



**Beginners'**  
**Road Map For**  
**GOSPEL LIVING**  
**Into Eternal Life**

**First Principles On How  
To Get From Here To There**

**DICKSON**

# **Beginners Road Map For Gospel Living Into Eternal Life**

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## SETTING THE RIGHT COURSE

There is one statement in the Bible that brings us to attention when considering all our efforts to stand before the Lord Jesus Christ in the final judgment. Notice carefully what the Holy Spirit said through Paul in the following pronouncement:

*Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, **knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord** (1 Corinthians 15:58).*

A very profound truth was made in this statement that should strike fear in the hearts of all those who are simply religious. Too many people have without question trusted either in their religious heritage or themselves. They have often accepted a behavior of religion that depends on the meritorious performance of religious rites and ritual, and good works on the side as a system of self-sanctification.

However, what the Holy Spirit was saying through the guided hand of Paul was that only “in the Lord” would all the good works that we would offer to God are profitable. All those good works that people either do out of a kind heart, or as some meritorious gesture of self-sanctification are simply in vain.

And just in case we might misunderstand, at the end of the Bible another similar statement of encour-

agement was made when the Holy Spirit concluded inspired literature with the book of Revelation.

*Blessed are the dead who die **in the Lord** from now on. “Yes,” says the Spirit, “so that they may rest from their labors, for their works follow them” (Revelation 14:13).*

We get the point. Only “in the Lord” are all our good works profitable. Only “in the Lord” will our good works follow us into eternal life. Therefore, it is absolutely necessary that one be “in the Lord” in order to receive any credit for all the good works that one may do throughout his or her life. This book is a guide to inform all readers how to come into the Lord.

Religion will not get us where we want to go. But the gospel will. If we stand before the Lord in final judgment with a catalogue of good works, and yet, be outside the Lord, then all those good works we did all our lives will be useless. However, if one is obedient to the gospel, then he or she “*is created in Christ Jesus for good works*” (Ephesians 2:10). The “road map” of this book is offered to you in order to stand you before Jesus Christ in judgment with profitable good works, which works will follow you right on into eternal life. Therefore, read well as this book takes you on a gospel journey right into the arms of Jesus in eternal heaven.



## Chapter 1

# THE BIBLE



One has deprived himself or herself of the best knowledge there is in the world if he or she has been deprived of a knowledge of the Bible. The reason for this is that the Bible is not about us, but specifically about the revelation of God the Son into this world for us. His incarnation, crucifixion for our sins, burial, resurrection, ascension, and present reign as King of kings is the message of the gospel (good news). This is the primary theme of the Bible. On the foundation of this theme, civilizations have been built and sustained. Only through the medium of the Bible can we know who God is and the gospel that He revealed to this world. We understand the gospel journey of the Son of God, therefore, only through the Bible. By understanding His journey, we discover our own.

The word “Bible” comes from the Greek word *Biblia* that means “book.” The Bible is God’s book of revelation of the gospel for all people. No other written words have affected so many people for so long in history. The reason for this is that people realize that the Bible contains the revelation of the truth of the gospel that inspires obedience and behavior.

The Bible is a library of sixty-six Holy Spirit inspired books and letters. Contrary to man-made religions that are often based on the writings of one man, the Bible was written by forty Spirit-inspired writers over a period of about 1,500 years. Though written by so many different people over a period of many centuries, there are no contradictions in the Bible. There is one united theme throughout the entire Bible. That message is that there is eternal salvation for all through the sacrificial offering of Jesus, the incarnate Son of God.

Thirty-nine of the Bible books compose the Old Testament. These books were first given to the nation of Israel. The New Testament contains twenty-seven documents that were written in order to explain the earthly ministry of the incarnate Son of God (Matthew – John), and to give an historical account of the resurrection, ascension and reign of Son, and to glorify His present kingdom reign (Acts – Revelation).

## A. **The Bible is God's blessing for mankind.**

**The Bible came to us through years of God's work to inspire men how to respond to the good news of His Son.**

1. The Bible is God speaking through words.<sup>1</sup>
2. The Bible is God speaking through the Holy Spirit.<sup>2</sup>
3. The Bible is God speaking through the Holy Spirit through inspired words of truth.<sup>3</sup>
4. The Bible is God speaking through the Holy Spirit to inspired writers who spoke and wrote inspired words of the truth of the gospel.<sup>4</sup>
5. The Bible is God speaking through the Holy Spirit through His written word to us today.<sup>5</sup>
6. The Bible is God speaking through the Holy Spirit through inspired writers to all people of all history.<sup>6</sup>

## B. **We can trust the Bible.**

**God gave the Bible to people upon the foundation of miraculous confirmation.** He not only inspired men to preach and write His word of truth, but He also sent confirming miracles to prove that His word was more than the word of mere men.

1. The Bible was confirmed by miracles. The word of God that was first spoken by the early messengers of God was confirmed to be from God by the miraculous work of the Holy Spirit.<sup>7</sup>
2. The confirmed spoken word was then written in the form of what we now have as the Bible. The inspired writers of the Bible recorded their miraculously confirmed word, which confirmation was recorded in the Bible for everyone throughout history to read.<sup>8</sup>

## C. **The Bible will change lives.**

**Because the Bible came to us from God, then we must give it a chance to affect our lives.** If we believe it to be the word of God, then we will treasure its message of the gospel. Our lives will thus be transformed into a life that is pleasing to God.

1. The Bible can dwell in our hearts.<sup>9</sup>
2. The Bible can be laid up in our hearts so that we not sin against God.<sup>10</sup>
3. The Bible can be written on our hearts when we live its principles.<sup>11</sup>
4. The Bible changes our lives when we sincerely obey its principles.<sup>12</sup>

## **D. The Bible is sufficient for the life of those who live the gospel.**

**The Bible is all-sufficient to furnish the Christian with all instruction that is necessary to be acceptable to God.** The Bible has the power to accomplish the following in our lives:

1. Power to change lives.<sup>13</sup>
2. Power to give eternal life.<sup>14</sup>
3. Power to eternally save.<sup>15</sup>
4. Power to give freedom.<sup>16</sup>
5. Power to minister to others.<sup>17</sup>
6. Power to teach.<sup>18</sup>
7. Power to admonish.<sup>19</sup>
8. Power to live a godly life.<sup>20</sup>
9. Power to reprove, rebuke and correct.<sup>21</sup>

## **E. The Bible is God's final revelation to man.**

**The Bible claims to be God's only and final revelation of truth to man.** With the writing of *Revelation*, the last book of the Bible, God terminated all revelation of truth that He desires that men know in these times of existence.

1. Before the first words of the Bible were written as the Sinai law, God revealed His will to the fathers of extended family groups.<sup>22</sup>

2. God revealed His will to Israel on Mount Sinai through precepts of the Sinai law.<sup>23</sup>
3. God revealed His will to the Old Testament writers who recorded examples for our learning today.<sup>24</sup>
4. God revealed all truth to the New Testament apostles in the first century as specific instruction for Christians.<sup>25</sup>
5. We have all necessary instruction today in the New Testament that was recorded for our teaching and moral guidance in response to the gospel.<sup>26</sup> Therefore, we must not add to nor subtract from the Bible.<sup>27</sup>

## **F. God works today through His word of instruction in the Bible.**

**Since God is our Creator, He seeks to direct our lives as His creation.** He intends that His word function in the following ways in the lives of those who seek a relationship with Him, and thus desire to obey the gospel. Through the Bible, God seeks to accomplish the following in our lives:

1. Produce faith in our hearts.<sup>28</sup>
2. Sanctify our souls of sin.<sup>29</sup>
3. Cleanse our hearts and souls.<sup>30</sup>
4. Quicken our souls.<sup>31</sup>
5. Enlighten our minds (Ps 19:8).
6. Give us understanding.<sup>32</sup>

7. Lead our lives.<sup>33</sup>
8. Comfort our hearts.<sup>35</sup>
9. Produce in us spiritual growth.<sup>36</sup>
10. Strengthen our hearts.<sup>37</sup>

God revealed His word of instruction to us in order that we find our way to Him through the gospel. Without His revelation of the gospel, we could not know who He is or how to please Him.

The Bible reveals that Jesus is the only way to God.<sup>38</sup> As the Son of God, Jesus said, *"If you love Me, keep My commandments."*<sup>39</sup> If one seeks to

know God and understand the revelation of gospel through Jesus, then the truth of the gospel can be discovered only in the Bible.

After obedience to the gospel, the only way to discover the instructions of God concerning our life in response to the gospel is by reading the Bible. We can know and keep Jesus' commandments by obedience to the gospel in order to come into Christ.<sup>40</sup> Through faith and obedience to the gospel, one becomes a member of the organic body of Jesus, the church.<sup>41</sup>

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**Scripture Footnotes:** 1. Matthew 22:43; Acts 1:16; 2 Timothy 3:16, 2. John 14:26; 16:13; 1 Corinthians 2:10-13; Hebrews 3:7; 9:8; 10:15; 2 Peter 1:20,21, 3. Jeremiah 36:4; 1 Corinthians 2:13, 4. Exodus 24:4; 35:1; 2 Samuel 23:2; Isaiah 51:16; Jeremiah 36:4-6; Ezekiel 11:5; 1 Corinthians 14:37, 5. Luke 1:70; Acts 28:25; Romans 1:2; 16:26, 6. Ezekiel 2:7; 3:4,10,11,17; 2 Thessalonians 2:14; 2 Timothy 3:16,17; Hebrews 1:1,2, 7. See 1 Kings 18:30-40; Mark 16:20; John 20:30,31; Acts 2:33; 4:29,30; 1 Corinthians 2:1-5; 12:7; Galatians 3:5; Hebrew 2:3,4, 8. Romans 15:4,18,19; 1 Corinthians 2:4; 10:11; 1 Thessalonians 1:5, 9. Colossians 3:16; 1 John 2:14,24; 3:9; 2 John 2, 10. Psalm 37:31; 119:11, 11. Psalm 40:8; Jeremiah 31:32,33; 2 Corinthians 3:3; Hebrews 8:10; 10:16, 12. James 1:22-25; 1 John 1:6,7; 2 John 4; 3 John 3,4, 13. 1 Thessalonians 4:1,2; 1 Peter 2:1,2; 2 Peter 1:3; 3 John 3,4, 14. John 8:51; see John 5:24; 11:26, 15. Acts 11:14; 20:32; Hebrews 4:12; James 1:21, 16. John 8:32; James 1:25, 17. Ephesians 4:11-16, 18. Psalm 119:103,104; Proverbs 22:6; Romans 15:4, 19. 1 Corinthians 4:14; 10:11; 2 Timothy 4:1,2; Titus 1:9, 20. Colossians 1:5-10; 1 Timothy 3:14,15; 1 Peter 5:12, 21. 2 Timothy 3:16; Titus 1:9, 22. Hebrews 1:1,2, 23. Deuteronomy 4:1,13; 5:1-5; Exodus 19:4-6; Nehemiah 8:1; Romans 3:1,2, 24. Romans 15:4; 1 Corinthians 10:11, 25. John 14:26; 16:13, 26. Galatians 1:11,12; Ephesians 3:3-5; Colossians 3:1-17; 2 Timothy 3:16,17, 2 Peter 1:3, 27. Deuteronomy 4:2; Galatians 1:6-9; 2 John 9-11; Revelation 22:18,19, 28. John 20:30,31; Romans 10:17, 29. John 17:17; Ephesians 5:26; 1 Timothy 4:4,5, 30. John 15:2,3; Ephesians 5:26; 1 Peter 1:22, 31. Psalm 119:50,93; Ephesians 2:1,5, 32. Psalm 119:104,130; Ephesians 3:4, 33. Psalm 73:24; 119:105, 35. Romans 15:4; 1 Thessalonians 3:2; 4:18, 36. Acts 20:32; Colossians 1:10,11, 37. Acts 20:32; Romans 16:25; 2 Timothy 2:1,2, 38. John 14:6, 39. John 14:15, 40. Read: John 6:45; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16; Romans 6:3-6; 1 Peter 3:21, 41. 1 Corinthians 12:13; Colossians 1:18



## Chapter 2

# GOD THE FATHER



Christians believe in the loving and merciful God of heaven. He is not harsh or unjust. He lovingly encourages His people to behave after His character of love, for He is love. There is only one God and He has revealed His love to man through His Son, Jesus Christ. He is revealed in the Bible as the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. The three manifestations have worked as one in creation, and thus through creation of man, to bring individuals into eternal heaven.

In the Bible the plural Hebrew word *elohim* is translated “God.” The plurality of the one God was revealed when God said in the beginning, “Let Us” create man.<sup>1</sup> The fact that God is one, and yet plural in manifestation, is something that is not possible for humans to understand. It is not possible for us to have a complete understanding of God through human reasoning. If we do feel that we comprehend the being of God, then we have created a god after our own imagination. If we create a god in our minds that we can fully understand, then we know that such a god does not exist, for the nature and work of this god would be limited to our human reasoning. A god we can fully understand is a god not worth believing. We would simply have to be God in order to comprehend the fullness of God.

The only God that exists, and the one in which we believe, is the one who is beyond our imagination. He is the God who is beyond the definition of the words of our dictionary. This God exists in spirit.<sup>2</sup> He is the God unto whom Christians call all people to be obedient, for we are His creation. God desires that we live in eternity with Him, for it was for this purpose that humanity was created. His appeal to us is that we seek Him first in all things,<sup>3</sup> and thus respond to the good news of His Son, Jesus Christ.<sup>4</sup> He works to give us eternal glory in His presence.<sup>5</sup> He will eventually in the future send His Son again to gather out of all His creation those who have responded to the gospel of His grace that was revealed through His Son.<sup>6</sup>



## A. Three manifestations of God:

**There is only one God.**<sup>7</sup> In the Bible it is recorded that He has manifested Himself in three ways in order to bring us into eternal glory.

1. At Jesus' baptism, the Father spoke from heaven. Through the form of a dove, the Holy Spirit signified His presence with the Son, Jesus, who was on earth in bodily form.<sup>8</sup>
2. While Jesus worked by the power of the Holy Spirit on earth, He found favor with the Father who was in heaven.<sup>9</sup>
3. Stephen was filled with the Holy Spirit at the moment of his death. At the same moment, he saw Jesus and the Father together in heaven.<sup>10</sup>

## B. The eternal nature of God:

1. **God is love.** The central attribute and character of God is love.<sup>11</sup> In all His work with people, He manifests love.<sup>12</sup> He commands that His obedient children manifest the same love for one another.<sup>13</sup> Those who are true children of the true God of heaven, work to serve Him with a spirit of love and mercy.<sup>14</sup> We know that if anyone creates an idea of

a God who promotes an unloving attitude of violence or terrorism, then that person has imagined a false god who behaves according to one's own carnal ambitions. God's children are identified by their love for one another.<sup>15</sup>

2. **God is eternal.** The central nature of God is that He is the only eternal spirit who is without beginning or ending. He is eternal in existence.<sup>16</sup> Since all things have not existed for eternity, it is logical to conclude that we were created by the eternal God.<sup>17</sup> And since nothing can exist outside the presence and power of God, then we must also conclude that God is the only eternal power who keeps all things in existence. God has now given this power and authority to the Son who reigns over all things.<sup>18</sup>
3. **God is unchanging.** He is unchanging in His behavior, character, nature and interaction with His creation.<sup>19</sup>
4. **God is all-powerful.** He is omnipotent in that He can do all that can possibly be done.<sup>20</sup>
5. **God is present everywhere.** He is omnipresent in that He is not connected to any specific location.<sup>21</sup> We cannot escape His

present, for it is in Him that we live, move and have our existence.<sup>22</sup>

**6. God knows everything.** He is omniscient, and thus knows all things in nature,<sup>23</sup> all the works of man,<sup>24</sup> the heart of man,<sup>25</sup> and the future.<sup>26</sup> He knows us better than we know ourselves.

### C. The eternal work of God:

**From the time of the creation, until the final coming of Jesus, God's work among people on earth was first manifested through Jesus, who was God manifested in the flesh (incarnation).**<sup>27</sup> From the time of the incarnation, God the Father exists as the head of Jesus.<sup>28</sup> God the Holy Spirit initially worked through Jesus on earth. He now dwells in obedient believers. The inseparable relationship between the Father and Son, while the Son was on earth, reveals the oneness of the Father and Son in their nature and work throughout this gospel dispensation of God's work until Jesus comes again to consummate all things of this present world.

#### 1. God works as the Father.

a. The Father is the "Father" in the Godhead.<sup>29</sup>

- b. The Father is the head (center-of-reference) of Christ.<sup>30</sup>
- c. The Father is the Father of all things.<sup>31</sup>
- d. The Father gave all authority (power) to the Son.<sup>32</sup>
- e. The Father's will was done by the Son on earth.<sup>33</sup>
- f. God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit created all things through the Son.<sup>34</sup>

2. God worked on earth through the Son. God, the Son, existed before the creation of the world. However, the Son was manifested as the incarnate Son of God in order to bring man, the creation of God, into eternal glory.

- a. The Son chose to give up an equality with God.<sup>35</sup>
- b. The Son was sent into the world by God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.<sup>36</sup>
- c. The Son was less than the Father while on earth.<sup>37</sup>
- d. The Son did the will of the Father on earth.<sup>38</sup>
- e. The Father miraculously bore witness to the Son on earth.<sup>39</sup>
- f. The Father and the Son remain as one while the Son was on earth in an incarnate state of existence.<sup>40</sup>
- g. The Father loves the Son.<sup>41</sup>
- h. The Father glorified the Son through a sacrificial death on the cross.<sup>42</sup>

- 3.** God works until now, and will continue to work in the future. The Son has now gone into eternal glory with authority over all things.<sup>43</sup> He has done so in order to reign over all things as King of kings until the conclusion of all things in reference to the existence of the world.<sup>44</sup>
- a.** The Son went back to the Father at the ascension.<sup>45</sup>
  - b.** The Father gave all authority to the resurrected Son in order that He might reign as King and Head over all things.<sup>46</sup>
  - c.** The Father now dwells in His people on earth through God the Holy Spirit.<sup>47</sup>
  - d.** The Spirit dwells in believers on earth.<sup>48</sup>
  - e.** The Son now reigns over all things from heaven.<sup>49</sup>
  - f.** The Son is now head over all things from heaven.<sup>50</sup>
  - g.** The Son is coming again to judge all men.<sup>51</sup>
  - h.** In the end, the Son will restore all authority to the Father.<sup>52</sup>
  - i.** Though we do not now see all things in subjection to the present reign of King Jesus, He continues to reign.<sup>53</sup>

Recognizing the awesome power and authority of God the Father, son and Holy Spirit should motivate sincere people to obey the gospel of God's grace by immersion into the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.<sup>53</sup>

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**Scripture Footnotes:** **1.** Genesis 1:26, **2.** John 4:24, **3.** Matthew 6:33, **4.** 1 Peter 5:6, **5.** Matthew 25:34, **6.** 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, **7.** Deuteronomy 4:35; 6:4,5; Isaiah 43:10,11; 45:5; 46:8-11, **8.** Matthew 3:16,17; John 1:33, **9.** Luke 1:30-35; 4:14, **10.** Acts 7:55-59; see also Matthew 28:19,20; 1 Corinthians 11:2; 2 Corinthians 13:14, **11.** 1 John 4:16, **12.** John 3:16; 1 John 3:1,16, **13.** John 13:34,35; 1 John 3:14, **14.** 1 John 2:10,11; 4:7-21, **15.** John 17:20,21, **16.** Deuteronomy 33:27; Isaiah 57:15, **17.** 1 Corinthians 8:6; Colossians 1:16; Revelation 4:11, **18.** Matthew 28:18; Romans 5:17; 1 Timothy 6:15; Hebrews 1:3, **19.** Numbers 23:19; Psalm 33:11; Malachi 3:6; Hebrews 6:17,18; James 1:17, **20.** Genesis 18:14; Job 42:2; Matthew 19:26; Revelation 19:6, **21.** 1 Kings 8:27; Psalm 139:3-10; Jeremiah 23:23, **22.** Acts 17:28, **23.** Genesis 15:5; Psalm 147:4,5; Isaiah 40:26, **24.** Psalm 119:168; 139:2,3, **25.** 1 Samuel 16:7, **26.** Isaiah 42:9; 46:11, **27.** John 1:1,2,14, **28.** 1 Corinthians 11:3, **29.** Galatians 1:1; Colossians 1:2,19; 2:9, **30.** 1 Corinthians 11:3, **31.** Ephesians 4:6, **32.** Matthew 28:18; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28, **33.** John 4:34, **34.** John 1:1-3; Colossians 1:16; Revelation 4:11, **35.** Philippians 2:5-11, **36.** John 1:14; 4:23,36; 5:23,36; 8:17,18, **37.** John 10:29; 14:28, **38.** John 4:34; 6:38; Hebrews 5:8, **39.** John 5:31-37, **40.** John 10:30; 17:11,21-24, **41.** John 15:9; 17:24, **42.** John 8:54, **43.** Matthew 28:18; Ephesians 1:20-23, **44.** 1 Timothy 6:15; Hebrews 2:8, **45.** John 14:12; 20:17, **46.** Matthew 28:18; 17:1,2, **47.** 2 Corinthians 6:16; 1 John 4:12-15; see Ephesians 2:18-22, **48.** Acts 2:38; 1 Corinthians 3:16; 6:19, **49.** 1 Timothy 6:15; Revelation 4:9-11, **50.** Ephesians 1:22; 1 Peter 3:22, **51.** John 12:48; 2 Corinthians 5:10; 2 Thessalonians 1:6-9, **52.** 1 Corinthians 15:28, **53.** Philippians 2:5-11; Hebrews 2:8, **53.** See Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15,16; Acts 2:38



## Chapter 3

# GOD THE SON



The greatest personality of human history who has affected the lives of millions of people, was born in the humble environment of a Bethlehem barn two thousand years ago. This is Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God. He is the only begotten Son of God, for He was the incarnation of God the Son in the flesh of man.

The explosion of Christianity into history, and the rapid growth of the number of Jesus' disciples, could not have occurred if Jesus were a mere man. The only logical answer for the phenomenal growth of Christianity in the first century is that it had a Supernatural beginning of One who came from beyond this world. As an historical character, Jesus is who He said He was, the Son of God. Nothing else answers the questions as to why Christianity has grown to the point of captivating the hearts of millions of people throughout the centuries.

Jesus fulfilled hundreds of Old Testament prophecies. He proved the divine origin of His teachings by the evidence of His confirming miracles. He taught a way of life that has been unmatched by any man-made religion. And finally, He was proved to be the Son of God by His resurrection from the dead. Two thousand years ago He ascended to reign as King over all things. In the future, He will come with the authority of a king in order to judge the world.

The existence, work and character of Jesus Christ could not have been dreamed up by over zealous disciples. He was God revealed in the flesh. Therefore, He demands and deserves the obedience of all people. Understanding that Jesus is not an invented historical personality by a group of men, but the actual Son of God in the flesh, should move all of us to serve Him. The fact that He is the incarnate Son of God in the flesh should motivate everyone to respond to His revelation of the love of God for all people.

## A. The person of Jesus:

**Our attraction to Jesus is the result of understanding who He is.**

Since He is truly the Son of God—and all that the Bible says He is—then He can be and is the solid foundation for the faith of millions of people who have responded to the good news (gospel) of who He is.

1. Jesus is the incarnate Word of God who existed before the creation of the world.<sup>1</sup>
2. Jesus was indwelt by the fullness of God throughout His earthly ministry.<sup>2</sup>
3. Jesus is the only Son of God.<sup>3</sup>
4. Jesus is one with God.<sup>4</sup>
5. Jesus is eternal in existence.<sup>5</sup>
6. Jesus is all-knowing.<sup>6</sup>

## B. The proof of Jesus:

**The Bible and history are both evidences that Jesus is who He said He was.** If one believes in the Bible, then he must believe in Jesus as the Son of God. Even if one believes in the historical documents of men, he still must believe that Jesus was a historical personality who has had influence over millions of people throughout history.

1. The proof of prophecy:

There are over 300 prophecies in the Old Testament concerning Jesus and His earthly ministry. These prophecies were written hundreds of years before Jesus was born into this world.

- a. He would be a descendant of Abraham.<sup>7</sup>
- b. He would be a descendant of Isaac.<sup>8</sup>
- c. He would be born of Judah.<sup>9</sup>
- d. He would be a descendant of David.<sup>10</sup>
- e. He would be born in the city of Bethlehem.<sup>11</sup>
- f. He would be betrayed.<sup>12</sup>
- g. He would be raised from the dead.<sup>13</sup>

2. The proof of His existence:

Many ancient historical documents refer to Jesus and events that surrounded His ministry.

- a. Julius Africanus quoted Thallus, who lived in Rome around A.D. 52. Thallus was familiar with the darkness that came over the earth at the time Jesus was crucified.<sup>14</sup>
- b. Mara Bar-Serapion in a letter to his son referred to the Jews' execution of "their king," a reference to Jesus.
- c. Tacitus, who was born around A.D. 52-54, referred to "Christus" (Christ) who was executed during

the reign of Tiberius.

- d. C. Plinius Secundus (Pliny, the younger), governor of Bithynia around A.D. 112, wrote to Caesar Trajan concerning the problem of “Christians” in his province.
  - e. The Jewish Talmud (Jewish teachings that were compiled from A.D. 70 to 200) makes many references to “Yeshu’a of Nazareth,” though the references are made in a negative context.
  - f. Josephus, a Jewish historian at the end of the first century refers to “Jesus, a wise man, ... a doer of marvelous deeds.”
3. The proof of His miracles and resurrection:

If Jesus were who He said He was, then we would expect Him to have control over the supernatural and natural world. He would not be subject to a death without a resurrection. While religions of men focus on the tombs of their founders, Christians focus on the reign of a resurrected Savior. The rapid growth of Christianity in the first century in only a few years is answered only in the fact that Jesus was actually raised from the dead.

4. The proof of persecuted disciples:

The suffering and death of the early Christians can be answered only in the fact that they believed Jesus was the resurrected Son of God.

- a. The disciples willingly suffered for Jesus.<sup>15</sup>
  - b. The disciples willingly died for Jesus.<sup>16</sup>
5. The proof of the New Testament documents:

The existence of the ancient New Testament documents proves that Christianity was a powerful movement of faith in the first century. Because these documents were written by several men over many years, and yet without contradiction, proves that neither Jesus nor the church were the invention of men.

### C. The power of Jesus:

**No man on earth ever claimed to be God as Jesus claimed to be.** Therefore, He was either the greatest liar and deceiver who ever lived, or He was truly the One He claimed to be with the authority and power He now has over all things. Who Jesus claimed to be makes Him greater than all men.

1. Jesus was the creator of all things.<sup>17</sup>
2. Jesus is now head of all things.<sup>18</sup>
3. Jesus is King of all earthly rulers.<sup>19</sup>
4. Jesus now reigns over all things.<sup>20</sup>
5. Jesus is our Savior and Redeemer.<sup>21</sup>
6. Jesus is our High Priest before God.<sup>22</sup>
7. Jesus was the Prophet about which the prophesied spoke.<sup>23</sup>
8. Jesus is our only mediator with God.<sup>24</sup>
9. Jesus will be the final judge of all.<sup>25</sup>
10. Therefore, we must believe that Jesus is the One who fulfilled all prophecies, and thus is the Son of God.<sup>26</sup>

#### D. The plea of Jesus:

**Because Jesus has universal authority, He is the only one who has a right to make a universal plea**

**to all men to come to Him for eternal existence in the presence of God.**

1. Jesus says He is the only way, truth and life.<sup>27</sup>
2. Jesus pleads that all come to Him.<sup>28</sup>
3. Jesus says that all people must believe in Him.<sup>29</sup>
4. Jesus says that everyone must believe and obey the gospel in order to be saved.<sup>30</sup>

The reason God the Son came in the flesh of Jesus was to become the atoning sacrifice for our sins.<sup>31</sup> When one responds to the gospel of His sacrifice for our sins, he can be reconciled to God.<sup>32</sup> All those who obey the gospel of His death, burial and resurrection through baptism will live forever in the presence of God.<sup>33</sup> When Jesus comes again, He will be coming for those who have obeyed the gospel.<sup>34</sup>

**Scripture Footnotes:** 1. John 1:1,14; 1 John 1:1,2; 2 John 7, 2. Colossians 1:19; 2:9, 3. John 1:14,18; 3:16,18, 4. Isaiah 9:6; John 1:1,2; 10:30; Titus 2:13; 1 John 5:20, 5. Romans 9:5; Hebrews 7:3; Revelation 1:8, 6. Matthew 9:4; Luke 5:22; John 2:25, 7. Genesis 12:1-3; see Galatians 3:16, 8. Genesis 21:12; see Hebrews 11:18, 9. Genesis 49:10; see Luke 3:33, 10. 2 Samuel 7:12-16; see Revelation 22:16, 11. Micah 5:2; see Matthew 2:1,3; John 7:42, 12. Psalm 41:9; 55:12-14; see Mark 14:66-72, 13. Psalm 16:10; see Acts 2:32, 14. Matthew 27:45, 15. Acts 4:18,19; 14:22; 2 Timothy 3:12, 16. Acts 8:1-3; 12:1-4; 1 Peter 4:16; Revelation 2:10, 17. Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 1:2, 18. Matthew 28:18; John 13:3; Ephesians 1:20-22, 19. 1 Timothy 6:15; Revelation 19:16, 20. Romans 5:17; Philippians 2:9-11; 1 Peter 3:22, 21. John 14:6; Acts 4:12; Ephesians 1:7; Titus 2:14, 22. Hebrews 3:1; 4:14; 7:26, 23. Deuteronomy 18:15,18,19; Luke 13:33; John 1:21; Acts 3:22-26, 24. 1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 8:6; 9:15; 12:24, 25. John 12:48; 2 Corinthians 5:10, 26. John 20:30,31, 27. John 14:6, 28. Matthew 11:28,29, 29. John 8:24, 30. Mark 16:15,16, 31. John 3:1-21, 32. 2 Corinthians 5:16-21, 33. John 5:24,25; Romans 6:3-6; 2 Thessalonians 1:6-9; 1 Peter 3:21, 34. 2 Thessalonians 1:6-9; 1 John 3:2



## Chapter 4



# GOSPEL OF GOD'S GRACE

The word “grace” refers to what God gives and cannot be earned through good works of merit, or by keeping any law perfectly before God. Therefore, grace is defined as God’s loving desire and action to save us regardless of our inability to earn eternal life by our good works or through keeping His law perfectly. In order to understand this grace, we must first understand our impossibilities in life in reference to our desire to live eternally with God.

What God has to offer costs more than what we can afford to pay.<sup>1</sup> Eternal life in heaven is without end. There is no possible way for us to earn heaven in a fair deal by trading a lifetime in good works as a Christian for the reward of eternal life. We could not live long enough doing good works on earth in order to earn what God offers through His grace. Eternal life in heaven is far greater than what we can earn in our short life.

In reference to our ability to keep God’s law, God says that “*there is none righteous, no, not one.*”<sup>2</sup> The problem that all people have is that “*all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.*”<sup>3</sup> We fall short because we cannot keep law perfectly in order to stand just (justified) before God. God reminded us that “*by the deeds of law no flesh will be justified in His sight.*”<sup>4</sup> Therefore, no one can be “*justified by the works of law.*”<sup>5</sup> We cannot be justified before God by law-keeping simply because no one has every been able to keep God’s law perfectly in order to demand heaven. If we are to be delivered from this life wherein we cannot save ourselves, then there must be grace extended from God on our behalf. How God has extended His loving grace to everyone is the beautiful story of the good news (gospel) that must be proclaimed throughout the world. The gospel that we must proclaim to the world is the fact that all people have an opportunity for heaven through Jesus Christ. It all depends on how one responds to the grace of God.



## A. The necessity of grace:

**Whenever we discuss our relationship with God, we must always begin with the subject of the problem of sin.** When one sins, the law of God says that he is a lawbreaker.<sup>6</sup> According to the justice of law, lawbreakers must be punished.<sup>7</sup> The lawbreaker (sinner) must receive the wrath of the Judge.<sup>8</sup>

One might seek to keep the whole law of God, and yet commit one sin. That one sin makes him a lawbreaker, and thus, guilty before God.<sup>9</sup> We must, therefore, cry out for grace from the Judge who would pardon our lawbreaking. For example, in recognizing his own inability to live perfectly before God according to law-keeping, Paul cried out, "*O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?*"<sup>10</sup> The answer to Paul's question is that Jesus Christ can deliver us from our state of condemnation in sin. What we need to discover is how He can do this, since we continue to fall short of His will.

As breakers of God's law, all of us seek deliverance from the coming judgment. Most people recognize that they break God's law. Most know that they are sinners. But because we think we can stand alone before God on the merit of our own good works, we sometimes invent for ourselves sys-

tems of sanctification by which we would cleanse ourselves of sin.

We often invent some system of performing religious rites or ceremonial rituals by which we feel we can sanctify ourselves before God. We thus answer Paul's preceding question in a wrong manner. Man-made religion can never be a system of atonement for sins. Religious performances can never sanctify us of sin because religion originates from man. In other words, the more religious one is, the further he or she moves away from God's solution for sin.

## B. Good works versus grace:

**Sometimes we seek to solve our problem with sin by offering works of merit in order to receive forgiveness that is based on the performance of our own religiosity.** However, our invented system of "salvation by good works" is a false hope because we have deceived ourselves into thinking that we can pay for our sins. We deceive ourselves into thinking that if we do enough good works, God will consider our good works as payment for our sins.

Doing good works may make one feel good, or even give us some peace of mind before God. But we forget that not one good work will obligate God to forgive one sin. The Bible says that we are not saved by

good works “lest anyone should boast.”<sup>11</sup> If we were saved by good works, then we would boast against one another. We would compare our good works with one another. We would glorify ourselves before God as the religious leader during the ministry of Jesus who boasted in prayer that he gave tithes and fasted twice a week.<sup>12</sup>

We often forget that salvation cannot be earned by good works of merit lest we think we can put God in debt to pay us with heaven. If one could earn his salvation by good works, then the reward would not be counted “as grace, but as debt.”<sup>13</sup> If we think we can sanctify ourselves through good works, then we marginalize the sanctification of the cross of Jesus. We marginalize the grace of God that was revealed at the cross. So under no circumstances should we as lawbreakers ever think that we can put God in debt to save us. Salvation is not a payoff by good works.

### C. The revelation of grace:

**Only God can give a solution for our problem of sin that has destroyed our relationship with Him.**

He only can deliver us from our condemnation in sin. Paul praised God for his personal deliverance from sin through the atoning sacrifice of Jesus:

*“I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord”*<sup>14</sup>

The Holy Spirit declares, “*For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men*”<sup>15</sup> To this, we say hallelujah! Jesus has become a mediator before God on behalf of those who establish a covenant with God.<sup>16</sup> He is the revelation of the loving grace of God on our behalf.

Jesus Christ, therefore, is the divine link between God and humanity. Through His incarnational offering on the cross, He revealed to us God’s free gift of grace. The Holy Spirit proclaimed that “*the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many.*”<sup>17</sup> For God so loved us that He gave His Son.<sup>18</sup> Though we were lawbreakers, God loved us regardless of our inability to keep any law perfectly.

Even in our futile efforts to save ourselves by offering to God works of merit, God reached from heaven and loved us through Jesus.<sup>19</sup> God’s gift came to sinful people could only come through grace. The gift was freely given, and thus, it is not earned by our righteousness. Neither was the free gift earned meritoriously by any good works through which we might think we can sanctify ourselves.

Since the gift of His Son was free, then we cannot demand that Jesus come into our lives on the basis

of any good works that we might perform.<sup>20</sup> The gift of His Son must be received by a positive response to His offering at the cross. This response must be more than words from our mouths. It must be action in our lives as it was the action of the Son of God on the cross and in the resurrection. Proclamations and claims from our mouths are futile without a positive response to the sacrificial death, burial, and glorious resurrection of the One who gave Himself for us as a free gift from God.

#### D. Responding to grace:

**God has worked His part in His gospel plan to bring us into His eternal existence in heaven.** We must now learn of His offering through Jesus, and then respond to the gospel of His grace.<sup>21</sup>

Our knowledge of the grace of God that was revealed through Jesus must inspire faith in our hearts. Faith must then move us into action. We must be moved by the loving gospel of God's grace in order to respond to what God wants us to do.<sup>22</sup> The Bible teaches that *"the just will live by faith."*<sup>23</sup> In other words, those who would be justified before God will live by trusting in God's grace for their salvation,<sup>24</sup> not in their ability to perform law perfectly, or attempt to trade good works to God for His grace.

God's grace does not give us freedom to sin as some have misunderstood.<sup>25</sup> It gives us freedom to obey.<sup>26</sup> The one who has heard and learned of the grace of God that was revealed through Jesus is motivated to obey the Father.<sup>27</sup> Therefore, we establish God's law in our lives by responding to His grace.<sup>28</sup>

The same response of thanksgiving that results from recognizing God's saving grace also applies to our good works. We are *"created in Christ Jesus for good works."*<sup>29</sup> In other words, we do good works because we are saved by God's grace, not in order to be saved. Good works, therefore, are our expressions of appreciation and thanksgiving to God for our salvation that we have in Christ.<sup>30</sup>

#### E. Set free by grace:

**There will always be those who seek to bind on the consciences of others those things God never intended to bind.** In the realm of faith, this is called religion. For example, some Jewish teachers in the first century sought to bind circumcision and other religious rites and ritualistic ceremonies on the consciences of the early Christians.<sup>31</sup> These teachers subsequently came into the fellowship of the free in order *"to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus,*

that they might bring us into bondage.”<sup>32</sup> However, in reference to this matter, the Holy Spirit’s exhortation to those who were set free from religion was straightforward: “*Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage.*”<sup>33</sup>

We must always remember that God’s grace sets us free from the bondage of human religious traditions.<sup>34</sup> One is fallen from grace if he seeks to justify himself meritoriously through the performance of man-

made religiosity.<sup>35</sup>

In order to come into the realm of God’s grace, one must respond to grace by obedience to the gospel of the death of Jesus for our sins and His resurrection for our hope.<sup>36</sup> Therefore, baptism for remission of sins can never be a work of merit. It is an action through which one goes in response to the grace of God. Those who respond to grace by baptism into Christ, acknowledge their appreciation to God for His grace that was revealed through Jesus.

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**Scripture Footnotes:** **1.** See Romans 8:18; 2 Corinthians 4:17, **2.** Romans 3:10, **3.** Romans 3:23, **4.** Romans 3:20, **5.** Galatians 2:16, **6.** 1 John 3:4, **7.** Romans 6:23, **8.** Romans 4:15, **9.** James 2:10, **10.** Romans 7:24, **11.** Ephesians 2:9, **12.** Luke 18:11,12, **13.** Romans 4:4, **14.** Romans 7:25, **15.** Titus 2:11, **16.** 1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 12:24, **17.** Romans 5:15, **18.** John 3:16, **19.** Romans 5:8; Ephesians 2:4,5, **20.** Ephesians 2:8,9, **21.** John 6:45, **22.** Romans 1:5; Galatians 5:6; James 2:14-26, **23.** Habakkuk 2:4; Romans 1:17; Galatians 3:11; Hebrews 10:38, **24.** Romans 5:1,2, **25.** See Romans 6:1; Jude 4, **26.** 1 Peter 2:16, **27.** Galatians 2:20, **28.** Romans 3:31; 1 John 4:19, **29.** Ephesians 2:10, **30.** 1 Corinthians 15:10, **31.** Acts 15:1,2,10, **32.** Galatians 2:4, **33.** Galatians 5:1, **34.** Galatians 5:1, **35.** Galatians 5:4, **36.** Read 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4; Romans 6:3-6



## Chapter 5



# GOSPEL OF THE INCARNATE SON

If one is honest, he or she knows that it is impossible to live a perfect life. Therefore, since God knew that we could not live without sinning, He planned before the world was created, the incarnational offering of His only begotten Son. This was the gospel offer long before it was revealed in time in the first century. He planned before mankind was created that the incarnate Son of God would offer Himself in order to save us from eternal destruction. When the time came in history for God to reveal His wonderful gospel plan of salvation, He sent His Son into the world.<sup>1</sup>

All of us know that we cannot save ourselves by perfect obedience to any law, or by earning heaven through good works of merit. Realizing that we cannot live perfect lives should motivate sincere people to search for the means by which God offered to deliver us out of our predicament of sin. Our search for deliverance from this world ends when we realize that God has delivered on His promise to save us. His offer comes to us through grace because we did not earn His favor. Regardless of our inability to save ourselves, God's grace was freely revealed on the cross through Jesus.<sup>2</sup> When we realize our inability to save ourselves, we seek this free gift of grace.

God is the creator of all things.<sup>3</sup> He created man in the beginning. Since God created man, this gives Him the right to give us moral laws by which we must live. Since He is our Creator, He has the right to demand our obedience. And since everyone has sinned against God's law, we must seek His forgiveness through the atoning sacrifice of His Son.<sup>4</sup>

Some may say that they have not sinned. But God says that such a person is a liar.<sup>5</sup> The point is that each one of us must recognize our sins against God before we will repent of our sins.<sup>6</sup> Recognizing our sin and separation from God motivates us. It motivates us to respond to God's gospel offer to respond to the grace that was revealed through Jesus Christ.

### A. Sin is transgression against God's law.

**1 John 3:4** teaches that we sin against God by voluntarily breaking His law. We do so by not doing what God has told us to do in His word. We also sin by doing what God has told us not to do in His word.<sup>7</sup> Everyone, therefore, and in some way, has sinned against God. There is no one who lives without sin in this world.

### B. Sin is neglecting to do that which is right.

**James 4:17** teaches that we sin when we do not do those principles of good that are defined in the Bible.<sup>8</sup> If our conscience is directed by God's word to do good, then we sin if we fail to do what we know is good.<sup>9</sup>

### C. Sin separates us from God.

**Isaiah 59:1,2** teaches that sin spiritually separates us from God, and thus, we can have no hope of life beyond this world if we are separated from God. Therefore, when we think about sin we must think about being separated from God, who only can give eternal life. If we die in sin, then we will be forever separated from our Creator.<sup>10</sup> Everyone, therefore, must be reconciled to God. We must be

restored to a relationship with God that will take us into eternal glory.

### D. The result of separation from God is death.

**Romans 6:23** teaches that the result of sin against God's will is separation from God. The result of separation from God, is death, whether spiritual or physical. One is spiritually dead because his sin has separated him from God who gives eternal life. One must physically die because we cannot eat of the Tree of Life. The final payment for sin that is in our lives, therefore, will be destruction in the second death, which is our final separation from God for eternity.<sup>11</sup>

### E. The result of sin is spiritual death.

**Romans 5:12** teaches that when one walks in sin, he is separated from God, and thus, spiritually dead. As the representative of the human race, Adam was the first to introduce sin into the world. Everyone since Adam, therefore, suffers spiritual death because everyone has individually sinned against God. Spiritual death, therefore, is man's first and greatest problem. The gospel is great news for our problem of spiritual death. The gospel is the only solution to this

great problem that we suffer as a result of our own personal sins against God.

#### **F. Sin brought physical death into the world.**

**1 Corinthians 15:20-22** teaches that when Adam sinned in the Garden of Eden, he was separated from the Tree of Life. He thus had to physically die.<sup>12</sup> Therefore, all of us must suffer the consequences of Adam's sin because we cannot now partake of the Tree of Life.<sup>13</sup> Physical death, therefore, is man's second greatest problem. The gospel is good news about this problem we all have.

#### **G. Jesus revealed the gospel.**

**Luke 2:10,11** was the first announcement of the revelation of the gospel. This announcement was made to shepherds watching over their flocks. **Mark 1:14,15** states that Jesus preached the good news that He had come into the world, and was headed for the cross of atonement for the sins of all men. The word "gospel" means good news. The good news was Jesus' coming into the world in order to solve both our spiritual death problem and our physical death problem. However, Jesus asks us to first learn of Him,<sup>14</sup> and then be-

lieve the good news (the gospel).<sup>15</sup>

#### **H. The gospel is about the incarnation of the Son of God.**

**John 1:1,2,14** teaches that God the Son, who was originally in the spirit of God before the creation of the world, came into the flesh of man.<sup>16</sup> This is the incarnation of God into the flesh of man as a babe in Bethlehem of Judah.<sup>17</sup> The entire case for Christianity is based on the fact of the incarnation of God the Son. If there were no incarnation of God into the flesh of man, then Jesus was just another Jew who was crucified in the first century. Many Jews were crucified by the Romans in the first century. But in the case of Jesus, a body had been prepared for the indwelling of the fulness of God.<sup>18</sup> It was this Jesus as the Son of God on earth in the flesh of man who revealed on the cross the gospel, reconciling us again to our Creator.<sup>19</sup>

#### **I. The gospel was revealed through the crucifixion of the Son of God.**

**Romans 5:8,9** teaches that while we were yet dead in our sins, the love of God was poured out on the cross as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. It was not that we deserved to be recon-

ciled to God through the cross. The cross signalled to all mankind that the Creator of all was willing to give all in order to bring all into eternal dwelling with God. In order to be reconciled to God, therefore, an incarnational sacrifice had to be made by God Himself.<sup>20</sup>

The crucifixion of Jesus on the cross was the revelation of the gospel of reconciliation. The crucifixion was more than a visual execution of Jesus. It was the earthly illustration of the heavenly gospel of reconciliation that took place in heavenly places. This is the message of the gospel that Christians proclaim to the world.<sup>21</sup>

**J. The gospel is about the power of the resurrection of the Son of God.**

**Romans 1:4** states that Jesus was declared to be the Son of God through the power of the resurrection. If Jesus were not raised from the dead, then He was just another Jew who was crucified by the Romans. But because He was resurrected, lives were transformed in the first century. In fact, the radical change in the lives of so many people, and the early rapid growth of Christians in only a few years, can be explained only in the fact that Jesus was raised from the dead. The early disciples of Jesus firmly

believed that He was raised from the dead.<sup>22</sup>

**K. The gospel is about the ascension of the Son of God.**

**Acts 1:9-11** is an historical account of the gospel ascension of Jesus to the right hand of God. The gospel of His ascension was prophesied centuries before the actual ascension.<sup>23</sup> If Jesus were raised, but died again in some secret location, then the power of the resurrection would have had little affect on the lives of those who believed in Him. But His ascension to a heavenly position to reign as King over all things reveals that all things are under His control.<sup>24</sup>

**L. The gospel is about the reign of the Son of God.**

**1 Timothy 6:15** teaches that Jesus is presently reigning as King of kings and Lord of lords. He presently has authority over all things.<sup>25</sup> He is presently head over all things.<sup>26</sup> Even angels and Satan are subject to Him.<sup>27</sup> Though we do not see everything subject to Him, this does not mean that there is no good news (gospel) about His present kingdom and reign over all things.<sup>28</sup>

At His ascension, He went to the right hand of the Father who gave Him



kingship over the galaxies.<sup>29</sup> The gospel of the coronation of Jesus at the right hand of God means that He is not coming again to lower the status of His kingdom reign. On the contrary, He is coming again in order to consummate all things over which He now reigns.

**M. The gospel is about the consummation of all things.**

**2 Thessalonians 1:7-9** teaches that Jesus is coming again at the end of time! When He comes, He will punish with everlasting destruction those who do not obey the gospel.<sup>30</sup> It is necessary, therefore, that everyone respond to the gospel in order to escape the coming destruction when Jesus comes. If one must obey the gospel, then there are two questions that must be asked and answered. “What is the gospel (good news)?” and “How can one obey the gospel?”

**N. The gospel is about past and present history.**

**1 Corinthians 15:1,2** teaches that the gospel was declared and preached to men. It was received by receptive and repentant hearts. Obedient believers base their emotional and spiritual well being on the historical fact that the gospel event actually

happened. We are saved by the gospel if we continue to believe the word of God that communicates to us the historical fact of the gospel event.

**1 Corinthians 15:3,4** gives a simple definition of the heart of the gospel. The gospel was revealed through the historical event of Jesus’ death for our sins and His resurrection for our hope of eternal life. The death and resurrection of Jesus on earth revealed what transpired in the heavenly realm wherein God offered to forgive our sins on earth. Jesus, therefore, died in order to bring us back to God.<sup>31</sup> He made it possible for us to draw near to God.<sup>32</sup> It is for this reason that the gospel is good news!

**O. The gospel inspires obedience to the gospel.**

**Romans 6:3-6** explains how to obey the gospel. In Romans 6:3 Paul declared that one comes “into Christ” by immersion (baptism). Verses 4 & 5 explain that we are buried with Jesus by immersion into water. We are then resurrected with Jesus out of the “tomb” of water. However, verse 6 explains that before one can obey the gospel by immersion into water, he must first be crucified with Jesus. In other words, one must repent of sins

before he or she is baptized for remission of sins.<sup>33</sup> As an example, people in the first century responded to the message of the gospel in the following ways:

1. They willingly listened to the good news.<sup>34</sup>
2. They believed the good news.<sup>35</sup>
3. As a result, they repented of their sins in order to commit themselves to obedience to the gospel.<sup>36</sup>
4. They then gave their lives as a living confession in order to live the gospel by focusing on heav-

enly things.<sup>37</sup>

5. In order to begin their life of living the gospel, they obeyed the gospel by immersion (baptism) into the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus.<sup>38</sup>

When speaking of the incarnation of Jesus, we must always remember a very important concept that Holy Spirit set forth through the hand of Paul: *“Therefore, from now on we know no man according to the flesh. Even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know Him thus no more.”*<sup>39</sup>

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**Scripture Footnotes:** 1. Galatians 4:4; Ephesians 3:3-5, 2. Titus 2:11, 3. Genesis 1:1,26,27, 4. Romans 3:10,23, 5. 1 John 1:8-10, 6. Acts 3:19; James 4:1-9; 2 Peter 3:9, 7. Romans 8:12-14; Ephesians 2:1-3; 1 John 2:14-16, 8. Galatians 6:10, 9. Matthew 25:41-46, 10. Matthew 7:21-23; 25:41, 11. Matthew 10:28; John 5:28,29; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9, 12. Genesis 3:22-24, 13. Hebrews 9:27, 14. John 6:45, 15. Mark 16:16; John 3:16; 8:24, 16. 1 John 1:1, 17. Philippians 2:5-8 18. Colossians 1:19; 2:9; Hebrews 10:5, 19. John 20:30,31, 20. Hebrews 9:12; 10:10; 1 John 4:19, 21. Mark 16:15,16; 1 Corinthians 1:23, 22. Acts 2:31-38; 1 Corinthians 1:23; Galatians 2:20; 1 Peter 1:3; 1 John 1:1, 23. Psalm 11:1; Daniel 1:13,14, 24. Matthew 28:18; 2 Corinthians 5:16; Hebrews 2:8; 8:1; 1 Peter 3:21,22, 25. Matthew 28:18, 26. Ephesians 1:20-23, 27. 1 Peter 3:22, 28. Hebrews 2:8, 29. See John 17:3-5; Romans 5:17; Colossians 1:13; 3:1,2; 1 Timothy 2:11,12; Hebrews 1:1-3; 8:1,2, 30. 1 Peter 4:17, 31. 2 Corinthians 5:18-21, 32. Ephesians 2:11-13, 33. Acts 2:38; 3:19, 34. Matthew 13:9; John 5:24,25; 6:45; 8:47, 35. Mark 1:14,15; John 3:16; 8:24; 20:30,31, 36. Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 2 Peter 3:9, 37. Matthew 10:32,33; Romans 10:9,10, Colossians 3:1,2 38. Mark 16:15,16; John 3:3-5; Acts 2:38; 22:16; 1 Peter 3:21, 39. 2 Corinthians 5:16



## Chapter 6



# GOSPEL REIGN OF KING JESUS

No matter what happens in the world today, one thing is true: Jesus Christ now reigns over all that exists. He is in control even of our physical world, and the worlds beyond our galaxy. All people on earth are under His kingdom reign. Even Satan and demons are contained by His authority. Regardless of what may happen on earth, or things in the spiritual world, we can be assured that King Jesus has the supreme authority over all things in heaven and on earth. All things are under control.

There are some exciting facts about this reign. Among the approximately three hundred Old Testament prophecies concerning Jesus, the Messiah (Gr. “Christ”), the prophecies of Daniel 2 and 7 refer specifically to Jesus’ kingdom reign and the establishment of His reign as King of kings and Lord of all lords after the good news of His ascension.

Six centuries before Jesus was born into the world, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon in Daniel 2 was given a vision by God. The vision was of an image that had a head of gold, breast and arms of silver, belly of brass, and feet and legs part of iron and part of clay.<sup>1</sup> Daniel interpreted this vision by emphasizing what would take place during the fourth world kingdom. This amazing vision was a prophecy of four world kingdoms.<sup>2</sup> The head of gold was the Babylonian Kingdom; the breast and arms of silver was the Medo-Persian Kingdom; the belly of brass was the Greek Kingdom; the feet and legs of part iron and part clay was the Roman Kingdom. It was in the days of the Roman Kingdom that God revealed that a new kingdom would be established.<sup>3</sup> This prophecy has been fulfilled!

Daniel 7 was a parallel prophecy of the same four world kingdoms of Daniel 2. In the Daniel 7 vision, Daniel foresaw the ascension of the Son of Man (the Christ) to the Ancient of Days (God).<sup>3</sup> In the prophecy, it was pictured that when the Son of Man ascended to His throne, kingdom reign and dominion would be given to Him.<sup>4</sup>

The prophecies of Daniel 2 and 7, with many other Old Testament prophecies, speak of the gospel resurrection and ascension of Jesus to the right hand of the Father. These were prophecies of Jesus who would ascend to be King over all things. His kingship would begin when He was seated on the throne of God. On the throne, He would function as both a priest and king. God's house would be the spiritual dwelling into which people from all nations would flow as they were drawn by gospel atonement of King Jesus on the cross.

### A. Jesus and John spoke of the kingdom to come.

As the forerunner of Jesus, John the Baptist was the one crying in the wilderness of Palestine in order to prepare the way for the Messiah. This would be the Messiah who would eventually be crowned King of kings at the time of His coronation. In preparation for the coming coronation, John proclaimed, "*Prepare the way of the Lord; make His paths straight.*"<sup>5</sup> Jesus followed John's preparation for the coming kingship. He proclaimed to Pilate, "*My kingdom is not of this world.*"<sup>6</sup> Before His crucifixion, Jesus also told Pilate that He was born for the purpose of being a king.<sup>7</sup>

### 1. John announced Jesus' kingdom reign.

John preached, "*Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is **at hand.***"<sup>8</sup> The word "kingdom" refers to reign and rule. The phrases "of heaven," or "of God" define the origin of the reign and rule. Jesus' reign proceeds from God out of heaven. At the time John and Jesus spoke, the phrase "at hand" referred John's audience. The use of this phrase indicated the nearness or immediate establishment of the kingdom reign from heaven.

In reference to John's ministry, Jesus' kingdom reign was soon to be established. It was not a kingdom that would be established over two thousand years in the future after the time John first preached this message. It was a kingdom that was to be established in the first century, not the twenty-first century.

### 2. Jesus announced His kingdom.

After John, Jesus prophesied, "*The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is **at hand.***"<sup>9</sup> In order to emphasize the immediate nature of the establishment of His kingdom reign, Jesus said that some of His immediate disciples would not die before they witnessed the establishment of His kingdom.<sup>10</sup>

### 3. Jesus announced His church.

During His ministry, Jesus asked His disciples, “*Who do you say that I am?*”<sup>11</sup> Peter answered, “*You are the Christ [Messiah], the Son of the living God.*”<sup>12</sup> Peter recognized that Jesus was the prophesied Messiah (Christ) because He had fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies concerning His coming and work.<sup>13</sup> He was the Son of God because the Father worked mighty miracles through Him to prove that He was who He said He was.<sup>14</sup> The Messiahship and Sonship of Jesus are the “rock” upon which the church is founded.<sup>15</sup>

In Matthew 16:19, Jesus also spoke of His kingdom. He continued to explain to Peter, “*And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven.*” The figure “keys” referred to Peter’s privilege to personally reveal on earth the kingdom reign of Jesus from heaven. Peter was the first person to officially and publicly announce on earth the kingdom reign of Jesus in heaven. Those who would respond to the gospel of the kingdom reign of Jesus would compose the church of the Lord Jesus Christ on earth.

### B. Fulfillment of kingdom prophecies:

The disciples of Jesus were in Jerusalem on Pentecost in A.D. 30 when God poured out the Holy Spirit upon the twelve apostles.<sup>16</sup> This outpouring fulfilled the prophecy of Joel that God had made centuries before.<sup>17</sup> It was God’s signal to those on earth that Jesus’ reign had officially begun. The church was to begin through those who would respond to the gospel reign of King Jesus. The gospel reign of Jesus began at the ascension of Jesus. The church began about a week later when Peter announced on earth the gospel reign of King Jesus.

#### 1. Old Testament prophecy was fulfilled in Acts 2.

In the days of the Roman kings, the events of Acts 2 fulfilled the kingdom prophecies of both Daniel 2 and 7.<sup>18</sup> Jesus had already ascended to the right hand of the Father and was reigning as King by the time the Acts 2 events took place.<sup>19</sup>

a. Peter stood up on Pentecost and made the first official announcement of the reign of the resurrected and ascended Jesus to the throne of God in heaven.<sup>20</sup>

b. Peter preached on Pentecost that Jesus was at the right hand

of God with all His enemies as His footstool.<sup>21</sup>

2. The church began when people first responded to the first announcement of Jesus' kingdom reign.

Peter preached the lordship of Jesus.<sup>22</sup> People believed and responded by repentance and baptism.<sup>23</sup> When submissive men and women obey Peter's instructions today, they too are added to the existing church of Christ.<sup>24</sup>

The church began in the first century when submissive people first responded to the first official announcement of the kingship of Jesus. Today, every time someone submits to the kingdom reign of Jesus, the will of the Father is done on earth in the heart of that person as it is done in heaven.<sup>25</sup> The kingdom comes into the hearts of those who have submitted to Jesus.<sup>26</sup>

The church is the assembly of all those who have submitted to King Jesus throughout the world. All the church is made up of submitted subjects, but the kingdom reign of Jesus extends from beyond the church of submitted subjects. The submitted

recognize the power and authority that King Jesus now has. The disobedient of the world over which Jesus also reigns do not recognize or submit to the reign as King of kings.

- a. All authority has now been given to King Jesus.<sup>27</sup>
- b. He is King of kings and Lord of lords.<sup>28</sup>
- c. King Jesus is now far above all principality, power, might and dominion.<sup>29</sup>
- d. All things are now put under the feet of King Jesus.<sup>30</sup>
- e. King Jesus is now exalted above every name.<sup>31</sup>
- f. All angels and authorities have been made subject to the King of kings.<sup>32</sup>
- g. The creation is now under the control of the Lord of lords.<sup>33</sup>
- h. Though we do not see everything now under the kingdom reign of King Jesus, this does not mean that He is not reigning over all things.<sup>34</sup>

We must not minimize the gospel reign of King Jesus. If we do, then we attack a special part of the gospel. It was good news that the incarnate Son of God died for our sins. But it is also good news that He is now reigning as King of kings.

**Scripture Footnotes:** **1.** Daniel 2:31-35, **2.** Daniel 2:36-45, **3.** Daniel 2:44, **3.** Daniel 7:13, **4.** Daniel 7:14; see also the prophecies of 2 Samuel 7:12,13; Psalm 16:8-11; 110:1; Isaiah 2:1-5; Joel 2:28-32; Zechariah 6:12,13; Micah 4:1-3, **5.** Matthew 3:3; see Isaiah 40:3; Malachi 3:1, **6.** John 18:36, **7.** John 18:37, **8.** Matthew 3:1,2, **9.** Mark 1:14,15, **10.** Mark 9:1; see Luke 9:27, **11.** Matthew 16:15, **12.** Matthew 16:16, **13.** Luke 24:44, **14.** John 20:30,31; see John 3:2, **15.** Matthew 16:18, **16.** Acts 2:1-4, **17.** Joel 2:28-32; Acts 2:16-24, **18.** Daniel 2:44; Luke 2:1-3, **19.** Daniel 7:13,14; Acts 1:9-11, **20.** Acts 2:29-33; see 2 Samuel 7:13,14, **21.** Psalm 110:1; Acts 2:25-28,34,35, **22.** Acts 2:36, **23.** Acts 2:37,38, **24.** Acts 2:41,47, **25.** Matthew 6:9,10, **26.** Luke 17:20,21, **27.** John 13:3; 17:2; Matthew 28:18, **28.** 1 Timothy 6:15, **29.** Ephesians 1:20,21, **30.** Ephesians 1:22, **31.** Philippians 2:9, **32.** 1 Peter 3:22, **33.** Hebrews 1:3, **34.** Hebrews 2:8



## Chapter 7



# OBEDIENCE TO THE GOSPEL

When someone discovers that God the Son was incarnate in the flesh of man for our eternal salvation, he or she should be in wonder concerning the great love that God has for us. When one sees the incarnational offering of the body of Jesus Christ on the cross for our sins, he or she should be moved in appreciation for the great sacrifice that was made on our behalf. And then, when we see the gospel resurrection of the buried Jesus, our hearts should sing with joy.

But the story of the gospel journey of Jesus does not stop there. There was also the gospel of the ascension and coronation. Though we knew Jesus of Nazareth according to His ministry in the flesh, as is explained in the historical records of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, we no longer know Him simply by His earthly ministry. We know Jesus now as King Jesus who is seated at the right hand of God. This is the present gospel reign of Jesus as King of kings and Lord of lords. It is only natural, therefore, that we would respond to this good news of God the Son. Obedience to this gospel message is thus necessary in order for us to connect in a covenant relationship with the King. This brings us to obedience to the gospel by baptism into the name of King Jesus.

Since the words “baptism” and “baptize” are mentioned several times in the New Testament, we must assume that this is a very important subject, especially in reference to our covenant relationship with God. Thousands of people were baptized in the first century. Thousands were baptized in order to come into a covenant agreement with King Jesus. Millions since the first century have also been baptized for the same reason that the early believers were baptized. They were baptized for the forgiveness of their sins. Upon faith and repentance, anyone today can also be baptized for the same reasons people were baptized two thousand years ago.

The Greek word *baptizo* that is used in the New Testament was first trans-



literated in English Bibles with the new English word “baptize.” In the transliteration of the word *baptizo*, the equivalent sounds of the Greek letters were brought over into the English language to produce the words “baptize” and “baptism.”

The Greek definition of *baptizo* is “to dip,” “to plunge,” “to immerse,” or “to overwhelm.” The most common definition is “immerse.” Therefore, when the words “baptize” or “baptism” are used in the English Bible in reference to one’s salvation, the meaning of immersion must be understood. When people were immersed in the first century, they were immersed in “much water.”<sup>1</sup>

### A. The one baptism:

Throughout the New Testament, six baptisms are mentioned:

1. John’s baptism (immersion) unto repentance.<sup>2</sup>
2. Baptism into the responsibility and burden of leadership.<sup>3</sup>
3. Baptism with the Holy Spirit.<sup>4</sup>
4. Baptism with fire.<sup>5</sup>
5. Israel’s baptism in the cloud.<sup>6</sup>
6. Baptism in water for remission of sins.<sup>7</sup>

When Paul wrote the Ephesian letter in A.D. 62, he proclaimed that there was **only one valid baptism at that time**.<sup>8</sup> This is baptism in water for forgiveness of sins that was first preached by the apostles on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2:38. This is the only valid baptism today.

### B. Candidates for baptism:

In order to be a candidate to be baptized, the following must happen:

1. Only those who can be taught are to be immersed.<sup>9</sup>
2. Only those who can understand the command to be immersed are to be immersed.<sup>10</sup>
3. Only men and women are to be immersed.<sup>11</sup>
4. Only those who can hear the teaching of the gospel are to be immersed.<sup>12</sup>
5. Only those who can believe the gospel are to be immersed.<sup>13</sup>
6. Only those who can receive the message of the gospel are to be immersed.<sup>14</sup>
7. Only those who can repent of their sins are to be immersed.<sup>15</sup>

Because of the preceding prerequisites, baptism is only for adults who can make a free-moral choice to be immersed into Christ.

### C. The purpose of baptism:

The New Testament contains the historical records of thousands of examples of people who believed the gospel and were immersed in the first century.<sup>16</sup> These people were immersed in obedience to the gospel for the remission of their sins.

#### 1. Baptism is obedience to the gospel.

The gospel was revealed through several historical events: It was revealed through the incarnation of God the Son. It was revealed through His crucifixion and death for our sins. The gospel was also revealed in the event of His burial and resurrection to give us hope of eternal life.<sup>17</sup> After His resurrection, Jesus continued in His gospel mission for us by the event of the gospel ascension, and now, His gospel kingdom reign over all things. These historical events are communicated to us through the inspired word of God. Unless one hears, believes, and obeys the

gospel, he or she cannot be saved.<sup>18</sup> When one is baptized, he or she is buried with Christ into His death in order to be raised from the waters of baptism to walk in newness of life.<sup>19</sup> Therefore, the action of *baptizo* is immersion into the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus in order to be saved.

#### 2. Immersion is for the remission of sins.

When one is immersed with Jesus in obedience to the gospel, he or she comes into contact with the blood of Jesus. One thus receives forgiveness of all past sins.<sup>20</sup> In the mind of God, one's sins are washed away.<sup>21</sup> God subsequently adds the immersed believer to the church of His people who are in a covenant relationship with Him.<sup>22</sup> Baptism, therefore, stands between being lost outside Christ and saved in Christ. It is necessary, therefore, that one be baptized into Christ. Baptism is a response and obedience of the gospel. When one submits to the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus by immersion, he or she receives great spiritual blessings from God. The following things occur in the

spiritual realm of his or her spiritual regeneration:

- a. One walks in newness of life.<sup>23</sup>
- b. One becomes a new creature.<sup>24</sup>
- c. One comes before God with a good conscience.<sup>25</sup>
- d. One puts on Christ.<sup>26</sup>
- e. One becomes an obedient subject of Christ.<sup>27</sup>
- f. One becomes a part “of Christ.”<sup>28</sup>
- g. One comes into a covenant relationship with Christ.<sup>29</sup>
- h. One comes into Christ where he or she receives the following:
  - All spiritual blessings<sup>30</sup>
  - Redemption by Jesus’ blood<sup>31</sup>
  - Forgiveness of sins<sup>32</sup>
  - Sanctification from sin<sup>33</sup>
  - Life in a state of no condemnation<sup>34</sup>
  - Life as a new creation in Christ<sup>35</sup>
  - Eternal life with Jesus<sup>36</sup>
  - Salvation for eternal life<sup>37</sup>

## D. Examples of baptism:

There are many examples in the New Testament where believing men and women obeyed the gospel by immersion in water for the forgiveness of their sins.

1. The Jews on Pentecost<sup>38</sup>
2. The Samaritans<sup>39</sup>
3. The Ethiopian eunuch<sup>40</sup>
4. Saul of Tarsus<sup>41</sup>
5. Cornelius and his household<sup>42</sup>

6. Lydia and her household<sup>43</sup>

7. The Philippian jailor and his household<sup>44</sup>

8. The Corinthians<sup>45</sup>

In reference to baptism, we must always remember the following points because baptism connects us with God:

- Faith, repentance and confession are unto salvation.<sup>46</sup>
- Baptism, however, is into Christ where there is salvation.<sup>47</sup>
- Men are redeemed by the sacrificial blood of Jesus.<sup>48</sup>
- Redemption by the blood is in Christ.<sup>49</sup>
- In order to come into Christ, one must be immersed.<sup>50</sup>
- Jesus sanctified the church by His blood because every member of the body came into contact with the blood of Jesus at the time of their immersion.<sup>51</sup>
- Jesus continues to sanctify the members of the body by His blood as they walk in the light of the gospel.<sup>52</sup>
- Only the sanctified are in the body of Christ.<sup>53</sup>
- In order to be sanctified by the blood of Jesus in Christ, one must be immersed into the body of Christ.<sup>54</sup>
- If one has been immersed for the

wrong reasons, he should be immersed again for the right reasons.<sup>55</sup>

- When one responds to the gos-

pel by baptism into Christ, this person now knows Jesus as He now is as the King of kings who is reigning in heaven.<sup>56</sup>

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**Scriptures Footnotes:** **1.** John 3:23, **2.** Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:4, **3.** Matthew 20:22,23, **4.** Matthew 3:11; Acts 1:5, **5.** Matthew 3:11, **6.** 1 Corinthians 10:1,2, **7.** Acts 2:38, **8.** Ephesians 4:5, **9.** Matthew 28:19,20, **10.** Acts 2:38, **11.** Acts 8:12, **12.** Mark 16:15,16; John 6:45, **13.** Mark 16:16; John 8:24; 8:12, **14.** Acts 2:41, **15.** Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 17:30; 2 Peter 3:9, **16.** Acts 2:41; 5:14; 6:7; 8:6,12, **17.** 1 Corinthians 15:1-4, **18.** 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; 1 Peter 4:17, **19.** Romans 6:3-6; Colossians 2:12, **20.** Acts 2:38, **21.** Acts 22:16; Titus 3:5, **22.** Acts 2:47, **23.** Romans 6:4, **24.** 2 Corinthians 5:17, **25.** 1 Peter 3:21, **26.** Galatians 3:27, **27.** John 3:3-5, **28.** 1 Corinthians 1:12,13, **29.** Romans 6:3; Galatians 3:26,27, **30.** Ephesians 1:3, **31.** Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:14, **32.** Ephesians 1:7, **33.** 1 Corinthians 1:2; 1 John 1:7, **34.** Romans 8:1, **35.** 2 Corinthians 5:17, **36.** 1 John 5:11, **37.** 2 Timothy 2:10; Acts 4:12; 1 Peter 3:21, **38.** Acts 2:41-47, **39.** Acts 8:5-13, **40.** Acts 8:26-40, **41.** Acts 9:17,18; 22:16, **42.** Acts 10:34-48, **43.** Acts 16:14,15, **44.** Acts 16:30-34, **45.** Acts 18:8, **46.** Romans 10:9,10; 2 Corinthians 7:10, **47.** 2 Timothy 2:10; 1 Peter 3:21, **48.** Acts 20:28; Revelation 5:9, **49.** Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:14, **50.** Galatians 3:27, **51.** Hebrews 13:12; Revelation 7:14, **52.** 1 John 1:7, **53.** 1 Corinthians 1:2; 6:11, **54.** 1 Corinthians 12:13, **55.** Acts 19:1-6, **56.** 2 Corinthians 5:16; 1 Timothy 6:15



## Chapter 8



# CHURCH OF GOSPEL-LIVING SAINTS

The word “church” is used in the New Testament to refer to the people of God who have obeyed the gospel by immersion into the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus. The Greek word *ekklesia* that is translated with the English word “church,” comes from two different Greek words, one meaning “out” and the other meaning “to call.” The word was originally used in Greek culture to refer to a general assembly of citizens or leaders of a community who were “called out” for a special community meeting. In the New Testament the word “church” is used primarily to refer to God’s people who have been called out of the world. The church is God’s special holy nation of redeemed people whose citizenship is in heaven.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, whenever we use the word “church,” we must think about people, not buildings. Christians can never go to “the church.” They are the church of people who go to an assembly of Christians.

The church is made up of those on earth who have submitted to the reign of King Jesus from heaven. The kingdom of King Jesus is revealed through His reign from heaven, but the church of His disciples are those on earth who have submitted to His kingdom reign. All the church, therefore, is composed of kingdom subjects, but not all the kingdom of King Jesus is confined to the church of submitted subjects.

The church is composed of those in whose hearts Jesus now reigns.<sup>2</sup> Whenever the will of God is done on earth in the hearts of men as it is done in heaven,<sup>3</sup> then the church exists. It is for this reason that all the church is under the reign of Jesus, but not all the kingdom of Jesus is the church, for angels, spiritual principalities and earthly governments are all under the kingship of Jesus, though they are not members of the church.<sup>4</sup>

- A. Prophecy of the kingdom and church:** of A.D. 30. The historical record of this establishment is in Acts 2. The establishment of the church took place when people first submitted to the first official announcement of the kingdom
- The church of Christ was established in Jerusalem on the Pentecost

reign of Jesus. The historical record of Acts 2 is an account of those who first responded to the kingdom reign of Jesus.

1. Jesus ascended to heaven about a week before Pentecost.<sup>5</sup>
2. The Holy Spirit was poured out to fulfill prophecy that would indicate a new beginning.<sup>6</sup>
3. According to prophecy, the events of Pentecost in Acts 2 took place in the last days of national Israel.<sup>7</sup>
4. People of all nations were added to the body of believers on that day, and the gospel went from Jerusalem into all the world.<sup>8</sup>
5. A new covenant was established between God and those who obeyed the gospel.<sup>9</sup>

## **B. Bible description of obedient subjects:**

There are several references in the New Testament to those who were the early church. These references explain the relationship the members of the body have with one another and God. The following words of identity, therefore, explain the relational nature of the body of Christ.

1. Disciples<sup>10</sup>
2. Brethren<sup>11</sup>
3. Christians<sup>12</sup>

4. Members<sup>13</sup>
5. Saints<sup>14</sup>
6. Servants<sup>15</sup>
7. Children of God<sup>16</sup>
8. Priests<sup>17</sup>

## **C. Bible description of God's people:**

The New Testament references to the body of members as a whole reveals who owns the church. The emphasis of phrases that refer to God's people as a whole focuses on God, not man. For this reason, there is no one specific reference to the church as a name, lest people start naming the church in order to divide gospel-obedient disciples from one another.

1. Church of God<sup>18</sup>
2. Bride of Christ<sup>19</sup>
3. Body of Christ<sup>20</sup>
4. Church of the Lord<sup>21</sup>
5. Church of Christ<sup>22</sup>
6. Flock of God<sup>23</sup>
7. House of God<sup>24</sup>
8. Temple of God<sup>25</sup>

## **D. The Christian's covenant with God:**

Those who have submitted to the lordship of Jesus have come into a saving covenant relationship with God.<sup>26</sup> As the people of Israel as a

chosen nation in the Old Testament, so is the family of God's people today. They are a family fellowship that is in a special covenant relationship with God.

1. Christians are in a personal covenant fellowship with God.<sup>27</sup>
2. Christians have been purchased and purified by the blood of Jesus, the Son of God.<sup>28</sup>
3. Christians are a holy priesthood of God who daily function as priests for God to the world.<sup>29</sup>
4. Christians are a holy nation of God who are spiritually motivated by the gospel.<sup>30</sup>
5. Christians have a heavenly citizenship, though they are citizens of nations of this world.<sup>31</sup>
6. Christians have been reconciled to God through their obedience to the gospel.<sup>32</sup>
7. Christians maintain a faith that is built on the Son of God.<sup>33</sup>

## **E. Organic function of the body of Christ:**

Jesus is the only head of the body.<sup>34</sup> He rules from heaven by the authority of His word.<sup>35</sup> Organic means that Christians function on earth as a body of people who are united in heart through their common obedience to the gospel.

### **1. Jesus is Head, King and Priest:**

As our Head, Jesus seeks to direct our lives through His word.<sup>36</sup> As our King, we voluntarily submit to His lordship in our hearts.<sup>37</sup> As our High Priest, we trust in Jesus to have completely sanctified of us sin at the cross.<sup>38</sup>

- a. **Head:** From heaven, Jesus is the only spiritual head of His body that is directed by the gospel.<sup>39</sup>
- b. **King:** Jesus is the King of all things.<sup>40</sup> He reigns over all.<sup>41</sup> The Father has subjected all things in both the spiritual world and material world to His reign.<sup>42</sup> Therefore, Jesus is not only the King of those who are submitted subjects, but also all that has been created.
- c. **High Priest:** Jesus is our High Priest who is seated at the right hand of the Father in heaven.<sup>43</sup> He makes intercession for all Christians.<sup>44</sup> Being our High Priest means that Christians are priest on earth who minister to those of this world.

### **2. Shepherds serve by the example of their gospel living:**

- a. A plurality of qualified servant elders<sup>45</sup> are designated by the members in the church in order to offer spiritual service, guidance and counseling for the flock of God.<sup>46</sup>

- b. Elders of the church are also referred to in the New Testament as “presbyters” (those who are older in age),<sup>47</sup> “overseers,” (or, “bishops” in some translations),<sup>48</sup> and “pastors,” or “shepherds” (those who care for the needs of the flock).<sup>49</sup>
- c. Elders organically function spiritually in order to lead spiritually through the example of their gospel lifestyles,<sup>50</sup> to care for the needs of the people,<sup>51</sup> to guard the flock from false teaching,<sup>52</sup> and to admonish the church through teaching of the word of God.<sup>53</sup>
- 3. Deacons, or servants, serve in special needs:
  - a. Deacons are designated to serve the body when special needs arise.<sup>54</sup>
  - b. Deacons must have qualities and qualifications of work and behavior before they are designated as special servants for the church.<sup>55</sup>
- D. Evangelists preach the word of God to the lost:**

It is the mission of the body of Christ to preach the gospel to the world. In order to accomplish this task, there are those among the members of the universal body who step forward to go into all the world. It is the primary work of an evangelist to do the following:

1. Proclaim the good news (the gospel) to the lost.<sup>56</sup>
2. Proclaim the truth of the word of God to the church.<sup>57</sup>
3. Reprove, rebuke and exhort the disciples with longsuffering.<sup>58</sup>

#### **E. The organic function of the disciples of Christ:**

As a body filled with the Spirit of God,<sup>59</sup> the church is a vibrant community of people in this world who seek to accomplish the work of God to bring gospel-obedient people into eternity. Until the final consummation of all things when King Jesus returns, the body of Christ organically functions in three primary areas:

1. **Evangelism:** Disciples of Jesus preach and teach the gospel to the world.<sup>60</sup>
2. **Benevolence:** Disciples of Jesus care for the needy and do good works for all people.<sup>61</sup>
3. **Edification:** Disciples of Jesus edify themselves<sup>62</sup> in order that they are equipped to minister in all good things.<sup>63</sup>

#### **F. The worship of the disciples of Jesus:**

Though every day for a disciple of Jesus is a day of worship that is



expressed through service to one's community,<sup>64</sup> Sunday is a special day of worship together as an assembly of God's people. Christians come together in order to celebrate the gospel of the incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection, ascension and kingdom reign of King Jesus. They do this in the celebration of the Lord's Supper in remembrance of Jesus.<sup>65</sup> Every day disciples worship through spiritual songs to God and the admonition of one another.<sup>66</sup> They worship through preaching and teaching the word of God.<sup>67</sup> They worship in daily

prayers<sup>68</sup> They worship by discussing and implementing good works.<sup>69</sup> They offer worship service to help those who are in need, especially those who are in need of the gospel.<sup>70</sup>

Jesus is coming again to consume all things and save His body of believers. In order to be saved from this world when Jesus comes, one must be a part of the one body for which Jesus died.<sup>71</sup> Therefore, one must be baptized into the body of Christ in order to be saved when Jesus comes again.<sup>72</sup>

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**Scriptures Footnotes:** **1.** Acts 20:28; Philippians 3:20,21; Titus 2:14; 1 Peter 1:18,19; 2:9, **2.** Luke 17:20,21, **3.** Matthew 6:10, **4.** Ephesians 1:20-22; 1 Peter 3:22, **5.** Daniel 2:44; 7:13,14; see Acts 1:9-11, **6.** Joel 2:28-32; see Acts 2:1-4,16-24, **7.** Joel 2:28; Isaiah 2:1-5; see Acts 2:16,17; Hebrews 1:1,2, **8.** Isaiah 2:1-5; Micah 4:1-3; see Luke 24:47; Acts 2:41,47, **9.** Jeremiah 31:31-34; see Hebrews 8:6-18, **10.** Acts 11:26, **11.** Philippians 4:21; 1 Peter 2:17, **12.** Acts 11:26; 26:28; 1 Peter 4:16, **13.** 1 Corinthians 12:27, **14.** Romans 1:7; Ephesians 1:1; Philippians 1:1, **15.** Romans 16:1,2, **16.** Galatians 3:26; 1 John 3:1,2, **17.** 1 Peter 2:5,9; Revelation 1:6, **18.** 1 Corinthians 1:2, **19.** Revelation 21:9, **20.** Ephesians 1:22,23, **21.** Acts 20:28, **22.** Romans 16:16, **23.** 1 Peter 5:2,3, **24.** 1 Timothy 3:15, **25.** 2 Corinthians 6:16, **26.** Hebrew 10:15-18, **27.** John 15:4; 1 Corinthians 1:9; 1 John 1:3, **28.** Acts 20:28; Ephesians 1:7,14; Titus 2:14; Hebrews 1:3; 9:14; 1 John 1:7, **29.** 1 Peter 2:5; Revelation 1:6; 5:10; 20:6, **30.** 1 Peter 2:9, **31.** Ephesians 2:6,19; Philippians 3:20,21, **32.** 2 Corinthians 5:18-21; Colossians 1:20-22, **33.** Matthew 16:15-19; 1 Corinthians 3:10,11, **34.** Ephesians 4:4-6, **35.** John 12:48, **36.** Matthew 11:28,29; John 12:48; Revelation 3:20, **37.** Luke 17:20,21, **38.** 1 John 1:7, **39.** Ephesians 5:23; Colossians 1:18, **40.** John 18:36,37; 1 Timothy 6:15; Revelation 3:21, **41.** Matthew 28:18; 1 Peter 3:22, **42.** Isaiah 9:6,7; Ephesians 1:20-22; Philippians 2:9,10, **43.** Hebrews 4:14-16; 8:1,6, **44.** Hebrews 7:25; 9:24; 1 John 2:1, **45.** 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9, **46.** Acts 14:23; 20:17; Philippians 1:1; Titus 1:5, **47.** Acts 11:30; 14:23; 15:2,4,6,22; 1 Timothy 5:17, **48.** Acts 20:28; 1 Timothy 3:1, **49.** Ephesians 4:11; 1 Peter 5:2, **50.** 1 Timothy 5:17, **51.** 1 Peter 5:1-3; James 5:14,15, **52.** Acts 20:28-32; Ti 1:9, **53.** 1 Thessalonians 5:12,13, **54.** Acts 6:1-6; Philippians 1:1, **55.** 1 Timothy 3:8-10,12,13, **56.** Matthew 28:19,20; Mark 16:15; Romans 1:15; 10:14,15; 1 Corinthians 9:16; 1 Peter 1:25, **57.** 1 Timothy 1:3-10; 4:1-3; 6:11-16; 2 Timothy 2:2; Titus 3:8, **58.** 2 Timothy 4:1,2, **59.** 1 Corinthians 6:19, **60.** Matthew 28:19,20; Mark 16:15,16; Luke 24:46,47; Acts 5:42; 6:7; 8:4; Colossians 1:23, **61.** Matthew 6:1-4; 7:11,12; 25:31-46; Luke 4:18; 6:30,31; 10:25-37; 14:12-14; Acts 2:44,45; 4:32-37; Galatians 2:10; 6:10; 1 Timothy 5:3-16; James 1:27; 2:14-26; 1 John 3:17,18, **62.** 1 Corinthians 14:3-5,12,16, **63.** Acts 14:22,23; Ephesians 4:11-16; 5:19; 6:10-18; Hebrews 10:24,25, **64.** Romans 12:1,2, **65.** Matthew 26:26-29; Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 11:23-29, **66.** Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16, **67.** 2 Timothy 4:2, **68.** 1 Thessalonians 5:17, **69.** Acts 20:7; Hebrews 10:24,25, **70.** Romans 10:14,15; 1 Corinthians 16:1-3, **71.** Acts 20:28, **72.** Romans 6:3-6; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Galatians 3:26,27



## Chapter 9



# REVELATION OF THE GOSPEL

The Bible contains two written laws that God has given to man throughout history. The first is the Sinai law that was given specifically to Israel as the condition for keeping the covenant that God established with Israel at Mount Sinai. This law is also called the “law of Moses,”<sup>2</sup> the “law of God,”<sup>2</sup> the “law of the Lord,”<sup>3</sup> or simply, “the law.”<sup>4</sup> This law was to preserve Israel until the Messiah came and the gospel was revealed. It was given in order that Israel not follow after their own religious rites and rituals that was characteristic with the nations of the world.

Therefore is reference in the New Testament to a second law that is referred to as law of Christ. This law was brought into force after Jesus, the Messiah, died on the cross. This law was established when the first official announcement of Jesus’ reign in heaven was made on earth in A.D. 30 on the Jewish feast of Pentecost. The law of Christ and His covenant are superior to the Sinai law and covenant because the new covenant has a better hope,<sup>5</sup> better covenant with God,<sup>6</sup> better promises,<sup>7</sup> better sacrifices,<sup>8</sup> better possession,<sup>9</sup> better hope of resurrection,<sup>10</sup> and a better blood offering.<sup>11</sup> Those who have obeyed the gospel of Jesus Christ have come into this new covenant agreement with Jesus.<sup>12</sup> They are now subjects to the “law of the Spirit of life,”<sup>13</sup> which, in contrast to the Sinai law, is the “perfect law of liberty.”<sup>14</sup> This is the “law of Christ,” a law that brings freedom in Christ.<sup>15</sup>

### A. Origin of the Sinai law:

The Sinai law was given to the nation of Israel. It was given as a condition for Israel to keep the covenant that God established with the nation about 1,440 years before Jesus.

fifteenth century B.C.<sup>16</sup>

2. The Sinai law was given through angels,<sup>17</sup> to Moses for Israel.<sup>18</sup>
3. The Sinai law was given only to the Jews, the children of Israel.<sup>19</sup>

### B. Purpose of the Sinai law:

1. The Sinai law was given to Israel by God at Mount Sinai in the

The Sinai law was given only to Israel as a temporary law to preserve

and prepare Israel for a greater law that would come in the future of the nation. By giving Israel the Sinai law, God sought to preserve a segment of humanity until God the Son was incarnate into the world for the salvation of all men.

1. The Sinai law was a shadow of more glorious things to come.<sup>20</sup>
2. The Sinai law was a tutor, or headmaster, to guide, instruct and preserve Israel until the revelation of the gospel.<sup>21</sup>
3. The Sinai law was given to expose and correct sin.<sup>22</sup>
4. The Sinai law preserved Abraham's heritage until God's promise of the gospel<sup>23</sup> was revealed.<sup>24</sup>

### **C. Weakness of people under the Sinai law:**

The Sinai law was flawless for the purpose for which it was given to Israel. It was God's law, and thus, it was holy, just and good.<sup>25</sup> It was not given to Israel as a means for the Israelites to earn their salvation, for no one can keep law perfectly in order to save himself.<sup>26</sup> Therefore, the weakness of the law was not in the law itself. It was weak in reference to salvation because of the following:

1. Animal sacrifices of the Sinai

law could not in and of themselves take away sins.<sup>27</sup>

2. No one can ever be justified by meritorious works of law.<sup>28</sup> Therefore, salvation under both the Sinai law and the gospel is through an obedient faith that responds to the grace of God.<sup>29</sup>
3. Righteousness before God cannot be achieved by meritorious works of law.<sup>30</sup> By works of merit no one can receive life under any law,<sup>31</sup> for all people sin.<sup>32</sup>
4. Because everyone sins against law, God never intended that law-keeping make one perfect before Him.<sup>33</sup>
5. There was forgiveness for the Jews who lived under the Sinai law only in view of the sacrificial blood of Christ that was yet to come in the history of Israel.<sup>34</sup>

### **D. Abolishment of the Sinai law:**

The Sinai law was never intended to be a permanent law of God for Israel, for God promised Israel that a new covenant and law would eventually come in their future.<sup>35</sup> God intended that the Sinai law exist only until the time came for the revelation of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

1. The Sinai law was to be in force only until the time when the Seed (Christ) came into the world.<sup>36</sup>

2. Jesus came to fulfill the purpose for which the Sinai law was given, and thus, abolish it through the revelation of the gospel.<sup>37</sup>
  3. When Jesus died on the cross, the Sinai covenant was taken away, and thus, the law of that covenant was made void.<sup>38</sup> It was abolished<sup>39</sup> in order that the gospel covenant and law of Jesus be established.<sup>40</sup>
  4. Christians have been made dead to the Sinai law by the sacrificial body of Christ.<sup>41</sup>
  5. There was a change of priesthood when Jesus ascended to heaven.<sup>42</sup> Jesus became our High Priest.<sup>43</sup> Therefore, the change in priesthood meant that there also had to be a change from the Sinai law to the law of Christ.<sup>43</sup>
  6. Since the Sinai law was nullified at the cross, all Christians today are now free from its bondage.<sup>44</sup>
1. Jesus died in order to institute the gospel covenant of grace and faith that Christians have with God.<sup>46</sup>
  2. The revelation of the truth of the gospel came through Jesus.<sup>47</sup>
  3. God speaks to us today through His only begotten Son, Jesus.<sup>48</sup>
  4. Jesus is now the only way, truth and life.<sup>49</sup>
  5. At the final judgment, Christians will be judged by the words of Jesus<sup>50</sup> that are spirit and life.<sup>51</sup>
  6. At the final judgment, the standard by which all people will be judged is whether one has obeyed the gospel.<sup>52</sup>

### E. Establishment of the new law:

When Jesus came, He came with a new covenant and law for all men. This is a gospel law of grace and truth that has come to us through Jesus.<sup>45</sup> Eternal moral principles of the Sinai law continue in the law of Christ, but the Sinai law requirements in a covenant relationship with God has now passed away.

The Sinai law and the Old Testament Scriptures are not the same. The Old Testament contains the Sinai law, but the entirety of the Old Testament is not the law that was revealed at Mount Sinai through Moses.

Christians use the Old Testament Scriptures today as an inspired record for learning and admonition.<sup>53</sup> However, the Sinai law of the Old Testament is no longer binding on mankind. For example, Christians do not have to offer animal sacrifices or keep the rituals of the Jewish priesthood.

All people this side of the cross of Christ must submit to the gospel of Jesus Christ, for He died once and for all time for our sins.<sup>54</sup> All must now obey the good news of Jesus'

death for our sins and His resurrection for our hope. All people of the world today are asked to bow down to the present gospel reign of King Jesus.<sup>55</sup> If one submits to King Jesus, then there is the promise that through obedience to the gospel one will come into a covenant relationship with God.<sup>56</sup>

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**Scripture Footnotes:** **1.** Nehemiah 8:1, **2.** Nehemiah 8:8,14,18, **3.** Luke 2:22-24, **4.** John 1:17; Romans 7:7, **5.** Hebrews 7:19, **6.** Hebrew 7:22; 8:6, **7.** Hebrews 8:6, **8.** Hebrews 9:23, **9.** Hebrews 10:34, **10.** Hebrews 11:35, **11.** Hebrews 12:24, **12.** See Matthew 26:26-29, **13. Romans 8:2, 14.** James 1:25, **15.** Galatians 5:1,2; 6:2, **16.** Exodus 19:11,18-20; Deuteronomy 33:2; Nehemiah 9:13, **17.** Acts 7:38,53, **18.** Nehemiah 8:14; 9:14 John 1:17; 7:19, **19.** Deuteronomy 4:1,13; 5:1-5; Exodus 19:4-6; Nehemiah 8:1; Romans 3:1,2, **20.** Hebrews 10:1; Cl 2:16,17; see Jeremiah 31:31-34, **21.** Galatians 3:24,25; 4:4, **22.** Romans 3:20; 7:7, **23.** Genesis 12:1-3, **24.** Galatians 3:8,16-19, **25.** Romans 7:12, **26.** Romans 3:20; Galatians 2:16, **27.** Hebrews 10:4; 9:15, **28.** Acts 13:39; Romans 3:20,28; Galatians 2:16; 3:10,11; Hebrews 10:1-4, **29.** See Habakkuk 2:4; Romans 1:17; Galatians 3:11,12; Hebrews 10:38; James 2:14-26, **30.** Galatians 2:21, **31.** Galatians 3:21,22, **32.** Romans 3:10,23, **33.** Hebrews 7:18,19, **34.** Romans 3:27; Hebrews 9:15, **35.** Jeremiah 31:31-34, **36.** Galatians 3:19; 4:4, **37.** Matthew 5:17,18, **38.** Hebrews 10:9,10, **39.** Colossians 2:14; Ephesians 2:14-16, **40.** Hebrews 9:16,17, **41.** Romans 7:1-6, **42.** Hebrews 7:11-25, **43.** Hebrews 2:17; 8:1; 9:11, **43.** Hebrews 7:11-14, **44.** Galatians 4:21 - 5:1, **45.** John 1:17, **46.** Hebrews 9:15-18; 10:9, **47.** John 1:17; Titus 2:11-14, **48.** Hebrews 1:1,2; see Matthew 17:5; John 12:48, **49.** John 14:6; see Acts 4:12, **50.** John 12:48, **51.** John 6:63, **52.** 2 Thessalonians 1:6-9, **53.** Romans 15:4; 1 Corinthians 10:11, **54.** Galatians 6:2; Hebrews 5:9, **55.** Philippians 2:9-11; Hebrews 2:8, **56.** Acts 2:38; Romans 6:3-6; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9



## Chapter 10



# CHRISTIANS ONLY

Over two thousand years ago the disciples of Jesus were called Christians.<sup>1</sup> They did not have it easy in those days to carry such a reference to their belief. Being just a Christian in the midst of a world of confused religions was not easy then, and neither is it today.

There are also thousands of religious groups today throughout the world, each one being branded with their own unique rites, traditions, ritualistic ceremonies and names. Nevertheless, in the midst of so many confused religions, millions around the world have decided to leave religion in order to be Christians only. These people of faith seek to be Christians outside the bondage of religious institutions who seek to bind on the consciences of people those things God never bound. Therefore, millions are becoming just Christians because they have discovered the freedom in faith that the gospel of Jesus of Nazareth brings into one's life. It is truly an exhilarating paradigm shift from religion to gospel that so many in the world are now making.

In a world of conflicting and confusing religious beliefs and practices, being a Christian is a refreshing opportunity to release one's faith from the confines of religion. One can be a disciple of Christ without being a part of any religious institution. One can be just a Christian without giving one's allegiance to some religious organization that seeks to enroll one's membership, and thus, bring one into the bondage of religion.

This chapter is about how to begin this journey into being just a Christian. The word "Christian" means that one is "of Christ." As a Christian, therefore, one belongs to Christ. He or she is a follower of the person and teachings of Jesus Christ because of a voluntary response to the gospel of the incarnate Son of God. Since all Christians have responded to the good news of Jesus, they have all come together as the one universal body of Christ. This is a dynamic universal body of believers who seek to be free from the confines of religion, but submissive to the gospel reign of King Jesus.

## A. Why be a Christian:

Because Jesus fulfilled over 300 prophecies written about Him hundreds of years before He lived, we have no other choice but to believe that He was one who came directly from God. Here are only a few examples of these fulfilled prophecies:

1. It was prophesied that He would be a descendant of Abraham.<sup>2</sup>
2. It was prophesied that He would be born in Bethlehem.<sup>3</sup>
3. It was prophesied that He would be a sojourner in Egypt.<sup>4</sup>
4. It was prophesied that He would be a teacher of the Gentiles.<sup>5</sup>
5. It was prophesied that He would be a worker of miracles.<sup>6</sup>
6. It was prophesied that He would be betrayed.<sup>7</sup>
7. It was prophesied that He would be crucified, but would rise from the dead.<sup>8</sup>
8. It was prophesied that He would ascend to God in heaven.<sup>9</sup>

When the preceding example prophecies are combined with over three hundred prophecies in reference to Jesus, then there can be no other conclusion that Jesus' coming into the world was the foreordained plan of God. No other person in all of history could have fulfilled so many prophecies by accident.

## B. Unity of Christians:

God expects His people to be united throughout the world. Though there were individual assemblies of Christians in the first century as in Corinth<sup>10</sup> or Ephesus,<sup>11</sup> all local disciples were part of the one universal church.<sup>12</sup> Though Christians assembled at different places on Sunday did not mean that they were autonomous from one another.

There is only one church throughout the world that is made up of all those who are just Christians. God expects Christians to be united together as one body.<sup>13</sup> They are not to denominate themselves from one another. As obedient disciples of Jesus who have given themselves in service to God, they are to stand fast in the faith and strive together with one heart and soul against the works of Satan.<sup>14</sup> Through the power of the gospel and their desire for unity, they are a worldwide force against evil.

Inherent in their common obedience to the gospel throughout the world, Christians stand as one body of believers. The Lord has added every baptized believer to this one worldwide body. For this reason, therefore, the citizenship (membership) of all Christians is in heaven where their King is seated at the right hand of the Father.<sup>15</sup>

### **C. Prayer for unity among Christians:**

Jesus prayed that those who follow Him should be united as one.<sup>16</sup> He did not pray that we be satisfied with dividing ourselves into different denominations. All Christians throughout the world, who believe in Jesus and His word, strive to answer Jesus' prayer that the church be one united body. Christians strive to be united in order to call the unbelieving world into a covenant relationship with God through obedience to the gospel.<sup>17</sup> When Christians are motivated by the one gospel of Christ, they are brought together as the one body of Christ.

### **D. Being free as a Christian:**

Anyone of faith can be free as a Christian. Believers in Jesus can be Christians and free from the religions of man. Christians know that religion separates believers from one another, but the gospel brings them closer together. Those who have obeyed the gospel, therefore, are set free from being divided into different religious groups.

One can be free from the restrictions of religion as a Christian only by allowing the word of God to be his or her only authority in matters of faith. Since we will be judged only

by the word of Jesus,<sup>18</sup> then we are free in matters of faith to be accountable only to King Jesus. Since the written word of Christ is inspired by the Holy Spirit,<sup>19</sup> then we are free to allow this word alone to direct us in our efforts to live in response to the gospel.

Since the word of Jesus is our source of faith,<sup>20</sup> then we are free to allow it to be our only foundation for faith. It is not wrong to have religious traditions. However, religious traditions must never be bound on believers in a manner by which the traditions cause division among Christians.<sup>21</sup>

In order that the truth of the gospel make us truly free, we must agree to allow the word of God to be our final authority in matters of faith.<sup>22</sup> We must speak where the Bible speaks. But where the Bible is silent in matters of own personal opinions, we must allow freedom. Christians do not allow their opinions or traditions to separate them from one another. Because of their common obedience to the gospel, they seek to maintain their unity with one another in order that the world might believe in Jesus.

### **E. First Principles for Christians:**

Being a Christian means being a disciple who works for Jesus, for it is the gospel of Jesus' love for us that



motivate us into action. In order for anyone to be motivated by the gospel, the following are essential or fundamental beliefs that all Christians must maintain in their lives:

1. One must believe in the one true and living God.<sup>23</sup>
2. One must believe in the one incarnational Son of God who came into this world.<sup>24</sup>
3. One must believe in Jesus as the one King of kings and Lord of lords.<sup>25</sup>
4. One must believe in the one universal body of Christ.<sup>26</sup>
5. One must believe in the one Holy Spirit and His fruit.<sup>27</sup>
6. One must believe in the one gospel of the incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection, ascension, coronation, and consummation of all things when Jesus comes again.<sup>28</sup>
7. One must believe in the one baptism (immersion) in obedience to the gospel.<sup>20</sup>
8. One must believe in the one faith of the gospel.<sup>30</sup>
9. One must believe in holy and moral living in response to the gospel.<sup>31</sup>
10. One must believe in Jesus' behavioral principle of love.<sup>32</sup>

## **F. Gospel expectations of Christians:**

As a result of their commitment to Jesus, Christians expect to live the abundant life of spiritual and emotional peace in this world.<sup>33</sup> Christians know and expect all things to work together for their good.<sup>34</sup> They expect not to be tempted above what they are able to endure.<sup>35</sup> However, because of their commitment to be working disciples for their Lord Jesus, they expect persecution from those whom Satan is using to destroy the work of God.<sup>36</sup>

Christians remember that the word of God tells them not to be ashamed, but to glorify God by living as a Christian.<sup>37</sup> Since the disciples of Jesus are more than Christians in name only, they understand that living the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ will stir up persecution against them. But they also remember that the reward for faithful discipleship is eternal life in heaven.<sup>38</sup>

## **G. Anyone can be a Christian:**

In order to be a disciple of Jesus, one must first believe that Jesus is the Son of God.<sup>39</sup> One must then obey the gospel of Jesus by being baptized into Christ.<sup>40</sup> Jesus calls the world to Himself through the gospel of His death for your sins and resurrection for your hope.<sup>41</sup> If one accepts the call of Jesus through the gospel, then he or she can be just a Christian by obey-

ing the gospel. After obedience to the gospel, great things will then happen in one's life.<sup>42</sup> If one has been frustrated with a life in the world, then he or she should come to King Jesus who now reigns over all things. If one is frustrated with the division and confusion of religion, then he or she should seek to be just a Christian.

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**Scripture Footnotes:** **1.** Acts 11:26; 1 Peter 4:16, **2.** Genesis 12:1-3; Galatians 3:16, **3.** Micah 5:2; Matthew 2:1,3, **4.** Hosea 11:1; Matthew 2:15, **5.** Isaiah 42:1-4; Matthew 12:18-21, **6.** Isaiah 35:5,6; Luke 7:18-23, **7.** Zechariah 13:7; Matthew 26:55,56, **8.** Psalm 16:10; John 2:19-22. **9.** Psalm 110:1; Daniel 2:44; 7:13,14, **10.** 1 Corinthians 1:2, **11.** Acts 20:17, **12.** Romans 16:16, **13.** 1 Corinthians 1:10, **14.** Philippians 1:27; Colossians 1:2-16, **15.** Hebrews 8:1, **16.** John 17:20,21, **17.** Romans 6:3-6, **18.** John 12:48, **19.** 2 Timothy 3:16,17, **20.** Romans 10:17, **21.** Galatians 5:1; see Mark 7:1-9; **22.** John 8:32, **23.** Isaiah 44:8; Ephesians 4:4-6, **24.** John 1:1,2,14; Philippians 5:2-11, **25.** John 20:30,31; Ephesians 4:4-6; 1 Timothy 6:15, **26.** Colossians 1:18, **27.** Galatians 5:22,23, **28.** Galatians 1:6-9, **29.** Acts 2:38; Ephesians 4:4-6, **30.** Ephesians 4:4-6; Jd 3, **31.** Colossians 3:12-17; 1 Peter 1:15, **32.** John 13:34,35; 14:15, **33.** John 10:10; Philippians 4:6,7, **34.** Romans 8:28, **35.** 1 Corinthians 10:13, **36.** 2 Timothy 3:12, **37.** 1 Peter 4:16, see Acts 11:26; Matthew 5:10, **38.** Revelation 2:10, **39.** John 20:30,31, **40.** Galatians 3:26,27, **41.** 2 Thessalonians 2:14, **42.** Acts 2:38,47



## Chapter 11

# THE HOLY SPIRIT



The reference “Holy Spirit” is not a name, but the identity of one of the three of the Godhead. There is God the Father and God the Son, but God the Spirit has never referred to Himself with a name. He is simply the Spirit of God who is holy.

God the Father and Son are working in the world through God the Holy Spirit. When the Son of God ascended to assume headship over all things, God the Holy Spirit was sent to work through the inspired word of God in order to continue the work of the Son on earth. He was also poured out in order to work in the lives of the people of God until God the Son returns to consummate all things in reference to this world.

Though there is much confusion today concerning the work of the Spirit, one thing is certain: The Spirit will do His work among God’s saints regardless of our understanding of how He works. The Spirit’s work is not controlled by our knowledge of how or when He works. Since this is true, then we can be assured that the Spirit will work among the people of God according to how He seeks to work.

We know that the Spirit works to produce unity among believers. He works to produce unity among all those who have obeyed the gospel, for obedient believers have received the Spirit. Since the Bible was inspired by the Holy Spirit, and specifically the New Testament in reference to the revelation of the gospel, then the Spirit uses the written record of the gospel in the New Testament to reach the world.

Gospel-obedient disciples look to the word of God for an explanation of how the Spirit works in their lives. Since we can be deceived by the many confusing teachings of the religious world, the Spirit seeks to lead us through the word of God that He inspired to be written for our direction. Since Christians have the Spirit, they desire to work, therefore, by the direction of the Spirit-inspired word of God.

## A. **The work of God the Holy Spirit:**

We must always keep in mind that it is neither our desires nor knowledge of the Holy Spirit that determines whether the Spirit will work in our lives. The believer must allow God the Spirit to be the One in control of what He determines to do. If we do not walk by faith in this matter, then we will continually be frustrated concerning whether the Spirit is working on our behalf. We must be content with the fact that God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit will work as one in order to accomplish the purpose for which this world was created, that is, to bring people of faith into eternal dwelling with them.

### 1. The Spirit is one with God.

God the Spirit manifested Himself in the history of man in order to accomplish the work of the Godhead among those of this world. He is thus referred to in the Bible to be one with God the Father and Son.

- a. As a part of the Godhead, God the Spirit was in existence before the creation of the world.<sup>1</sup>
- b. The eternal Spirit was working in the beginning in creation as a part of the Godhead.<sup>2</sup>

- c. If one lies to the Spirit, he has actually lied to God the Spirit.<sup>3</sup>
- 2. God the Father and Son work in the world through God the Spirit.

The one true God manifested Himself to man through the work of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. God the Spirit now works as one with the Father and Son for the benefit of all Christians.

- a. The Spirit worked through the Son while the Son was on earth during His earthly ministry.<sup>4</sup>
- b. The Spirit now glorifies the Son, not Himself, while the Son reigns as King of kings.<sup>5</sup>
- c. The Spirit gives testimony to God the Son.<sup>6</sup>
- d. In the first century, the Spirit was first sent by the Father and Son to the twelve apostles in order to reveal all truth of the gospel.<sup>7</sup>
- e. The Spirit revealed all truth to the apostles that He heard from the Father and Son.<sup>8</sup>
- f. The Spirit revealed the mind of God to the first century apostles and prophets.<sup>9</sup>
- g. The word of God was written by the direction (inspiration) of the Spirit in order to continue the work of God among men.<sup>10</sup>

## **B. Attributes of the Holy Spirit:**

The nature and attributes of the Holy Spirit are the same as God the Father and Son. Therefore, there can never be a separation between the three. The Spirit is of the same nature and essence as God the Father and Son.

1. The Spirit is eternal.<sup>11</sup>
2. The Spirit is all-powerful (omnipotent).<sup>12</sup>
3. The Spirit is all-knowing (omniscient).<sup>13</sup>
4. The Spirit searches all things.<sup>14</sup>
5. The Spirit loves the saints.<sup>15</sup>
6. The Spirit is a personality that can be grieved,<sup>16</sup> lied to,<sup>17</sup> resisted,<sup>18</sup> despised,<sup>19</sup> blasphemed and sinned against.<sup>20</sup>

## **C. The early disciples and the Holy Spirit:**

When the prophecy of Joel 2:28 was fulfilled at the time the Spirit empowered the apostles on the Pentecost of A.D. 30 in Acts 2:1-4, the Spirit's work on earth began among Christians. The miraculous work of the Spirit continued until God's messengers, and their spoken and written word, were confirmed before the world. This confirmation was finalized, and subsequently recorded in order to continue throughout history

the fact that Jesus was the Christ and Son of God.<sup>21</sup> Upon reception of the Spirit when one is baptized, the Spirit continues His presence among Christians today in order to bring all things together for good.

### **1. The Christian and the Spirit in the first century:**

- a. In the first century, the inspired spoken word was miraculously confirmed before unbelievers by the Spirit.<sup>22</sup>
- b. In the absence of the written word in the first century, through the miraculous gifts the Spirit initially guided Christian teachers and prophets, whose teachings were inspired by the Spirit.<sup>23</sup>
- c. In order to mature the early disciples, miraculous gifts of the Spirit were given to the disciples by the laying on of the apostles' hands.<sup>24</sup>
- d. The miraculous confirming work of the Spirit before unbelievers ended with the completion of the written word of God in the first century.<sup>25</sup>
- e. All necessary truth for the disciples of Jesus was revealed in the first century, and subsequently recorded for the church until Jesus comes again.<sup>26</sup>
- f. The New Testament contains the truth of the gospel that was revealed by the Holy Spirit.<sup>27</sup>
- g. Christians must now rely on the

written word of God for direction from God and their knowledge of the gospel.<sup>28</sup>

- h. Christians are warned not to change, add to, or subtract from the Spirit-inspired written word of God.<sup>29</sup>

## **D. The Christian and the Spirit today:**

When the Holy Spirit completed His work of miraculously confirming the message of the gospel in the first century, this did not mean that He ceased to minister among the disciples of Jesus. His work continues to this day and will continue until the Lord Jesus comes to consummate all things.

1. The Spirit indwells the Christian as His word permeates their moral behavior.<sup>30</sup>
2. The Spirit sanctifies by instructing through the word of God how Christians should remain separate from the world.<sup>31</sup>
3. The Spirit strengthens.<sup>32</sup>
4. The Spirit comforts.<sup>33</sup>
5. The Spirit leads.<sup>34</sup>
6. The Spirit seals the Christian.<sup>35</sup>
7. The Spirit seeks to produce the fruit of the Spirit in our lives.<sup>36</sup>
8. The Spirit works today through the impact of the word of God on the heart of man to produce faith,<sup>37</sup> convert,<sup>38</sup> save,<sup>39</sup>

cleanse,<sup>40</sup> quicken,<sup>41</sup> give understanding,<sup>42</sup> admonish,<sup>43</sup> guard,<sup>44</sup> exhort,<sup>45</sup> instruct,<sup>46</sup> stir up,<sup>47</sup> purify the soul,<sup>48</sup> and enlighten the mind.<sup>49</sup>

## **E. The foundation of the work of the Spirit:**

The Spirit works today in ways that are beyond our complete understanding. However, He does explain in the Bible that He wants the Christian to maintain a life of self-control and dignity. To live in this way, the Spirit desires that we do the following:

1. Maintain emotional control of our free-moral choice, because we will give account of our behavior before Christ.<sup>50</sup>
2. Maintain unity upon the foundation of the gospel, because we must speak and live the one gospel.<sup>51</sup>
3. Maintain unity in purpose and work, because the members of the body worldwide must work as one body.<sup>52</sup>
4. Maintain control of our speech in order to speak with grace so as to be clearly understood. We must so speak because we will give account before God of every idle word that we speak.<sup>53</sup>
5. Maintain a studious life of the

word of God, because we are responsible before God to know the Scriptures.<sup>54</sup>

One blasphemes the Spirit by saying that the Spirit's instructions for salvation are not from God. One sins against the Spirit by rejecting the Spirit's instructions in the Bible as to how one must be saved.<sup>55</sup> But the Spirit seeks to convert people today

through the preaching of the gospel that is explained in the inspired word of God.<sup>56</sup> When one obeys the gospel, he or she is born again.<sup>57</sup> Therefore, one is born again when he or she obeys the Spirit's written instructions that one must believe and obey the gospel,<sup>58</sup> in order to come into a covenant relationship with God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.<sup>59</sup>

**1.** Genesis 1:1,2,26, **2.** Genesis 1:1,2; Job 26:13; Psalm 104:30; Hebrews 9:14, **3.** Acts 5:3,4, **4.** Matthew 3:16; 4:1; 12:28; Luke 4:1,14,18,21; John :34, **5.** John 16:13,14, **6.** John 15:26, **7.** John 14:26; 15:26, **8.** John 14:26; 16:13,14, **9.** 1 Corinthians 2:10-13; 2 Peter 1:20,21, **10.** 2 Timothy 3:16,17; 2 Peter 1:20,21; see Acts 20:32, **11.** Job 26:13; Hebrews 9:14, **12.** Genesis 1:2; Luke 4:1,14, **13.** Romans 8:26,27; 1 Corinthians 2:10-13, **14.** 1 Corinthians 2:10, **15.** Romans 15:30, **16.** Isaiah 63:10; Ephesians 4:30, **17.** Acts 5:3, **18.** Acts 7:51; 1 Thessalonians 5:19, **19.** Hebrews 10:29, **20.** Matthew 12:31,32; Mark 3:28,29; Luke 12:10, **21.** John 20:30,31, **22.** Mark 16:17-20; Hebrews 2:3,4, **23.** 1 Corinthians 12 – 14, **24.** Acts 8:18; Romans 1:11; 2 Timothy 1:6, **25.** 1 Co 13:8-13, **26.** 2 Timothy 3:16,17, **27.** 1 Corinthians 15:1-4; Ephesians 3:3-5, **28.** Acts 20:32; Ephesians 3:3-5; 2 Timothy 3:16,17; see Galatians 1:6-9; Jd 3; Revelation 22:18,19, **29.** Galatians 1:6-9; Jude 3; Revelation 22:18,19, **30.** 1 Corinthians 3:16; 2 Corinthians 6:16; Ephesians 2:22; 2 Timothy 1:14, **31.** 2 Thessalonians 2:13,14; see John 17:17; Acts 15:9; Ephesians 5:26; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; 1 Timothy 4:4,5, **32.** Acts 20:32; Ephesians 3:16,20; Colossians 1:10,11, **33.** Acts 9:31; see Romans 15:4; 2 Corinthians 7:6,7,13; 2 Thessalonians 2:16,17, **34.** Romans 8:14; Galatians 5:18,25; see Isaiah 48:17; Psalm 119:105; 2 Thessalonians 3:5, **35.** 2 Corinthians 1:21,22; Ephesians 1:13,14; 4:30, **36.** Galatians 5:22,23, **37.** John 20:30,31; Romans 10:17, **38.** James 1:18; 1 Peter 1:22,23, **39.** Acts 11:14; James 1:21, **40.** John 15:2; Ephesians 5:26, **41.** Psalm 119:40,93; John 6:63, **42.** Ephesians 3:4; 2 Timothy 3:15, **43.** 1 Corinthians 10:11, **44.** 2 Timothy 3:13-15, **45.** 1 Peter 5:12, **46.** 2 Timothy 3:16,17, **47.** 2 Peter 1:12,13, **48.** 1 Peter 1:22, **49.** Psalm 19:8; 119:130, **50.** 2 Corinthians 5:10, **51.** 1 Peter 4:11; see 1 Corinthians 1:10; Galatians 1:6-9; 1 John 4:1-4, **52.** 1 Corinthians 12:12-31; Colossians 3:12-17, **53.** Matthew 12:36,37; Colossians 4:6, **54.** Acts 17:11; 2 Timothy 2:15; see 2 Peter 3:15,16, **55.** Matthew 12:31,32; Mark 3:28-30; Luke 12:10, **56.** James 1:22, **57.** 1 Corinthians 4:15; 1 Peter 1:22,23, **58.** Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38, **59.** Matthew 28:19,20



## Chapter 12



# MIGHTY WONDERS OF GOD

God is not confined to the natural laws of this world. Neither does He dwell in a realm that is controlled by our natural laws. He is above nature. His existence is above the laws that control this physical world. In other words, God is supernatural. There are four different Greek words in the New Testament that explain how God has supernaturally intervened in our physical world.

**WONDERS (Gr. *teras*):** This word is never used alone in reference to the confirming miracles of God. It was always used with other words that referred to God's supernatural activity in the affairs of this world.<sup>1</sup> This word focused on the reaction of people to a miracle.<sup>2</sup> And in order to react, people had to perceive through their senses that the supernatural power of God was at work.

**SIGNS (Gr. *semeion*):** This word was used when God wanted to signal to unbelievers His presence with those He used as messengers to preach word of the gospel.<sup>3</sup> The work of God as a sign was visually perceived by the unbelievers who beheld the miracle. There was no faith involved in one's perception of a miracle as a sign. The miracle was so obvious that it produced faith in the minds of the unbelievers.

**POWERS, or mighty works (Gr. *dunamis*):** Through supernatural powers, God wanted the witnesses of a miracle to recognize power that was greater than the natural laws that ordinarily worked in our environment.<sup>4</sup> Miracles that confirmed the presence of God manifested the power of the Father,<sup>5</sup> Son,<sup>6</sup> and the Holy Spirit.<sup>7</sup>

**WORKS (Gr. *ergon*):** Though a confirming miracle was a wonderful act to behold, this word explained that a confirming miracle was a manifestation of the environment in which God dwells.<sup>8</sup> A miracle as a work of God, therefore, clearly manifested the presence of God to all men. Again, a miracle as a work of God was not perceived through faith, but through the empirical senses of the beholders.



## **A. The purpose of confirming miracles:**

God does not work without a purpose. He never worked in a miraculous manner in order to satisfy the idle curiosity of man. He worked through miracles to accomplish specific objectives in order to continue His mission to bring His Son into the world in order to take all His sons into eternity.

When we study miracles in the Bible, we must understand the uniqueness of the confirming miracles wherein God sought to confirm His messengers and their message. These confirming miracles occurred instantaneously and were perceived through the senses of men. Even unbelievers could not deny them. Though God continues to work today, His work is perceived through our faith.

1. Confirming miracles occurred in order to manifest the glory of God.
  - a. When God revealed the realm of the supernatural through miraculous intervention, His glory was manifested to people in a manner that could not be denied.<sup>9</sup>
  - b. When we read in our Bibles of the miraculous intervention of God, we are moved to give glory to God.<sup>10</sup>

2. Confirming miracles occurred in order to manifest the glory of Jesus.

- a. Confirming miracles proved that Jesus of Nazareth was sent directly from God into this world.<sup>11</sup>
- b. Confirming miracles manifested God's approval of Jesus as His Son.<sup>12</sup>
- c. Confirming miracles proved that Jesus was the Christ (Messiah), and the incarnate Son of God.<sup>13</sup>
- d. Confirming miracles glorified Jesus when He was on earth.<sup>14</sup>
- e. Confirming miracles proved Jesus to be God on earth with the authority to personally forgive sins.<sup>15</sup>
- f. Confirming miracles proved Jesus' supernatural power on earth over material substances,<sup>16</sup> distance,<sup>17</sup> time,<sup>18</sup> creation,<sup>19</sup> nature,<sup>20</sup> misfortune,<sup>21</sup> and death.<sup>22</sup>

3. Confirming miracles occurred for the purpose of giving a divine testimony of God's messengers.

- a. Confirming miracles proved that God was working with His people.<sup>23</sup>
- b. God allowed His messengers to work miracles in order to manifest to the world that His messengers were sent from Him. He gave miraculous witness to Elisha.<sup>24</sup> Moses,<sup>25</sup> Jesus,<sup>26</sup> the apostles,<sup>27</sup>

and special first century disciples.<sup>28</sup> This miraculous witness of God is recorded in the Bible. The Bible is thus a sufficient witness for us today to believe in Jesus as the Son of God.<sup>29</sup>

**4. Confirming miracles validated the fact that the word of God was from God.**

- a. Confirming miracles proved that the inspired word of the Christ-sent apostles was from God, and not from man.<sup>30</sup>
- b. Confirming miracles proved that the Christ-sent apostles were God's messengers who had the authority to speak His word.<sup>31</sup>
- c. Since God's will was confirmed by miracles, and recorded for our reading, then the disciples of Jesus find confidence in the historical fact of the miracles that are recorded in the Bible.<sup>32</sup>
- d. Confirming miracles were not given for personal benefit.<sup>33</sup>

**B. Characteristics of confirming miracles:**

- 1. In order for a miracle to be valid, the occurrence of the miracle had to be perceived through one or more of the five senses of man.<sup>34</sup>
- 2. True miracles could not be explained by the ordinary occur-

rence of natural laws. Those who experienced true miracles clearly understood that something out of the ordinary had happened.<sup>35</sup>

- 3. The presence of the supernatural work of God was clearly witnessed in the event of the miracle.<sup>36</sup>
- 4. A confirming miracle did not occur over a long period of time. The miracle was instantaneous in order that it not be confused with the ordinary occurrence of natural laws.<sup>37</sup>
- 5. Confirming miracles in the Bible were not worked in a manner to be hidden from the beholders. Because they could be witnessed by everyone, true confirming miracles could not be denied even by unbelievers.<sup>38</sup>
- 6. Because miracles could be witnessed, their purpose of signaling God's presence to unbelievers could be accomplished.<sup>39</sup>

**C. God continues to work today:**

God continues to work today apart from the ordinary occurrence of natural laws, but in a way that is perceived through the faith of the believers. His work is believed by believers, but often denied by unbelievers. Nevertheless, He continues to work providentially in the lives of His people.

1. Since God has already miraculously worked to confirm Jesus as the Messiah and His Son, He now works through the preached word of the gospel in order that people believe on Jesus.<sup>40</sup>
2. God works providentially to restore health to those believers who pray for healing.<sup>41</sup>
3. God works providentially to care for those believers who ask for the necessities of life.<sup>42</sup>
4. God works providentially to open doors for evangelism.<sup>43</sup>
5. God works providentially to provide ways of escape from temptations and trials.<sup>44</sup>
6. God works providentially to deliver His people from evil doers.<sup>45</sup>
7. God works providentially to raise up evangelists.<sup>46</sup>
8. God works providentially so that our faith not fail.<sup>47</sup>
9. God works providentially to aid the saints in times of need.<sup>48</sup>
10. God works providentially to bring teachers to the saints.<sup>49</sup>
11. God works providentially to bring forth fruit to His glory.<sup>50</sup>

God expects people today to respond to His preached word in order to believe and obey the gospel.<sup>51</sup> The

message of the gospel needs no more miraculous confirmation, for the confirmed word of God is sufficient to produce faith.<sup>52</sup> Though God will allow many to believe in false miracles,<sup>53</sup> one must now believe the testimony of the miracles that are recorded in the Bible. One must respond to the preached word of the gospel and respond by baptism in obedience to the miraculously confirmed gospel of Jesus.<sup>54</sup>

If one assumes to be working the confirming miracles of God today, and that person is not preaching that one must obey the gospel of the death, burial and resurrection of the gospel of Jesus, then he is a false teacher. If one claims to be working confirming miracles today, but does not preach the present gospel reign of King Jesus over all things, then he is a false teacher. As in the first century, so it is today. Jesus said, "*For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ.'* ***And they will deceive many.***"<sup>55</sup> The Holy Spirit's final warning concerning the deceptive works of those who do not love the truth of the gospel, was expressed in the following words: "*The presence of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan with all deceiving power and signs and wonders.*"<sup>56</sup>

**1.** Acts 2:22,43; 4:30; 5:12; 6:8; 15:12; Hebrews 2:4, **2.** Matthew 9:26; Mark 2:12; 4:41; 6:51; 7:37; Luke 8:56; 13:17, **3.** Mark 16:20; John 3:2; Acts 14:3; 2 Corinthians 12:12; Hebrews 2:4, **4.** Genesis 18:14; Exodus 5:2; Psalm 33:4-9; 107:23-32; Isaiah 40:12-27; Acts 2:22; 19:11, **5.** Acts 15:12, **6.** Matthew 10:1, **7.** Matthew 12:28, **8.** John 5:36; 7:21; 10:24,32,38; 14:11,12; 15:24, **9.** John 1:14; 11:40-42; 17:6-8; Acts 4:14-16, **10.** Isaiah 40; Psalm 19:1,2; Job 38,39; Romans 1:20, **11.** John 3:2; 4:48; 5:36; 6:14; 10:24,37,38; 11:15; 14:11, **12.** Acts 2:22, **13.** Matthew 11:2-6; Luke 7:20-22; John 20:30,31, **14.** John 2:11, **15.** Matthew 9:6; Mark 2:9-12; Luke 5:26, **16.** John 2:1-11, **17.** John 4:46-54, **18.** John 5:1-9, **19.** John 6:1-14, **20.** John 6:16-21, **21.** John 9:1-12, **22.** John 11:1-46, **23.** Deuteronomy 13:1-4; Matthew 12:24-27; Acts 2:1-4,6-8,43; 3:6-10; 4:14-16; 5:12-16; 8:6; 9:36-42; 14:8-11; Hebrews 2:3,4, **24.** 2 Kings 2, **25.** Exodus 7:8-13, **26.** John 3:2, **27.** Acts 2:43; 2 Corinthians 12:12, **27.** Mark 16:17-20; Hebrews 2:3,4, **28.** Mark 16:17-20; Hebrews 2:3,4, **29.** See John 20:30,31; 2 Timothy 3:16,17, **30.** Mark 16:17-20; see John 14:26; 16:13,14, **31.** Hebrews 2:3,4, **32.** See 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12; 2 Timothy 3:16,17, **33.** See Philippians 2:25-27; 2 Timothy 4:20, **34.** See John 3:2; Acts 26:26, **35.** Acts 4:14-16; 26:26, **36.** 1 Kings 18:17-46; John 3:2; 11:43-45, **37.** Matthew 8:3; 20:34; Mark 10:52; John 11:43,44, **38.** 1 Kings 18:30-40; John 9; 11:45,46; Acts 4:14-16; 26:26, **39.** Mark 16:17-20; John 20:30,31; Acts 2:22, **40.** John 20:30,31; Acts 2:22, **41.** 2 Kings 20:5; James 5:13-16, **42.** Matthew 6:9-13, **43.** 1 Corinthians 16:9; 2 Corinthians 2:12; 2 Thessalonians 3:1,2, **44.** Romans 8:28; 1 Corinthians 10:13; Philippians 1:19; 2 Peter 2:9, **45.** 2 Corinthians 1:9-11; 2 Timothy 4:18; see Proverbs 2:6,8,12,16; 2 Thessalonians 3:2; 2 Timothy 3:11; 4:17; Philemon 22, **46.** Matthew 9:38, **47.** Luke 22:31; see Psalm 125:3; 1 Corinthians 10:13; Colossians 4:12, **48.** Romans 15:30-32, **49.** Romans 1:9,10; 1 Thessalonians 3:10, **50.** 1 Corinthians 3:5,6; 1 Thessalonians 1:2-8; 2 Thessalonians 1:11,12, **51.** Romans 10:17; see John 20:30,31, **52.** Romans 10:17; 2 Timothy 3:16,17; see 1 Corinthians 15:1-4, **53.** 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12, **54.** Romans 6:3-6; see Galatians 3:26,27, **55.** Matthew 24:5, **56.** 1 Thessalonians 2:9