

TEN LESSON BIBLE STUDY

BASED UPON MATERIAL BY JON QUINN

TABLE OF CONTENTS

OUR GOD IS ALIVE	3
GOD HAS SPOKEN	9
WHAT IS MAN?	15
FOCUSING ON JESUS	21
ETERNITY AND MAN	29
WHAT MUST WE DO?	37
LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE!	45
IN SPIRIT AND IN TRUTH	53
“I WILL BUILD MY CHURCH”	61
KEPT BY GOD’S POWER	67

OUR GOD IS ALIVE – LESSON 1

By Jon Quinn

Knowing God is necessary if one is to do more than stumble through life from one ordeal to another. One needs purpose and direction. God gives us reason to live and reachable goals to attain.

GOD EXISTS

Everything has a cause. Science calls this the "law of cause and effect". Nothing in our universe can be the cause of its own existence; therefore, we must look beyond this physical realm to find the Ultimate Cause of all things. The universe is like a huge clock that is winding down. The question is WHO "wound up the clock" in the beginning?

Genesis 1:1-In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

Revelation 4:11-You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created.

When we buy a watch, we recognize that there must have been a watchmaker. If we admire a painting, we understand that there must have been an artist. Likewise, the universe tells us of its Maker. We see design all around us. The human eye is much more effective than the finest camera and no one would seriously suggest that a camera came into existence by accident instead of by plan. It makes even less sense to deny the existence of the Designer and Creator of the eye!

Psalm 19:1-2-The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork. 2 Day unto day utters speech, And night unto night reveals knowledge.

Psalm 139:14-I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works, and that my soul knows very well.

Also, the nature of man tells us much about his origin. Human beings are moral, rational and spiritual creatures. We ponder our existence asking "how" and "why"; and these very questions point us in God's direction! It is foolish to deny His existence.

Psalm 14:1-The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God." They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none who does good.

CHARACTERISTICS OF GOD

How does one describe God? Words are inadequate and yet they are all we have. The best approach is to see how God has revealed Himself to us. Our God is majestic. He is all-powerful. His glory surpasses anything else in human experience.

1 Timothy 6:15-16-which He will manifest in His own time, He who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, 16 who alone has

immortality, dwelling in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see, to whom be honor and everlasting power. Amen.

Our God is wise. He knows His universe down to the smallest detail. He knows the heart. He knows what is best for us.

Psalm 33:13-15-The LORD looks from heaven; He sees all the sons of men. 14 From the place of His dwelling He looks on all the inhabitants of the earth; 15 He fashions their hearts individually; He considers all their works.

Romans 11:33-34-Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out! 34 "For who has known the mind of the LORD? Or who has become His counselor?"

Our God is jealous. This is not to be confused with anything like the petty jealousies of man. It simply means that God demands loyalty from those He loves and redeems.

Exodus 20:5-you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me,

Our God is love. Our well being is His concern and He has acted in our behalf.

John 3:16-For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Hebrews 4:16-Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Our God is also capable of wrath. He is the righteous judge of a wicked world. His wrath is perfectly dispensed; none will pay an unjust penalty. Also, it must be noted that Divine wrath is what men choose for themselves when they retreat from the light that God has provided.

2 Thessalonians 1:8-in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

John 3:18-He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

NAMES OF GOD

There are several names that God uses in identifying Himself. They also tell us something of His nature. We will look at two of these names.

"Jehovah" is the name by which God revealed Himself to Moses from the burning bush. This name continued to be used by God's people throughout history. A shortened form of the name is used in the word "hallelujah" which means "praise to Jehovah". The name "Jehovah" is from the Hebrew language and means "I AM". It shows God's eternal nature; that He has no beginning or end.

Exodus 3:14-And God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." And He said, "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.' "

"Elohim" is a name which signifies might and power. It is this Hebrew word that is translated "God" in the very first verse of the Bible.

Genesis 1:1-*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.*

GODHEAD

Most are familiar with the concept of three persons in one God. Some refer to this as "the Trinity." But what does the Bible teach?

There is one God. There are not two, three or more. However, we have already noticed the use of the word "Elohim" as one of the names used by God. The interesting thing is that "Elohim" is plural! This certainly helps to explain Genesis 1:26,

Then God said, *"Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."*

The one God of the Bible is revealed to be a unity of three Persons. All three are mentioned together several times in the scriptures.

Matthew 3:13-17-*Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. 14 And John tried to prevent Him, saying, "I need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me?" 15 But Jesus answered and said to him, "Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he allowed Him. 16 When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. 17 And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."*

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

2 Corinthians 13:14-*The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen.*

God, the Father, is separate and distinct from the Son and the Spirit, and yet one with them.

1 Peter 1:2-*elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace be multiplied.*

Jesus, the Son, is referred to in the scripture as God. He also accepted being addressed as God. He was also willing to be worshipped after saying that it was only proper to worship God and no other! Please compare:

Matthew 4:10-Then Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.' "

Matthew 28:9-And as they went to tell His disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, "Rejoice!" So, they came and held Him by the feet and worshiped Him.

Also notice...

Matthew 1:23-"Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel," which is translated, "God with us."

John 1:1-3-In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.

John 1:14-And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

John 1:17-For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

John 20:26-29-And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, "Peace to you!" 27 Then He said to Thomas, "Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving but believing." 28 And Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!" 29 Jesus said to him, "Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

Titus 2:13-looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,

The Holy Spirit is revealed in the Bible as being both a living being and Deity. The personal pronoun "He" is used to refer to Him. He is said to love, speak and grieve. He has a mind. If one lies to the Spirit, he has lied unto God!

John 14:16-18-And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—17 the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. 18 I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.

Acts 5:3-4-But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back part of the price of the land for yourself? 4 While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own control? Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God."

Romans 8:27-Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

Ephesians 4:30-And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

We find examples of the Lord God making statements in the Old Testament and then discover that the New Testament quotes those same statements and attributes them specifically to the Holy Spirit. This certainly shows that the Holy Spirit is one of the Godhead. Compare the following...

Isaiah 6:8-10-Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying: "Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?" Then I said, "Here am I! Send me." 9 And He said, "Go, and tell this people: 'Keep on hearing, but do not understand; Keep on seeing, but do not perceive.' 10 "Make the heart of this people dull, and their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; Lest they see with their eyes, And hear with their ears, And understand with their heart, And return and be healed."

Acts 28:25-27-So when they did not agree among themselves, they departed after Paul had said one word: "The Holy Spirit spoke rightly through Isaiah the prophet to our fathers, 26 saying, 'Go to this people and say: "Hearing you will hear, and shall not understand; And seeing you will see, and not perceive; 27 For the hearts of this people have grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, and their eyes they have closed, Lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, So that I should heal them."'

CONCLUSION

It is important to know our God. Not just to know about Him but to know Him as God. In this universe and in eternity, when all has been said and done, man cannot fail more seriously than to live out his life estranged from his Creator. On the other hand, there cannot be a brighter success story than that of a man or woman who walks with God.

Lesson #2 is entitled "GOD HAS SPOKEN" and shows the Bible itself as God's word.

How do we know that the Bible is God's word?

What does "inspiration" mean?

What is the difference between the Old and New Testaments?

Can one really understand the Bible?

These and other questions will be dealt with in Lesson #2.

QUESTIONS FOR LESSON ONE

Please answer the following questions. Either use your own Bible or search the above information for the answers. After typing in your answer, delete the underling.

GOD EXISTS

Read PSALM 19:1-2 and fill in the blanks.

"The heavens declare the _____ and the firmament shows _____"

The lesson compared the human eye to a camera in making the point that we find evidence of intelligent design in our universe. Think of another example from nature which shows evidence of intelligent design. _____

According to PSALM 14:1, who says in His heart "There is no God"? _____

CHARACTERISTICS OF GOD

The lesson mentions five of God's characteristics. Please list them here.

_____; _____;
_____; _____;

What has God done for us that proves His love? John 3:16 _____

NAMES OF GOD

What does the name "Jehovah" tell us about God? _____

GODHEAD

Is the name "Elohim" singular or plural? _____

Explain Genesis 1:26 and its use of the term "Us". _____

Compare Matthew 4:10 with Matthew 28:9 and answer the following: Is it right to worship anyone other than God? _____

Did Jesus object when people worshipped Him? _____

Does this show that Jesus is God? _____

What does Thomas call Jesus in John 20:28? _____

Does Jesus accept this or rebuke Thomas? see also John 20:29 _____

GOD HAS SPOKEN – LESSON 2

By Jon Quinn

Sir Isaac Newton: *"There are more sure marks of authenticity in the Bible than in any profane history."*

George Washington: *"It is impossible to rightly govern the world without God and the Bible."*

Abraham Lincoln: *"I believe the Bible is the best gift God has ever given to man. All the good from the Savior of the world is communicated to us through this book."*

Daniel Webster: *"If there is anything in my thoughts or style to commend, the credit is due to my parents for instilling in me an early love of the Scriptures."*

You are in good company if you respect the Bible. The Bible's greatness, however, does not depend upon what men may say about it, good or bad. It is the greatest of books because of its author and its important message.

THE SOURCE OF THE BIBLE

The Bible is a product of God's mind. The writers were instruments through whom God revealed His message.

Exodus 24:3-4-*So Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD and all the judgments. And all the people answered with one voice and said, "All the words which the LORD has said we will do." 4 And Moses wrote all the words of the LORD. And he rose early in the morning and built an altar at the foot of the mountain, and twelve pillars according to the twelve tribes of Israel.*

2 Timothy 3:16-17-*All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.*

2 Peter 1:20-21-*knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, 21 for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.*

The word "inspiration" means "inbreathed". God "breathed" the words into the writers. In fact, much of the Bible could never have been written by man alone! There are hundreds of prophecies made generations before they were fulfilled. Not one failed! Examples include that the Messiah would be born in the tiny town of Bethlehem (Micah 5:2) and a very vivid account of the crucifixion (Psalm 22:6-18). Also, there are the early, somewhat casual statements of natural facts which were yet to be discovered by science. Examples of this include the earth's roundness (Isaiah 40:22), the ever-expanding nature of the universe (Genesis 1:8) and that the earth does not rest on any visible base (Job 26:7).

Concerning the New Testament, Jesus planned for its occurrence. He sent the Holy Spirit to guide the apostles. It is easy to trace how Jesus' plan unfolded thus building our confidence in the Bible as God's word.

John 14:26-But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.

Acts 1:5-for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

Acts 1:8-But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

Acts 2:4-And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Galatians 1:11-But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man.

1 Thessalonians 2:13-For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe.

1 Thessalonians 4:1-2-Finally then, brethren, we urge and exhort in the Lord Jesus that you should abound more and more, just as you received from us how you ought to walk and to please God; 2 for you know what commandments we gave you through the Lord Jesus.

THE HISTORY OF THE BIBLE

The Old Testament was originally written in Hebrew and the New Testament in Greek. Many copies of the originals were made and circulated. We have complete manuscripts of the New Testament dating back to about 350 A.D. We have many fragments of the New Testament dating back to about 120 A.D. just 20 years after its writer, the apostle John, died.

There are also abundant early manuscripts of the Old Testament dating back several centuries before Christ. The most famous of these are the Dead Sea Scrolls. The importance of this is that when we compare our translations with these early works, we find that we have reliable Bibles. We do not have to worry that errors have crept in over the centuries. God has seen to it that His Word has been preserved for us today.

1 Peter 1:24-25-because "All flesh is as grass, And all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withers, And its flower falls away, but the word of the LORD endures forever." Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you.

SHORT SURVEY

The Bible has two main divisions: The Old and New Testaments. The 39 books of the Old Testament contain 5 books of law, 12 books of history, 5 poetical books and 17 books of prophecy. The 27 books of the New Testament contain 4 gospels

(accounts of Jesus' life), 1 book of history, 21 epistles and 1 book of prophecy in that order.

The Old Testament deals with the early history of man from the creation to Abraham, and then focuses on Abraham and his descendants as the people through whom the Messiah would come and bless all nations (Genesis 12:1-3).

The New Testament deals with how the promise of the Messiah is fulfilled in Jesus and reveals that eternal hope exists only in Him.

Acts 4:12-Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

COVENANTS

A testament is a covenant or contract. We have mentioned two: Old and New. Jesus did not destroy the first one, but rather He fulfilled it thus taking it out of the way. Its obligations have been met and it is no longer valid.

Matthew 5:17-Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.

Galatians 3:24-27-Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. 25 But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. 26 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

Colossians 2:13-17-And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, 14 having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. 15 Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it. 16 So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, 17 which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ.

In the place of the first Jesus established a second covenant. When one becomes a Christian, he recognizes and accepts that he is in a contract with God. There are blessings as well as responsibilities in this relationship.

Romans 7:4-Therefore, my brethren, you also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another-- to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should bear fruit to God.

Hebrews 8:6-7-But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises. 7 For if that first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second.

Hebrews 8:13-In that He says, "A new covenant," He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.

Hebrews 9:15-17-And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. 16 For where there is a testament, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. 17 For a testament is in force after men are dead, since it has no power at all while the testator lives.

Though the first covenant is no longer binding today, it is still useful to the Christian in learning about faith, God's character and in receiving encouragement.

Romans 15:4-For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.

UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE

God is our Maker. He created us with the ability to communicate with our fellow human beings through language. He has chosen to communicate with us, not through some mysterious language of angels, but through human language so that He might be understood by us. The best way to understand the Bible is to use the same rules by which we understand any human speech. The Bible uses words and sentences to express ideas and can be understood.

Deuteronomy 30:11-14-For this commandment which I command you today, it is not too mysterious for you, nor is it far off. 12 It is not in heaven, that you should say, 'Who will ascend into heaven for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?' 13 Nor is it beyond the sea, that you should say, 'Who will go over the sea for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?' 14 But the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may do it.

Romans 10:6-10-But the righteousness of faith speaks in this way, "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?' " (that is, to bring Christ down from above) 7 or, " 'Who will descend into the abyss?' " (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). 8 But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith which we preach): 9 that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

It must be admitted that there are some things more difficult to understand than others. One should begin with simple concepts and then build upon them as he progresses to the more difficult.

Hebrews 5:11-14-of whom we have much to say, and hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing. 12 For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. 13 For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. 14 But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

1 Peter 2:1-3-Therefore, laying aside all malice, all guile, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, 2 as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby, 3 if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious.

2 Peter 3:15-17-and account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation--as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, 16 as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures. 17 You therefore, beloved, since you know this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked.

Also, one must have a proper attitude. This means putting away preconceived ideas and having faith that one can understand God's message.

Proverbs 2:1-5-My son, if you receive my words, And treasure my commands within you, 2 So that you incline your ear to wisdom, And apply your heart to understanding; 3 Yes, if you cry out for discernment, And lift up your voice for understanding, 4 If you seek her as silver, And search for her as for hidden treasures; 5 Then you will understand the fear of the LORD, And find the knowledge of God.

Matthew 13:14-16-And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says: 'Hearing you will hear and shall not understand, And seeing you will see and not perceive; 15 For the hearts of this people have grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, And their eyes they have closed, Lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, So that I should heal them.' 16 "But blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear;

Diligence in Bible study is also a requirement if one is to understand. The Bible commends those who have enough interest in His word to investigate its truths.

Acts 17:11-These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so.

Ephesians 5:17-Therefore do not be unwise but understand what the will of the Lord is.

2 Timothy 2:15-Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

CONCLUSION

Jesus promised that truth that is known can make one free (John 8:32). This shows that God's truth can be understood and used beneficially. The fact that you are taking this course shows that you have a certain interest in these things. May God richly bless you in accordance with His will.

LESSON #3 deals with the question of "WHAT IS MAN?" It will consider what it means to be "created in the image of God" and what a human being's ultimate purpose is.

QUESTIONS FOR LESSON TWO

THE SOURCE OF THE BIBLE

Who's words did Moses write down (Exodus 24:3-4)? _____

What does the word "inspiration" mean? _____

THE HISTORY OF THE BIBLE

In what language was the Old Testament written? _____ The New Testament? _____

How long will the word of God continue to abide according to 1 Peter 1:24-25?

SHORT SURVEY

What are the two main divisions of the Bible? _____

What is the New Testament message concerning the Messiah? _____

COVENANTS

What did Jesus come to do regarding the Old Law? (Matthew 5:17)? _____

Are we still bound by the Old Law (Galatians 3:24-27)? _____

Of what use is the Old Testament to the Christian today (Romans 15:4)? _____

UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE

Why do some not understand Jesus' message (Matthew 13:14-16)? _____

Why were the people at Berea commended (Acts 17:11)? _____

Can the Lord's Will be understood (Ephesians 5:17)? _____

WHAT IS MAN? LESSON 3

By Jon Quinn

Psalm 8:3-4-When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, The moon and the stars, which You have ordained, 4 What is man that You are mindful of him, And the son of man that You visit him?

Good question! The psalmist pondered man's nature. Of what value is a human being to God? When you compare a human being with the vastness and grandeur of the universe it seems that man is somewhat insignificant. Why are we here? Where are we headed?

People have been pondering such questions for centuries. Many skeptics have tried in vain to find purpose in life apart from God and have always come up with little or nothing. Tolstoy asked, "What is life for? To die?" Woody Allen, with his characteristic wit, said, "Its not that I am afraid to die, I just don't want to be there when it happens..."

Apart from answers that God gives us in His word, life seems futile. One man wrote about his experience in trying to find fulfillment and peace apart from God. Riches, pleasure and wisdom had brought him only shallow happiness that was much too brief and unsatisfactory. "So, I hated life, for the work which had been done under the sun was grievous to me; because everything is futility and striving after the wind." This is from the pen of Solomon, one of the wealthiest, highly educated and pampered men of history!

Ecclesiastes 1:2-"Vanity of vanities," says the Preacher; "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity."

Ecclesiastes 1:14-I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and indeed, all is vanity and grasping for the wind.

Ecclesiastes 1:17-And I set my heart to know wisdom and to know madness and folly. I perceived that this also is grasping for the wind.

Ecclesiastes 2:1-2-I said in my heart, "Come now, I will test you with mirth; therefore, enjoy pleasure"; but surely, this also was vanity. 2 I said of laughter--"Madness!"; and of mirth, "What does it accomplish?"

Ecclesiastes 2:10-11-Whatever my eyes desired I did not keep from them. I did not withhold my heart from any pleasure, for my heart rejoiced in all my labor; And this was my reward from all my labor. 11 Then I looked on all the works that my hands had done and on the labor in which I had toiled; And indeed all was vanity and grasping for the wind. There was no profit under the sun.

Ecclesiastes 2:17-Therefore I hated life because the work that was done under the sun was distressing to me, for all is vanity and grasping for the wind.

CREATED IN GOD'S IMAGE

Man was the last of earth's creatures that God made. The Bible says that God created man and woman "IN HIS IMAGE".

This means that something in man was patterned after God. It was not his physical body for God is spirit and has no physical form compare John 4:24 with Luke 24:39.

Luke 24:39-Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have."

John 4:24-God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

Rather, "image" refers to man's inner self, his spirit. God created man's body from the dust of the earth and placed within the body a spirit which bears His own image.

Genesis 2:7-And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.

Zechariah 12:1-The burden of the word of the LORD against Israel. Thus, says the LORD, who stretches out the heavens, lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit of man within him:

Acts 17:29-"Therefore, since we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, something shaped by art and man's devising.

Hebrews 12:9-Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected us, and we paid them respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live?

Therefore, man is like God in some respects. Man is capable of rational thought. He has free will and is accountable for his actions. He is emotional and moral. And like God, he enjoys making things that are good.

This also means that we cannot be truly complete apart from God. Though many people estranged from God would claim to be happy and content, such claims ignore the question "Why am I here?" and leave one abandoned in the hopeless situation of: "You live and then you die". This certainly is not the best philosophy of life available, is it?

Psalm 52:1-7-Why do you boast in evil, O mighty man? The goodness of God endures continually. 2 Your tongue devises destruction, like a sharp razor, working deceitfully. 3 You love evil more than good, lying rather than speaking righteousness. Selah 4 you love all devouring words, you deceitful tongue. 5 God shall likewise destroy you forever; He shall take you away, and pluck you out of your dwelling place, and uproot you from the land of the living. Selah 6 The righteous also shall see and fear, And shall laugh at him, saying, 7 "Here is the man who did not make God his strength, But trusted in the abundance of his riches, And strengthened himself in his wickedness."

Psalm 42:1-5-As the deer pants for the water brooks, so pants my soul for You, O God. 2 My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God? 3 My tears have been my food day and night, while they continually

say to me, "Where is your God?" 4 When I remember these things, I pour out my soul within me. For I used to go with the multitude; I went with them to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept a pilgrim feast. 5 Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God, for I shall yet praise Him for the help of His countenance.

OUR PURPOSE

Why do we exist? To lose sight of our reason for being leads to despair. Are we really born only to die? The answer is NO!

God created man to fulfill a high and noble purpose; there can be no greater dignity than to fulfill this purpose; to give God glory.

Ecclesiastes 12:13-Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: fear God and keep His commandments, for this is man's all.

Micah 6:8-He has shown you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?

This purpose can be properly met only in God's Son. He promises to make our lives abundant and successful, not in material wealth and possessions, but in spirit and truth. Your God has a place for you in this life and in eternity!

John 10:10-The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

Ephesians 1:3-6-Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, 4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, 5 having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, 6 to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He has made us accepted in the Beloved.

Ephesians 1:14-who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.

Children of God find confidence by...

relying on God's promises.

Romans 4:20-He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God,

honoring God

Romans 1:21-23-because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. 22 Professing to be wise, they became fools, 23 and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man--and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things.

praising God with one voice

Romans 15:5-7-Now may the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like-minded toward one another, according to Christ Jesus, 6 that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. 7 Therefore receive one another, just as Christ also received us, to the glory of God.

and daily living lives which bring Him glory

Matthew 5:16-Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

1 Corinthians 10:30-31-But if I partake with thanks, why am I evil spoken of for the food over which I give thanks? 31 Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

This confidence brings strong assurances because the disciple of Christ knows nothing can defeat him as long as he trusts and obeys Christ. Even death loses its victory as far as the man or woman of God is concerned.

1 Corinthians 15:55-O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?

SIN AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

Sin is transgression of God's law.

1 John 3:4-Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness.

It destroys one's relationship with God. This is why true contentment cannot be found by one entrapped by sin. God refers to those who would deny the reality or consequences of sin as deceivers and warns that one who makes a habit of sin is not of God.

1 John 3:7-10-Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous. 8 He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. 9 Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God. 10 In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother.

The consequences of sin are tragic and include both physical and spiritual harm. By continuing in sin God says that one hurts himself.

Proverbs 8:36-But he who sins against me wrongs his own soul; all those who hate me love death."

If one continues in sin, he will ultimately lose everything in death.

Proverbs 11:7-When a wicked man dies, his expectation will perish, and the hope of the unjust perishes.

Sin brings about eternal death, which simply means eternal separation from God, hope and all that is good.

Romans 6:23-For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Sin keeps one out of God's kingdom as he reaps what he has sown.

Galatians 5:19-21-Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, 20 idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, 21 envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Galatians 6:7-8-Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. 8 For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.

GOD STILL LOVES THE SINNER

God hates sin! But He also loves the sinner, even those so wicked that you and I might find it difficult to love. Jesus said that God's love is perfect, or complete. It is this love that is the basis of our hope. We are important to God because we are His offspring. We must understand that while our God is a God of love, He is also completely righteous. Therefore, He cannot simply ignore our sins, but instead has acted in our behalf to deal with them. That is why the message of the gospel is referred to as "GOOD NEWS".

John 3:16-For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

We will deal with redemption more fully in future lessons. For now, recognize that God has dealt with us in a compassionate manner and invites us to choose, of our own free will, to come to Him. This offer has been extended for our own well-being and has cost Him dearly. No higher price has ever been paid than that which was paid for our sins so that we might be saved. But again, it is our choice to either accept God's gift or reject it. Let none who reject it say that the reason that they are lost is that God does not love us enough. God, by His merciful action, has already laid that lie to rest!

John 15:13-Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends.

Acts 20:28-Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.

1 Corinthians 6:20-For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

CONCLUSION

We have been placed here for a purpose. Life's biggest tragedy is to fail in that purpose because to do so is to fail both God and us. On the other hand, there can be no better victory than that which faith brings to its possessor.

Revelation 21:3-5-*And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. 4 And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away." 5 Then He who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." And He said to me, "Write, for these words are true and faithful."*

QUESTIONS FOR LESSON THREE

CREATED IN GOD'S IMAGE

In what way are we created in God's image? _____

Must one keep the commandments of Jesus to "abide in His love" and share in His joy John 15:10-11? _____

OUR PURPOSE

Our purpose is to glorify God. How does Jesus say this purpose is accomplished John 15:8? _____

SIN AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

What is sin I John 3:4? _____

What is the "wages of sin" Romans 6:23? _____

GOD STILL LOVES THE SINNER

What did God do because of His love for us John 3:16? _____

What is the greatest love that one can have for another John 15:13? _____

How does Revelation 21:4 describe the victory that faith brings? _____

FOCUSING ON JESUS – LESSON 4

By Jon Quinn

About 2,000 years ago God's Son became flesh. He was the firstborn child of a poor family and lived only about 33 years in our world. Yet no other has had the impact He has had upon our world! As bad as things sometimes get, things would be far worse if not for Jesus!

Jesus once asked His apostles, *"Who do people say the Son of Man is?"* They told Jesus of the opinions held about Him and then Jesus asked another question, *"Who do men say that I, the Son of Man... Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God" Matthew 16:13-16.*

What is your opinion of Jesus? Why does His name invoke such love in some while exciting such hatred in others? The fact is this: Jesus was much more than a simple Galilean carpenter.

THE PROMISED ONE

The prophets had foretold of a Messiah. He would undertake the most important rescue mission of all to secure redemption from sin. There were over 300 prophecies made about Him hundreds of years before His birth. Jesus fulfilled all of these prophecies. Not even one failed. It had been prophesied that He would enter our world by a miraculous birth, having no human father. This event would take place in a small village called Bethlehem.

Isaiah 7:14-Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.

Micah 5:2-"But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Though you are little among the thousands of Judah, Yet out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, From everlasting."

Matthew 1:22-25-So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: 23 "Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel," which is translated, "God with us." 24 Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife, 25 and did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son. And he called His name JESUS.

Matthew 2:1-6-Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, 2 saying, "Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him." 3 When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. 4 And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. 5 So they said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet: 6 'But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are not the least among the rulers of Judah; For out of you shall come a Ruler Who will shepherd My people Israel.' "

He would be a descendant of Jesse, the father of David. There is much prophesied about His ministry, but perhaps it is all best summed up by the prophet Isaiah.

Isaiah 11:1-5-There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, And a Branch shall grow out of his roots. 2 The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him, The Spirit of wisdom and understanding, The Spirit of counsel and might, The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD. 3 His delight is in the fear of the LORD, And He shall not judge by the sight of His eyes, Nor decide by the hearing of His ears; 4 But with righteousness He shall judge the poor, And decide with equity for the meek of the earth; He shall strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, And with the breath of His lips He shall slay the wicked. 5 Righteousness shall be the belt of His loins, And faithfulness the belt of His waist.

This Mighty King and Humble Servant would be slain for the people. Even as He suffered, they would mock Him as they cast lots for His clothing, not knowing that it was for them He was giving His life!

Psalm 22:11-18-Be not far from Me, for trouble is near; For there is none to help. 12 Many bulls have surrounded Me; Strong bulls of Bashan have encircled Me. 13 They gape at Me with their mouths, Like a raging and roaring lion. 14 I am poured out like water, And all My bones are out of joint; My heart is like wax; It has melted within Me. 15 My strength is dried up like a potsherd, And My tongue clings to My jaws; You have brought Me to the dust of death. 16 For dogs have surrounded Me; The congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me. They pierced My hands and My feet; 17 I can count all My bones. They look and stare at Me. 18 They divide My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots.

Isaiah 53:1-8-Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? 2 For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, And as a root out of dry ground. He has no form or comeliness; And when we see Him, There is no beauty that we should desire Him. 3 He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. 4 Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. 5 But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. 6 All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. 7 He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, And as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth. 8 He was taken from prison and from judgment, and who will declare His generation? For He was cut off from the land of the living; For the transgressions of My people He was stricken.

John 19:23-24-Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His garments and made four parts, to each soldier a part, and also the tunic. Now the tunic was without seam, woven from the top in one piece. 24 They said therefore among themselves, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be," that

the Scripture might be fulfilled which says: "They divided My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots."

Therefore, the soldiers did these things.

But death would not be the end. He would prosper and receive glory and power. He would live again!

Psalm 16:8-11-I have set the LORD always before me; Because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved. 9 Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices; My flesh also will rest in hope. 10 For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption. 11 You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

Isaiah 53:10-12-Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief. When You make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, And the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand. 11 He shall see the labor of His soul and be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, For He shall bear their iniquities. 12 Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, And He shall divide the spoil with the strong, Because He poured out His soul unto death, And He was numbered with the transgressors, And He bore the sin of many, And made intercession for the transgressors.

Luke 24:4-8-And it happened, as they were greatly perplexed about this, that behold, two men stood by them in shining garments. 5 Then, as they were afraid and bowed their faces to the earth, they said to them, "Why do you seek the living among the dead? 6 He is not here but is risen! Remember how He spoke to you when He was still in Galilee, 7 saying, 'The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.' " 8 And they remembered His words.

Jesus is the fulfillment of God's promises. There simply is no provision for redemption apart from God's Anointed One.

JESUS' CLAIMS

Jesus never intended for you to think of Him simply as a great philosopher. He made claims concerning Himself that leave us with only two options: either He was an insane liar, or He is who He claimed to be. We believe that His claims are true.

Jesus claimed to have existed before His conception and birth. He claimed to be eternal and equal with God.

John 5:16-18-For this reason the Jews persecuted Jesus, and sought to kill Him, because He had done these things on the Sabbath. 17 But Jesus answered them, "My Father has been working until now, and I have been working." 18 Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God.

John 8:57-59-Then the Jews said to Him, "You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?" 58 Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM." 59 Then they took up stones to throw at Him; but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.

John 10:29-33-I and My Father are one." 31 Then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him. 32 Jesus answered them, "Many good works I have shown you from My Father. For which of those works do you stone Me?" 33 The Jews answered Him, saying, "For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy, and because You, being a Man, make Yourself God."

John 17:5-And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.

He taught that He was the only way to God as the light of the world and that He had the power to forgive sins.

John 8:12-Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."

John 14:6-Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

Luke 5:24-But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins"--He said to the man who was paralyzed, "I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house."

He claimed to have been given all authority by God and that one day He would judge every person who had ever lived. He said that even the angels were subject to Him.

Matthew 25:34-Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

Matthew 25:41-"Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels:

Matthew 25:46-"And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

Matthew 26:53-54-Or do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels? 54 How then could the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must happen thus?"

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

He referred to Himself as the Resurrection and the Life. His proof would be that He would rise from His own tomb on the third day.

John 11:25-Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live.

Mark 9:31 -For He taught His disciples and said to them, "The Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of men, and they will kill Him. And after He is killed, He will rise the third day."

Obviously, we are not talking about someone who was simply a good human being and nothing more. The only choices are to either dismiss Jesus as a deceiver or to accept Him as God's Son. He left us no middle ground between the two.

JESUS' MISSION

Jesus came to fulfill God's plan to redeem humanity. He knew exactly what would happen and how He would be slain. In this we see the supreme example of love.

2 Corinthians 8:9-For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich.

Philippians 2:5-9-Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, 7 but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. 9 Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name,

Jesus said that He came down out of heaven to do His Father's will. Jesus was faithful in this, even when God's will, meant yielding His own.

John 6:38-For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.

Matthew 26:39-He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will."

Jesus came to seek and save the lost. He knew our need and came to bring hope.

Luke 19:10-for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."

The Lord was born into our world to be a King, though He makes it quite clear that His kingdom is not physical, but spiritual.

John 18:33-37-Then Pilate entered the Praetorium again, called Jesus, and said to Him, "Are You the King of the Jews?" 34 Jesus answered him, "Are you speaking for yourself about this, or did others tell you this about Me?" 35 Pilate

answered, "Am I a Jew? Your own nation and the chief priests have delivered You to me. What have You done?" 36 Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here." 37 Pilate therefore said to Him, "Are You a king then?" Jesus answered, "You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice."

The Son of God came to die for the world. As He approached the time of His crucifixion He would not avoid it because it was for this purpose that He came.

John 12:27-28-"Now My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save Me from this hour'? But for this purpose I came to this hour. 28 Father, glorify Your name." Then a voice came from heaven, saying, "I have both glorified it and will glorify it again."

DEATH, BURIAL AND RESURRECTION

The central fact of the gospel is that Jesus died for our sins, was buried, and on the third day following rose from the dead.

1 Corinthians 15:1-4-Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, 2 by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you--unless you believed in vain. 3 For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures

Since this is such a crucial point in our study, perhaps it would be best to just open your Bible and read thoughtfully the following passages:

DEATH OF JESUS *MARK 15:22-39*; HIS BURIAL *MARK 15:46-47*; HIS RESURRECTION! *MARK 16:1-8*.

God has said that our sins demand death. He is absolutely holy and righteous and He cannot merely ignore our sins by pretending that they never happened. But He could substitute His own willing, righteous Son to pay our debt with His own death. Now that this has been accomplished, each one of us has a decision to make: either to accept this great gift of God and the responsibilities and rewards which accompany it, or reject it and face eternal death ourselves which is what we deserved to begin with.

Romans 3:26-to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

Romans 6:23-For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

LORD AND SAVIOR!

Jesus is presented to us as both Lord and Savior. There is no indication in the Bible that He will be a person's savior who has not accepted His lordship over his

or her life. This means that we must obey Jesus as Lord as we trust Him to save. Jesus Himself has gone on record on this very point. Accepting Jesus' lordship means that we obey Him.

Luke 6:46-*"But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do the things which I say?"*

John 12:26-*If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor.*

John 14:15-*"If you love Me, keep My commandments.*

John 14:21-*He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him."*

Accepting Jesus as savior means we have hope in Him.

Matthew 1:21-*And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins."*

Philippians 3:20-21-*For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.*

CONCLUSION

Jesus saves those that obey Him.

Hebrews 5:9-*And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him,*

Jesus is the hope of the world. He is much more than a simple Galilean carpenter/preacher and none of us are ready to leave this world until we have accepted that fact and acted upon it.

LESSON #5 is entitled "ETERNITY AND MAN". We will examine the differences between temporal, material things and eternal, spiritual things. We will see why it is such a mistake to ignore our spiritual needs and look at the judgment to come.

QUESTIONS FOR LESSON FOUR

THE PROMISED ONE

About how many prophecies were made about the Messiah? _____

How many of these did Jesus fail to fulfill? _____

Choose a prophecy about Jesus and tell how it was fulfilled. Feel free to use one of the examples cited in the lesson or another of your own choosing. _____

What enabled the prophets to foretell with 100% accuracy 2 Peter 1:20-21?

JESUS' CLAIMS

Did Jesus say He was the way to God or that there were other ways as well
John 14:6? _____

Why did some want to kill Jesus John 10:31-33? _____

JESUS' MISSION

The lesson gave at least four main points about Jesus' mission. What are they
Luke 19:10; John 6:38; 12:27,28; 18:37?

1. _____ 2. _____

3. _____ 4. _____

DEATH, BURIAL & RESURRECTION

What are the facts of the gospel that are of first importance 1 Corinthians 15:3-4? _____

What does Jesus' resurrection declare about Jesus ROMANS 1:4? _____

LORD AND SAVIOUR!

Fill in the blanks: Hebrews 5:9. *And having been _____, He became the author of eternal _____ to all who _____.*

ETERNITY AND MAN LESSON 5

By Jon Quinn

The fulfillment of God's plan will occur after this universe ceases to be. It is to be replaced by a new system, which God calls "the new heavens and the new earth". It promises to be a wonderful place.

We are here only a short time. Even a lifetime of 100 years is not long when compared to eternity. The Bible describes the brevity of life as *a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away* James 4:14. The question follows: "What will eternity be like for me?".

TEMPORARY OR ETERNAL?

The Bible teaches that some things are temporary. They exist for a time and then cease to be. Other things are eternal and will always be. But many people give the things, which are destined to pass away priority. They trade what would have given them eternal joy for that which lasts for a moment. What a foolish and fateful decision!

2 Corinthians 4:16-18-Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. 17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, 18 while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

For example, there are two kinds of wealth. Material wealth lasts for only a time; "You cannot take it with you." Then there are spiritual treasures, which will never fade away but only grow more precious, even after this world has ceased to be!

Matthew 16:19-21-And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." 20 Then He commanded His disciples that they should tell no one that He was Jesus the Christ. 21 From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day.

1 Timothy 6:17-19-Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy. 18 Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share, 19 storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

Also, there is the universe in which we live. It is an amazing place with its countless galaxies. But it is temporary. On the other hand, there is a new heavens and earth to come, an unending spiritual realm, which will far outshine this present system.

Hebrews 13:14-*For here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come.*

1 Peter 1:4-*to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you,*

2 Peter 3:12-*looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat?*

Revelation 21:1-*Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also, there was no more sea.*

We see the marvelous works of humanity. There are works of art, machines and buildings. But none of these, last forever. Then there are God's eternal works, such as the eternal city and His eternal Word.

2 Peter 3:10-*But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.*

1 Peter 1:23-*having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever,*

Hebrews 11:20-*By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.*

We see people anxious to reverse or at least slow down the aging process as time takes its toll on their bodies. We also read about spiritual bodies, which God will prepare for us in eternity. These will never wear out or die.

2 Corinthians 5:1-*For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.*

1 Corinthians 15:50-53-*Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. 51 Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed—52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. 53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.*

THE HUMAN SPIRIT

The human creature has both a physical and a spiritual side. The body is only the temporary abode of the soul, or spirit. The words "soul" and "spirit" each have several different uses in the Bible, and it must be determined from the context as to their meaning. We shall consider examples where these words are used to refer to that very real part of each one of us that will never cease to exist.

God created man as a dual being: body and spirit.

Genesis 2:7-*And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.*

Zechariah 12:1-The burden of the word of the LORD against Israel. Thus says the LORD, who stretches out the heavens, lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit of man within him:

1 Corinthians 6:20-For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

The spiritual part of man survives death and continues to have consciousness and identity.

Matthew 22:32-I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living."

Luke 16:19-31-"There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day. 20 But there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, who was laid at his gate, 21 desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table. Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. 22 So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried. 23 And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. 24 Then he cried and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.' 25 But Abraham said, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented. 26 And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us.' 27 Then he said, 'I beg you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father's house, 28 for I have five brothers, that he may testify to them, lest they also come to this place of torment.' 29 Abraham said to him, 'They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.' 30 And he said, 'No, father Abraham; but if one goes to them from the dead, they will repent.' 31 But he said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead.' "

Luke 23:43-And Jesus said to him, "Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise."

Philippians 1:20-24-according to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ will be magnified in my body, whether by life or by death. 21 For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain. 22 But if I live on in the flesh, this will mean fruit from my labor; yet what I shall choose I cannot tell. 23 For I am hard pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. 24 Nevertheless to remain in the flesh is more needful for you.

The place where our spirits go to await the resurrection is referred to as "Sheol" or "Hades"

Psalm 16:10-For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.

Luke 16:23-And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

1 Corinthians 15:42-44-So also is the resurrection of the dead. The body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. 43 It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. 44 It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.

JUDGMENT

Following the resurrection there will be a final judgment of all. This judgment is not for the purpose of determining guilt or innocence; this will have already been determined. Rather, it is for the pronouncing of reward or punishment. It is final; there is no higher court to which to appeal.

Hebrews 9:27- And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment,

John 12:48-He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him--the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day.

It will be just...

Romans 2:5-8-But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, 6 who "will render to each one according to his deeds": 7 eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality; 8 but to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness--indignation and wrath,

...and according to one's life's deeds

2 Corinthians 5:10-For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

Tragically, many will be unprepared.

Hebrews 10:27-but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries.

By God's grace some will be ready for judgment and eternity to follow

1 John 4:17-Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world.

HEAVEN

With newly fashioned, incorruptible bodies like Jesus' own glorified body, the redeemed of the ages will enter into heaven.

1 John 3:2-Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

Christians live in anticipation of Heaven, where they are enrolled as citizens

Philippians 3:20-For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,

Heaven is described as an eternal place where the saved dwell with Christ and the Father

Matthew 25:46-"And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

John 14:1-3-"Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. 2 In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.

Revelation 21:3-And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God.

It is a place of rest, which does not mean that there will be little activity, but that the activity will be refreshing and enjoyable, not burdensome and tiresome

Hebrews 4:1-Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it.

It is the inheritance of the faithful and the home of the victorious

1 Peter 1:3-5-Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Revelation 21:7-He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son.

There is no death or sorrow there, but rather it is filled with light and glory

Revelation 21:4-And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."

Revelation 21:23-25-The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light. 24 And the nations of those who are saved shall walk in its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it. 25 Its gates shall not be shut at all by day there shall be no night there.

In its' midst stands the tree of life.

Revelation 22:14-Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city.

Small wonder that it is called a "better" place

Hebrews 11:10-*for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.*

Hebrews 11:16-*But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore, God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.*

HELL

All will be raised:

John 5:28-29-*Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice 29 and come forth--those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.*

Those who have rejected God's grace and light have chosen eternal darkness for themselves. They will reap what they have sown

Galatians 6:7-8-*Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. 8 For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.*

Jesus tells us that hell is everlasting.

Matthew 25:46-*"And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."*

It is a dark place far from God and all that is good.

Matthew 25:30-*And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'*

2 Thessalonians 1:7-9-*and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, 8 in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,*

Jesus described it as a place of fire and plainly warned of sorrow there.

Matthew 13:42-*and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.*

Matthew 25:30-*And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'*

Romans 2:8-9-*but to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness--indignation and wrath, 9 tribulation and anguish, on every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek;*

It is a place of hopelessness where there is no rest.

Ephesians 2:12-*that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.*

Revelation 14:11-*And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name."*

Revelation 20:10-*The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.*

It is described as the second death.

Revelation 20:14-*Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.*

We do not enjoy thinking of such a place, but that does not change the facts. We do rejoice that Jesus was willing to save us from this by His own suffering. Hell can be avoided by loving and trusting in Jesus!

CONCLUSION

It is by God's grace that there is hope. He has already done more for us than we could ever hope to deserve. Each one of us are in the position of choosing for ourselves heaven over hell; life over death and victory over defeat. God will abide by our choice. The faithful Christian has made heaven his choice by his obedient trust in the gospel of Jesus Christ, and on that basis lives in hope

Colossians 1:5-*because of the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, of which you heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel,*

Colossians 1:23-*if indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard, which was preached to every creature under heaven, of which I, Paul, became a minister.*

LESSON #6 is entitled "WHAT MUST WE DO?". We will examine what it really means to be "born again" and how this new birth is absolutely necessary. We will learn what it means to "call upon the name of the Lord" to be saved.

QUESTIONS FOR LESSON FIVE

TEMPORARY OR ETERNAL?

What does the Bible say about the things we can see? _____

2. The things we cannot see 2 Corinthians 4:16-18? _____

3. Briefly tell what will happen to the present heavens and earth 2 Peter 3:10-13; Revelation 21:1? _____

THE HUMAN SPIRIT

What does the Lord form within us Zechariah 12:1? _____

Does Jesus teach that the dead are conscious following death Luke 16:19-31? _____

JUDGMENT

What will be the standard of judgment John 12:48? _____

2. What else will be considered 2 Corinthians 5:10? _____

HEAVEN

How is the Christian's inheritance described 1 Peter 1:4? _____

Name some things which will not be in Heaven Revelation 21:4. _____

List some of the things which will keep those who practice them outside the Kingdom of God 1 Corinthians 6:9-11. _____

HELL

What word does Jesus use to describe the duration of punishment Matthew 25:46? _____

How does Jesus describe hell Matthew 13:42? _____

WHAT MUST WE DO? LESSON 6

By Jon Quinn

In the last lesson we saw how tragic it is to be lost in eternity. It is important to learn what God has done to save us from this state. God's actions in our behalf are called "grace". Our response to what God has done for us will determine whether we benefit from His grace or not. The proper response to grace is "faith". We are saved by grace through faith

Ephesians 2:8-For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God,

No question has generated more confusion than "**What must I do to be saved?**" The problem does not come from the Bible being difficult to grasp on this point! It is quite plain. The problem comes from the systems that men have devised which, while containing some truth, distort or ignore Bible passages, which deal with salvation when they do not support their system. Any system, which does not accept all the Bible says about salvation, should be discarded.

YOU MUST BE BORN AGAIN!

Being "born again" is not just another way of being a Christian; it is necessary. If I am not a "born again" Christian, then Jesus says that I am outside His Kingdom! What does it mean to be "born again"?

John 3:1-8-There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. 2 This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him." 3 Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." 4 Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" 5 Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. 6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7 Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' 8 "The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit."

The same idea is expressed by different figures of speech throughout the New Testament. Paul refers to the same thing by using figure of death to sins, burial with Christ into His death baptism and resurrection rising from baptism to walk in newness of life. Paul was simply using a different figure to show the same thing, which Jesus had referred to as being "born again".

Romans 6:2-4-Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? 3 Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? 4 Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

Jesus explained to Nicodemus that He was not talking about a literal birth, but a spiritual rebirth. Jesus also explained that this new birth consisted of being born of water and the Spirit.

John 3:5-Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God."

The Spirit works on the heart through the gospel to bring about the new birth. The gospel is God's power to save.

Romans 1:16-For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

Jesus taught that the Spirit gives life and that His words are spirit and life.

John 6:63-It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life.

Jesus also taught that the word is the seed of the kingdom.

Luke 8:11-"Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God."

The Bible says that we are "brought forth" by the word of truth.

James 1:18-Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of first fruits of His creatures.

1 Peter 1:23-25-having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever, 24 because "All flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withers, and its flower falls away, 25 But the word of the LORD endures forever." Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you.

The gospel is the agent through which the Spirit works on the heart to bring about the new birth. Jesus said that this birth is like the wind because neither can be seen, but you can see the effects of both.

John 3:8- "The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit."

FAITH

The Biblical definition of "faith" is "the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen."

Hebrews 11:1-Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

Hebrews 11:6-But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

The faith by which we are saved consists of trust and obedience and leads us to live godly lives.

Hebrews 11:8 *By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going.*

Faith that lacks these qualities is "vain" or "dead". The Bible teaches that we are "justified by faith," but also plainly shows that we are not justified by faith alone.

Romans 5:1-*Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,*

James 2:24-*You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only.*

Both statements are true; we are justified by faith but not by faith alone

James 2:14-24-*What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him? 15 If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, 16 and one of you says to them, "Depart in peace, be warmed and filled," but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit? 17 Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. 18 But someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works." Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. 19 You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe--and tremble! 20 But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead? 21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? 22 Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect? 23 And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." And he was called the friend of God. 24 You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only.*

We must be careful that what we believe is what God, and not man, has said.

Matthew 15:9-*And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.'* "

Faith is a part of the new birth process.

REPENTANCE

What does "repentance" mean? Many people would be surprised to learn what it does not mean! For example, "repentance" does not mean sorrow for one's sins alone. However, godly sorrow leads to repentance and one cannot repent apart from being sorry for his sins.

2 Corinthians 7:9-10-*Now I rejoice, not that you were made sorry, but that your sorrow led to repentance. For you were made sorry in a godly manner, that you might suffer loss from us in nothing. 10 For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death.*

Neither is changing one's life repentance, although repentance does produce changed lives

Acts 3:19-Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord,

Repentance is simply a change of heart. It is the victory won within the heart as one brings his own will into line with God's will. Repentance is a part of the new birth process.

CONFESSION

The Bible states that one must confess faith in Christ as Lord. This means to tell others what he has come to believe in his heart. A good example of this confession is found when Philip taught the Ethiopian Treasurer about Jesus.

Acts 8:27-39-So he arose and went. And behold, a man of Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority under Candace the queen of the Ethiopians, who had charge of all her treasury, and had come to Jerusalem to worship, 28 was returning. And sitting in his chariot, he was reading Isaiah the prophet. 29 Then the Spirit said to Philip, "Go near and overtake this chariot." 30 So Philip ran to him, and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah, and said, "Do you understand what you are reading?" 31 And he said, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" And he asked Philip to come up and sit with him. 32 The place in the Scripture which he read was this: "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and as a lamb before its shearer is silent, so He opened not His mouth. 33 In His humiliation His justice was taken away, and who will declare His generation? For His life is taken from the earth." 34 So the eunuch answered Philip and said, "I ask you, of whom does the prophet say this, of himself or of some other man?" 35 Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him. 36 Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, "See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?" 37 Then Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." And he answered and said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." 38 So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him. 39 Now when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, so that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing.

The confession, which is made "unto salvation," is a confession of faith in Christ, not a confession of sins. Though there is a deep awareness of guilt, confessing our sins to others is not a requirement made of one initially coming to Christ.

Romans 10:9-10-that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Confession of Christ is a part of the new birth process.

BAPTISM

You will recall that Jesus mentioned water as He discussed being born again. Jesus was referring to baptism in water. Baptism is a response of faith in God's

power and willingness to save. It is the consummation of the new birth process. Jesus taught that one must believe and be baptized to be saved.

Mark 16:15-16-And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. 16 He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.

Those in sin were told that they needed to "call upon the name of the Lord" to be saved

Acts 2:21-And it shall come to pass that whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved.'

When they came to believe in Jesus, they asked exactly what they must do. How does one "call upon His name"? They were told to repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus "for the remission of sins."

Acts 2:36-38-"Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ." 37 Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" 38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Acts 22:16-And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.'

Many other passages show the importance of baptism. We have already seen Paul's parallel of Jesus' death, burial and resurrection with repentance, baptism and walking in newness of life. Later in the chapter, Paul points to this act of "obedience from the heart" as the time when one is freed from his sins.

Romans 6:16-18-Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness? 17 But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. 18 And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.

It is at baptism that God into His Son places us and salvation can only occur in Christ.

Galatians 3:27-28-For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Colossians 2:12-buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.

Does baptism have anything to do with being saved? YES!

1 Peter 3:21-*There is also an antitype which now saves us--baptism not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,*

Baptism is a part of the new birth process.

CONCLUSION

Forget about trying to determine which of these steps in being born again are the most important. "Is belief more important than confessing?" "Is baptism more important than repentance?" Rather than this, we must determine that if God has said a thing is necessary, then it is. Each of these parts must play its God-given role in salvation. LESSON #7 is entitled "LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE!". We will see what it takes to be a disciple of Jesus.

QUESTIONS FOR LESSON SIX

YOU MUST BE BORN AGAIN!

What two items did Jesus specify as being included in being born again John 3:5? _____ and _____.

Can one see the Kingdom of God without being born again John 3:3? _____

Can one enter the Kingdom of Heaven apart from the Spirit? _____

Can one enter the Kingdom of Heaven apart from water? _____

In what way do we "purify our souls 1 Peter 1:22? _____

Through what are we born again 1 Peter 1:23? _____

FAITH

James 2:24 says, "You see then that a man is justified by _____ and not by _____ only.

Is justification by "faith alone"? _____

REPENTANCE

How does "godly sorrow" relate to repentance 2 Corinthians 7:9-10? _____

What _____ is _____ repentance?

CONFESSION

What is to be confessed about Jesus ROMANS 10:9? _____

BAPTISM

What two things did Jesus say one must do to be saved Mark 16:16? _____

What two things were believers told to do for the forgiveness of their sins Acts 2:38

What was Saul instructed to do Acts 22:16? _____

What act of faith has God appointed to be the point at which we are placed "into Christ" Romans 6:3; Galatians 3:27? _____

LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE! – LESSON 7

By Jon Quinn

A Christian has put a new "Captain" in control of his life. Jesus is Lord. Jesus once asked some people, *Why do you call Me Lord and not do the things which I say?* Luke 6:46. Jesus told His disciples to *let their lights shine* Matthew 5:13-16. This lesson deals with what it means to be a disciple of Christ.

DISCIPLESHIP IS DEMANDING

Following Jesus has its costs. To be successful one must truly love Him and learn to depend upon Jesus for the strength necessary to endure. Jesus urged all who think about becoming His disciples to carefully count the cost!

Luke 14:27-33 And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple. 28 For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it — 29 lest, after he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, 30 saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish.' 31 Or what king, going to make war against another king, does not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? 32 Or else, while the other is still a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks conditions of peace. 33 So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple.

Jesus said that His kingdom must take priority in life. While many are content to let their religion to play a minor role in their lives, Jesus' disciples know it must take first place!

Matthew 6:33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

The word "disciple" means "one who follows" The disciple does not merely learn from his teacher but imitates Him. Jesus invites all to learn of Him

Matthew 11:29 Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

1 John 2:6 He that saith he abides in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.

A disciple of Jesus abides in Him by keeping His commandments

John 15:10 If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love.

1 John 2:14 *I have written unto you, fathers, because you have known him that is from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the wicked one.*

1 John 3:24 *And he that keeps his commandments dwells in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit which he has given us.*

A disciple is not ashamed of Jesus or His word. In the name "Christian" he glorifies God even if others mock

Luke 9:26 *For whoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels.*

1 Peter 4:16 *Yet if any man suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.*

Jesus taught that His disciples must be willing to say "yes" to Him even when we must deny self to do so.

Mark 8:34 *And when he had called the people unto him with his disciples also, he said unto them, whoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.*

Luke 14:27 *And whoever does not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.*

Galatians 2:20 *I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.*

Our Lord said our loyalty to Him must be so great that He becomes more precious than life itself. Disciples have had to make the choice between Jesus and life at times! But remember, He has the power of resurrection and eternal life.

Luke 12:15 *And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life does not consist of the abundance of the things which he possesses.*

John 12:24-26 *Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abides alone: but if it dies, it brings forth much fruit. 25 He that loves his life shall lose it; and he that hates his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. 26 If any man serves me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serves me, him will my Father honor.*

ACTIVITIES OF DISCIPLESHIP

Discipleship means participation. A disciple conforms to his Teacher's example and makes decisions based on His will

Romans 12:1-2 *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And be not conformed to this world: but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*

A disciple fills his life with praise of our Creator and Savior. Early Christians joyfully praised God for His blessings; especially for His redemptive work in Christ. Even when suffering hardship, early Christians could be found praising God

Acts 16:25 *And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them.*

Hebrews 13:15 *By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.*

Jesus' disciples follow His example in talking with God. Prayer is an important part of the Christian's day.

Philippians 4:6 *Be anxious for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.*

Colossians 4:2 *Continue in prayer and watch in the same with thanksgiving.*

Every disciple becomes a teacher by example as well as in word. He is eager to share the good news with others because he realizes the benefit it has been to him

2 Timothy 2:2 *And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.*

Hebrews 5:12 *For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.*

Disciples are unselfish. This involves being hospitable and ready to help those in need

Romans 12:13 *Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.*

Galatians 6:10 *As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto those who are of the household of faith.*

Disciples assemble with other disciples to worship God and to encourage one another.

Acts 20:7 *And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.*

Hebrews 10:24-25 *And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: 25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as you see the day approaching.*

ATTITUDES OF DISCIPLESHIP

Disciples love God. This love is not some mere mushy feeling, but an expression of will. Even if one "feels good" about God, he does not really love Him unless he is willing to obey Him

Matthew 22:37 *Jesus said unto him, you shall love the Lord thy God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.*

John 14:15 *If you love me, keep my commandments.*

1 John 5:3 *For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not burdensome.*

Disciples love others. Again, this entails more than the way we feel. It means that we seek for what is best for others

Matthew 22:39 *And the second is like unto it, you shall love your neighbor as yourself.*

1 John 3:16 *Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.*

Disciples are humble. This does not mean that they think of themselves as inferior. It simply means that they recognize God's place in their lives, and they are willing to submit to His will

James 4:10 *Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he will lift you up.*

Disciples have both joy and sorrow in life

Romans 12:15 *Rejoice with them that rejoice, and weep with them that weep.*

Through it all they have the confidence Jesus gives them as they walk by faith

Ephesians 3:11-12 *According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord: 12 In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him.*

Philippians 4:8 *Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.*

Philippians 4:13 *I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.*

Hebrews 4:16 *Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.*

Disciples hate sin because of the awful effect it has had on our world and its people. It is because of sin that Jesus died on the cross

Ephesians 5:11 *And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.*

1 Thessalonians 5:21-22 *Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. 22 Abstain from all appearance of evil.*

Disciples are reverent people who look upon God and His will with respect and treat others with dignity

Romans 11:20-21 *Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by faith. Be not high minded, but fear: 21 For if God did not spare the natural branches, take heed lest he also not spare you.*

1 Peter 1:17 *And if you call on the Father, who without respect of persons judges according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear:*

THE DEATH OF THE DISCIPLE

Death is an enemy that some believe unbeatable, but death loses its despair as the disciple puts his trust in the One who has died and lives again forevermore. Jesus has the "*keys of death and Hades*"

Revelation 1:17-18 *And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last: 18 I am he that lives, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.*

A good example of this confidence is Paul. He talked of a resurrection which drives grief away

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 *But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that you sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. 15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. 16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: 17 Then we which are alive*

and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. 18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

He summed up the disciple's attitude toward death: *"Death is swallowed up in victory!"*

1 Corinthians 15:54-57 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. 55 O death, where is your sting? O grave, where is your victory? 56 The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. 57 But thanks be to God, Who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

All these things are easy to say when preaching about death. The real test of Paul's words came as he faced his own execution! Were they mere words or did he really believe his message? Had he really seen the resurrected Lord? The answer is yes!

As Paul sat in a dungeon, he saw his own death approaching. He had been in prison before, but he knew that this would be the last time. He would shortly be beheaded by order of Nero. In his last writing he said,

2 Timothy 4:6-8;18 "I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award unto me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing ... The Lord will deliver me from every evil deed, and bring me safely to His heavenly kingdom; to Him be the glory forever and ever. Amen."

No regrets, no fear; only peace and hope in these final words. The disciple lives his life to bring glory to the One whom he knows will deliver him from death.

CONCLUSION

A disciple has made the decision to follow Christ. He is determined not to look back, slow down, back away or be still. He has been redeemed from his past, his present makes sense and his future is bright. His goal has been set upon the gate at the end of the narrow road. When Jesus comes again, He will have no trouble recognizing every true disciple which He has; they are bright lights shining forth in a dark world.

LESSON #8 is entitled "IN SPIRIT AND IN TRUTH." It deals with worship: what makes it acceptable, and for what reasons might God reject it. We will notice how the early church was taught to worship.

QUESTIONS FOR LESSON SEVEN

DISCIPLESHIP IS DEMANDING

What story did Jesus use to show the wisdom in "counting the costs" before becoming His disciple Luke 14:27-30? _____

What does Jesus' disciple seek first Matthew 6:33? _____

What does the word "disciple" mean? _____

Who is it that "abides in Jesus" 1 John 3:24? _____

ACTIVITIES OF DISCIPLESHIP

Disciples are not to be conformed to what? _____

What are they to do instead? Romans 12:2 _____

What are disciples told not to forsake doing Hebrews 10:25? _____

ATTITUDES OF DISCIPLESHIP

What does Jesus say about loving Him John 14:15? _____

1 John 5:3 says, *For this is the _____ of God, that we keep his _____ and his _____ are not grievous.*

What does it mean to be "humble"? _____

DEATH OF A DISCIPLE

Who has the "keys of death and Hades" Revelation 1:17-18? _____

In what four ways does the Bible describe the body that is buried 1 Corinthians 15:42-44? 1. _____ 2. _____

3. _____ 4. _____

In what four ways does the Bible describe the body that will be raised 1 Corinthians 15:42-44? 1. _____ 2. _____

3. _____ 4. _____

Why did Paul face his execution with such courage and peace 2 Timothy 4:6-8;18? _____

IN SPIRIT AND IN TRUTH – LESSON 8

By Jon Quinn

The Bible shows that God does not accept all worship that people offer Him. God has even asked some worshipers not to worship Him anymore until they make some needed changes!

Malachi 1:6-10

A son honors his father, and a servant his master. If then I am the Father, where is My honor? And if I am a Master, where is My reverence? Says the Lord of hosts to you priests who despise My name. Yet you say, 'In what way have we despised Your name?' 7 "You offer defiled food on My altar, but say, 'In what way have we defiled You?' By saying, 'The table of the Lord is contemptible.' 8 And when you offer the blind as a sacrifice, is it not evil? And when you offer the lame and sick, is it not evil? Offer it then to your governor! Would he be pleased with you? Would he accept you favorably?" says the Lord of hosts. 9 "But now entreat God's favor, that He may be gracious to us. While this is being done by your hands, will He accept you favorably?" says the Lord of hosts. 10 "Who is there even among you who would shut the doors, so that you would not kindle fire on My altar in vain? I have no pleasure in you," says the Lord of hosts, "Nor will I accept an offering from your hands. "

God also punished two religious leaders in the Old Testament for worshiping Him through means He had not commanded.

Leviticus 10:1-2 And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the LORD, which he commanded them not. 2 And there went out fire from the LORD, and devoured them, and they died before the LORD.

Human beings need to worship God in Whose image we are created. True worship brings dignity to our lives. We need to know how to worship God according to his will or else our worship will be in vain.

IN SPIRIT AND TRUTH

"Worship" is the adoration of God. Acceptable worship must consist of appointed acts which are motivated by respect. Jesus came that we might worship God "in spirit and in truth". One can find out about such worship in the New Testament. It is the only reliable source of information!

John 4:23 But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him.

Early Christians met together to worship God at various times in addition to their regular assembly on the first day of each week, or Sunday which came to be referred to as "the Lord's Day".

Acts 20:7 And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached to them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.

1 Corinthians 16:1-2 Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also: 2 On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come.

Revelation 1:10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet,

This was a different day of worship than what had been used in the Old Testament period. The Israelites had been commanded to observe the Sabbath day Saturday. However, the New Testament teaches that we are no longer under this law. Sabbath observance passed away with the Old Law.

Colossians 2:13-17 And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; 14 Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; 15 And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it. 16 Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: 17 Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.

Hebrews 8:13 In that He says, "A new covenant," He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.

Hebrews 7:12 For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law.

The will of Christ is our authority and we must look there to learn of what worship ought to consist. Many will be surprised to see how worship has changed over the centuries. But the critical point is this: no one had the right to change worship of God at all! If our worship is to be acceptable unto God, then it must be according to His will.

Matthew 15:9 But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

Galatians 1:8-9 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. 9 As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.

THE LORD'S SUPPER

One reason that disciples met upon the first day of each week was to "break bread" or partake of the memorial supper as Jesus had commanded. It was a very solemn occasion indeed. We must not change that which has been revealed to us concerning its observance.

It was appointed by Jesus Himself

Matthew 26:26-29 And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, "Take, eat; this is My body." 27 Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. 28 For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. 29 But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom."

Its purpose was to help us remember how He gave His life for our salvation and to proclaim our faith in Him

1 Corinthians 11:23-26 For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; 24 and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." 25 In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." 26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.

The items of the supper consist of the bread and the fruit of the vine. These symbols remind disciples of His body as it hung on the cross and the blood which flowed from His wounds.

Luke 22:19-20 And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me." 20 Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you.

Under the guidance of the apostles and by the will of God, the early church would come together on the first day of the week to partake of the supper.

Acts 20:7 And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached to them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.

Disciples would meditate about the sacrifice of Christ and what it meant to them. They would commune with the Lord and be strengthened in the week to follow.

1 Corinthians 11:27-29 Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. 28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. 29 For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

PRAYER

Prayer has always been a vital part of the everyday lives of God's people. Early Christians also prayed as they gathered to worship. Prayer is communicating with God. As Christians we pray "in Jesus' name" which simply means by His authority. We cannot approach God through any other mediator.

1 Timothy 2:5 *For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;*

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

Prayer's purpose is to assist us in building our relationship with God. It is not to inform God of something which He may not be aware of or to try to convince Him to love us. He already knows our needs and He has certainly shown his love. We trust Him to do what is best even when we fail to see the results for which we had hoped.

Matthew 7:7-11 *Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. 8 For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. 9 Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? 10 Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? 11 If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!*

Ephesians 3:20-21 *Now to him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, 21 Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.*

Proper prayer includes having correct attitudes and must be according to God's will. Selfish or self-righteous prayers are not acceptable.

James 1:5-8 *If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. 6 But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. 7 For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; 8 he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.*

James 4:3 *You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures.*

1 John 5:14 *And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he hears us:*

SINGING

God's children worship Him in song, both privately and when they assemble. The purpose is to glorify God and to build up one another.

Ephesians 5:19 *Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;*

In the New Testament the music offered unto God by His church was purely vocal. This continued to be the case for centuries until musical instruments

gradually began to be accepted in more and more places. Of course, the real question is whether any of us have the right to make changes in what God has appointed in the doctrine of Christ. Early Christians sang psalms, hymns and spiritual songs as they lifted up their voices in praise of God

Colossians 3:16-17 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. 17 And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

TEACHING

Christians also spent time contemplating God's word together as they received instruction. This would help them know more about God's will and character and how it ought to affect their lives. Disciples continued steadfastly in the teaching of the apostles. They had great confidence in the Scripture as God's Word and as a completely reliable guide for life.

Acts 2:42 And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work.

Teaching took the form of reproof, rebuke and exhortation; all with the purpose of encouraging faithful living on the parts of the hearers.

2 Timothy 4:1-5 I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: 2 Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. 3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; 4 and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables. 5 But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

GIVING

Members of the Lord's body were instructed to give. Specific guidelines were given and ought to be observed. The work of the church involves financial considerations.

2 Corinthians 8:1-4 Moreover, brethren, we make known to you the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia: 2 that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded in the riches of their liberality. 3 For I bear witness that according to their ability, yes, and beyond their ability, they were freely willing, 4 imploring us with much urgency that we would receive the gift and the fellowship of the ministering to the saints.

Philippians 4:15 *Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but you only.*

The method of providing for these needs was to take up a collection from among the members of a local church on the first day of the week. Disciples were not commanded to give a specific amount or percentage, but simply told to decide in their own hearts and according to how God had prospered them.

1 Corinthians 16:1-2 *Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also: 2 On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come.*

They were also told to give cheerfully.

2 Corinthians 9:6-7 *But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. 7 So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.*

CONCLUSION

The command to worship God is not without purpose. By doing so we glorify God...

Revelation 4:10-11 *the twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying: 11 "You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and by Your will they exist and were created."*

dignify ourselves ...

Philippians 3:3 *For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.*

Philippians 3:13-14 *Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, 14 I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.*

and express our faith.

Hebrews 13:15 *By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.*

Worship that God finds acceptable takes place in the heart of the individual as he expresses his love for God through the actions which God Himself has appointed.

LESSON #9 is entitled "I WILL BUILD MY CHURCH" and deals with how Jesus fulfilled this promise and exactly what it was that He built.

QUESTIONS FOR LESSON EIGHT
IN SPIRIT AND TRUTH

What is worship? _____

Why do Christians assemble on Sunday rather than Saturday? _____

What does Matthew 15:9 say about worship and the doctrines of men? _____

THE LORD'S SUPPER

When did early disciples partake of the Lord's supper Acts 20:7? _____

What were they to remember 1 Corinthians 11:23-26? _____

What do the bread and cup represent Luke 22:19-20? _____

PRAYER

What does it mean to pray "in Jesus' name"? _____

What purpose does prayer fulfill? _____

SINGING

What two-fold purpose is accomplished in singing praises Ephesians 5:19? _____

What kind of music were Christians taught to offer God in the New Testament -
vocal or instrumental Colossians 3:16-17? _____

Do we have a right to change what God has spoken? _____

TEACHING

What warning is given about failing to continue in the doctrine of Christ 2 John
9-11? _____

GIVING

What method is the church to use in raising funds for its work 1 Corinthians 16:1-
2? _____

Upon what day of the week was this to be done? _____

I WILL BUILD MY CHURCH – LESSON 9

By Jon Quinn

Upon Peter's confession of faith that Jesus was the Christ Jesus replied that this fact was the rock upon which He would build His church

Matthew 16:16-18 Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." 17 Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. 18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

As you read the passage, you get the idea that Jesus thought that He was announcing something of great importance: "I will build My church".

WHAT DID JESUS BUILD?

The word "church" in the Bible never refers to any kind of physical building, denomination or group of denominations or to any kind of human religious hierarchy. The church which Jesus built is a spiritual building made up of redeemed people. Its foundation is the fact of Jesus' identity as God's Son and the gospel is the tool used to build it

Romans 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believes; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

2 Thessalonians 2:14 to which He called you by our gospel, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The term "church" is a collective noun like the words "flock" or "crowd" and is made up of multiple parts. The church is made up of all people who have answered God's call. They have been redeemed from sin by the blood of Christ. The church consists of all people who are disciples of Jesus.

Acts 8:3 As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering every house, and dragging off men and women, committing them to prison.

Acts 9:1 Then Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest

The word translated "church" simply means "called out". Those who make up the church have been "set apart" or "sanctified". All disciples are called "saints".

Acts 9:13 Then Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much harm he has done to Your saints in Jerusalem.

1 Corinthians 1:2 To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all who in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:

The answer to the age-old question "must one be a member of the church to be saved?" becomes obvious when one realizes that the church is the saved and the saved are the church; those who have been purchased by the blood of Christ.

Acts 20:28 Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.

Notice that the word "church" is used in both a local as well as general sense in the Bible. In the local sense it refers to the saved at a particular city or place who have joined together to work and worship

Romans 16:1 I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea:

Romans 16:5 Likewise greet the church that is in their house. Greet my beloved Epaphroditus, who is the first fruits of Achaia to Christ.

Romans 16:16 ... The churches of Christ salute you.

The Bible shows that these groups of people are locally organized and independent of one another. But in the general sense there is only one church made up of faithful disciples everywhere. Most of the references that we will consider use the term in the general sense.

GOD DESCRIBES HIS CHURCH

We can see the high value God places on His church by the terms He has chosen to describe it. He refers to the church as His family or household

Ephesians 2:19-20 Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, 20 having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone,

Members of the church are part of Christ's Kingdom

Colossians 1:13 He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love,

They are referred to as members of Christ's body over which Jesus is the Head

Ephesians 1:22-23 And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, 23 which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

Since God dwells in His church it is also called His temple

1 Corinthians 3:16 Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?

See how important the church is? If it is important to you to be a child in God's family, a citizen of His kingdom, a member of Christ's body and for God to dwell in you, then it will be equally important to be a member of the church of Christ!

JESUS AND HIS CHURCH

Jesus is the center of God's purpose. When we see His special relationship to His church, we will also learn more of the church's importance. Jesus gave Himself up for the church and loves His church

Ephesians 5:23 *For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the savior of the body.*

The church has always been a part of God's plan to bring about eternal redemption through His Son. Far be it from us to dismiss it as not essential

Ephesians 3:9-11 *and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ; 10 to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places, 11 according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord,*

THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH

The purpose of the church is to bring glory to God. "To Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations ..."

Ephesians 3:21 *Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.*

The church sounds forth the word of the Lord ...

1 Thessalonians 1:8 *For from you the word of the Lord has sounded forth, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place. Your faith toward God has gone out, so that we do not need to say anything.*

When the local church assembles it is for the encouragement of its members

Hebrews 10:24-25 *And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, 25 not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.*

The church must not fail to uphold the truth

1 Timothy 3:15 *but if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.*

It seems today as if many churches are engaged in about whatever business you can imagine. It is time to get back to the basics!

UNITY AND THE CHURCH

Jesus prayed for His disciples' unity. However, it was not to be unity at any cost! It was to be based upon a mutual acceptance of His word. It was to be the kind of oneness that Jesus had with His Father

John 17:11; 17 *Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are ... 17 Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.*

Did you know that religious division and the things which cause it are strongly spoken against in the Bible? Some think it is fine to have so many differing denominations with various creeds, organizations and leaders. The word "denomination" means "division" and while having so many offers us a greater selection it does not please God and that ought to be our foremost priority! What does God think about this division?

1 Corinthians 1:10-13 Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. 11 For it has been declared to me concerning you, my brethren, by those of Chloe's household, that there are contentions among you. 12 Now I say this, that each of you says, "I am of Paul," or "I am of Apollos," or "I am of Cephas," or "I am of Christ." 13 Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?

How many faiths, religious bodies and so forth can we have and still find God's approval? Only one!

Ephesians 4:4-6 There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism; 6 one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

The fact that men became religiously divided did not surprise God. He foresaw it

1 Timothy 4:1-3 Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, 2 speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron, 3 forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth.

THE LOCAL CHURCH

When the Bible speaks of a group of God's children in fellowship with one another as a church, it does so in a local sense. When they could, Christians in the first century joined or associated themselves with a local church

Acts 9:26 And when Saul had come to Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples; but they were all afraid of him and did not believe that he was a disciple.

This was and is God's will. But not every local church is pleasing to God. Even in the New Testament some churches were warned that if they did not return to the way of the Lord that He would refuse to recognize them any longer

Revelation 2:5 Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place — unless you repent.

We must exercise care in identifying with a local church.

CONCLUSION

Of which church should you be a member? It is according to what your purpose is. If it is to please God, then you will insist upon a church that accepts Jesus' authority in all matters because it recognizes Him as its only Head. It will recognize no church law other than His. It will involve itself only in those works that the Lord has given to it. According to Jesus, anything less renders worship vain and separates one from God

Matthew 15:9 *But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.*

2 John 9 *Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son.*

LESSON #10 is entitled "KEPT BY GOD'S POWER". It concludes this series by looking at how Jesus gives hope to His disciples. We will see the need for endurance and consider God's warnings about falling away. We will also discuss the wonderful security in Christ.

QUESTIONS FOR LESSON NINE

WHAT DID JESUS BUILD?

Describe the people out of which Jesus builds His church 1 Corinthians 1:2.

What does the word translated "church" mean? _____

What did God purchase and what was the price Acts 20:28? _____

In what two senses is the word "church" used in the Bible? _____
and _____

GOD DESCRIBES HIS CHURCH

What do "household of God", "kingdom of God's Son", "body of Christ" and "temple of God" all refer to? _____

Are being a part of these important to you? _____

Why or why not? _____

JESUS AND THE CHURCH

Read Ephesians 5:23-27 and list at least four aspects of Jesus' relationship with His church. _____

THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH

Ephesians 3:21 says, *Unto him be _____ in the _____ by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.*

UNITY AND THE CHURCH

What does God think about division 1 Corinthians 1:10-13? _____

B. How many faiths and religious bodies ought men to have Ephesians 4:4-6?

THE LOCAL CHURCH

What warning did Jesus give the church at Ephesus Revelation 2:5? _____

What words of approval did Jesus give to the church at Philadelphia Revelation 3:8? _____

Does the doctrine taught in a church matter? 2 John 9 _____

What are important things to look for in a local church? _____

KEPT BY GOD'S POWER – LESSON 10

By Jon Quinn

Peace of mind is extremely important to a person's well-being. Polls conducted have always rated "peace of mind" at the top of the list of things necessary for happiness. And yet this "inner peace" seems so elusive today.

Also, nobody wants to live with a false sense of security. The ideal is peace of mind brought forth by genuine security. This is exactly what Jesus offers to His disciples. We are going to consider various questions concerning security in Christ that have been debated for centuries. "How secure is salvation and upon what is this security based?" "Can a child of God ever forfeit His salvation and be lost?"

HOPE IN CHRIST

Christianity is based upon a message of hope in the place of despair, faith rather than doubt and purpose rather than emptiness. There is no reason to live life or face eternity without hope. To do so leads to cynicism. Paul reminded the Christians at Ephesus of how they had been before: "...having no hope and without God in the world."

Ephesians 2:12 that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

1 Thessalonians 4:13 But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope.

Apart from faith the "eat, drink and be merry" philosophy makes tragic sense. But there is something better

1 Corinthians 15:32; 57-58 32 If, in the manner of men, I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantage is it to me? If the dead do not rise, "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die!" ... 57 But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. 58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

God has offered to give dignity and purpose to our lives and peace to our souls. Let us flee to Him for strong encouragement

Hebrews 6:17-20 Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath, 18 that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us. 19 This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil, 20 where the forerunner has entered for us, even Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

The peace which God offers does not depend upon outward circumstances. This peace may be enjoyed in a mansion or in a dungeon and is conditioned upon "hearing His voice"

John 10:27-29 *My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. 28 And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. 29 My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand.*

We are only protected by the power of God through our faith

1 Peter 1:3-5 *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.*

It is entirely possible for a Christian to leave His Lord and thereby leave the security which He gives

John 6:66-68 *From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more. 67 Then Jesus said to the twelve, "Do you also want to go away?" 68 But Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.*

Other passages in the Bible which show that security is based upon remaining in Christ are abundant

John 15:4-6 *Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. 5 "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. 6 If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned.*

We learn that there is no condemnation to those who live in Christ

Romans 8:13; 37-39 *For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live ... 37 Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. 38 For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, 39 nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Abiding in Christ means keeping His commandments

1 John 2:4-6 *He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. 5 But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. 6 He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.*

ENDURANCE

God requires our loyalty. There is no acceptable reason to deny our faith. There is no loss or sacrifice so great that we ought to feel that our Lord will excuse our disloyalty to Him, whether the loss of possessions, money, friends, status or even the good will of our family. The Lord has much to say about enduring faith. He tells us that we must be willing to "endure to the end" even if our own brother revolt against us

Matthew 10:21-22 Now brother will deliver up brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death. 22 And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. But he who endures to the end will be saved.

Jesus told us to abide in His word

John 8:31-32 Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are you my disciples indeed; 32 And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

Our perseverance will bring us to our goal of eternal life

Romans 2:6-8 who "will render to each one according to his deeds": 7 eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality; 8 but to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness — indignation and wrath,

Christians at Corinth were urged to "hold fast to the word"

1 Corinthians 15:1-2 Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, 2 by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you — unless you believed in vain.

and we are told that "in due we will reap if we do not grow weary"

Galatians 6:9 And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we do not faint.

Only if we endure will we reign with Him

2 Timothy 2:12 If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us:

We are God's house and partakers of Christ if we "hold fast our confidence" until the end

Hebrews 3:6; 14 But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end ... 14 For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end;

God tells us that we need endurance so that when we have done His will we may receive what has been promised

Hebrews 10:26 *For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins,*

The crown of life belongs them that are "faithful unto death"

Revelation 2:10 *Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.*

WARNINGS AGAINST FALLING

God considers these matters so important to our wellbeing that He has given repeated warnings that it is possible to fall from grace. It would certainly be wise to heed these warnings as we seek to avoid the consequences of apostasy. In the parable of the sower Jesus illustrated the possibility of being saved from sin and then returning to sin and being lost. Note especially the seed that fell on the rocky soil

Luke 8:4-15 *And when a great multitude had gathered, and they had come to Him from every city, He spoke by a parable: 5 "A sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed, some fell by the wayside; and it was trampled down, and the birds of the air devoured it. 6 Some fell on rock; and as soon as it sprang up, it withered away because it lacked moisture. 7 And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up with it and choked it. 8 But others fell on good ground, sprang up, and yielded a crop a hundredfold." When He had said these things He cried, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear!" 9 Then His disciples asked Him, saying, "What does this parable mean?" 10 And He said, "To you it has been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest it is given in parables, that 'Seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand.' 11 "Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. 12 Those by the wayside are the ones who hear; then the devil comes and takes away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. 13 But the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, who believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away. 14 Now the ones that fell among thorns are those who, when they have heard, go out and are choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity. 15 But the ones that fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep it and bear fruit with patience.*

The disciple is warned to take heed "lest he fall"

1 Corinthians 10:12 *Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.*

In fact, some disciples at Galatia were "severed from Christ" and had "fallen from grace"

Galatians 5:4 *You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace.*

God also predicted that in later times some would "fall away from the faith" and therefore urged us to exercise care

1 Timothy 5:8 *But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.*

Hebrews 3:12 *Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God;*

We are warned that spiritual death awaits those who "stray from the truth" if they do not turn back again

James 5:19-20 *Brethren, if anyone among you wanders from the truth, and someone turns him back, 20 let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins.*

Yes, one can have his name erased from the book of life

Revelation 3:5 *He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.*

SECURITY AND PEACE

God offers security and the peace which it brings by His grace. We receive and maintain it by our own continued faith. This is our confidence and hope. Our God will not allow us to be tempted beyond our ability to bear, but He will allow us to be tempted and to choose our own way. He will not forsake us. We must not forsake Him

1 Corinthians 10:13 *No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.*

Hebrews 13:5-6 *Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." 6 So we may boldly say: "The Lord is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?"*

Yes, we can know that we are right with God. This knowledge does not come from intuition or feeling; feelings do not always lead to truth. We can know by that which God has caused to be written

1 John 5:11-13 *And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. 12 He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. 13 These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God.*

The peace of God is not flimsy like that of the world

John 14:27 *Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.*

It surpasses understanding in that it comforts and encourages the disciple in good times and bad

Philippians 4:7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

It rules the heart and fills the man or woman of faith with gratitude

Colossians 3:15 And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body: and be thankful.

CONCLUSION

The faithful Christian knows that nothing will defeat him as long as he abides in Christ. He is secure in that knowledge and his peace is based upon it. God is always faithful.

Romans 8:1; 31; 37-39 There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit ... 31 What shall we then say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? 37 Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. 38 For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, 39 nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

QUESTIONS FOR LESSON TEN

HOPE IN CHRIST

If there is no resurrection, what should we be doing and why 1 Corinthians 15:32?

What three things will happen "in the twinkling of an eye" at the last moment of time 1 Corinthians 15:52? _____

What six things does Jesus say about His sheep John 10:27-28? _____

If one does not heed the voice of Christ, is he one of His sheep? _____

Do the promises of "eternal life" and "shall never perish" apply to those who cease to follow Jesus? _____

ENDURANCE

The disciple who endures to what point will be saved Matthew 10:22? _____

One is saved by the gospel if he does what? 1 Corinthians 15:1-2. _____

If we endure what will happen? If we deny Jesus what will happen 2 Timothy 2:12? _____

WARNINGS AGAINST FALLING

Why is the Christian warned to "take heed" 1 Corinthians 10:12? _____

What two things happened to some of the unfaithful disciples who were seeking to be justified by the law of Moses? Galatians 5:4. _____

What does Jesus say we must do in order that our names in the book of life not be erased or blotted out Revelation 3:5? _____

SECURITY AND PEACE

What does God promise concerning temptation? 1 Corinthians 10:13. _____

What do the scriptures "things written" allow us to know 1 John 5:13? _____

What guards the hearts and minds of the faithful disciple? Philippians 4:7. _____