

Foundations of Faith

Book 1

From Wrath to Grace

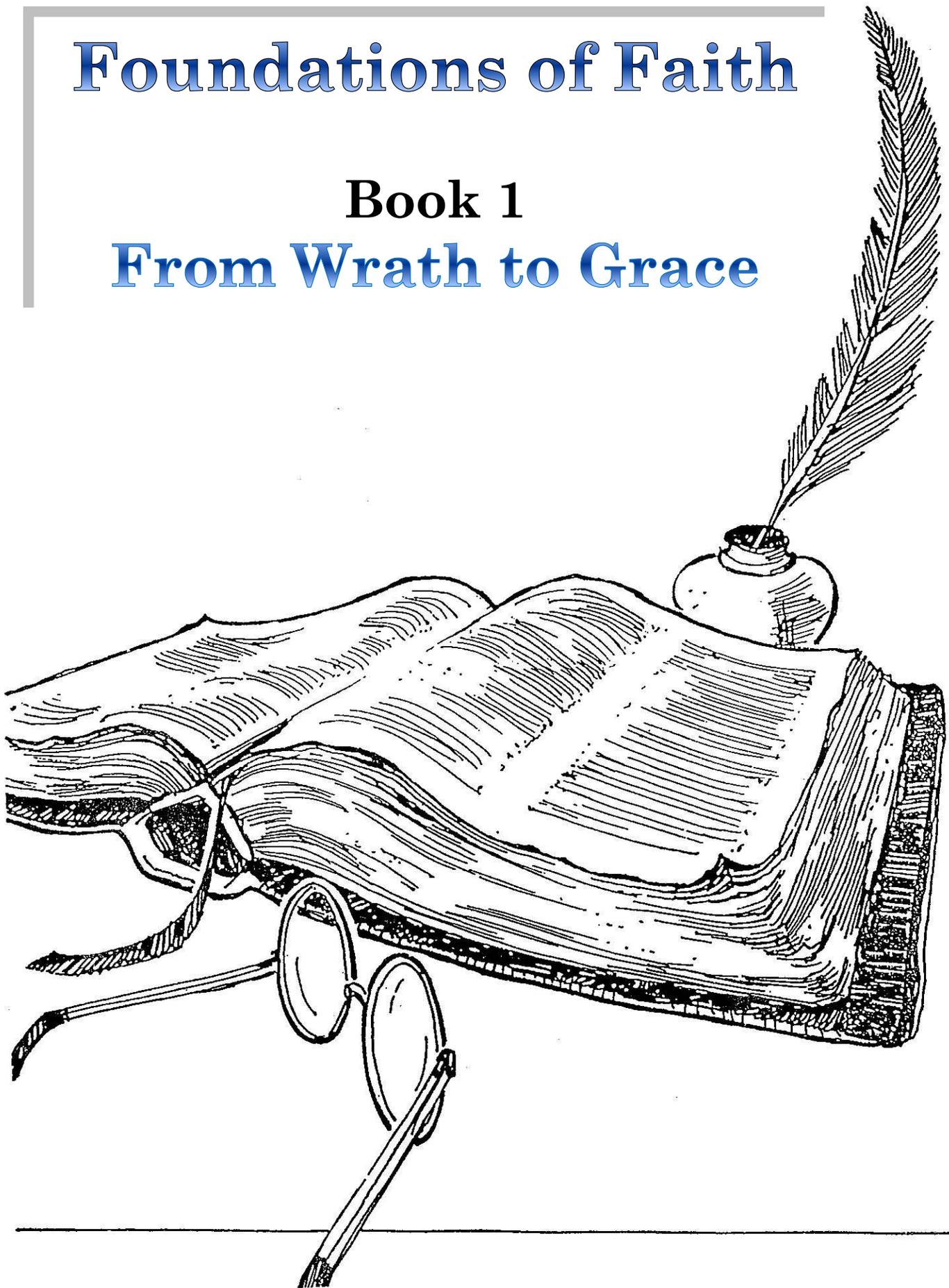


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INTRODUCTION

This booklet was begun in 1992 specifically as a help in the ministry of the Foundation Baptist Church of Calgary. The constitution of the church states: *“Our goal as a church is two-fold. First, we desire to fulfil Christ’s command to ‘go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.’ Second, we desire to see believers instructed in the knowledge of Christ through our regular services and Bible Studies.”* This publication was designed specifically to help achieve both of these goals. As it has always been in a state of revision and expansion, so it was revised again in 2010 for use in the Foundation Church Institute (FCI) at Meadowlands Baptist Church of Edmonton.

The Bible that is used in most of the lessons is the 1769 edition of the King James Version (also called the *Authorized Version*). As you follow the lessons bear in mind that the questions are designed to be used with this version. The New King James Version or Scofield Study Bible (New or Old) would be very close to the AV wording used in these lessons, but you might find a significant difference in the wording of the New International Version, English Standard Version, or the New American Standard Version, though the basic meaning would be the same.

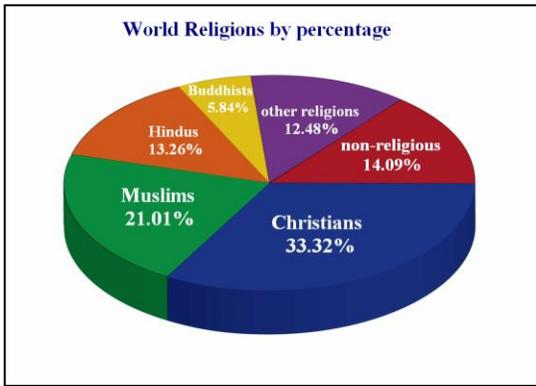
Typically, these lessons are used in conjunction with a weekly Bible study. Therefore, I recommend that you work your way through one lesson per week. This need only take a few minutes each day, although you could take more time to pray over what you are reading and studying. Look up all of the verses, even if you have to use the Table of Contents in the front of your Bible to find the references. A Bible reference (like Genesis 12:3) lists the book (Genesis), chapter (12) and verse (3). The answer to most of the questions can be found right in the wording of the verses that you look up. Fill in all of the blanks to the best of your ability. Use a pencil if you think you might change your answers later. We can discuss anything you don’t understand when we meet. Feel free to make notes and comments in the margins, because they may help you to remember the things you learn in each lesson. The more work you put into these lessons, the more you will profit and grow in your spiritual life.

Each lesson contains a highlighted box which briefly explains various points of doctrine. You do not need to memorize them, but read them over several times to make sure you understand what they are saying. They are there to familiarize you with basic Bible teaching about key subjects. Look up the verses and make sure you understand how they support the point being made. Healthy doctrine leads to a healthy daily walk with Jesus Christ. Each lesson also concludes with a small list of things to do. These are designed first of all to help you become familiar enough with the Bible so that you can begin to find your way around both the Old and New Testaments without too much trouble. Then there is a key verse or passage which you should memorize. Do this by (1) reading through each verse out loud twenty times, being careful to actually look at all the words each time you read it. This will help fix it in your mind. Then (2) it should be relatively easy to recite it from memory. If not, read the verse over (or write it out by hand) as many times as it takes to say it without looking at the Bible. Then (3) recite it from memory twenty-five times. The next day (4) say it twenty times from memory, and (5) each following day decrease the recitation by five times, until you say it just five times. Then (6) review it just once a week after that. God’s Spirit will use it to teach you and strengthen you greatly. Next, the reader is encouraged at the end of each lesson to make simple decisions of dedication to the Lord. These are critical to spiritual growth and should be made with all solemnity and determination. Do not trifle with God by making these decisions lightly. It would be better not to make them at all. I would recommend that you conclude your daily study times by doing each of the things listed at the end of that lesson.

It is my prayer that the Lord would do for you what He did for His disciples in Luke 24:45: *“And He opened their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures.”*

Pastor Bud Talbert
September 2013

Lesson 1: What Is God Like?



An author has said that Eastern people (eg. Chinese, Indians, etc.) conceive of religion as a *way*, a process by which they achieve peace, prosperity, or whatever makes them happy. The term *religion*, he says, has little significance to non-Western people. The national Japanese religion is Shinto, meaning ‘the way of the gods’; Buddhism is described as the ‘Noble Eightfold Path’; Confucius called his teaching ‘the Way’; ‘Taoism’ derives from ‘Tao’, meaning *the way*. Interestingly enough, Christianity is also called *The Way* (see Acts 9:2).

Western people, under the influence of Christianity, tend to think of religion more as a *relationship* with God. To us God is a Father. But to Muslims, for instance, Allah is unknowable – a person

cannot have a relationship with him. The daily life of the Hindu is imbued with constant acts of worship, for their six million plus gods are irritable, capricious and vengeful. Confucianism says that the *gods* should be avoided at all cost because they are fundamentally undependable. Taoism, like Animism, is a *hodgepodge of superstitions* in which the worshipper *thinks of the unseen world as being full of spirits, both good and evil. Trees and stones, mountains and rivers, are inhabited by these spirits.* Great and constant efforts are made to placate them. Buddhism originated in India in the 6th century B.C. but came to China in the mid second century A.D. and has been the primary religion in China ever since. The earnest Buddhist hopes, through the accumulation of merit and faith in the name of Buddha, to reach the ‘Pure land.’ Once again, the gods of Buddhism are many and fickle, hopefully appeased with offerings.



Postmodern Pluralism

So what should a person do? Is there an objective reality concerning God? Is there one, true God, and the rest just figments of man’s imagination? Postmodernity, the contemporary worldview defined by relativism and a sceptical assessment of tradition, claims there is no absolute truth, and so no objective reality concerning God. Buddhism may be the best religion for some, but not for all, they say. So may Islam, Taoism, or Hinduism, or Christianity. In this sense, we refer to the religion of our postmodern world as _____.

That is, there is no single correct religion, but many different religions which are all, in their sphere of influence, legitimate. There are many paths to heaven, they say. But this raises several questions.

a. Jesus stated (John 14:6), “*I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me.*” Is Jesus’ assertion absolute? ____ Is He stating that access to God can only come through Him? ____ Was He lying? ____ Is that only true for some people, and not all? Did Jesus limit this to only certain people? ____ Don Carson (*The Gagging of God*, 141) states that “*philosophical pluralism unblushingly insists that all assertions of worldview and outlook that make exclusive truth claims (i.e. like Jesus made in the verse quoted above) are necessarily wrong.*” So believers in postmodernity think Jesus is wrong for making such a claim.

b. Also, Colossians 1:16 states “*For by Him (i.e. Jesus Christ) all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth ...*” How much did Jesus create? ____ But Islam says that _____ created all things. Buddhism teaches that the universe _____ through aeons of time. The ancient Norse religion believed that in the beginning there was an _____ out of which came a land of mist called Niflheim. Hinduism teaches that the earth never had a beginning. Can all of these creation stories be true? ____ Why not?

c. A third question has to do with authority. Jesus told His disciples before His ascension (Matthew 28:18-19), “*All authority is given to me in heaven and earth. Go therefore and make disciples of every nation.*” If Jesus has all authority, then how much authority do the representatives and writings of other religions have? ____ What did Jesus command His disciples to do? To make _____. Of whom? The people of _____ nation. So does Jesus present Christianity as a universal religion? ____ If my job is to make disciples of atheists, agnostics, Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists, etc. then does my God want me to recognize those religions as legitimate. ____ In fact, the reason I am making them disciples of Jesus is because their religions aren’t legitimate.

Christianity



Charles Spurgeon, a Baptist preacher in 19th century London (we will meet again in this series of lessons) believed that there was just one God. In fact, he stood in the pulpit of the New Park Street Chapel in London on January 7, 1855 and opened his morning sermon with these words: *“The proper study of a Christian is the Godhead. The highest science, the loftiest speculation, the mightiest philosophy, which can ever engage the attention of the child of God, is the name, the nature, the person, the work, the doings, and the existence of the great God whom he calls his Father. ... I know nothing which can so comfort the soul; so calm the swelling billows of grief and sorrow; so speak peace to the winds of trial, as a devout musing upon the subject of the Godhead.”*

Who is God according to the Bible? What is He like? What does He do? What has He done in the past? Is He some wizened old father-figure wringing his hands over the terrible state of the world, anxious that everything turn out alright? Or is He the Creator and Sovereign Lord of the entire universe? Let’s look at what the Bible says about Him.

Genesis 1:1

The very first verse in the Bible implies a great deal about God: *“In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth.”* The first verse of the Bible is the foundational verse of the Bible. Consider ...

1. It teaches the eternality, or at least the existence of God before creation _____ ... because if God created it, He would automatically be over it.
2. It teaches the supremacy of God over the entire creation _____ ... because creating requires extraordinary ability.
3. It teaches the power of God _____ ... because He is the only deity in this universe.
4. It teaches the exclusiveness of God _____ ... because when the beginning came, God was already there.

Henry Morris (*The Genesis Record*, 38) says that this simple, yet profound verse ...

- ... refutes atheism, because the universe was created by _____.
- ... refutes pantheism, because God is _____ to that which He created.
- ... refutes polytheism, because _____ God created all things.
- ... refutes materialism, because matter had a _____.
- ... refutes dualism, because God was _____ when He created (i.e. no “Dark Side” yet).
- ... refutes humanism, because God, not man, is the _____.
- ... refutes evolutionism, because God _____ all things.

The Tri-Unity of God

Two Bible facts make the doctrine of the trinity a necessity ...

1. Look up Deuteronomy 6:4 in your Old Testament. According to that verse, how many gods are there? _____. What is our obligation to Him? We are to _____ Him. How much? With all of our _____ and _____ and might, or strength.

2. But there are three distinct persons in Scripture who are called God.

a. For instance, over 250 times Jesus referred to God as His _____ (see, for instance, John 2:16, 3:35, 5:17, 20, 6:32, 8:16, etc.) In most of the references to God in the Old Testament, the person being referenced is God the Father.

b. Then, the Lord Jesus Christ is referred to as deity also.

(1) He pre-existed His arrival in Bethlehem. John 1:1 states *“In the beginning was the Word.”* John is saying, *“At the beginning of time, the Word _____ was.”*

(2) In John 5:17-18 we read, *“Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.”* Equal with God means that Jesus was claiming to be _____.

(3) In John 10:33 the Jews were once again seeking to stone Jesus. Why? *“For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; because thou, being a man, makest thyself God.”* Even Jesus’

enemies confessed that He claimed to be _____.

c. In Acts 5:1ff we read the story of a couple (Ananias & Sapphira) who sold a piece of land and kept some of the money from the sale for themselves while giving the rest of it to the church. This would have been fine, except they lied about how much they gave to the church, saying that they gave ALL the money.

(1) Look at verse 3. Who did Peter say they lied to? To the _____ (Spirit).

(2) Now look at the end of verse 4. Who does Peter say they lied to here? To _____.

(3) So who does Peter think the Holy Spirit is? He is _____.

3. How can the Father be God, the Son (Jesus) be God, and the Holy Spirit be God too? Some have complained, "But the word 'trinity' never appears in the Bible." And they assume that the doctrine could not be true if the word does not occur in the Scripture. But this doctrine explains the two facts that the Scriptures plainly teach. We know there is only one God, and we also know that the Father is God, Jesus is God and the Holy Spirit is God.

4. Why is this doctrine important? _____ Aside from its importance simply because it is the truth, it is important because Christians have an intimate relationship with each of the three divine Persons. Each Person has a special part in our salvation. The Father is the Author of our salvation, and we owe Him our eternal worship in return. The Son, Jesus, is the Accomplisher of our salvation, and we owe Him our eternal gratitude in return. The Spirit is the Applier of our salvation to us individually, and we owe Him our eternal submission in return.

The Attributes of God

What is this triune God like? In answering this question we are speaking of the *attributes* of God, the various aspects of His character and being. Look up the verses on the left, and then draw a line to the attribute that is presented there.

- | | | |
|--------------------|-------|---|
| 1. John 4:24 | _____ | God is faithful, always doing what He promises |
| 2. 1 Timothy 1:17 | _____ | God is spirit, without a body |
| 3. Malachi 3:6 | _____ | God knows everything; "omniscient" (pronounced <i>om + nish + ent</i>) |
| 4. Psalm 90:2 | _____ | God is Almighty, all powerful, "omnipotent" |
| 5. Revelation 19:6 | _____ | God is invisible |
| 6. Romans 16:27 | _____ | God is gracious, merciful, long-suffering, abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity ... |
| 7. Isaiah 6:3 | _____ | God is everywhere at the same time; "omnipresent" |
| 8. John 3:16 | _____ | God is eternal, without beginning or end |
| 9. Exodus 34:6-7 | _____ | God is wise |
| 10. Psalm 139:7-10 | _____ | God is immutable; He never changes |
| 11. Psalm 139:4 | _____ | God is Holy; separated from sin |
| 12. Numbers 23:19 | _____ | God is loving |

Conclusion: Spend some time thinking about each one of these characteristics of God. What kind of a Being is He? How is this portrayal of Him from the Bible different from the one you had/have? What does each of these attributes mean for you? Since God is like this, how should you respond to Him?

What Should I Do This Week?

1. If you have not yet done so, get your own copy of the Bible. Put your name in it, the day you obtained it, and who from (if not you).
2. Pray that God would allow you to know Him better.

Your Own Notes: _____

Lesson 2: Who Am I?



What is a human being? Some adventurous person (who has too much time on his hands!) has calculated that a 150 pound person is made up of 92.4 lbs. oxygen, 31.5 lbs. carbon, 14.6 lbs. hydrogen, 4.6 lbs. nitrogen, 2.8 lbs. phosphorous, 1.12 lbs. chlorine, 1.02 lbs. iron, 0.34 lbs. potassium, 0.24 lbs. sulfur, 0.12 lbs. sodium, 0.04 lbs magnesium and 0.02 lbs. fluorine. However, scientists can add all of those elements together in those exact measures, and they won't get a human being! A human being is more than the sum total of its material parts.

What is man? It is a question that the Bible asks five times (see Job 7:17, 15:14, Psalm 8:4, 144:3 and Hebrews 2:6). Where have I come from? What am I doing here on their earth? What is the purpose of my life? These are common questions for a person to ask at some point in his/her life. They are the very beginning of God's work in a person's life, and so they are very important to answer truthfully. Neither human philosophy nor science can provide the truth, but the Bible can and does.

A Human Being Is Created

For most of human history man has believed that he was created by God. But Charles Robert Darwin proposed that man evolved from lower orders of life. He first published his findings in 1859 in his book *The Origin of the Species*. This proposal is accepted as factual by most people today. Those committed to the evolution of man propose that our presence on earth at this time and in this place is completely an accident of impersonal science. Is that true? Or are we the descendant of a first human being who was created by God thousands of years ago?

A. God Created Man: The Bible is certainly clear that God created the first man.

1. What are the first four words of Genesis 1:27? _____
2. How many times does Genesis 5:1-2 say that God created mankind? _____
3. Deuteronomy 4:32 talks about "*the day that _____ man upon the earth.*"
4. Isaiah 45:12 says: "*I have made the earth, and _____ upon it.*"
5. Revelation 4:11 says that God is worthy because He "*created _____.*"

Does the Bible teach that God created man? _____. Are these statements true, or are they false? They are _____. Then what must be true? It must be true that God _____.

B. God Preserves Man: Because God created man we do not live autonomously or independently. We are completely dependent on God from birth to death. Do we control our own birth? Do we control whether or not we are born healthy or sickly? Can we by our own willpower keep our hearts beating, or our eyes seeing, or our ears hearing? Can we keep ourselves alive in spite of terminal illness? The answer to all of these questions is *NO!*

1. In the prayer of Nehemiah 9:6 the Levites say, "*... thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all things that are therein, the seas, and all that is therein, and thou _____ them all*" This verse tells us that God preserves everything, even us.

2. Acts 17:25 says that God gives "*to all _____, and _____, and all things.*"

These verses teach us that every human being is dependent on God. I am not the result of mere chance. I was given life by a powerful Creator. Neither am I kept alive from day to day by chance, or by my determined effort. God is keeping me alive, and He can take that life away whenever He chooses.

All of this tells us that God _____ man.

C. Man is Accountable to God: Because God created man, and because He preserves us in life, every human being is accountable to God. This is true whether a person believes it or not.

1. Romans 14:12 says that "*every one of us shall give _____ of himself to God.*"

2. In Matthew 12:36 Jesus says that "*every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give _____ in the day of judgment.*"

These passages from Scripture, and others like them, teach us that man is _____ to God.

Transition: So, where did I come from? I am a descendant of Adam and Eve whom God created. This same God is preserving me in life moment by moment. Finally, I am accountable to God, and one day I will stand before God who is my judge. How should this truth affect a person?

A Human Being Is Fallen

It was October 7, 1969 in Montreal. The local police force went on strike. For twelve hours that city was plunged into a nightmare of crime. A burglar and a policeman were slain. Forty-nine persons were wounded or injured in rioting. Nine bank holdups were committed, along with 17 other robberies at gunpoint. Usually disciplined, peaceful citizens joined the ruffraff and went wild, smashing plate glass windows in the heart of the city, carrying away stereos, radios, TVs and apparel. While looters stripped window displays of valuable merchandise, professional burglars entered big box stores and made off with truckloads of goods. With no police around, anarchy ruled. This leaves us asking, *Why do people behave this way?*



A. God Created Man in His Image: Genesis 1:26 tells us: “*And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.*” How does this verse tell us that God created man? In His _____ and after (i.e. in accordance with) His _____. What do these expressions mean? They mean that God made mankind to correspond to Himself. He was the original pattern, and we are the copies made to be like Him.

1. Name some of the ways that we are NOT like God. _____

2. Name some of the way that we ARE like God. _____

Humanity is unique in all of God’s creation because we alone are created in God’s _____.

B. Adam Sinned and Died: God told Adam not to take the fruit of a tree in the Garden of Eden.

1. In Genesis 2:17 what did God say would happen to him if he did take the fruit of that tree? “*For in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt _____.*”
2. According to Genesis 3:6, did Adam take the fruit of that tree? _____
3. Therefore, what happened to him? He _____. But Adam was still alive after he had eaten (see Genesis 3:7ff). How could he be dead but still alive? _____

4. So Ephesians 2:1 says that before we are saved we’re _____ in trespasses and sins.

Transition: Have you ever wondered why trees aren’t ruling the world? Or whales? Or, as Gary Larson’s *Far Side* would have it, why cows don’t rule over human beings? It is because God made us in his image. He did not make cows in His image. But our likeness to God was damaged by Adam’s sin.

A Human Being Is Sinful

C. All Mankind – that means us – Inherited the Sin of Adam: Romans 5:12 tells us that just “*as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.*”

1. What “one man” is this verse talking about? It is referring to _____.
2. What entered into the world by him? _____ entered into the world because of him.
3. And because sin entered into the world, what came with it? _____
4. So what was transferred to (“passed upon”) all of Adam’s descendants? _____

5. In order for death to *pass upon* all men, what else had to be given us from Adam? _____
Therefore, every human being inherits from Adam the _____ he committed, the guilt of that sin, and the death it brings.

D. Man's Present Condition is One of Depravity: This means that every human being is born with the stain of sin on his/her soul. It also means we are sinners by nature. But as soon as we are able to start making our own choices, we show that we are also sinners by our own personal choice. Depravity does **not** mean that we are as bad as we can possibly be, but it means that we cannot do anything – anything **at all** – to earn God's forgiveness.

1. Jeremiah 17:9 tells us that "*The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?*" Does this include your own heart? _____

2. In Genesis 6:5 God looked at mankind and saw that "*every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only _____ continually.*"

3. Romans 3:23 says that "*all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.*" Does this include you? _____

4. In Isaiah 64 the prophet contrasts God's greatness (verses 1-5) with man's wickedness (verses 6-7). Isaiah says "*all our righteousnesses are like _____.*" The very best things we do (*our righteousnesses*) are utterly disgusting to God.

This leads us to the inevitable conclusion that man's present condition is one of _____.

Conclusion: Someone has calculated how a typical lifespan of 70 years is spent. The average Canadian spends 23 of his years sleeping, 16 working, 8 watching television, 6 eating and another 6 traveling. We are ill for about 4 years, and we spend 2 years dressing ourselves. That only leaves us 5 years or about 7% of our lives for everything else. Do you have any time for your Creator?

What Should I Do This Week?

1. Spend at least 5-10 minutes each day this week reading your Bible. Begin in Matthew (the beginning of the New Testament). Try to think about what you read as you go through the day.

2. Think about the main points you learned from this lesson:

First, God made me.

Second, God preserves me.

Third, we are sinners against this God.

Your Own Notes: _____

Lesson 3: Where Will I Go When I Die?



There is first a notable lack of pain, sometimes a temporary buzzing sound. At this time the individual appears to be hovering above his or her physical body. Both hearing and vision are more acute than normal. A brilliant white light is seen, perhaps a tunnel into which a person is ushered. There is an over-whelming sense of love, as though emanating from some great Being. Sometimes there is a terrifying sense of fear, as though the person is descending into a fiery pit.

These are some of the “core” experiences shared by those who have felt that they came close to dying. Dr. Raymond Moody focussed attention on the afterlife in 1975 with his best-selling book *Life After Life*. Typical of the testimonies recorded in the book was this one from one of his patients: “Off in the distance ... I could see a city. There were buildings – separate buildings. They were gleaming, bright. People were happy in there. There was sparkling water, fountains . . . a city of light I guess would be the way to say it ... it was wonderful. There was beautiful music. Everything was just glowing, wonderful.”

Such experiences ought to be regarded with caution, however, since we have no way to verify what the person claims. But they do raise several questions. Is there life after death? What will happen to me when I die? Where will I go?

There are certain indications in the history and nature of man which argue that there is life after death.

1. Belief in the afterlife is universal and detailed among the peoples of the world. Whether it is heaven (Judaism, Christianity), or a paradise (Islam), or reincarnation (Hinduism), or nirvana (Buddhism), God has put a sense of eternity into the very fibre of humanity, as Eccl 3:11 says.
2. Also, mankind everywhere has some sense of justice innate in his constitution which pleads for a “day of judgment” when every person shall receive what they are due (Rom 14:12).
3. Again, human beings have a natural, in-born sense of God. Everywhere you go, people are religious. They may not practice the true religion, but they all have a sense that there is some kind of supreme being (Rom 1:19-21).

While these arguments may sound reasonable, and the experiences mentioned above may seem compelling, we have yet to speak with final authority on the afterlife. For that we must turn to the Bible.

The Bible Teaches That The Soul Survives Death

1. Read Luke 16:19-31.
 - a. What happened to both men? They both _____.
 - b. What happened to the poor man after he died? He was carried by _____ to _____.
 - c. What happened to the rich man when he died? He was in _____.
 - d. Who did he recognize when he was in hell? _____ and _____.
 - e. Who did the rich man speak to when he was in hell? He spoke to _____.
 - f. If the rich man could speak and recognize people, then did he continue to exist? _____
2. It would have surprised the Jews who were listening to learn that a rich man went to hell. They assumed that all Jewish rich people got their riches from God because He liked them, and that poor Jewish people were poor because God did not like them. But they were wrong. Both men continued to exist after death, after they had *passed away* from this earth. One went to heaven, and the other went to hell.

Transition: Every single person who has ever lived still exists today somewhere. No one has ever simply ceased to exist. The question is this: Where are they? Even more to the point, if you were to die today, where would you spend eternity?

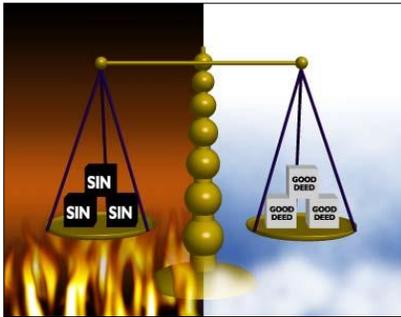
Doctrines Box: The Bible

1. God reveals Himself to mankind in two different ways. He gives to all men the *general* revelation of Himself in their conscience, in nature around them, and in His providential intervention in their lives. All men understand these witnesses, and God holds all men accountable and responsible if they do not respond to them (Romans 1:19-21). But God has also given *special* revelation both in the Bible (John 5:39) and in the person of Jesus Christ (Hebrews 1:1-3).
2. The Bible is unlike any other book because (1) God is its Author and (2) God preserves it. The Old Testament was written in Hebrew (also some Aramaic), and the New Testament in Greek, because those were the languages that His people spoke at the times these books were written. Any faithful translation of these original, inspired books can therefore be said to be the very Word of God.
3. Second Timothy 3:16 tells us that “*all Scripture (the Bible) is given by inspiration of God.*” This means that it is breathed out by God through holy men so that the finished product is His. Therefore, the Bible has no mistakes because God cannot make any. Second Peter 1:21 tells us that the Bible was produced when “*holy men of God spake as they were moved (carried along) by the Holy Ghost.*”
4. Sixty-six books, about forty writers, fifteen hundred years, and yet the Bible presents a unified message, because it was all the product of God’s inspiration. God not only wanted it for those ancient generations, He wants it for us today. Therefore, He has preserved it for us.

The Bible Teaches That People Who Do Not Get Saved Spend Eternity In Hell

1. Read Revelation 20:11-15.

- a. Why would creation flee from the person on the throne? Because He is so _____.
- b. Who stands before the throne of God? Those who are already _____.
- c. How many of the dead are there? All of them from the _____ and all from _____ and _____.
- d. What does God judge them for? Their _____.
- e. Where do their names have to be written before they can escape hell? In the _____ book of _____ (verse 15).
- e. What happens to every one of them after they are judged? They are _____ into the _____ of _____. What does the Bible call this lake? _____.
- f. How long will they be there? _____.



2. Many people have a very different concept of judgment than the one described here. They think that after they die they will be called to stand before God. Then all their sins will be placed on one side of a great scale, and all of their good deeds will be placed on the other side of the scale. As long as the good deeds outweigh the sins, then they think God will allow them into heaven. But there is no such teaching in the Bible. In fact, the Bible teaches that even our best deeds are filthy rags before God (remember Isaiah 64:6?). It is not on the basis of our “works of righteousness” that God saves us, but only by His mercy through Christ (see Titus 3:5).

3. Romans 6:23 puts it very clearly: “*The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*”

- a. What does God pay us for our sin at the end of this life? _____
- b. What does this *death* refer to? It refers to spending _____ apart from God in _____.
- c. But what does God give us that saves us from eternal death? _____.
- d. And how does this eternal life come to us? Through _____ our Lord.

Conclusion: What will happen to me when I die? Well, I will continue to exist somewhere. But where is that? If I remain in my lost state, I will spend eternity in hell.

What about you? Are you going there? Have you repented of your sins and trusted Jesus to save you from your sins?

What Should I Do This Week?

1. Continue to spend at least 5-10 minutes each day this week reading your Bible. Try to think about what you read as you go through the day.
2. Begin to pray each day, even if only for a few minutes each day. Ask God to help you understand what He wants you to do, and then ask Him to help you do it. You will learn that you cannot obey God simply by wanting to do it. You need His strength to obey.

Your Own Notes: _____

Lesson 4: How Can I Be Saved?



Suppose you went to the doctor because you were having pain in your lower back. After some tests, the doctor informed you that you had renal cancer (i.e. cancer of the kidney), and that you would die within two years if it were not treated. Suppose that he then offered you two options. One, you could endure surgery and chemotherapy. There would be a 95% chance you would be healed, but the process would be very painful. Or, two, he could make sure you never felt very much pain from the cancer. You would certainly die, but it would not be very painful for you. Which one would you choose to do?

Wanting to be saved from pain while my body is ravaged to death by cancer is a little bit like wanting to be saved from hell, but not from sin. Hell *IS* painful. It is a place of continual suffering. There is nothing like it in the experience of man. Jesus said that hell is a place where lost people experience constant torment – remember Luke 16:23? He said that there would be weeping and gnashing of teeth (Matthew 24:51). He said that hell was a place of darkness (Matthew 8:12, 22:13), a place of unspeakable filth and fire (Mark 9:45-46). And worst of all, Jesus said that it will never end (Matthew 18:8, 25:41, 46). It is awful, and it will be awful forever.

Our sins in this life provide us with a very little taste of what hell is like. It separates us from God, leads to troubled circumstances, makes me do things I regret, and fills my heart and mind with gloom and foreboding. In Matthew 1:21 the angel of the Lord told Joseph, “*thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.*” If I get saved from my sin, I *WILL* be saved from hell also, because hell is simply the ultimate penalty of sin. I do not just want the pain taken away. I want the cancer of sin removed so that I can know the God who made me. The question is: How can I know God? How can I have my sins forgiven? How can I be saved?

The answers to these questions is found throughout the New Testament. But we will focus on only one place where the answer is found, the book of Acts. This is a record of how people were saved in the church of the first century. How did they get saved? How did they have their sins forgiven? How did they come to know God? We will find the answer to these questions in the book of Acts.

The Message of the Early Church

1. We will look first at what the apostles in the early church preached that people had to do in order to get saved. Peter is preaching to a crowd of people at the Temple in chapter 3 (on the day of Pentecost). The crowd asks Peter what they should do, and in verse 19 he says: “*Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out.*”

a. What two things did they have to do? They had to _____ and be _____.

b. What would happen to them if they did that? Their _____ would be _____.

2. In the very next chapter Peter is explaining to the Jewish leaders how a man was healed. In 4:10 he says, “*By the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole ... 12 Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.*”

a. There is no salvation in any other what? _____

b. This tells us that Jesus Christ of Nazareth is the only one who can _____ us.

3. In Acts 8:29-40 we read the story of Philip preaching to an Ethiopian man.

a. According to verses 32-33 what Old Testament portion was the man reading? He was reading _____.

b. So Philip started at Isaiah 53 and preached unto him _____ (verse 35). In other words, Isaiah 53 is a prophecy (prediction) about Jesus.

c. In verse 36, what did the man want to do? _____

d. In verse 37, what did Philip say the man had to do before he could get baptized? He had to _____ with all his heart. Did he believe? _____

Transition: So a person has to believe in Jesus alone for salvation. He can't believe in Jesus and a church, or another person, or another religion. He has to repent of his sins and be converted for his/her sins to be blotted out, or forgiven. This is the message of the early church.

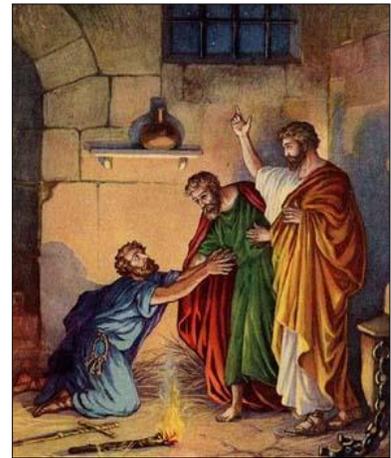
Salvation in the Early Church

1. There are many examples of people getting saved in the book of Acts. We will only look at three of them. In Acts 10 we have the story of Peter preaching to the household of Cornelius, who was a Roman officer. Peter tells the group (verse 38) that God anointed Jesus with the Holy Spirit, and that Jesus did good and healed people by His divine power. He says (verse 39) that the Jews killed Jesus and hanged Him on a tree (i.e. they crucified Him), but that God raised Him from the dead, and revealed Him to believers (verses 40-41). Then Peter said this: “*And he (i.e. God) commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he (i.e. Jesus) who was ordained of God to be the Judge of the living and the dead. To him (i.e. Jesus) give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believes in him shall receive remission of sins.*”

a. What did these people have to DO to be saved? They had to _____. In whom? In _____.

b. And if they did, what would they receive? _____ of sins. Notice that in all the Acts, there is no mention of being saved from hell, but there is repeated mention of people being saved from their sins. They **were** saved from hell, but that is only the consequence of sin. The real problem that we must be saved from is sin.

2. In Acts 16 Paul and Silas are on the second missionary journey. They have been arrested for preaching the gospel and jailed in Philippi. As they sang and praised God during the night, God sent an earthquake which opened all the doors to the prison cells. This meant all of the prisoners had the chance to escape. If they did, the jailer would have lost his life for losing his prisoners. Verse 27 says: “*And keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had fled. 28 But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do yourself no harm: for we are all here! 29 Then he (the jailer) called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and down before Paul and Silas, 30 and brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?*” Paul and Silas answered him in verse 31: “*And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.*”



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a. What did the jailer have to do? He had to _____. On whom? On the _____
_____. He had to believe in Jesus, and he had to believe two things about Jesus: (1) that he was Christ (a Greek word meaning *Messiah*), and (2) that he was THE Lord from heaven.

b. If the jailer did that, what would happen to him? He would be _____.

c. If the other members of his household did that, they would be _____ also.

3. From Philippi Paul and Silas went to Thessalonica (Acts 17). Verses 2-4 tell us: “*And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them (i.e. into their synagogue), and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures, 3 Opening and alleging, that it was necessary for Christ to suffer, and to rise again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ. 4 And some of them believed, and consorted with Paul and Silas.*”

a. Paul’s message to them was that it was necessary for _____ to _____.

This, of course, refers to His suffering on the cross when He was crucified.

b. What else was it necessary for Christ to have done? To _____ from the dead.

c. He also preached to them that this Jesus is _____.

The Messiah was the special prophet, priest and king who would rule Israel, and intercede for them, and preach God’s Word to them. Jesus is Israel’s Messiah.

d. What did some of the Thessalonian people do in response to Paul’s message? They _____ it, and then *consorted with* (i.e. joined in fellowship) Paul and Silas.

Conclusion: When I was a teenager I learned how to rock climb at a survival camp. Before our first climb, everyone at the camp spent a couple days in training – balance exercises, boulder climbing, zip-lining over gorges to get us

used to heights, and lectures of explanation. Then came the day of the climb. Before 9:00 AM we were all staring up a 200+ meter cliff. “**We’re** going to climb **that**?” we thought. Our instructor reminded us, with a twinkle in his eye, “It’s not the fall that hurts. It’s when you hit the ground. Now **THAT** hurts.” Salvation is somewhat similar. God saves us from the pain of hell (i.e. hitting the ground), by saving us from the sin that takes us there (i.e. falling). He saves us from falling in the first place, and keeps us safe in Jesus.

How can I be saved? Well, how have others been saved? In the Bible, what did others do to be saved from their sins? They repented of their sins, believed in Jesus Christ, got converted, and showed their faith by being baptized. Have you done these things? The following lessons explore the ideas of repentance and faith even further.

What Should I Do This Week?

1. Continue to spend at least 5-10 minutes each day this week reading your Bible.
2. Ask God especially to save you, just as He saved Cornelius, and the Philippian jailer, and just as He saved the Ethiopian man. Ask Him to help you be sure of your salvation.

Your Own Notes: _____

Lesson 5: Am I Sorry for My Sin?



The mother came into the boys' room in something of a hurry. They had strewn wooden building blocks across the floor as they fought about who had built the best "fort." She asked the boys to stop fighting and put the blocks away. Immediately both boys launched a verbal attack on mother. "Aw, Mom! Why do we have to put them away? Can't we play? It's not fair! It's his fault!" She cut them both a rebuking motherly glare and left the room. In a few moments both boys were standing – humble, Bambi-eyed looks on their faces – side by side next to their mother at the dining room table. "I am sorry," they said in their best forlorn unison. One boy, Fenton, turned and ran back to the room where he began picking up the blocks. The other, Bobby, asked his mother if he could keep playing. When she said *No*, the forlorn Bambi-eyed expression clouded over. He then turned in a huff and stomped out of the room, and could be heard muttering angrily under his breath.

Which boy was genuinely sorry? _____ How do you know? _____ Second Corinthians 7:10 distinguishes between two kinds of sorrow: "*For godly sorrow works repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world works death.*" Godly sorrow is sadness over the sin itself, whereas worldly sorrow is sadness over having been caught, or sorrow over the punishment that must be suffered. Worldly sorrow is sorrow for one's self. Godly sorrow is sorrow for having displeased God.

Our relationship with God cannot even begin until we are genuinely sorry for having sinned against Him, until we have *repented* of our sins. Jesus Himself said: "*Except ye repent, ye shall likewise perish.*" This word *repentance* comes from a root which means a *change of thinking*. We repent when we change our thinking about ourselves, about our sins, and about God, and as a result of this change in thinking, we change our behavior. We no longer approve of ourselves, but we rightly sense our guilt before God. We no longer want our sins, but we hate them and want to be rid of them. We no longer are repulsed by God, but we love Him and want to know Him better. This is real repentance. Genuine repentance has three qualities. These qualities may be evident in varying degrees, but the key quality – they very heart of genuine repentance – is an act of submission to God which leads to a change in behavior.

The Emotion of Real Repentance

We can measure the genuineness of our repentance by the evidence of its three essential ingredients: emotion, confession, and submission. What do you think is the emotion of the truly penitent person? _____ Second Corinthians 7:10 states it very plainly: *sorrow*. King David expressed this kind of godly sorrow on numerous occasions, and even memorialized it in Psalm 38. The psalm describes how David's sins made him feel.

1. In verse 1 David begs God not to do two things. What are they?
 - a. Do not _____ me in Your _____.
 - b. Do not _____ me in Your hot _____. In other words, he is begging God to deal gently with him even though he has sinned.
2. According to verse 3 what is happening to David:
 - a. There is no _____ in his flesh. What does that mean? It means that David is losing his _____. And why is there no soundness in his flesh? Because of God's _____. Why is God angry at David? Because David has _____.
 - b. There is no _____ in David's bones because of his _____. In other words, David's sin is making him lose his health.
3. In verse 4 what are David's sins like? They are like a heavy _____.
4. In verse 6 David says that he goes _____ all day long because of his sins.
5. What does David say he will do in verse 18?
 - a. He will _____ his iniquity. This is what we mean by _____.
 - b. He will be _____ for his sin. Here is real repentance. There is genuine sorrow for the sin.

Read the prayers of repentance offered in Daniel 9:4-19 and Ezra 9:5-10:1. It is very easy to see that the emotion which runs through these prayers is one of sorrow. Search your own heart now. Do you sense a genuine sorrow in your heart for your sin? This is not only a sorrow that you are wrong, or a sorrow that God will hold you accountable (though we may well feel those also), but a sorrow that you have offended God, a sorrow that makes you wish you

would never sin again. Genuine repentance includes genuine sorrow, the emotion of repentance.

Doctrines Box: Who Is God?

1. We cannot fully *understand* God but we can *know* Him through Jesus Christ. The Bible presents God as a *trinity*, or a *tri-unity*. Though the Bible never actually uses this term *trinity*, it does clearly teach two facts which, taken together, indicate that God exists in this relationship. The first fact is that there is only one God (Deuteronomy 6:4, Isaiah 44:6). Shiva is not God, Allah is not God. Only Jehovah is God. There are not many deities, but only one, and He is the God of the Bible. The second fact is that three distinct personalities are all called God in the Bible: the Father (John 5:18), the Son (Romans 9:5) and the Spirit (Acts 5:3-4). These are not simply three different manifestations of God, but three separate persons who are one in their essential being. It is a mystery beyond our comprehension, but an essential Biblical doctrine.

2. What is God like? He is a Spirit (John 4:24) who is eternal (Psalm 90:2), all-powerful (Daniel 4:35), all-knowing (1 Kings 8:39), and everywhere present in all His fullness at the same time (Psalm 139:7-10). He is infinitely perfect (Psalm 6:4-6), unchangeable (Malachi 3:6) and absolutely holy (Habakkuk 1:13), and yet we find Him loving us in His grace (Ephesians 1:6-7), His mercy (Ephesians 2:4) and His longsuffering (Romans 2:4). God is completely good (Acts 14:17) and wise (Romans 11:33). He will only always do what is good for us because He loves us and wants to save us from our sins.

The Confession of Real Repentance

When we *confess* something, we are essentially agreeing with God about that thing, that it was wrong just like He said it was, and that we were wrong to do it. Confessing something means to honestly admit that we are wrong, that we have sinned. In 2 Samuel 24 David made just such an admission.

1. What does David confess in verse 10? *I have _____ greatly in all that I have done: and now, I beseech thee, O LORD, take away the iniquity of thy servant; for I have done very _____.*”

Notice that David does not try to excuse himself, or blame others, or rationalize his actions, or in any way minimize the wrongness of what he had done. That is real confession.

2. However, not everyone who says those words really means it. Pharaoh said this very thing twice (Exodus 9:27, 10:16), and both times, we are told, he *hardened his heart*. This means that he *changed his mind* about having *changed his mind*! Saul said *I have sinned* three different times (1 Samuel 15:24, 30, 26:21) but never meant it, as his subsequent behavior demonstrates.

3. So we can see that confession is far more than just saying the words. It means that we take God’s side in condemning ourselves for having sinned against Him. It means admitting that we deserve His punishment for our sins.



In many of the states to the south of us, when a defendant enters into a plea bargain with the prosecution (in order to avoid a trial), one of the conditions of the plea bargain is that the defendant *allocute* to his crime. This means that he admits to having committed a crime, and relates the details of that crime (usually to provide closure for the victim’s family). In such cases, the defendant is not allowed to excuse his crime in any way, but must completely and frankly admit that he was in the wrong. If mankind requires this of its own, then would God require less?

The Submission of Real Repentance

The third and crucial element of real repentance is a willingness to accept the consequences for sins. If I agree with God about my sin (i.e. confession), then I will also agree with Him about the punishment I deserve. This is very important because repentance can stop short of this, and it is not genuine if it does.

1. Read Luke 15:18-19. What is the prodigal son ready to accept in consequence of his sin? He is willing to become his father’s _____ instead of continuing as his son.

2. David, once again, is a dramatic example of this. He had put his confidence in the size of his great army

rather than in the Lord. And for this God kills some 70,000 Israelites (read 2 Samuel 24). In the midst of this punishment David cries out (verse 17): “*Lo, I have sinned, and I have done wickedly: but these sheep* (i.e. the 70,000 who were slain), *what have they done?*” What does David ask in the very next phrase? “*Let thine hand, I pray thee, _____, and against my father's house.*” David was asking God to punish **him** for his sin, rather than allowing **Israel** to suffer for his sin.

3. Do we not *deserve* to suffer the just punishment of our sins? Remember Bobby from our opening story? He **said** that he was sorry, but he really didn't really mean it, did he?

Conclusion: Repentance of sin is more than just saying some words. When I was growing up in the Catholic Church I used to go to “confession.” In the church there were some small booths in the back, one for the priest, and one for me, separated from the priests by only a cloth screen. I would kneel in front of the screen, and ask if I could begin. The priest would give his permission, and I would recite this formula: *Bless me father* (I was addressing him, not God) *for I have sinned. It has been _____* (how long?) *since my last confession. These are my sins ...*” Then I would name the things I thought I had done wrong. I was “going to confession” but I was not really confessing. Why not? There was no emotion of repentance (real sorrow). Neither was there any real confession. I was just “*going through the motions*” as they say. And there certainly wasn't any submission.

Real repentance is an attitude of the heart, a change in one's thinking that leads to a change in behavior. Have you truly repented of your sins?

What Should I Do his Week?

1. Begin to familiarize yourself with the table of contents in your Bible (see Appendix 1 & 2). See which books are in the Old Testament and which are in the New Testament.
2. Continue your reading as you have been doing. It has been 3-4 weeks since you started reading. You ought to have finished reading Matthew by now. If not, finish Matthew this week, so that you can begin reading the Gospel of John next week.
3. Begin to pray that God would be pleased to give to you a proper repentance from sin. It is not something that you can work up yourself. Notice in 2 Timothy 2:25 that God is the one who “grants” repentance. Pray that He would grant it to you.

Your Own Notes: _____

Lesson 6: What Does It Mean To Believe?



The little girl was awakened by all the noise. She grabbed her stuffed bear and went to the window where she saw lights flashing. She noticed smoke in her third storey room, and looking out saw her frightened family pointing up at her in the window. A big, burly fireman stepped into the front yard below the window and shouted the little girl's name, asking her to open her window. What the girl did not know was that the fire had almost completely consumed the back of the house, and her life was in grave danger. She opened her window and looked down at him some fifteen feet below. He asked her to jump and promised to catch her. She looked at him intently. She believed that his voice was kind, and he certainly looked strong enough to catch her. He stepped slightly forward and encouraged her again, seeing the flames behind her in the room. All at once she stepped out on the window sill and dropped confidently, and safely, into his arms. A moment later her entire room and the rest of the house burst into flames. But the little girl was happily reunited with her family.

Think about this story for a moment. At what point would you say that the little girl really *believed* the fireman? Did she believe him when she saw him in the yard, or was it when she heard his voice? Did she believe him when he asked her to jump, or when she saw his outstretched arms? Actually, she did not *really* believe the fireman until she did what? Not until she _____.

What Is faith? What does it mean to truly *believe* something or someone? If we were to look up in a dictionary what faith is, we might come up with a definition something like this: “*a confident belief in the truth, value, or trustworthiness of a person, idea, or thing.*” The key word in this definition is “*confident.*” Faith in the New Testament means *to give credence to, to be convinced of* something. It is more than just *knowing* a thing. It is even more than just thinking that a thing is *true*. Real faith, saving faith, involves a commitment. Let's look at these three ingredients.

The Knowledge of Real Faith

The first element in saving faith is *knowledge*. It is impossible to believe something of which we have no knowledge.



1. In John 9 Jesus healed a man who had been born blind (verses 1-7). Jesus made clay from His own saliva and dirt, rubbed it on the man's eyelids, and told him to go wash it off in a nearby pool. When he returned (verses 8-12) with sight he explained to some neighbors what had happened to him. Then (verses 13-34) he explained the same thing to the Pharisees, but they completely rejected his story. Verse 35 tells us: “*Jesus heard that they had cast him out* (i.e. the Pharisees threw him out of their conference); *and when He had found him, He said to him, 'Do you believe in the Son of God?'*” How did the man answer the question (verse 36)? “*Who is He, Lord, that I may _____ in Him?*” In other words, he had to know who the Son of God was before he could believe in Him. Notice what Jesus said in the next verse: “*37 And Jesus said to him, 'You have both seen Him and it is He who is talking with you.'*” *38 Then he said, 'Lord, I believe!' And he worshiped Him.*” The first part of faith is knowledge. You cannot believe what, or in this case *who*, you do not know.

2. In Romans 10:13 Paul tells us that “*whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.*” To *call upon* God means to reach out to Him in faith. But where do people hear about the Lord on whom they must believe in order to be saved? Verse 17 answers that question when it says, “*So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*” According to this verse, how does a person get the knowledge of Jesus Christ he needs to believe in Him? He gets it from _____ the Word of God. Because copies of the scrolls of the Bible were relatively rare, people could not read the Bible for themselves in the first century. But they could hear it when they went to the synagogue.

So the Bible tells me that Jesus is God come in the flesh, and that He worked miracles to demonstrate His deity and

to verify the message which He preached. When a person calls on Him in faith, then, he must know about the One he is calling on. But simply *knowing* about something does not mean that I believe it.

The Assent of Real Faith

The second element in real faith is *assent*. This means that I not only know *about* Jesus Christ, but I also give my *assent* to His truthfulness. In other words, a person has to believe that what he is hearing from the Bible is true. He has to believe that Jesus Himself told the truth when He spoke.

1. Look at John 3:31-36.

a. In verse 33 Jesus talks about the person who “*has received His testimony.*” Whose testimony is He talking about? This is _____ testimony.

b. What does it mean that a person “*has set to his seal*” that God is true? It means that the person has affixed his _____ to it. A seal in ancient times was used much like a signature today. It was the formal certification of a contract. When a person fixed his seal to a document, he was saying that he was in full agreement with it. Therefore, this is saying that I agree with what Jesus was saying about Himself, that he was God, and that He is the only Savior of mankind (see John 14:6).

2. The mistake that many people make today is in assuming that mere mental assent is the same thing as faith. Look at James 2:14 and read it.

a. What is the answer to the question James asks in that verse? _____ Some translate the last phrase: “*Can **that kind of** faith save him?*” The kind of faith that is only mental assent is useless because it does not save the soul.

b. What does James call that kind of faith in verse 17? He says that it is _____.

c. According to 2:19 who has that kind of faith? _____. Are they saved? _____

3. There was once a young man who was raised in a very religious home. He had attended Sunday School and catechism classes, and so he knew many of the facts of the Bible. One day as he was hitch-hiking, a man picked him up who handed the young man a gospel tract. He asked him if the young man had ever heard about Jesus Christ. When the young man answered affirmatively, he asked, “*If you were to die tonight, do you have any doubt where you would spend eternity?*” “*I don't know what would happen to me if I died right now,*” the young man confessed. Why not? Although he knew many facts *about* Jesus Christ, he did not **know** Christ personally. Although he had exercised mental assent, he had never exercised *saving faith*.

The Commitment of Real Faith

The third and crucial element in real, saving faith is *commitment*. The little girl in the burning house did not really *believe* the fireman until she *committed* her safety to him alone, and jumped. Likewise, no one really believes in Christ who does not *commit* the eternal safety of his soul to Him alone – apart from trusting good works, or a church, or sacraments, or anything else. It means abandoning my soul to Christ alone, casting myself on His mercy to save me from my sins.

1. We have an example of this in John 6:66-69. Jesus had preached a very difficult sermon, and (verse 66) many of His so-called followers stopped following Him.

a. What did Jesus ask His remaining disciples in verse 67? “*Will ye also _____?*”

b. Peter answers for all the disciples (vs. 68-69) when he said, “*We _____ and are _____ that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.*” He was saying, “*We are completely committed to You, and **we know** that You are Who you claim to be.*” That's real faith.

2. Read more about this kind of faith in Hebrews 11:3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 17, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 27, 28, 29, 30, and 31. What is similar about all of these verses? In all of them faith _____ to prove its genuineness. Real faith is repentant, obedient, submissive, and results in works.

Conclusion: Let me tell you the story of Bob and Mary. They met at a church function and liked each other's company very much. Bob asked Mary to join him for a meal or just coffee several times. As they talked together and

Bob told her all about himself, Mary *believed* him.

Bob and Mary dated steadily for about three years. During this time, Mary learned that Bob was a godly man. She noticed that he was especially careful about paying his bills in full and on time. Once a man in the church sold Bob an old car. The man didn't really know Bob very well, and he was a little concerned whether he would get his payment for it. Bob told Mary, "*I'll pay him on Sunday.*" And she *believed* him.



Then the fateful day came, and Bob asked Mary to marry him. The wedding day came, and she came down the aisle and joined Bob in front of the pastor. Bob said, "*I, Bob, take thee, Mary, as my lawful wedded wife; to have and to hold from this day forward, for better or for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish until death do us part.*" And she *believed* him, and married him.

This third time that Mary believed Bob is an illustration of saving faith. She believed him enough to commit her whole life to him, and that is exactly what we do when we get saved. Christ claimed to be God and we believe Him. He claimed to be our only savior and we believe Him. But then He says, "*If you trust me completely, I will save you.*" Now we believe Him, and we get saved. It is not until we commit the well-being of our eternal soul to Him that we are saved.

Have you done this? Are you saved? What have you done to prove that your faith is genuine? Has your behavior changed? Do you have a real desire to read the Bible now? Do you pray? Have you told others about being saved?

What Should I Do This Week?

1. Continue to familiarize yourself with the arrangement of the Biblical books from Appendix 1 & 2.
2. Take the space below and write down some of the changes that have occurred in your life since you believed (if you have).

Your Own Notes: _____

Lesson 7: What Is Salvation?



When you received Jesus Christ as your personal Savior many things about your life changed. Famous Christians from the past have described that change in different terms. For instance, John Wesley (1703-1791), founder of Methodism, prepared for the Anglican ministry and tried for years to "earn" salvation by being good. In fact, he even served as a missionary to the natives and colonists in South Carolina and Georgia for some years. He was very familiar with the various facts of the gospel. He knew who Jesus was, and what He had done. After all, Wesley was an Oxford seminary graduate! But he was still unsaved. On May 24, 1738 Wesley stood in Aldersgate Street, London, and listened to a Moravian man preach the gospel. That night he truly **believed** it. This is how he described the change that took place on that evening: "*I felt I did trust in Christ. My heart seemed strangely warmed!*"

Another well-known preacher was Charles H. Spurgeon (1834-1892). It was a snowy Sunday morning when he, only a teenager at the time, wandered into a Primitive Methodist Chapel in Colchester and sat down about halfway back on the left-hand side of the small auditorium. The weather was so bad that the pastor of the church could not get there, and an old steward decided to preach to the 15-20 people who were present. His text was Isaiah 45:22. God says: "*Look unto me, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth.*" This is how Spurgeon described the change that came over him during that service: "*I saw at once the way of salvation ... My spirit saw its chains broken to pieces, I felt that I was an emancipated soul, an heir of heaven, a forgiven one, accepted in Christ Jesus. Simply by looking to Jesus, I had been delivered from despair, and I was brought into such a joyous state of mind that, when they saw me at home, they said to me, 'Something wonderful has happened to you;' and I was eager to tell them all about it.*"

Change! That is what occurs when a soul comes to Christ. In 2 Corinthians 5:17 Paul the Apostle says: "*Therefore, if any man be in Christ (in other words, if anyone gets saved), he is a new creature (a brand new creation): old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*" According to that verse, how much of my life becomes new? _____ becomes new. This means that my life takes on a whole new quality that I never have experienced before. For the first time, I have a "divine viewpoint" on life. That is a big change!

Paul talks about this change again in the Book of Acts. He tells King Agrippa in Acts 26:18 that the reason he traveled around preaching the gospel was "*To open their eyes (i.e. the eyes of the Gentiles), and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me (i.e. Jesus).*" In the first part of this verse, Paul mentions three things that change when a person gets saved. What are they? (1) Their _____ are _____; (2) they are _____ from _____ to _____; and (3) they _____ from the power of _____ unto _____. These three changes describe what the Bible calls **conversion**. What we have described above is the *conversion* of John Wesley and Charles Spurgeon. Conversion is _____ from your sin, and _____ to God for pardon. And Jesus said in Matthew 18:3 "*Except ye be _____, and become as little children (i.e. humble), ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.*" Let's look more closely at Paul's statement in Acts 26:18.

The First Change

The first change that Paul mentions in that verse is a change from spiritual _____ to spiritual _____. Before people get saved they are spiritually blind. Second Corinthians 4:4 says that *the god of this world (i.e. Satan) has **blinded** the minds of them that believe not*. They may THINK they are safe in their religion. Paul the Apostle thought that too, but he was wrong. Turn to Matthew 7 and read verses 21-23. According to verse 22, how many people **think** they are going to heaven who do not make it in? _____ That means that Satan is very effective at fooling people about their eternal destiny. John Newton, in his song *Amazing Grace*, talks about this first change:

*I once was lost but now am found;
Was blind but now I see.*

The Second Change

The second change is a turning “*from _____ to _____.*” The New Testament describes evil as *darkness*. Those who are still unsaved and under the dominion of evil are said to be “*in*” darkness (see 1 John 2:9-11).

1. Jesus said in John 12:46 “*I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide (i.e. remain, continue) in darkness.*” So when a person gets saved, they do not “continue” in darkness, but they “turn” from that darkness to the light of the truth. This turning from sin is called _____.

2. How do lost people regard the darkness of sin, according to John 3:19? They _____ it. In John 3:19 Jesus says, “*And this is the condemnation, that light (i.e. Jesus) is come into the world, and (yet) men loved darkness rather than light.*” Why do they love darkness rather than loving light? “... *because their own deeds were evil.*” In other words, they hated the truth that exposed their own lives as evil. If they love darkness, then they won’t love light, will they? Verse 20 explains further: “*For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.*”

3. But people who are saved have turned from _____ to _____. Now they love the _____, because they have been *converted*.

Doctrines Box: The Works of God

1. The universe and all it contains was created out of nothing as a free act of God in six twenty-four-hour days (Genesis 1-2). It was created *with* time rather than *in* time. All three persons of the Godhead were active in the creation (Isaiah 40:12, John 1:3, Genesis 1:2). As an expression of His love, God created the universe for the ultimate happiness of man in fellowship with God, and for His own glory (Isaiah 43:7).

2. God created an innumerable company of angelic spirits before He created the rest of the universe (Job 38:4-7). They are intelligent spirit personalities (2 Samuel 14:20) who love and rejoice (Luke 15:10), desire (1 Peter 1:12), contend (Jude 9), worship (Hebrews 1:6), speak (Zechariah 1:9), travel (Genesis 19:1), and so on. Some time before the creation of the world a large company of angels followed Lucifer in rebelling against their Creator (Isaiah 14:12-15). Lucifer is also called Satan, the devil, the Dragon, and Apollyon. His followers are called demons or unclean spirits. God created them good, but they did not retain their original position (2 Peter 2:4). The good (elect) angels are servants of the Christian (Hebrews 1:14), and the demons oppose the Christian.

The Third Change

Paul describes a third change in this verse as a turning “*from the power of _____ unto _____.*” This means that before I became a Christian, I was under the dominion and power of Satan. You might say, “*But I didn't FEEL like I was under Satan's power.*”

1. Turn to John 8:44 and read it. Who is Jesus talking to in this verse? (see verse 33) _____ He is not just talking to Jews, but specifically to Pharisees. You can find this in verse 3, 12-13. These were the religious leaders of Judaism.

2. In verse 44 who does Jesus say that their father is? _____ And these men were very religious! Now turn back to John 1:12 and read it. What happens to a person who “*receives*” Jesus Christ? He has the _____ (i.e. the *right, authority*) to become a _____ of _____. Satan is no longer his father, but now God is his Father, and all other genuine believers become his brothers

and sisters in Christ.

Evidences of Conversion

“*There are so many stony ground hearers who receive the Word with joy that I have determined to suspend my*

judgment till I know the tree by its fruits ... You may as well expect a crop of corn on unplowed ground as a crop of grace until the soul is convinced of its being undone without a Savior. That is the reason we have so many mushroom converts, so many persons that are always happy! happy! happy! and never were miserable. Why? Because their stony ground is not plowed up; they have not got a conviction of the law . . . they fall away . . . That makes me so cautious now, which I was not thirty years ago, of dubbing converts too soon. Now I wait a little, and see if people bring forth fruit."



So said George Whitefield, a preacher of the first Great Awakening in the British colonies from 1740-1770. Our age is little different from his. George Barna tells us that 38% of adults and 33% of teens in the U.S. say they are born-again, and yet Josh McDowell claims that of the people who "accept Christ" **only about 4% experience a significant change in their lives!** Approximately 70% of Canadians (some 23 million people) claim to be Christian (about 40% of them Catholic). Have they been truly converted? The little epistle of 1 John sets forth seven evidences that a person has been truly converted. These evidences do not always appear at the same time and to the same degree in all Christians. However, they must all be true if a person is truly converted.

1st The evidence of righteous _____. 1 John 1:6-7 together present two things: a *claim* ("if we say") and then a *walk* (i.e. a regular, daily behavior). If that walk is "*in darkness*" (i.e. known, unconfessed sin), then a person's claim to Christianity is false. If that walk is "*in the light*" (i.e. seeking to please God by one's behavior), that person's claim to Christianity is genuine.

2nd The evidence of confessing _____. 1 John 1:8-10 contrasts those who _____ their sin (i.e. their sinfulness, verse 8; their specific acts of sin, verse 10), and those who *confess* it, admit it, and repent of it. Their claim to salvation is false if they deny their sin.

3rd The evidence of _____ other Christians. 1 John 2:9-11 once again presents someone who makes a claim ("*He that saith he is in the light ...*", i.e. he claims to be saved) which is shown to be false by his behavior ("*and hateth his brother*", i.e. other Christians). This person, John says, "*is in darkness even until now.*" That is, he is really lost. His claim is false. A real Christian is someone who has an innate, God-taught love for other Christians.

4th The evidence of _____ from the world. 1 John 2:15-17 contains John's command for converts to "*stop loving the world and the world's things.*" This is the world of unsaved people united in their opposition to God, His Word, His will, and His people. John goes on to say that those who persist in "*loving*" the world **do not** have the Father's love in them (i.e. they aren't saved).

5th The evidence of _____ the truth about Jesus Christ. 1 John 2:23 says "*Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: (but) he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also.*" What activities are contrasted here? Denying Jesus and acknowledging Him. Here is how I can tell a genuine Christian – he/she confesses the truth about Jesus Christ.

6th The evidence of _____ to Scripture. 1 John 4:6 "*We* (i.e. John and the other apostles) *are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.*" The apostles were spokesmen for God and proclaimed God's Word. Genuine Christians will listen to Scripture (i.e. submit to it, seek to obey it), but "false professors" will not.

7th The evidence of the _____ Holy Spirit. 1 John 4:13 says "*Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.*" Do you possess the Holy Spirit? Is He indwelling you? Is His fruit evident in your life?

Looking at these evidences ought to affect each one of us in one of two ways. (1) On the one hand, it may be deeply disturbing. The Spirit of God is telling you that there really is no evidence that you have been converted. You know that conversion is essential, but as you review these evidences, you see little of them in your life. (2) On the other hand, a message like this may be affirming. You know that you are not what you should be, but every time you review another evidence of conversion, the Holy Spirit says to you: "*That IS true of your life.*" Which is it with you? Have YOU been converted?

Conclusion: When a person is converted his/her whole viewpoint on life changes: from blindness to sight, from loving sin to loving righteousness, from being Satan's child to being God's child. The Christian ceases to think of things with respect to time. The moment he is saved, he begins to enjoy *eternal* life. Now his life can count for eternity and not just for time. In John 10:10 Jesus said, "*I am come that they might have life, and that they might*

have it ***more abundantly***.” These are wonderful changes. You now have a new power, God's power, at work in your life.

What Should I Do This Week?

1. Learn the books of the New Testament in order (Appendix 1).
2. Read two chapters of the Gospel of John each day this week.
3. Ask God to help you experience conversion so that you can devote yourself entirely to Him.

Your Own Notes: _____

Lesson 8: What Did Christ Do On The Cross?



The five words “*Christ died for our sins*” (1 Corinthians 15:3) constitute the gospel message by which we are saved. Thomas Watson, a graduate of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, during the “Golden Age of Evangelicalism” in seventeenth-century England (i.e. the Puritan Age), said in his *Body of Divinity*: “*The doctrine of redemption by Jesus Christ is the marrow and quintessence of the gospel, in which all a Christian’s comfort lies. Great was the work of creation, but greater the work of redemption; it cost more to redeem us than to make us; in the one there was but the speaking of a word, in the other the shedding of blood.*” It is imperative, then, that we appreciate

what the Bible tells us Christ did when He died in our place at Calvary. And this brings us to what is called the doctrine of the **atonement**.

Our English word *atone* comes from an ancient Anglo term meaning *to reconcile*. Maybe you have heard it explained as *at + one + ment*. There is etymological truth in that explanation, because that is the root of our English word. But the Biblical word *atonement* refers to *a covering* for sin. It has to do with how our sins are atoned for, or covered over, so that God no longer holds them against us.

Some people think that their sins are atoned for by the good deeds they do in life. But the Bible is categorically against such a notion. If we are to have our sins forgiven, if we are to go to heaven, God is going to have to do it for us. We cannot do it ourselves.

The Explanation of the Atonement

Leviticus 16 describes the Hebrews’ annual *Day of Atonement*, which Jews today call *Yom Kippur*. Two animals were offered (verses 7-10), each illustrating a different aspect of the *atonement*. The high priest would take the first sacrificial animal, the *scapegoat*, and lay his hands on its head while confessing the sins of the nation. This represented the transferring of their sins to the animal. Then the scapegoat would be released into the wilderness, representing the *bearing away* of their sins (read verses 20-22). The second animal was then slain. Its blood was sprinkled on the altar, and its body burned in the fire. This represented the sacrificial suffering necessary to pay the price for sin (read verses 15-16). These animals *took the place* of the Jews in suffering for sin.

But this annual ritual was just a picture of what Jesus Christ would do when He came to earth. John the Baptist said (John 1:29) that Christ was the “_____ of _____ who takes away the _____ of the _____.” That is, what the *Day of Atonement* in Old Testament times **prefigured**, Christ **fulfilled**. He came to earth as the perfect sacrifice so that He could ‘bear away’ our sins. By faith we “lay our hands,” as it were, on the head of the Lord Jesus, transferring all of our guilt to Him, and He bears our sins away so that they are never again considered by God. So Jesus *took our place* when He suffered for sin instead of us suffering for our own sins. This *taking someone else’s place* makes Christ’s atonement **substitutionary**, or we could use the word *vicarious*. Read the description of Christ’s *vicarious atonement* in Isaiah 53:4-6.

According to Romans 6:23 what does sin cost? _____ What kind of death is this referring to? _____ . *Death* is separation. When our body dies, our soul is separated from it. If a person is lost, his soul is then eternally separated from God, a punishment God calls the “*second death*” (Revelation 20:14). For **us** to pay for our sins, then, we must suffer eternally in hell separated from the presence of our Creator. This is sin’s just payment. Therefore, when Jesus hung on the cross, He suffered just as much as we would have if we had spent eternity in hell. His suffering was not just physical, although that was certainly included. He was enduring the equivalent of our eternity in hell as the Father poured out on Christ His righteous wrath against our sins. When Jesus cried “*It is finished*” He had paid the full price for our sins. What does 1 Peter 1:18-19 say that price was? *The _____ blood of _____ as of a _____ without blemish and without spot.*

Now God invites us to believe in Jesus Christ as our Savior from sin. The moment we truly receive Christ (John 1:12), a great exchange is made in heaven. All of our sin is taken from us and laid upon Jesus. And all of His perfect obedience (His righteousness) is given to us. This act of *laying on* (i.e. our sins being laid on Him, and His righteousness laid on us) the Bible calls **imputation** (see Romans 4:6, 8, 11, 22-24). Now God sees us not as the sinners we are, but as the *saints* He has made us in Christ! Now He accepts us just as He does His only begotten Son! Blessed, free, complete, permanent forgiveness! What does Romans 8:1 say is true now? *There is therefore*

now no _____ to them which are in Christ Jesus!

Doctrines Box: God's Providence

The Christian's life, just like every other aspect of creation, is completely under the influence of the providing hand of God. He controls every circumstance of our lives with a view to forming in us the very image of His Son, Jesus Christ (Galatians 4:19). Remembering this, the believer needs also to remind himself of three things that are true of God. He is completely sovereign, controlling even the most minute details of human history (Daniel 4:35). He is perfectly wise, always knowing what is best for us and what we need most (Romans 11:33-36). He is completely loving, and only allows those things into our lives which a loving Father has designed for our greatest good and ultimate happiness (Romans 8:28-30). We need to trust in Him, and in His wise providence for our lives.

Pictures of the Atonement

1. There are four pictures of the atonement drawn in the New Testament, pictures which were designed by God to help us understand what the atonement means.

A. The first picture, called by the term **propitiation** (pronounced *pro-pish-ē-ā-shun*), is taken from Temple life. Propitiation takes place when God's anger against our sin is appeased, or satisfied, by Christ's sacrifice (read Romans 3:25 and 1 John 2:2). The anger we deserved was taken by Christ.

B. The second picture comes from the market place, and portrays Christ as our **redeemer**. To redeem something means to *buy it back*. We were enslaved to sin, and Christ's death bought us back out of 'the slave market of sin' (read Galatians 3:10-13).

C. The third picture of the atonement is taken from the law courts, and it presents the sinner as **justified** by Jesus' death. The moment we savingly believe in Jesus Christ, God declares us to be righteous, accepts us as righteous, and treats us as righteous (read Romans 5:1).

D. The fourth and final picture of Christ's atonement is that of **reconciliation**. Taken from life in the home, this presents Jesus as the one who restores our fellowship with the Father, the fellowship which our sin had ruined. (Read 2 Corinthians 5:17-21).

2. What does each picture show us about our sin?

1. Propitiation shows us that our sin made God _____.

2. Redemption shows that our sin _____ us.

3. Justification shows us that our sin _____ us.

4. Reconciliation shows that our sin _____ us from God.

Our sin angers God, it enslaves us, it condemns us, and it makes us strangers to God. But the atonement of Christ changes all of that for the Christian.

3. What does each picture show us about God?

1. Propitiation shows us that although God was angry at us, now His wrath has been _____.

2. Redemption shows us that although we were slaves to sin, God has _____ us _____.

3. Justification shows us that although God did condemn us, He now _____ us.

4. Reconciliation shows us that although God was our enemy, He is now our _____.

Whereas God was angry at us, now He is satisfied with us. Whereas He did not know us, now He owns us. Whereas He was our Judge, now He is our Advocate. Whereas He was our enemy, He is now our Friend, nay, our dearest *Abba* Father. You can turn to Appendix 7 to review the meaning of these terms in the glossary.

In between the sinful soul and the righteous God, with arms outstretched to each, is the Almighty Mediator, dying on the cross to make man and his Maker one again, to bring them together in an eternal fellowship! Hallelujah!

What Should I Do This Week?

1. Review the books of the New Testament in order.
2. Continue reading the Gospel of John.
3. Praise and thank God for each aspect of His work to save you, and give yourself again to Him.

Your Own Notes:

Lesson 9: Can I Lose My Salvation?



The walls of the shell are constructed of granite that is four feet thick, and some say lined with concrete and steel. The building sits on a foundation composed of multiple layers of concrete topped with a granite slab over ten feet thick. The windows are sealed from the inside and out. The glass is fire-proof, bullet-proof and blackened so that you cannot see in. The front door weighs nearly twenty-two tons and is blast-proof. As if that were not enough, inside are vaults with twenty-seven inch thick steel and concrete walls. The world-class surveillance system watches every square inch of the structure 24/7. It is without question the single most secure facility in the entire world. And all of this security, just to protect some quarter of a billion dollars in gold bullion.

When you think of security, it is difficult not to think of Fort Knox as the preeminent example. And yet this is but a shadow in comparison to the security enjoyed by every genuine child of God. God loves His redeemed ones unconditionally and permanently. Here is an important lesson for Christians to learn: **His love for us does not depend on our faithfulness to Him.** God loves me because I am in Christ, because I have trusted Him as my Savior.

Read Romans 8:35-39. According to those verses, does God love us permanently? _____ What would it take to get Him not to love us anymore? _____ And in what is God's love for us grounded? The _____ of _____. Remember, God never loves us more or less than He does the moment we received His Son as our Savior. His love is eternally constant. So God *began* a good work in us when He saved us. What does Philippians 1:6 say God will do with that good work? *He will _____ it until the day Christ comes back.* In other words, there is nothing I can do to 'lose' my salvation. Let's look at four passages which teach us that truth.

John 10

In John 10:22-30 Jesus tells the Jewish religious leaders that they are missing any **assurance** that their sins are forgiven, any **peace** in their hearts that they truly *know* God, any **security** that they have eternal life: *You are not my sheep.*

1. According to verse 28, what is it that Jesus gives to those who follow Him? He gives them _____.
2. When does He give eternal life to them? As soon as they _____ in Jesus.
3. If it is *eternal* life, and it is given to them the moment they are saved, then can He take it away from them? _____
4. What would be true if He did? Then it really wouldn't have been _____ life in the first place.
5. What does the rest of verse 28 say? What does it mean that we *shall never perish*? It means that our souls will not spend _____ in _____. He is speaking of "perishing" eternally, of not going to heaven but rather to hell eternally. In this expression Jesus is piling up impossibilities: *Perish? No! No! Not ever! Not at all!* One would see God pulled from His throne before the least of His sheep would perish.
6. If we cannot be *plucked* from His hand (or the Father's, see verse 29), then what is true? They must be eternally _____. But this is more than just security. It is *protection*. The Law accuses us because we are in reality sinners, but God justifies us through Christ. Satan accuses us, but Christ's blood justifies us. Even our own conscience brings a railing accusation against us, but because of Jesus we are declared free and clear.

Ephesians 1

Ephesians 1 makes it clear that in the mind of God He saw us as saved and in heaven even *before the foundation of the world*. Read verses 12-14.

1. According to verse 12, for what purpose did God save us? So that we should be to the _____ of His _____.
2. What did God do to us after we believed in Christ, according to verse 13? He _____ us with that

_____ of promise.

3. What does that mean? It means that God Himself _____ our salvation by giving us the Holy Spirit. A *seal* is the guarantee of the signatory that he would do what he promised. The person who comes to God by faith in Christ is given the Holy Spirit as the guarantee that God will keep His promise to save him and take him to heaven. But the Holy Spirit is more than the seal.

4. What else is He, according to verse 14? He is called the _____ of our inheritance. An *earnest* is a down-payment, proof of intention to pay the remainder of the debt. When we truly believe, God promises to save us and take us to heaven. As proof of His intention to fulfill that promise, He gives us the Spirit as a “down-payment” of heaven.

Doctrines Box: God Chose Us

1. The Biblical doctrine of election states that in eternity past God made a choice of who among men would be convicted, drawn to Christ, saved, kept, transformed into perfect likeness to Christ, and secure in heaven forever (Ephesians 1:3-6). These are called the *elect*, or *chosen* ones.

2. It is impossible for our small minds to reconcile the truth of God’s election with man’s freedom to believe (Romans 9:19-20), but it is true nonetheless. These two truths constitute a Biblical paradox, in which two seemingly contradictory truths are both clearly taught in Scripture. Because the Bible teaches both, then both are to be accepted and believed. At the gate of salvation is the invitation “*Whosoever Will May Come.*” The person who steps through that gate, and turns to look at the back of the gate, which reads: “*Elect from the foundation of the world.*”

3. God did not choose us for any merit of ours, or because He knew ahead of time we would believe in Christ. His election of us was unconditional (John 15:16) and loving (Ephesians 1:4), and it ought to encourage our gratitude to God.

1 John 2

First John 2:3 says “*Hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.*” To *know* a thing is to be sure of it, certain of it. So John is saying, *By this we can be certain that we know Christ ...* And how can we be certain that we know Christ (i.e. that we are saved)? If we _____ His _____. Does this mean that we have to obey them perfectly to be certain of our salvation? _____ How do you know? _____ So if the desire of my heart and the habit of my life is to obey what God says in His Word, then I can have assurance that I really am saved.

1 John 5

Read 1 John 5:10-13. According to verse 13, to whom is John writing? To those who _____ on the name of the _____ of _____. You will notice that he writes this letter to them for two reasons, both of which are stated in the rest of verse 13. What are they?

(1) That they would _____ that they _____ eternal life; and

(2) That they would continue to _____ on the name of the Son of God. He wants them to keep on believing just as they have been doing. He wrote this letter so they would not lose heart. But I want you to notice that first reason: “*that ye may **know** that ye have eternal life.*” John writes this letter to give them **assurance, peace and security.**

Two Problems

These are just some of the verses that help us answer the question in this lesson. After reading all of these passages, do you think it is possible for a genuine Christian to lose his salvation? There are two things we need to clarify at this point.

1. Some may think that it is arrogant for a person to claim to **know** that God will forgive his sins, and that he will get into heaven. *No one can be absolutely certain*, they say. This would be true **if** a person earned salvation by _____. Then a person who said he was sure he was going to heaven would

think that he had done enough good deeds to earn heaven. But according to Titus 3:5 can a person get to heaven by doing good works? ____ What is it that gets us there? It is God's _____. So it is not arrogant to be certain. I am certain because God cannot lie, and because Christ's death was sufficient to save me from all my sin. My certainty is not based on my personal performance, but on God and what He has said. It does not depend on my faithfulness, but God's. My certainty does not rest on my work, but the work of Christ.

2. Second, others may conclude that if you can never be lost once you get saved, then salvation is a license to sin. This would be true *if* the Christian did not change when he was saved. If I still loved my sin and hated God *after* I got saved, then I would still want to sin. But what does 1 Corinthians 16:22 say about a person who does not love the Lord? Let him be _____. This term *anathema* means "condemned to hell." If I love the Lord, and He hates sin, then won't I hate it also? _____ (see Psalm 45:7 & 97:10)

Conclusion: In closing, I want you to remember three cautions when it comes to the doctrine of assurance.

1st Being secure in Christ does not mean that I am in no spiritual danger. We contend against very powerful enemies, so that even Jesus prays to the Father that we might be protected from them (see John 17:14-15).

2nd Being secure in Christ does not mean that we are free from falling into sin just because we are Christians. The stories of the Bible are full of saints who sinned. Noah got drunk and exposed himself. Abraham lied. David committed adultery and murder. Peter denied Christ. Knowing God and being secure in Him does not mean that we won't ever sin again. It just means that because of Jesus, God does not hold those sins against us.

3rd Eternal security does not mean that those who merely profess Christ are safe. Matthew 7:21-23 describes those who *said* they were saved but showed no evidence of *doing* God's will. A person can deceive himself into thinking he is saved when he is not. But the genuine believer can never lose his salvation. "*See that you buy the field where the Pearl is; sell all, and make a purchase of salvation. Think it not easy: for it is a steep ascent to eternal glory: many are lying dead by the way, slain with security.*" (Samuel Rutherford)

What Should I Do This Week?

1. Continue reading the Gospel of John.
2. Quickly review the first seven lessons. Write down seven things you have learned.

Your Own Notes: _____

Foundations of Faith

Book 2

From Grace to Grace

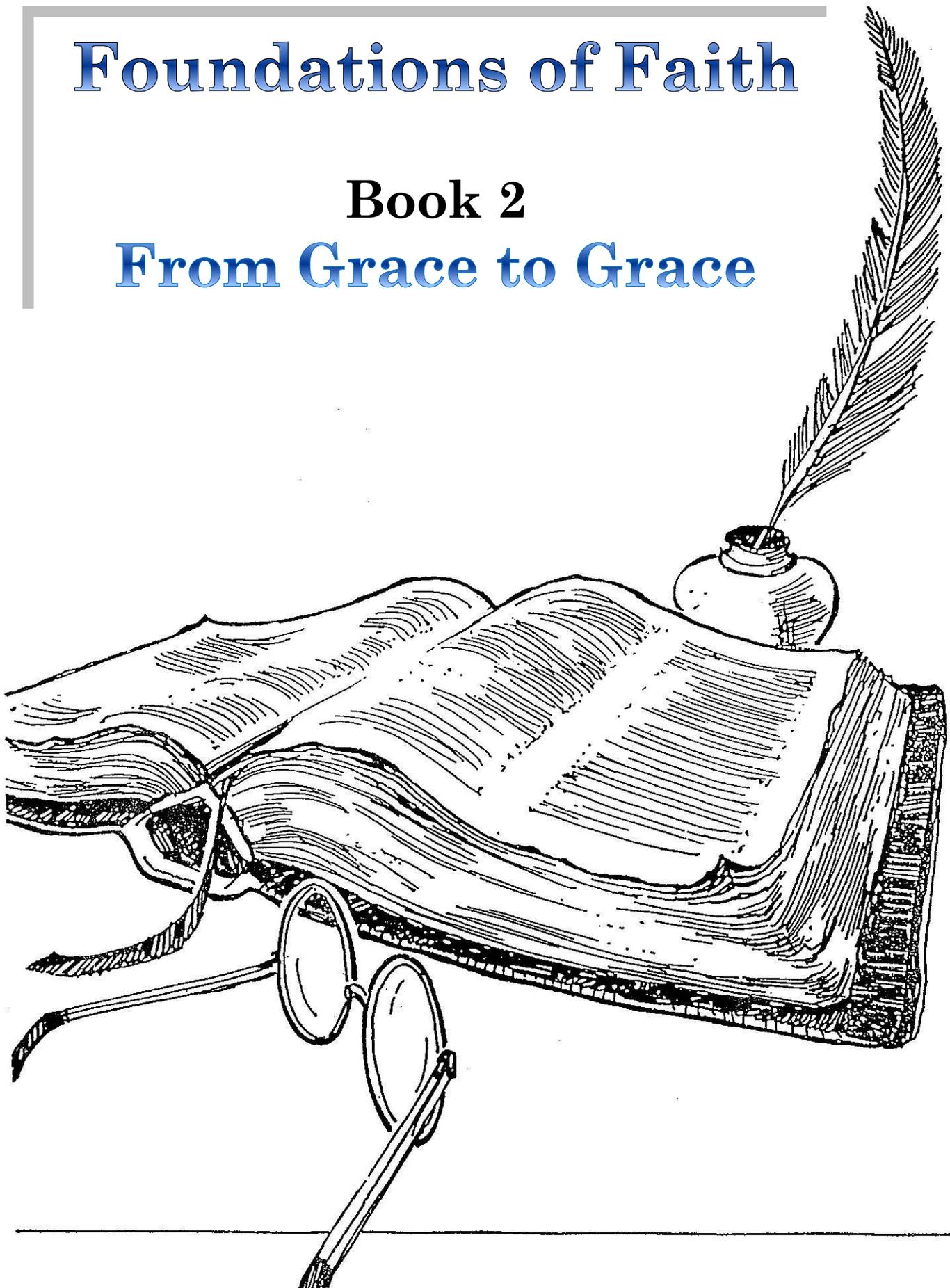


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Appendices

Appendix 1

INTRODUCTION

This second booklet in the series *Foundations of Faith* briefly examines the doctrine of sanctification from a practical standpoint. The term “sanctification” refers to “becoming holy.” We have already seen back in Lesson 7 that salvation begins when we get “converted.” The change that occurs in a person’s life when he gets saved is radical, permanent and pervasive. The moment a person believes in Jesus for salvation, he begins a process of becoming like his Savior, and this process will progress for the rest of his earthly life. We never do become sinlessly perfect in this life. But, our failures notwithstanding, we will steadily become more like Jesus. The title of this booklet, “From Grace to Grace,” alludes to what 2 Corinthians 3:18 describes as progressing “from glory to glory.” While Book 1 looked at the various issues dealing with getting saved, Book 2 conveys the first lessons of growth into the likeness of Jesus Christ.

To make good progress in holiness, the new Christian needs to understand what sin is, and how temptation works (Lessons 10-11). He then needs to understand who his enemies are, and how to effectively master them by God’s grace and power. But most important of all are the means of grace, spiritual exercises through which we obtain help from God to grow in holiness. The Christian needs to learn how to talk to God in prayer. Several things will help him do this. First, let him study the prayers of people in the Bible, and especially the prayers found in the Psalms.

Second, let him learn to “pray” through the Scriptures. In Lesson 11 you are going to learn about temptation. When you read about Satan’s temptation of Eve, make those verses the basis of your prayer. Genesis 3:1 tells the reader that the serpent “*said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?*” Using this verse as the basis for your prayer, you might ask God something like this: “*Lord, help me not to listen to voices which question You. I want to obey Your Word. Help me recognize the voice of Satan, and stay away from it.*”

Third, every believer from time to time ought to read good books on the subject of prayer. D. Edmond Hiebert’s *Working With God Through Intercessory Prayer*, R. A. Torrey’s *How to Pray*, and George Muller’s *Answers to Prayer* are excellent.

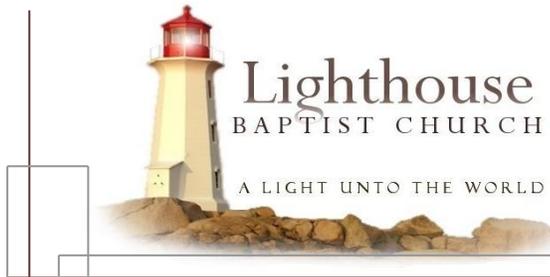
Making the Bible your “daily bread” is another very important habit the new Christian should develop. For this read, you will begin memorizing verses in Book 2. Read the verses over out loud and with your eyes reading each word fifty times. Then say the verse 25 times without looking at it. The next day, review it 20 times from memory, the next day 15 times, the next day 10 times, then 5 times and then just once. You can repeat them just once a month after that.

Meditating on a verse means that you divide it into parts in your mind, think about how each part relates to the other parts, examining every word, and applying it all to your life. You want to answer the question, “*What does this verse mean?*” Think about what it meant to those who first received it. What would they have DONE to obey this verse? Then ask yourself, “*What will you DO to obey it?*”

Christian fellowship is likewise very important to Christians. This is part of the reason God commanded us to form and faithfully attend a church. God says (1 John 2:7-11) that we are to have a distinctive love for other Christians, just as we have a distinctive love for family members. Then, a regular examination of my life helps me gauge my growth. How successful am I in obeying God? Where am I failing most?

This book is sent out with the prayer that God will make it helpful in the daily habit of walking with God.

Pastor Bud Talbert
March 2014



As the Pastors of Lighthouse Baptist Church believe that you must have been blessed by the studies for far.

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