I. ASSURANCE OF SALVATION

Accepting the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior is the best and most important decision you have ever made in life. Romans 5:1 tells us, **"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ":** Having peace about your soul's eternal destiny is one of the benefits that go along with salvation. As a result, Satan's first step is to make you doubt your salvation. He will bring questions to your mind such as, *"How could God save you when you've ...?"* The Devil is a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. (I Peter 5:8, 9). He wants you to doubt your salvation and be defeated in spirit. In this way he can keep you from influencing anyone else for Christ. The Bible informs us that one can know he or she is saved. You must simply believe what it says. What does it say about salvation?

> ***I John 5:11-13, "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in HIS SON. He that hath the SON hath life: and he that hath not the SON of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the* SON *of God: that you may* KNOW *that ye* HAVE *eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the SON of GOD."***

This is GOD'S promise. GOD would have to lie, which HE cannot do, in order for you **not** to know that you are saved and have eternal life. The question to ask yourself is, ***"Do I believe the record?"*** That record is the Word of God. The next thing is ***"he that hath the Son hath life,"*** Therefore, I need to ask myself whether John 1:12 is true or not. ***"As many as received HIM to them gave HE the power to become the sons of God."*** If you believe on the name of the Son of God, then you **know** that you have eternal life. It is not because you or I deserve it, rather, it is because God does not lie.

Salvation is not something that you keep. It is something that God keeps for you. Listen to the words of Christ in John 10:27-29,

> **"*My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow ME: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My FATHER, which gave them ME, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my FATHER'S hand."***

Are you greater than GOD? Is Satan greater than GOD? Is sin greater than GOD? Of course the answer to all those questions is **no!**—a thousand times **no!**

Keeping salvation is not your work. It is God's work. Notice how HE does it. Ephesians 1:13, 14, states, ***"In whom [Jesus] ye also trusted, [were saved] after ye heard the Word of Truth, the gospel of your salvation: [when you got saved] in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that HOLY SPIRIT of promise, [the HOLY SPIRIT came into your heart when you got saved to live with you forever] Which is the earnest of our inheritance [the non-refundable down payment] until the redemption [when Jesus comes again and takes us to heaven] of the purchased possession, [we who were saved by trusting in the shed blood of Christ as our payment and HIS resurrection] unto the praise of HIS glory."***

In short, these two verses are telling us that in order for GOD to lose your salvation, HE would also have to lose HIS HOLY SPIRIT! HE is not going to lose HIS HOLY SPIRIT. Therefore, our salvation is as secure as HIS HOLY SPIRIT.

Remember, you are not saved or kept by your good works. Ephesians 2:8, 9 states: ***"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of GOD: not of works, lest any man should boast."***

When you received CHRIST into your life as your LORD and GOD, you received GOD'S gift of *eternal life* and with it HIS promise to never take it from you. If you have doubts, claim the promises of GOD written in HIS WORD and realize that it is Satan who makes you doubt. You might live a long time in this life. It is very important that the matter of your salvation is settled in your mind. Don't go through life doubting what Christ has done for you. (Romans 8:38, 39).

QUESTIONS

1. What is the best and most important decision a person makes?
   a. To receive Christ as Savior. b. To get married. c. One's vocation for life.

2. After one is saved, Satan's first area of attack is to make you doubt you are saved.
   True or False?

3. Can GOD or HIS WORD lie? Yes or no?

4. Who keeps you saved?
   a. The Church. b. Christ c. You, by your efforts.

5. In order for you to lose your salvation, GOD must lose HIS HOLY _ _ _ _ _ _.

6. Is anyone saved or kept by his works? Yes or no?

7. What is GOD'S gift? (short answer).

Put a Lid on it!

"… whereby you are sealed until the day of redemption." Ephesians 4:30

Nothing can corrupt your salvation.

GOD HAS SEALED IT!!!

II. BAPTISM TO FOLLOW

Baptism does not save your soul! When you invited CHRIST into your life, you became as saved as you ever will be. One need look only to the thief on the cross to see that a person was saved who never belonged to a church nor was baptized.

What, then, is baptism? Baptism is your first step in your confession of CHRIST before men. The word *baptize* comes from the Greek word ***baptizo*** and simply means to immerse. Matthew 3:16 shows that this is how CHRIST was baptized. Acts 8:38, 39 indicate that this is how Philip baptized the Ethiopian eunuch. In both cases, they were baptized by immersion. [Acts 10:47]

Some wonder if sprinkling is the same thing since other churches call it "baptism." Actually, the first records of sprinkling are not until about A.D. 250. It was not until A.D. 1311 that the Roman Catholic Church at the Council of Ravena made sprinkling an official allowable mode of baptism. The Church of England adopted sprinkling in A.D. 1644 by an act of Parliament. It was by a vote of 25 to 24 (one vote) that sprinkling became the mode of baptism. Baptists are called Baptists because they re-baptized people after their salvation, which was according to the Lord's command. Stephen, Bishop of Rome, excommunicated many of the pastors of Asia Minor in A.D. 253 for holding to this Biblical view.

The Bible uses the word ***baptize***, which means to immerse. It was how John the Baptist baptized Jesus, and it is the same word the Lord used in commanding baptism. **It must be by immersion!** Why? Because of what it pictures.

> ***Romans 6:3-6 "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into JESUS CHRIST were baptized into HIS death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as CHRIST was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of HIS death, we shall be also in the likeness of HIS resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with HIM, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin."***

When one is baptized, he is showing his **identification** with CHRIST and is showing, symbolically, what Christ did for him. Going under the water shows HIS death, whereas coming up out of the water shows HIS resurrection. In like manner, we are also showing that we are dead to the old life and risen to walk in newness of life. We are going from honoring the flesh to honoring God. I Peter 1:14-16 demonstrates what this change should be. It is not to be like the former lust, rather, it is to be holy. Sprinkling or pouring, as one can plainly see, does not symbolize burial or resurrection.

Perhaps you were baptized ***before*** your salvation. Does this count? Imagine a young man is the son of a heart surgeon. He goes to work with his dad every day Although he completes college, he decides not to take post graduate work nor does he do an internship. He says, *"I watched my dad do the surgery many times. I should not have to go through all that training,"* His background notwithstanding, he will not be allowed to practice medicine or perform surgery, and rightly so. In like manner, baptism comes ***after*** salvation.

If one is baptized before salvation, he has gotten wet and that is all. He has not really entered a real relationship with CHRIST, and as a result, it does not picture his association with CHRIST. He was not associated with HIM nor was he dead to the old life. JESUS was not HIS SAVIOR. Baptism is a picture of what CHRIST did for us, and it is our public association with HIM. It was also commanded by CHRIST in Matthew 28:19. How can anyone say he has received CHRIST as his SAVIOR and LORD, and then not follow HIS first command after salvation? Baptism is an ordinance of the local church given by the Lord Jesus Christ.

QUESTIONS

1. Does ***baptism*** save or help save one's soul? Yes or no?

2. The word ***baptism*** means to _ _ _ _ _ _ _.

3. Sprinkling is the same as baptism by immersion. True or false?

4. Did Catholics and other denominations baptize by immersion at one time? Yes or no?

5. What two things does baptism symbolize?
   a.
   b.

6. If one is baptized before salvation, should they be baptized again? Yes or no?

7. Who gave the ordinance of Baptism to the local church?
   a. Paul b. The Pope c. Jesus Christ d. Billy Sunday

REMEMBER: ACTS 8:36-39

CORRECT: 1st Believe→2nd Be Baptized
INCORRECT: 1st Be Baptized→ 2nd Believe

Romans 6:3-6
…we also should walk
in newness of life…

III. CHURCH ATTENDANCE

"Every time the church doors are opened, you should be there unless you are providentially hindered." It may sound like a pastor's statement, but the principle is actually in God's Word.

> Hebrews 10:25 ***"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching."***

Most New Testament books are written to churches. GOD'S plan for this age is to work through local churches. Television and radio ministries are fine, but this does not allow us, in any way, to forsake the assembling of ourselves together. When the local church was formed in the book of Acts, it was formed for five reasons.

> Acts 2:42, 46, & 47 ***"And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers… And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, Praising GOD, and having favor with all the people. And the LORD added to the church daily such as should be saved."***

This tells us that the local church was established for the following:

1. **DOCTRINE-** The study of GOD'S Word for faith and practice. [note: faith refers to doctrine].
2. **PRAYER-** Praying together for the church, each other, and souls.
3. **FELLOWSHIP-** New friendship with Christian should be established. The word *Fellowship* comes from the Greek word *koinonia* and has the idea of a partnership. The same word is used to describe the union of husband and wife.
4. **EVANGELISM-** Evangelism is leading the unsaved to the LORD JESUS CHRIST for the salvation of their souls through the use of the Scriptures. One should notice that people were added to that local church daily as they were being saved. To be saved, someone had to show them the gospel.
5. **EDIFICATION-** This is building one another up in the faith through God's Word. Sharing what you've learned from God's Word is the manner in which we edify others. The word ***edify*** means to build up. We find an eternal promise, in I Peter 5:2-4, of a Crown of Glory for building one another up in Christ. Sharing God's Word is not the idea of arguing or raising questions that cause strife (Titus 3:9). Edification is also encouraging one another to serve Christ in our local church and to be a testimony on the job. For example, you may get one to go soul winning with you, or you could work on a bus ministry together. It could simply be seeing how we may be of help to other Christians in a spiritual, physical, financial or social way.

Yes, GOD does expect you to become a member of a local church. HE also expects you to faithfully attend and ***support*** that church. Ouch! That hurts! Hit a man in the pocketbook and it hurts. It is important to see what the Bible says about financial giving. Perhaps you have heard the term *tithe* used in giving to the church. This is not really a religious term, it simply means tenth. In the Bible, it represented giving one tenth of one's gross income to the LORD. Abraham ***commenced*** it in Genesis 14:20, and Jacob ***continued*** it in Genesis 28:16-22. Both of these were before the Old Testament law was given. Moses ***confirmed*** it in the law, Leviticus 27: 30-33; Malachi ***commanded*** it in Malachi 3:10. In the New Testament it was ***commended*** by Jesus Christ in Matthew 23:23. What should our motivation be for giving at least one-tenth of our gross income? Our love for CHRIST and HIS work. Our tithing and offering need to be with a **CHEERFUL** attitude. Notice what the Scriptures state:

> II Corinthians 9:6-8 ***"But this I say, he which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity:*** **for GOD loveth a cheerful giver.** ***And GOD is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work."***

A tithe is ten percent of your gross income. You do **not** give an offering until such time that you give above ten percent. It is possible, according to Malachi 3:8-10, to rob GOD in *tithes* and *offerings.* If GOD lays on you heart to give an amount above a tithe, and you don't, then you have robbed GOD! (Be sure to read Malachi 3:8-10 yourself).

Perhaps an illustration would fit in here. Imagine a man gets married and then tells his new wife that he is going to keep a separate apartment and try to see her on weekends when it is convenient. Will that marriage last? Is that a real commitment? Is it a commitment to say you've given your life to CHRIST but not give to HIS work? Do I have anything I am unwilling to give to the LORD JESUS CHRIST? We each must ask ourselves that important question.

Most churches take collections on Sunday. This is Scriptural:

> I Corinthians 16:2 ***"Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as GOD hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come."***

The Bible is teaching us to bring our *tithes* and *offerings* on the Lord's Day, Sunday, which is the first day of the week. (Sunday, by the way, is not the Sabbath, Saturday is!) We worship on Sunday as they did in the New Testament Church. It is the Lord's Day, for it marked the day of HIS resurrection. Actually, a casual reading of the Word of God will reveal the early church not only met on Sunday, it met daily. That is why souls were added to the church daily.

It is hard to start giving; but if you'll be faithful and use wisdom in how you spend your income, GOD will supply your need. However, this brings up a question. What if my church uses the finances to support those who are against CHRIST? For example, what if your offerings plate money helps support a professor in a denominational college that does not believe in the Deity

of CHRIST or in the *inspiration* and *preservation* of the Bible. Should our money given in worship of CHRIST, as well as in obedience to HIS WORD, be used to support those whose doctrine undermines the doctrines and beliefs of GOD'S WORD? **NO!** It is important to choose a church that is not only a ***Bible believing, Bible preaching and teaching church***, but it should also be a church that supports what it says it believes in practice.

The following Bible doctrines are very important for any church. If a church is unwilling to abide by them, then we should come out of that church. (II Corinthians 6:14-18; Amos 3:3). First, a church and its pastor should believe in the doctrine of Christ. (II John 9-11). This should include the following:

1. The deity of CHRIST. That is, HE was almighty GOD in the flesh. John 1:1-3, 14
2. That salvation is through the shed blood of Jesus Christ, **alone**. John 14:6; Colossians 1:14; Hebrews 9:22. Our part is repentance and faith. Acts 17:30, 31; 3:19; Ephesians 2:8,9; Titus 3:5
3. That HE was virgin born, sinless throughout HIS entire earthly life, and is eternal in that HE existed in eternity past with no point of HIS own creation. HE always was and He will live forever. Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23; II Corinthians 5:21; John 8:56-58.
4. That HE rose up from the dead physically, and that HE is coming again. Acts 1:11; Acts 2:23,24.
5. That HE now intercedes for believers before the Father in Heaven. Hebrews 4:14-16; Hebrews 7:24-26.

Again, it should be made perfectly clear that the pastor and the church believe that all are sinners, and that salvation is in CHRIST and in HIM **alone**. The church should not teach that good works or *doing the best you can* will save a person.

QUESTIONS

1. True or false? Most New Testament books were written to local churches.

2. List the five purposes for which GOD ordained the local churches.
   a. D _ _ _ _ _ _ _ b. P _ _ _ _ _ c. F _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ d. E _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
   e. E _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

3. God expects you to faithfully attend and:
   a. support the local church b. visit many different churches c. watch religious t.v.

4. A tithe is _ _ _ percent of one's income. An offering is anything _ _ _ _ _ a tithe.

5. Can a man rob GOD? Yes or no?

6. The tithe is to be brought to:
   a. your favorite television ministry b. your favorite missionary c. your local church

7. List five things that a local church and its pastor should believe about the doctrine of Christ.

IV. DOCTRINAL ISSUES

Having made brief statements about the doctrine of CHRIST, it is important to consider the next list of Bible doctrines with which to question a pastor. If they **do not agree**, then you are probably not in a Scriptural New Testament Church. GOD would **not** expect you to support a church like that. GOD'S will is to come out from among them and be separate. [II Corinthians 6:14-18]. The rest of the doctrinal statements are as follows:

1. The inspiration and preservation of the WORD OF GOD, the Bible—By inspiration we mean that the books of the Bible were written by holy men of old as they were moved by the HOLY SPIRIT, in such a definite way that their writings were supernaturally and verbally inspired and free from error as no other writing has ever been, or ever will be, inspired.
   We believe that the original manuscripts of the WORD OF GOD are no longer in existence but that GOD has ***supernaturally and providentially preserved HIS WORD*** from the very beginning of time to this very moment (Psalm 12:6, 7; Psalm 119:160; Isaiah 59:21; Matthew 5:18; 24:35; I Peter 1:23).
   We believe that GOD'S WORD is preserved for us today in the Authorized Version, King James Version (1611), for English speaking people. This is the GOD-honored Text of the Reformation.
   We believe that **inspiration without preservation would be meaningless**. How does that doctrinal belief fit your everyday life? GOD speaks to us through HIS WORD. If the Bible is not preserved, then how can we trust it for our need? Could we really trust what it says about salvation? When it tells us what to do about various needs in the heart, how could we trust it? When we know, by the Bible, the right thing to do, but inwardly we desire to do something else, how can we trust that the Bible is right for us? **Yes, inspiration and preservation** are more than statements of creed. They are crucial for ***daily*** Christian living.

2. The belief of the **ONE TRUE GOD**—we believe that there is one, and only one, living and true GOD, an infinite, intelligent ***Spirit*** [John 4:23, 24], the maker and Supreme Ruler of heaven and earth, who is **inexpressibly** glorious in **holiness** and worthy of all possible honor, confidence, and love.
   In the unity of the GODHEAD there are three persons, THE FATHER, THE SON, & THE HOLY SPIRIT. They are equal in every divine perfection, and execute distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption. In short, they are three ***Divine*** distinctions in one **Divine** essence. (Isaiah 45:21, 22; I John 5:7-9).
   How does this doctrinal belief affect our lives? Being GOD, HE is ***all-powerful, all-knowing, and all-present***. Being ALMIGHTY, HE can allow us to have a free will. HE is not threatened by us. This power not only means HE can do all things, it also means the relationship with HIM is based on HIS love and HIS holiness. It means that any promise in the WORD OF GOD can be trusted, because HE backs it up. [Hebrews 6:13].

3. We also believe that the ***HOLY SPIRIT*** is a Divine person, equal with GOD the FATHER and GOD the SON and the same essence; that HE was active in creation. We believe in His relation to the world in that HE restrains the evil one until GOD'S holy

purpose is fulfilled; that HE convicts of sin, of judgment, and of righteousness [John 16:8-11]; that HE bears witness to the truth of the Gospel in preaching and testimony; that HE is the agent in the ***New Birth***; and that upon one's salvation, HE ***seals, endues, guides, teaches, witnesses, sanctifies, and helps*** the believer. (Romans 8:9, 16-18, 26, 27) How is this practical for your life? Upon receiving CHRIST as your personal SAVIOR and GOD, the HOLY SPIRIT came to indwell you. HE is there to teach you, help you, and give you understanding of the BIBLE. HE is there to convict you when you are about to do things that displease GOD and lose reward in heaven. HE is there to guide and strengthen you when you are trying to live life according to the WORD OF GOD, and when you need HIS strength as well as guidance to meet the complications and the tragedies of life. Just think, ALMIGHTY GOD **living in you!** Yours is simply faith, which is obedience to the WORD and HIS HOLY SPIRIT.

4. We believe that Satan, i.e. "The Devil," "that old serpent," "Lucifer," "the dragon," is a real person or being, created by GOD. HE is opposed to all that pertains to GOD.[Isaiah 14:12-15; John 8:44; Revelation 12:7-9; 20:1-3, 10]. We can see by action he is clearly opposed to the Trinity. For example, we look at the FATHER as **Creator**. How does Satan oppose this?--with the ***theory*** of evolution. JESUS CHRIST provides for us a ***complete*** salvation. The devil opposes with a ***works*** salvation. The HOLY SPIRIT works in and through us via the WORD OF GOD. Satan corrupts the ***true*** WORD. It is often times through faulty translations. It is also by false teachers. Satan was, at one time, a holy angel who was second only to GOD [Ezek. 28:12-19]. Through pride and ambition, he wanted to be above ALMIGHTY GOD. He failed, and one third of the angels fell with him. When he was in heaven, he was in charge of heaven's music. Although we often talk about the angels singing after the fall, they are never seen singing again. Although saved people in heaven sing, the angels always join in ***"saying."*** This is true, even in the Christmas story recorded in Luke. If there was one word that describes Satan's mission, it is he ***corrupts***. He tries to corrupt the minds of men so they will not be saved. If they get saved, he tries hard to tempt man and get him involved with the cares, pleasures, and riches of this life so that he accomplishes little for CHRIST. Especially, he does not want us to bring anyone else to salvation in the LORD JESUS.

5. We believe in creation. Creation is not limited to the first two chapters of the book of Genesis. Creation is spoken of in different forms throughout the BIBLE. The creation account given in Genesis is to be accepted literally, not figuratively, or allegorically. Man was created by God in GOD'S own image, not through an evolutionary process which GOD started. GOD'S creation did not evolve! ***IF one accepts evolution, then he must logically assume that JEHOVAH GOD and the way of salvation is a creation of the minds of men.*** (Genesis 1:1, 11, 24, 26, 27; John 1:3; Romans 1:20; Revelation 4:11)

6. We believe that man was created in innocence under the law of his Maker, but by voluntary transgression, fell from his sinless and happy state. As a result, all mankind are now sinners, under just condemnation, and without defense or excuse. How does that belief affect us today? It should help us see there is none righteous and that all men who are without CHRIST ***are headed to the eternal lake of fire***. We should, therefore, have the compassion to want to see them saved from hell and to Heaven. We do have

responsibility to witness the **gospel** to the unsaved. They have the free will from GOD to accept it or reject it. (Genesis 3:1-6; Romans 3:10, 23; 5:12; Galatians 3:22).

7. We believe that salvation of sinners is wholly of the ***grace of GOD***. [Ephesians 2:8, 9]. When JESUS CHRIST shed HIS **blood** on the **cross**, HE was dying for every sin of all men, past, present, and future. [Romans 5:8; I Peter 2:24]. He was three days and three nights in the grave. While HIS body was in the grave, HIS spirit was in hell. Why? That is the cost of our sin. [Romans 6:23; II Corinthians 5:21]. While HIS spirit was in hell, HE preached to those who were already there. [I Peter 3:18-22]. Then HE rose up **victorious** over the grave. As a result, HE has the keys of both hell and death. [Revelation 1:18]. ***The resurrection is just as important as the shedding of HIS Blood for our sins.*** [I Corinthians 15:12-20]. This is why JESUS said in John 14:6, HE is the only way to be SAVED from hell. A reading of Matthew 7:13-23 may help us to understand that the LORD JESUS CHRIST is ***the only way to heaven.*** (John 3:16-18; Romans 10:9-13; Acts 4:12; 17:30, 31; Luke 13;3, 5)

QUESTIONS

1. Inspiration without preservation is _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _.

2. GOD is three Divine persons in one Divine essence. We call this:
   a. the TRINITY b. the three gods the Revelation d. the theory of GOD

3. The HOLY SPIRIT:
   a. Convicts of sin, righteousness and judgment to come.
   b. Indwells the believer, while teaching him the Scriptures and guiding his life.
   c. Points to CHRIST and testifies of HIM.
   d. All the above

4. The one word that best describes what Satan does is the word _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _.

5. True or false? GOD created the heavens and then set up the evolutionary process.

6. True or false? All men are on their way to hell until they receive CHRIST as SAVIOR.

7. The resurrection of CHRIST is just as _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ for our salvation as is the shedding of HIS _ _ _ _ _.

V. ETERNAL TRUTHS

The BIBLE tells us that in the last days, men will not endure sound doctrine. That is the reason for this extended portion on doctrine. **Doctrine** not only refers to the eternal truths of GOD'S HOLY WORD, it is practical for day to day living. Now, continuing with the things that we most assuredly believe, we next consider the following doctrines:

1. Salvation is **free**. Sometimes it is referred to as ***"whosoever will,"*** referred to in Revelation 22:17. Man has a free will. That also calls for responsibility [Romans 14:12; I Corinthians 4:5; II Corinthians 5:9-11; Revelation 20:11-15]. Although salvation is something one cannot earn or work to keep, it is something that the individual is allowed to accept or receive upon hearing the ***gospel.*** In Ezekiel 33:11, GOD says HE has no pleasure in the death of the wicked. In this same chapter, HE further instructs us to warn the wicked to turn from his evil ways. How is the doctrine of free will a help to you? You may feel responsible after having witnessed to your own children or having reared them in church, and reared them with moral instruction, **if they turn away from these teachings** the Devil will try to make you think that it is your fault. You obviously made a mistake in rearing them. We must understand that our children have free wills, and they also have a depraved nature with which they were born (Just like you and me). If we teach them rightly and especially the way of salvation, we are certain that GOD'S HOLY SPIRIT will bring that to their mind. There is always hope. Praise the Lord for a free will so we never lose hope in this flesh. (Isaiah 55:1; Matthew 11:28-30; John 6:37; Romans 10:13) Again, we must never forget that man must **repent**. (Acts 3:19) The **work** of saving us was accomplished by the ***LORD JESUS CHRIST via His death, burial, and resurrection***. The reader should refer to chapter one and see the security of this salvation. It is also Bible doctrine.

2. We believe that a *NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH* is a congregation of baptized believers associated together by a covenant of faith and fellowship. The membership of the church is based on the salvation of the individual with baptism following. [Acts 2:41]. The church has two ordinances: baptism and the LORD'S supper. The local church has CHRIST as its head. GOD has ordained leadership for the local church. The pastor is the under-shepherd of GOD'S flock. He is responsible for final decisions within the realm of spiritual practice. Deacons are also officers of the church. They are to look after the financial matters, widows, and other things of benevolence. You may read of these offices in Acts 6:1-7; I Timothy 3:1-13; II Timothy 3:16-45; Titus 1:5-9; and Ephesians 4:11. It is important that you understand that the words ***Bishop, Elder, and Pastor*** refer to the same office. They are only describing different duties of the office. The church has the responsibility of fulfilling the great commission, which is to take the ***Gospel*** to the world, beginning in its own community and spreading to the rest of the world via missions. We are to win the lost to CHRIST, then teach them to observe all things which HE has commanded us. Of course, we are to baptize each believer as well.

It is important that one, if saved at home or in another place outside the local church, make the decision public. [Romans 10:11; Matthew 10:32, 33]. This is usually done by walking forward at the invitation time of your church. The pastor will share with the Church that you have received CHRIST as SAVIOR and are now making it public. We call this a public profession of CHRIST. The local church should be a church whose primary mission is to edify the people through the preaching and teaching of the WORD OF GOD. The local church is **not** a social welfare agency. It does have the responsibility of disciplining erring members. The church holds to baptism and the LORD'S SUPPER AS SYMBOLIC. Baptism is symbolic of what CHRIST did for us on the cross. It also shows we are identifying with HIM and are dead to the old way of life to walk with HIM. The supper is symbolic of HIS body being nailed to the cross to be sacrificed for our sins, and HIS **blood** is symbolic of the payment our sins required. (Acts 2:41, 42; 20:17-28; Ephesians 1:22, 23; 4:11-13; 5:22, 23; Matthew 28:18-20; Romans 6:3-5; I Corinthians 11:23-30). The doctrine of the local church is a good thing for us. GOD ordained the local church for this age in the same degree of importance HE ordained Israel in the Old Testament. (Ephesians 2:11-20). Our GOD is a GOD of order. HE also did not leave it up to us on how to set up a local church. HE instructs us through HIS Holy Word.

3. We also believe that the church is not to be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. In addition, we are not to cooperate in religious activity with those who hold to false doctrine. Think on the following Scriptures: (II Corinthians 6:14-18; Romans 16:17, 18, note: *"mark them"* means identify or call out their names to the local church; II Thessalonians 3:6, 7, 14, 15; I Corinthians 5:9-11; II Timothy 3:5; Titus 3:9-11; II John 9:9-11). The importance of this doctrine is seen as one remembers Satan. He is a deceiver. He will make something sound good. Many are deceived by the religious words used by those in false doctrine. You must remember, they may use your religious language, but mean something entirely different. God ordained local churches for today. He is never happy or satisfied when HIS doctrines of HIS precious WORD are compromised for the sake of unity or some good that might be accomplished if we will be compromised. Jesus did not want devils or unsaved men testifying of HIM during HIS earthly ministry. (Romans 3:5-8; 6:1, 2, 15; Acts 16:16-18).

QUESTIONS

1. True of false! Man has a free will and may respond to or reject the way of salvation as the HOLY SPIRIT OF GOD convicts his heart.

2. The **work** of saving us was accomplished by the LORD JESUS CHRIST via His death, burial, and _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _.

3. What does Acts 2:41 shows as the criteria for church membership?

4. ***Bishop, Elder, and Pastor*** all refer to the same _ _ _ _ _ _ .

5. The responsibility of the local church is to fulfill the great commission. Right or wrong?

6. What is a pastor to do about those who cause division contrary to doctrine? [short answer]

VI. FUTURE EVENTS

Sometimes you may hear of the ***Second Coming of CHRIST***, also called ***the Rapture.*** Some BIBLE scholars use the term ***Eschatology,*** which is the doctrine of last things. As we continue in the overview of doctrine, general statements will be made in the area of eschatology with corresponding references from the BIBLE.

1. The Rapture is when everyone who is saved is suddenly caught up to be with the LORD in the air. (I Corinthians 15:51-54; I Thessalonians 4:13-18). This includes those who were saved and have now died. Their bodies are buried in the grave, but their spirits are conscious and awaiting the return. (Luke 23:43; II Corinthians12:2-4; Revelation 6:9-11) This will be followed on earth by a seven year period known as the ***Tribulation period.*** It will begin after the rapture when a world leader signs a covenant with Israel. He is referred to in Scripture as ***the Beast and the Anti-Christ.*** The tribulation period is divided into two periods: the *Tribulation* and the *Great Tribulation.* Pertinent verses are: Jeremiah 30:7; Daniel 9:24-27; Matthew 24 & 25. Revelation chapters six through nineteen describe many of the events of this period. Daniel chapters four and seven also go into detail of this time, although those two chapters are hard to understand. The Rapture could come at any moment. There is nothing that needs to happen for it to take place. This doctrine should exhort each of us to be faithful and to be serving the LORD today. When HE comes, you will either be ashamed as a Christian or have confidence. (I John 2:28)
2. There are several judgments mentioned in the BIBLE involving future events. Some are:
    a. The Judgment Seat of Christ. This is for saved people only. It will not determine whether or not they are going to heaven. If they are saved, they will be in heaven. Rather, this looks at the rewarding of their works. (I Corinthians 3:11-15; II Corinthians 5:9-11).
    b. The Judgment Seat of Nations. The LORD JESUS CHRIST will judge the nations upon HIS return at the end of the seven year tribulations. (Matthew 25:31-46). (See item #3)
    c. The Great White Throne Judgment. This judgment is for anyone in all history who died without salvation. This judgment does not determine whether or not they go to heaven. It determines the degree of punishment they will receive in the ***Lake of Fire*** for all eternity. It will be worse for some than others. (Revelation 20:11-15; Luke 12:47, 48). (See item #5)
3. At the end of the tribulation, CHRIST will return. This is the **actual** Second Coming of CHRIST. At the **Rapture**, HE meets us in the clouds, but HE does not at that time touch the earth with HIS feet. (Zachariah 14:4; I Thessalonians 4:13-18). The return of CHRIST will be when the armies of the world are gathering together to war. The battle is called the Battle of ARMAGEDDON. You may read about it in Revelation 14:14-20; 16:18-21; 19:11-21.
4. After CHRIST returns, HE will set up a kingdom on earth for one thousand years. This is referred to as the ***Millennium.*** It will be a time of peace and prosperity as the earth has never known since before the fall of man. Isaiah eleven is good to read

about this time period. We also know by Revelation 20:1-4 and 7-10 Satan is chained during this period. What a great day it will be! Keep this in mind as we go to item #5.

5. At the end of the Millennium, Satan will be loosed for a short season. We do not know how long a period that will be, but we do know that it will be short. (Revelation 20). CHRIST will then rain fire down on HIS enemies. Then comes the resurrection of all those who died without being saved. Particularly, Revelation 20:11-15 deals with this judgment. All those at this White Throne Judgment will be cast into the Lake of Fire.
6. Next, is the Eternal reign of CHRIST. Revelation chapters twenty-one and twenty-two describe our eternal home. We are to live each day with eternity set in our hearts. Colossians 3:1, 2 tells us to set our affections on things above, not on things of the earth. Matthew 6:19-21 gives the instruction of CHRIST. We are to lay up treasure in heaven for eternity.
7. That may bring a question of, "How does a Christian lay up treasure in heaven for eternity?" Revelation 4:11 tells us that we were created for HIS pleasure. We must do those things that are righteous and well pleasing in HIS sight. The BIBLE mentions rewards for those who are HIS. (Malachi 3:17). Daniel 12:3 speaks of those who turn many to righteousness as shining as the brightness of the firmament and stars. We turn others to righteousness when we share the gospel with them. It is up to them, since they have a free will, to accept it or reject it. It is mighty special to GOD when we share the gospel and one receives CHRIST. I am not sure what that shining is like, but it must be great. The people of Israel feared when Moses shone this way. Romans 8:18 calls this shining **glory**. May we ever be about the business of bringing unsaved people to CHRIST in order to prevent them from going to an ***eternal Lake of Fire***.
    a. **The crown of life.** This is referred to in James 1:12. It is for those who endure trials. Like Job in the Old Testament, this one does not turn his back on GOD when things are going badly. He stays true and does what a Christian is supposed to do according to the WORD OF GOD. Persecutions, family problems, financial setbacks, and even health issues will not prevent this one from serving the LORD.
    b. **The crown incorruptible.** This is referred to in I Corinthians 9:24-27. This is one who lives the Christian life according to the WORD OF GOD. He does not compromise his personal standards from the BIBLE. He does not try to corrupt the work. That is, he doesn't try to make it look, sound, walk, or talk like the world. This includes his worship and daily testimony. He has accepted II Timothy 3:12, while having his heart on things above. (Colossians 3:1, 2)
    c. **The crown of rejoicing.** This is seen in I Thessalonians 2:19, 20. This is for bringing other souls to the saving knowledge of the gospel.
    d. **The crown of righteousness.** This is referred to in II Timothy 4:5-8. It is for those who love HIS appearing. This is for the person who knows the will of GOD and does it. Righteousness, according to Deuteronomy 6:25, is referring to the "to do" commands of the WORD OF GOD. Jesus implored us in Matthew 6:33 to seek first the Kingdom of GOD and HIS righteousness. Why? HE knew it would be best for you throughout eternity. You see, the rewards in heaven last forever. They are just as precious one billion years into eternity as they are the first day.

e. **The crown of glory.** This is referred to in I Peter 5:2-4. This is for the person who ***edifies*** his fellow believers. Some have called it the "Pastor's crown," but it is for all who encourage fellow believers by sharing with them things they learn from GOD'S HOLY WORD. It also is being the person who exhorts them to the work and rebukes them in love concerning sin.

QUESTIONS

1. The _ _ _ _ _ _ _ is the next event to take place on GOD'S prophetic calendar.

2. Name the three judgments mentioned in the lesson.
   a.
   b.
   c.

3. At the end of the tribulation, which is seven years in duration and divided into two parts of three and a half years each, JESUS CHRIST our LORD will actually touch earth. True or false?

4. The one thousand year reign of CHRIST on earth is known as:
   a. the Rapture b. the Tribulation c. the Millennium d. the Eternal Reign

5. Who is chained during the Millennium?
   a. the Beast b. Satan c. unsaved people d. no one

6. In view of the eternal reign, we are to live with _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ set in our heart.

7. List the five crowns in the lesson.
   a.
   b.
   c.
   d.
   e.

VII. GODLY SEPARATION

JESUS said in John 4:23, 24, "*But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the FATHER in spirit and in truth: for the FATHER seeketh such to worship HIM. GOD is a SPIRIT: and they that worship HIM must worship HIM in spirit and in truth."* You are not a body with a soul and spirit. Instead, you are a spirit and soul which possess a body. At death, one's spirit leaves the body and goes to be with CHRIST, or he goes to hell. In I Thessalonians 5:23, we read the following: *"and the very GOD of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray GOD your whole **spirit** and **soul** and **body** be preserved blameless unto the coming day of our LORD JESUS CHRIST."* You will notice that GOD'S order is spirit first, then soul, followed by the body.

It is important that we identify terms. The **spirit** is the seat of man's intelligence. This is not speaking of "I.Q." or academic excellence, rather this is the place where one may go in his heart in order to contemplate. We think and reason out the issues of life. Decisions of short term and long term are made here. Our governing principles of life are established here. The **soul** is the seat of our emotions. We can think within the soul. For example, a man comes home and the dog meets him. Usually it is wagging its tail. This day the tail is between his legs. He obviously has done something for which he thinks his master will punish him. Although an animal has a limited ability to think, it has the ability to contemplate a situation such as this. Consider the difference between ***soul thinking*** and ***spirit thinking***. A young man considers marriage. He thinks, "Wow, she is pretty! I like being seen with her! She is so cool. I like the sexy way she dresses." Another young man thinks, "I believe I would like to marry her. She would stick with me if things were tough. I believe that she would make a good mother to my children. She really seems to love GOD!" Now the question is this, ***"Which young man is thinking in his soul, and which young man is thinking in his spirit?"*** Of course, the second young man is contemplating in the spirit. Money, beauty, things of the world, or the flesh are not the things he is considering, but he is focused on the long term. The first man, however, is thinking in the moment and the fulfillment of his desires. We can have fulfillment of the soul without having fulfillment of the spirit. Because GOD created us with a soul and spirit, we can have fulfillment in soul and yet know that down deep we are lacking fulfillment. There are people who have married three or four times expecting fulfillment from a marriage which is a fulfillment only GOD can give. [By the way, in the BIBLE one will sometimes find SCRIPTURES that say, *"with the **heart** man believeth unto righteousness,"* while another verse states, *"He that trusteth in his **heart** is a fool."* This is not a contradiction. When reading the BIBLE, one must see if the heart is referring to the spirit or the soul].

The next part of our make up is the body. It will not be changed until we go to heaven at the **rapture**. Then it will be made like unto ***HIS glorious body***. (Philippians 3:20, 21). Many times the use of the body is referring to the base, or the vile, things. Often times the soul refers to the things of the world. The world is not necessarily an evil thing in and of itself. For example, in Luke 8:14, it mentions ***cares, pleasures, and riches*** making us unfruitful in a spiritual sense. Those things are not necessarily evil cares, pleasures, and riches; but they are things that take us from the LORD. They may interfere with our personal walk with GOD. The soul is not always a bad thing. Christians are not feeling-less people. But our feeling should be stirred by responding

to the spirit. And our spirit should have the LORD JESUS CHRIST and HIS HOLY WORD, THE BIBLE, guiding its contemplations. Feelings can be stimulated by outward forces or from the spirit within our being. ***Faith*** is not feelings. It is not trying to believe so hard that something comes to pass. ***Faith*** is knowing the facts (spirit), which come from GOD'S WORD, that you can rely upon them. It is not faith to just state you believe that CHRIST shed HIS blood and died for your sins, and rose up from the dead three days later. HE must be received. Until HE is received, it is only a statement of fact. The devils believe that fact. (James 2:19). Our duty as Christians is found in Colossians 3:1, 2: *"If ye then be risen with CHRIST, seek those things which are above, where CHRIST sitteth on the right hand of GOD. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth."*

Consider what is meant by setting your affections on things above (**spirit**), and on things of earth (**soul**). I John 2:15-17, *"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world,* ***the love of the FATHER is not in him****. For all that is in the world,* ***the lust of the flesh, and the lust of eyes, and the pride of life,*** *is not of the FATHER, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of GOD abideth for ever."* The context of this passage is of the world. It is not necessarily the wicked vile things. If this is where your heart lies, if these things are your desire, then the BIBLE states clearly that the **love of the FATHER is not in you**! One can say they love GOD, but I John 3:18 shows us that love is not in word and tongue, (the touchy, feely things of the soul) rather it is in deed and in truth, (the spirit). Now notice "the lust of the flesh." This can be vulgar and vain things but not necessarily. It can be tobacco habits, obesity, or things that you watch on television. It is wise to beware of television and the internet. **Be sure that pornography will make you its servant. Even one contact is one too many!** Next is the "lust of the eyes." This is covetousness. It replaces spiritual values with material values, or eternal values with present values. As Bob Jones, Sr. used to say, *"Don't sacrifice the eternal on the altar of the present."* This may be seeing things of the world and desiring to have those things. It may be material possessions or pleasures. Again, they aren't evil of themselves, but they become the desire of the heart and that for which we live to attain. Finally, we see the "pride of life." This person is self-centered. He or she may step over people in order to attain power, privilege, or position. It is that which exalts self. It looks at its own feelings and not unto the LORD. This person may have tendencies to divorce, jump from church to church, or just have a plain temperamental personality because they are living for self. They will be the last ones to see it. These are things that pass away; while the eternal things last forever. We need to have our mind (spirit) set on things above. That is, we need to have eternity in view.

The next passage we need to see is I Peter 1:13-16. There we read, *"Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of JESUS CHRIST."* This verse is telling us to get serious about the business of our spiritual life. *"As obedient children,* [one cannot please GOD without obedience. A lack of obedience is a lack of faith] *not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance:"* In other words, do not try to make your religion or your daily life look like the world. When we repent, we turn from the world. Today, there is a tendency to try to make our dress and music in church like that of the world. Rock music is beat-driven music, while GOD'S music is melody-driven (Ephesians 5:19). Would the music being played in a strip tease joint be acceptable for believers if the employees had BIBLE verses tattooed on their bodies? Of course

not, that is ridiculous. Isn't it just as ridiculous to bring to church the same sound that is heard in the strip joint with the only difference being the words? Now we continue with verses 15 and 16, *"But as HE which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy."* Holiness has to do with our heart relationship with GOD. We confess sin. We contemplate the SAVIOR through study of HIS WORD. We make decisions as a result of this. We seek to become more conformed to CHRIST. (Philippians 2:5). Galatians 5:16 commands the Christian to *"…Walk in the SPIRIT, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh."*

It is important then to refrain from wrong places, activities, and friends. We want to win our friends to CHRIST, but we cannot afford to injure the testimony of CHRIST by involving ourselves in things that are not right. Things that fulfill the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life are not right. It is important that we put away all use of alcoholic beverages and the use of tobacco. Although these things will not send you to hell, they will damage your health, as well as your personal testimony and credibility. Such behaviors may become the very stumbling block that keeps someone, especially someone you love, from coming to CHRIST. As a Christian, we need to be on guard with respect to the places we go. Imagine someone sees you walking from a theater that has shown a movie that even the unsaved find distasteful. Besides, why support the vile fornication life of Hollywood? With the dances of the day, don't go to the dance. Such activities will certainly stir the lust of your flesh and stimulate ungodly thinking. (Matthew 18:6, 7). Does this mean we are to become a recluse and have no friends? No! A thousand times no! We are to be friendly with all men, but our purpose is to bring them to repentance and faith in CHRIST JESUS (Rom. 12:18; Heb. 12:14). Please read the following passages and think of them long and hard. (Matthew 5:14-16; Romans 12:1, 2; I Corinthians 6:19, 20; I Thessalonians 5:22). These things in this chapter are actually called **the doctrine of separation.**

QUESTIONS

1. The spirit is the seat of man's _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _.

2. The soul is the seat of man's [intelligence/emotions].

3. True or false? You are a spirit and soul possessing a body.

4. Which of the following is **not** an area of the world which the Christian should avoid?
   a. the lust of the eyes b. the lust of the flesh
   c. automobiles d. the pride of life

5. "Don't sacrifice the eternal on the altar of the _ _ _ _ _ _ _."

6. Holiness in a believer is a [command/request] of GOD.

7. The subject matter of this chapter is called the Biblical doctrine of:
   a. Eternal security b. future things c. the church d. separation

VIII. HOW TO WALK WITH GOD

Whether one calls it ***devotions*** or ***walking with GOD***, this is dealing with your fellowship with GOD. The first things you should do is allow GOD to speak to you. GOD talks to us through the BIBLE. Of the BIBLE it has been said, *"Read it to be wise, believe it to be safe, practice it to be right."* I cannot think of better advice.

> **II Timothy 2:15** *"Study to show thyself approved unto GOD, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the WORD OF TRUTH."*
>
> **I Peter 2:2** *"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the WORD, that ye may grow thereby."*
>
> **Psalm 119:11** *"Thy WORD have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee."*
>
> **Psalm 119:97** *"O how love I thy law! It is my* ***meditation all the day****."*
>
> **Psalm 119:105** *"Thy WORD is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."*
>
> **Acts 17:11** *"These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the WORD with all readiness of mind,* ***and searched the SCRIPTURES daily****, whether those things were so."*

Yes, the BIBLE should be read and studied daily. I suggest rising thirty minutes earlier in the morning to read it. It may only be a chapter. Read it, then think on it the rest of the day (This is called meditation). There are seven questions to ask yourself when reading the BIBLE (taken from the Navigators).

1. What new thing did I learn?
2. Is there a command to obey?
3. Is there an example to follow?
4. Is there a sin to forsake?
5. Is there a promise to claim or proclaim?
6. Does it tell me something about GOD?
7. Is there an error to avoid?

It would be good to write these questions in the front of your BIBLE. I would also suggest to begin with reading the book of **John**. You will not understand everything. I have read the BIBLE many times, (besides the studies into commentaries and sermons of other men) yet I find more new and refreshing things as I grow in HIS WORD. Remember this important ingredient in BIBLE study: ***the BIBLE will be a waste of time if you do not obey its commands.*** If you read it and do not obey it, you will be an unprofitable servant of GOD. **It is not *our* faith until we obey it.** Faith is not just saying *"I believe it."* You should meditate on what you read. You can do this while driving down the road or are involved with an activity that does not require your full concentration. If you have time to think on sports, or some other avenue of interest, you have time to think on the WORD OF GOD.

Invest in a good BIBLE. It is interesting that people will not go more than a day without a television if theirs were to burn out. They do not find the smallest or cheapest television. Find a good study BIBLE. There are several out there. Be sure that it is the 1611 King James Version of the BIBLE, since it is the most accurate translation of the right manuscript. There are several King James Version BIBLES you may buy. Go to your local BIBLE book store to find them. I have recommended the *Defined King James Bible* put out by Dr. Waite. It will help you to understand those hard BIBLE words. I also recommend the *Old Scofield Study Bible*. It has many good notes in it. The *Rice Reference Bible* is also a good study BIBLE. There is also the *Defenders Study Bible* that Dr. Henry Morris put out. *The Hebrew Greek Key Study Bible* is also an excellent tool for study. In addition, I would suggest buying the *STRONG'S EXHAUSTIVE CONCORDANCE OF THE BIBLE*. It will list every word of the BIBLE and tell you where it is found. One needs to understand, however, that the notes in those BIBLEs are added by **fallible** men. Some will make mistakes. Ultimately, one must ask the SPIRIT OF GOD to give them understanding as he reads the WORD OF GOD.

Be sure to look for the ***verbs*** in the BIBLE. Some of the verbs in the BIBLE are action verbs, (such as stand, walk, abstain, etc). There are verbs that call us to action. Obey the call to action in GOD'S WORD! It is good to take notes as your pastor preaches and teaches. Refer to them later. That is, be sure to go back and look them over. Many times GOD will use this to give you more insight than the pastor gave in the message. All these things will help you to mature in the ***"knowledge of our LORD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST. To HIM be glory both now and for ever. Amen."*** JESUS told us that the "WORD IS TRUTH." There is no error in it at all. If you and I are to grow, then we must understand also Romans 10:17: *"Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the WORD OF GOD."*

QUESTIONS

1. The BIBLE should be read and studied:
   a. daily b. once a week c. when convenient d. rarely

2. List the seven questions to ask oneself when reading the BIBLE
   a. b.
   c. d.
   e. f.
   g.

3. The suggested book to read first from the BIBLE is the book of _ _ _ _.

4. Yes or no? Can it be called faith if we say we believe it, but do not obey it?

5. The best version of the BIBLE is: a. King James 1611 b. New International Version

6. We should not only read the BIBLE, we should meditate upon it. Right or wrong?

7. "Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the _ _ _ _ of _ _ _.

IX. INTIMATE RELATIONSHIP

Walking with GOD is not limited to BIBLE study. Our walk with the Lord is incomplete without prayer and service. Whereas BIBLE study allows GOD to talk to us by HIS HOLY SPIRIT through the WORD OF GOD, prayer allows us to talk to GOD.

> **Psalm 62:8** *"Trust in HIM at **all times**; ye people, **pour out your heart** before HIM: GOD is a refuge for us. Selah."*

The word *selah* means think about it. Today people are paying exorbitant amounts to psychiatrists to listen to them as they pour out their hearts. Our GOD is better than any earthly psychiatrist. Too often, we do not think of HIM as being a real person. As a result, we do not think we are pouring our hearts out to someone who can help us in the midst of our trial. **You can trust GOD! You can trust HIS WORD!** The passage I Thessalonians 5:17, 18 says, *"Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks: for this is the will of GOD in CHRIST JESUS concerning you."* The BIBLE clearly states here that praying is GOD'S WILL for His children. It behooves us to pray. Just think, we can actually talk to the Almighty Creator! And we talk to HIM personally!

Some are intimidated about this matter of prayer. You have heard someone pray in church who uses big and religious sounding words. As a result of not knowing what he meant, you are afraid to pray. JESUS said where two or three are gathered together in HIS name, HE is in the midst of them. Prayer is not to impress those around us with our knowledge, gifts, or spirituality. It is to talk to GOD. In church, we are talking to GOD in behalf of the church. In the home, we are talking to GOD about the matters of our heart and the things upon which we have meditated from HIS WORD. Prayer is as old and universal as man. But GOD hears only certain prayers (II Chronicles 16:9). That is, HE only hears the prayers of saved people who are right with HIM (Psalm 66:18; Isa. 1:15, 16). This does not mean we are perfect, but it does mean we are trying to walk with HIM according to HIS WORD. The following elements should be considered in the matter of prayer:

1. **PRAISE.** Praise GOD for ***what*** HE is and for ***who*** HE is. HE is **Almighty** GOD. HE is the **Creator** of heaven and earth and all that therein is. **Great** is the LORD! (Psalm 48:1, 2). HE is **holy, pure, righteous, just, loving, merciful, and gracious**. HE is 100% all these things, and there is **no evil** in HIM at all. Praise HIM for it! A reading of Psalm 145-150 reveals examples of praise.

2. **CONFESSION.** Tell HIM all that is on your heart, good and bad. If we cannot tell GOD, ***then who can we tell?*** You may say, "But I have some evil things in my heart." He already knows what is in your heart (Ps. 44:21; Jer. 17:9, 10; Lk. 9:47). We are also told in Proverbs 18 that HE "*is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother*." HE is there to help you work out those problems of the heart.
   Hebrews 4:14-16 *"Seeing then that we have a great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, JESUS THE SON OF GOD, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feelings of our infirmities; but was in all*

*points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. **Let us** therefore come boldly unto the Throne of Grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."*

The idea of coming boldly does not mean to come arrogantly, demandingly, or disrespectfully. It is the idea of bringing everything in your heart to God and asking Him to work in you to make everything right. At that point, we confess all known sin to GOD.

I John 1:9 *"If we confess our sins, HE is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."*
Proverbs 28:13 *"He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy."*

This tells us that it is **not**, "Do whatever you want to do that is wrong and then just say, "I'm sorry,' and GOD will forgive." We are to ask GOD to help us forsake the sin. Asking GOD to forgive with no intention of forsaking the sin or making things right is not the confession to which the BIBLE is referring. Some have committed adultery with the idea of "GOD will forgive me." The word ***confess*** means, "to say the same thing as." In other words, we look at sin, we turn from it, and we do not want it in our lives anymore. Asking GOD to forgive you with no intention to forsake the sin is like asking GOD to help you sin without a guilty conscience. **HE is not going to do that!**

3. **THANKSGIVING.** Thank GOD for everything- your home, your family, your church, your job, the weather, but especially your salvation! Thank HIM for answers to prayer. The list would be endless if we list things for which to thank HIM. As the hymn writer says, "Count your many blessings see what God has done!"

4. **PETITION.** This is asking GOD for your needs. The following is a partial list of things for which GOD instructs us to ask:
    a. To know HIS will for your life. Colossians 1:9
    b. For your daily physical needs, (Not necessarily our wants. We need to eat, but our wants might be steak instead of hamburgers.) Matthew 6:11
    c. For the problems you have, be it on the job, in the home, or at church. Hebrews 4:15-16
    d. For our leaders and for our land. I Timothy 2:1, 2
    e. For the souls of men. I Timothy 2:3, 4. (Pray for unsaved by name).
    f. For and with fellow believers. Matthew 18:19, 20; I Thessalonians 5:25
    g. For the sick. James 5:14-16

The following is a list of things that will hinder your prayers:

1. An unharmonious relationship with your spouse. You must do your part even if they don't. I Peter 3:1-7
2. Selfishness will hinder prayer. James 4:3
3. An unforgiving spirit will hinder prayer [note: forgiveness should be in our heart, but is not restorative to the offender until they repent and ask forgiveness.] This also includes having wronged someone without making or seeking to make things right. Matthew 6:12, 14, 15, 22, 24.

4. Unbelief will also hinder prayer. James 1:6, 7.

We must also realize that prayer may be answered by **"no"** as well as by the **"yes"** we seek at times. II Corinthians 12:7-10 is an example of the Apostle Paul who prayed earnestly to GOD, but GOD'S answer was **"no."**

When we begin with prayer, we address the HEAVENLY FATHER. Usually when a Christian finishes a prayer you will hear him say, "In JESUS' name, amen." That does not mean, "Goodbye" or "so long." It means we have prayed this prayer and asked these petitions for CHRIST'S sake. We believe that it is in line with HIS will and HIS WORD. Note John 16:23, 24:

> ***"And in that day ye shall ask ME nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsovever ye shall ask the FATHER in MY name, HE will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in MY name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full."***

The bottom line is, praying is talking to GOD, and we should talk to GOD daily.

QUESTIONS

1. Prayer is _ _ _ _ _ _ _ to GOD.

2. Name the four elements of prayer:
   a.
   b.
   c.
   d.

3. List four things that will hinder prayer from being answered.
   a.
   b.
   c.
   d.

4. True or false? Sometimes the answer to prayer is **"No."**

5. Prayer should be addressed to a. Our Heavenly FATHER b. Hey GOD.

6. When asking the prayer in Jesus' name we are asking according to HIS _ _ _ _ and HIS _ _ _ _.

7. The bottom line is, prayer is talking to GOD, and we should talk to HIM daily, Right or wrong?

X. JOINING IN THE WORK

Imagine walking down the road and seeing a neighbor's house on fire. They are asleep inside. Would you say you will not wake them up because you do not want to offend them, sound like a fanatic, or ruin your relationship with them? Of course, the answer is **no**. That thought does not enter your mind; yet souls are dying daily and going to hell, a place of flames and eternal torment, and people are not warning them or trying to lead them to CHRIST. You are saved because someone cared enough to share the gospel with you. Should you not express the same care for others?

JESUS could have taken you to heaven when you got saved, but HE didn't. Why not? Because HE left you here as a light in the world. We have a threefold responsibility as Christians:

1. To grow in the ***grace*** and ***knowledge*** of the LORD JESUS CHRIST. II Peter 3:18
2. To win the lost to CHRIST. I Thessalonians 2:19, 20
3. To ***encourage*** or ***edify*** the saints. I Peter 5:2-4; Hebrews 3:13

There are rewards promised for these things. Rewards will last throughout all eternity. Unlike earthly things, *they will never dim nor lose their splendor.* The LORD has already laid up rewards for the service HE wants you to do. There are those who won't work for the LORD. They will lose their reward.

> **I Corinthians 3:13-15** *"Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he* ***shall suffer loss:*** *but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire."*

Your work for CHRIST will be brought into account, and also the work you should have done. GOD has a specific will for your life. You are **so** special to HIM!

> **Ephesians 2:10** *"For we are HIS workmanship, created in CHRIST JESUS unto good works, which GOD hath before ordained that we should walk in them."*

In living the Christian life, you will find that pastors, evangelists, teachers, deacons, and other Christians will fall into dreadful and vile sins. This can discourage you if you are not careful. We are to follow a pastor's leadership for the office he holds remembering he is a man. For example, a man and his wife may go out for an evening and leave the oldest in charge. The younger ones must obey the older child, not because he is better or older, rather because the parents' authority gave the older authority. They obey the older child in honor of the parents. In like manner, submit yourselves to the leadership of the pastor as unto CHRIST. Pray for him daily. GOD has given him the same authority in the local church as HE gives the husband in the home. (Hebrews 13:7, 17)

The best place to start in helping other Christians and winning the lost is in your own house. It would be good each night before bedtime or each morning before leaving the house (whichever suits your situation best) to have a family altar time. A family altar consists of ten to fifteen minutes of **BIBLE** and **prayer.** You may read a short portion of SCRIPTURE and then talk about it. If you have your own personal devotions first, you can be thinking on them as you go throughout the day. Then you will have something to share with your family. The doctrinal sections of this booklet are good to review such that all your children understand bible doctrine before they ***leave the nest***.

A devotional booklet may be used. I highly recommend a booklet called ***FEATURE*** which is a daily devotional guide that uses the King James Version exclusively. One may order it from:

FUNDAMENTAL EVANGELSTIC ASSOCIATION
2251 EAST BEECHWOOD AVE.
FRESNO, CALIFORNIA 93720

Usually, the cost of this booklet for a year is ten dollars. I have used it for many years. Be sure that you read the SCRIPTURES for each day's reading. In addition to the devotional booklet for family altar, take requests for prayer. To avoid our prayers from becoming mechanical, have the family pray for different things. You may ask one child to pray for missionaries while another is asked to pray something ***specifically*** for the church. Have people, situations, and other requests for which you pray. Do not forget the LORD'S admonition in Luke 18:1: *"...that men ought to always pray, and not to faint*." Be sure to **thank** the LORD for answers to prayer. Be sure to **praise** HIM in prayer.

Many people have made it a practice to pray with their company before they leave to go to their homes in the evenings. Some have taken new Christians into their homes and have used a booklet such as this in order to ground them in the faith. You will be surprised at how much joy and blessing you receive from doing this.

You should also share the plan of salvation with others. It is good if your church has a visitation program. If so, go with an experienced witness and listen to them present the gospel. You may be alone one day and have the opportunity to witness to a lost person about his soul. Right now you think, *"I wouldn't know what to say."* There are two suggestions to consider in this regard: first, have a tract with you at all times that explains the way of salvation. If nothing else, read the tract to them and explain it as you go along. Second, since you have received CHRIST, you have a testimony. Tell them how you received CHRIST as SAVIOR. You should memorize a basic outline and some BIBLE verses on GOD'S **plan of salvation,** and then go out and share it. Never forget, multitudes in our own community are going to hell. They need to have someone who cares enough to share the gospel with them. (II Corinthians 5:18-20).

In presenting the plan of salvation, one should share the following things:

1. GOD loves man. John 3:16; Romans 5:8
2. All have sinned and come short of the glory of GOD. Romans 3:10, 23
3. The wages of sin is death, that is, you go to hell. Romans 6:23; Revelation 20:14, 15

4. GOD'S gift is eternal life. Hell, *wages*, has been earned. It is our just reward. On the other hand, salvation is a *gift of GOD*. Again Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:8, 9.
5. They must believe that JESUS CHRIST shed **HIS PRECIOUS BLOOD** on the cross for their sins and that three days later HE rose up from the dead having conquered death and hell. Romans 10:9, 10; I Corinthians 15:1-4.
6. They must believe with the heart. This is, they must turn from their sin and their self, trusting CHRIST and not their works, or way, to save them. This is humbling one's self, to say, *"I am a sinner who deserves to go to hell. I don't deserve it, but I take CHRIST at HIS WORD concerning salvation and therefore call upon HIM."* Acts 3:19 and 17:30, 31 use the world *repent*. That means to turn from. One is turning from himself and turning to CHRIST in dependence for salvation. This is trusting your eternity with CHRIST. The word of GOD does not lie. Therefore, if they follow GOD'S way to be saved, then they are saved. Romans 10:10, 13; Hebrews 6:18.
7. Then offer to lead a person through a prayer for salvation. Remind them the prayer will only be words if they do not mean it from their heart. The prayer could be as follows:

   Dear GOD. I know that I am a sinner. Please forgive me of my sins. I believe that JESUS CHRIST shed HIS blood on the cross and died for my sin. I believe that three days later HE rose up from the dead. I give you my life right now. Come into my heart and life and save me. Thank you for saving me. In JESUS name, AMEN!

After taking one through this prayer, show them Romans 10:13 and Ephesians 2:8, 9. You may also show them I John 5:11-13. Show them that this is GOD'S WORD and not yours. Based on HIS WORD, if they meant this, then their eternal destiny is heaven. The next thing to do is to invite them to church. Tell them they need to make this decision public. (Romans 10:11) Offer to walk forward with them. Have them start reading the BIBLE, and you may even use this booklet to get them grounded in the LORD. By the way, it is possible to use only the book of Romans in presenting the plan of salvation. Check the above verses as they were given.

May the LORD JESUS CHRIST through HIS HOLY SPIRIT use this booklet in your life to make you fruitful for CHRIST.

QUESTIONS

1. What is the threefold responsibility of a Christian?
   a.
   b.
   c.

2. Every family should have a family _ _ _ _ _.

3. In a family altar, it is **good** to have your children pray: a. specifically b. mechanically

4. One can read a tract or use his own personal testimony in witnessing to the lost. True/false?

5. Give the seven points that were presented in giving the plan of salvation.

6. Is it possible to give the plan of salvation using only the book of Romans? Yes or no?

7. **We should lead the one to whom we witness in prayer to receive CHRIST. Yes or no?**

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Pastor Andy Bloom