

**THE CHURCH
AND
FRUITFUL CHRISTIANITY**

Workbook

C.B. Beekhuizen a.o.

**Christian Counselling Seminars
for
Training in Discipleship**

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For Fruitful Discipleship Training**

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INTRODUCTION



This workbook contains a collection of special Bible studies, taken from the hundreds of Bible course flyers for Africa and India. It gives an outline of Biblical topics, given to appointed Church leaders in Africa and India on request of Christian brethren in Kenya, Uganda and Burundi. These seminar topics are also available in our website www.adullam.nl

For many years we were able by God's grace and inspiration to teach hundreds of Bible topics in seminars about Church developing, spiritual growth, Christian suffering, and disaster or conflict management with some seminars for youth how to be protected against HIV AIDS.

Because the present troubles in some African and Indian countries and in places where the Christians undergo disaster, poverty, terrorism, persecution, tribe conflicts, competition, jealousy, even among Church leaders, the need for Christian counselling literature and seminars is increasingly felt.

Therefore, our international Adullam workers produced many Biblical counselling flyers and brochures for Bible school students and pastors, but also for community leaders and officials within the local Government.

We pray and hope that many people will read or download those lectures from our website www.adullam.nl

The apostle Paul wrote: *“Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way, death became to all men, because all sinned – breaking a command – the many died by the trespass of the one man – how much more did God’s grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, overflow the many!”*

May God bless the readers and the counselling lectures!

Your International Adullam Ministries Field Director, C.B. Beekhuizen

International leader of Adullam Ministries for counselling and first aid.

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CHAPTER 1

1. The Foundation of Christian faith (Flyer 1)

To learn the basis of Christian faith, we must make a study of the foundation, because the Lord Jesus Christ is God's Image (Col. 1:15-23; 1Tim. 3:16; Heb. 1:3).

Col 1:15-23 *"The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. 16. For by him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether they are kings, lords, rulers, or powers. All things have been created through him and for him. 17. He himself existed before anything else did, and he holds all things together. 18. He is also the head of the body, which is the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he himself might have first place in everything. 19. For God was pleased to have all of his divine essence inhabit him. 20. Through the Son, God also reconciled all things to himself, whether things on earth or things in heaven, thereby making peace through the blood of his cross. 21. You who were once alienated with a hostile attitude, doing evil, 22. he has now reconciled by the death of his physical body, so that he may present you holy, blameless, and without fault before him. 23. However, you must remain firmly established and steadfast in the faith, without being moved from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven and of which I, Paul, have become a servant."*

1Ti 3:16 *"By common confession, the secret of our godly worship is great: In flesh was he revealed to sight, kept righteous by the Spirit's might, adored by angels singing. To nations was he manifest, believing souls found peace and rest, our Lord in heaven reigning!"*

Heb 1:3 *"He is the reflection of God's glory and the exact likeness of his being, and he holds everything together by his powerful word. After he had provided a cleansing from sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Highest Majesty."*

1.1. Christ is Gods' Foundation (1 Cor. 1:23; 3:11)

1Co 1:23 *"but we preach the Messiah crucified. He is a stumbling block to Jews and nonsense to gentiles,"*

1Co 3:11 *"After all, no one can lay any other foundation than the one that is already laid, and that is Jesus the Messiah."*

1.2. He is Gods' power and wisdom (1 Cor. 1:23, 24)

1Co 1:23 *"but we preach the Messiah crucified. He is a stumbling block to Jews and nonsense to gentiles, 24. but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, the Messiah is God's power and God's wisdom."*

1.3. The apostles' doctrine (Eph. 2:20; 2 Pet. 3:2).

Eph 2:20 *"having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, the Messiah Jesus himself being the cornerstone."*

2Pe 3:2 *"to recall the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets and the commandment of our Lord and Savior spoken through your apostles."*

2 The Christian position

2.1. Sealed on Gods' foundation by His Spirit (Eph. 1:13)

Eph 1:13 *"You, too, have heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed in the Messiah, you were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit,"*

2.2. Placed in Christ by faith (Eph.1:4-6; 1 John 2:20)

Eph 1:4-6 *"Just as he chose us in the Messiah before the creation of the universe to be holy and blameless in his presence. In love 5. He predestined us for adoption to himself through Jesus the Messiah, according to the pleasure of his will, 6. So that we would praise his glorious grace that he gave us in the Beloved One."*

1Jn 2:20 *"You have an anointing from the Holy One and know all things."*

2.3. Cleansed by His blood and Word (Heb. 9:14 ; 1 Pet. 1:22)

Heb 9:14 *"how much more will the blood of the Messiah, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from dead actions so that we may serve the living God!"*

1Pe 1:22 *"Now that you have obeyed the truth and have purified your souls to love your brothers sincerely, you must love one another intensely and with a pure heart."*

2.4. Kings and priests (1Pet. 2:9; Rev. 1:6)

1Pe 2:9 *“But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people to be his very own and to proclaim the wonderful deeds of the one who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.”*

Rev 1:6 *“and has made us a kingdom, priests for his God and Father, be glory and power forever and ever! Amen.”*

2.5. Placed in Christ, one with Him (Col. 2:7)

Col 2:7 *“For you have been rooted in him and are being built up and strengthened in the faith, just as you were taught, while you continue to be thankful.”*

2.6. Rooted in Gods’ love (Eph. 3:17)

Eph 3:17 *“and that the Messiah would make his home in your hearts through faith. Then, having been rooted and grounded in love.”*

2.7. Having a place in Heaven with Christ (Eph. 2:6)

Eph 2:6 *“raised us up with him, and seated us with him in the heavenly realm in the Messiah Jesus,”*

3. Christian faith built on the rock as hiding place

3.1. Jesus is the Rock and Good Shepherd (Isa 32:1, 2 ; 1 Sam. 22:1; John 10:14)

Isa 32:1 *“Look, a king will reign in righteousness, and rulers will rule with justice. 2. Each one will be like a shelter from the wind and a hiding place from storms, like streams of water in the desert, in the shadow of a great rock in an exhausted land.”*

1Sa 22:1 *“David left from there and escaped to the Cave of Adullam. His brothers and all his father’s family heard about this and went down to him there.”*

3.2. The Rock as foundation (1Cor. 3:11; Mat. 7:24; 16:8)

1Co 3:11 *“After all, no one can lay any other foundation than the one that is already laid, and that is Jesus the Messiah.”*

Mat 7:24 *"Therefore, everyone who listens to these messages of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on a rock."*

Mat 16:8 *"Knowing this, Jesus asked them, "You who have little faith, why are you discussing among yourselves the fact that you don't have any bread?"*

3.3. He is the source of living water (1Cor. 10:4; Ex. 17:6)

1Co 10:4 *"and drank the same spiritual drink, for they drank from the spiritual rock that went with them. That rock was the Messiah".*

Exo 17:6 *"I'll be standing there in front of you on the rock at Horeb. You are to strike the rock and water will come out of it, so the people can drink." Moses did this in front of the elders of Israël."*

4. Christian responsibilities

4.1. To hold/express God's Truth in love (Eph. 4:15)

Eph 4:15 *"Instead, by speaking the truth in love, we will grow up completely and become one with the head, that is, one with the Messiah,"*

4.2. To hold and express Christian unity (Eph. 4:3,13)

Eph 4:3 *"Do your best to maintain the unity of the Spirit by means of the bond of peace. 13. until all of us are united in the faith and in the full knowledge of God's Son, and until we attain mature adulthood and the full standard of development in the Messiah."*

4.3. To grow in Christ's knowledge (1Pet. 2:1; 3:18)

The apostle Paul introduces the Lord Jesus, focussing on one central point: *"For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and He crucified."*

Keeping this in mind, Paul writes about the only foundation laid down for Christians with which we - willingly and with devotion - form one unity.

Study verses: 1 Cor.3:11; Eph.1:13; 1 John 2:20; Acts 13:2,48; Eph.1:4; Heb.9:14; 1 Pet.1:22; 2:4,5.

1Co 3:11 *“After all, no one can lay any other foundation than the one that is already laid, and that is Jesus the Messiah.”*

Eph 1:13 *“You, too, have heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed in the Messiah, you were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit,”*

1Jn 2:20 *“You have an anointing from the Holy One and know all things.”*

Act 13:2 *“While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, “Set Barnabas and Saul apart for me to do the work for which I called them.”*

Act 13:48 *“When the gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord. Meanwhile, all who had been destined to eternal life believed,”*

Eph 1:4 *“just as he chose us in the Messiah before the creation of the universe to be holy and blameless in his presence. In love.”*

Heb 9:14 *“how much more will the blood of the Messiah, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from dead actions so that we may serve the living God!”*

1Pe 1:22 *“Now that you have obeyed the truth and have purified your souls to love your brothers sincerely, you must love one another intensely and with a pure heart”.*

1Pe 2:4 *“As you come to him, the living stone who was rejected by people but was chosen and precious in God's sight, 5. you, too, as living stones, are building yourselves up into a spiritual house and a holy priesthood, so that you may offer spiritual sacrifices that are acceptable to God through Jesus, the Messiah.”*

5. Christ's doctrine, God's power and wisdom

1 Cor. 1:23,24 He is God's power and wisdom

1Co 1:23 *“but we preach the Messiah crucified. He is a stumbling block to Jews and nonsense to gentiles, 24. but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, the Messiah is God's power and God's wisdom.”*

1 Cor. 2:1-5 He was crucified in weakness

1Co 2:1 *When I came to you, brothers, I didn't come and tell you about God's secret with rhetorical language or wisdom. 2. For while I was with you I resolved to know nothing except Jesus the Messiah, and him crucified. 3. It was in weakness, fear, and great trembling that I came to you. :4. My message and my preaching were not accompanied by clever, wise words, but by a display of the Spirit's power, 5. so that your faith would not be based on human wisdom but on God's power.*

Col. 1:15-23 He is the image of God

Col 1:15 *The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. Col 1:16 For by him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether they are kings, lords, rulers, or powers. All things have been created through him and for him. Col 1:17 He himself existed before anything else did, and he holds all things together. Col 1:18 He is also the head of the body, which is the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he himself might have first place in everything. Col 1:19 For God was pleased to have all of his divine essence inhabit him. Col 1:20 Through the Son, God also reconciled all things to himself, whether things on earth or things in heaven, thereby making peace through the blood of his cross. Col 1:21 You who were once alienated with a hostile attitude, doing evil, Col 1:22 he has now reconciled by the death of his physical body, so that he may present you holy, blameless, and without fault before him. Col 1:23 However, you must remain firmly established and steadfast in the faith, without being moved from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven and of which I, Paul, have become a servant. Col. 2:5; 1:27 Our foundation of faith and hope.*

2 Pet. 1:19 God's word, the Morning Star

2Pe 1:19 *Therefore we regard the message of the prophets as confirmed beyond doubt, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a lamp that is shining in a gloomy place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.*

Isaiah 32:2 The Rock in which we shelter

Isa 32:2 *Each one will be like a shelter from the wind and a hiding place from storms, like streams of water in the desert, in the shadow of a great rock in an exhausted land.*

Deut. 33:27-29 Who brings us in Father's arms

Deut 33:27 The God of old is a dwelling place, with everlasting arms underneath. He drove out your enemies before you and said: 'Destroy them!' Deut 33:28 So Israel lives in confidence, isolated as the fountain of Jacob in a land of grain and new wine, where the heavens rain down dew. Deut 33:29 How blessed are you, Israel! Who can be like you, a people delivered by the LORD, your shield of help and your finely crafted sword. May your enemies cower before you. You will tread down their high places. Heb. 12:22-28 and in the heavenly Jerusalem

Heb. 11:10 The City which has foundations

Heb 11:10 because he was waiting for the city with permanent foundations, whose architect and builder is God.

6. The apostles' doctrine (Eph. 2:20)

Acts 2:42 The basis in our community

Act 2:42 The believers continued to devote themselves to what the apostles were teaching, to fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to times of prayer.

1 Pet. 2:5 Being "living stones" of God's House

1Pe 2:5 you, too, as living stones, are building yourselves up into a spiritual house and a holy priesthood, so that you may offer spiritual sacrifices that are acceptable to God through Jesus, the Messiah.

2 Pet. 1:16 Not built on fables

2Pe 1:16 When we told you about the power and coming of our Lord Jesus, the Messiah, we did not follow any clever myths. Rather, we were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

2 Pet. 1:20,21 Without any personal interpretation

2Pe 1:20 First of all, you must understand this: No prophecy in Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, 2Pe 1:21 because no prophecy ever originated through a human decision. Instead, men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

Luke 24:31, 45 Because this is “Christ’s doctrine”

Luke 24:31 *Then their eyes were opened, and they knew who he was. And he vanished from them.*

Luke 24:45 *Then, he opened their minds so that they might understand the Scriptures.*

Zech. 3:9 God’s eyes are focussed on this

Zec 3:9 *Look, the stone that I put in place in Joshua's presence—on that one stone are seven eyes. And look, I will do the engraving myself,' declares the LORD of the Heavenly Armies, 'and I will remove the perversity of that land in a single day.*

Eph. 3:2-12 And they reveal His mystery

Eph 3:2 *Surely you have heard about the responsibility of administering God's grace that was given to me on your behalf, Eph 3:3 and how this secret was made known to me through a revelation, just as I wrote about briefly in the past. Eph 3:4 By reading this, you will be able to grasp my understanding of the secret about the Messiah, Eph 3:5 which in previous generations was not made known to human beings as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to God's holy apostles and prophets. This is that secret: Eph 3:6 The gentiles are heirs-in-common, members-in-common of the body, and common participants in what was promised by the Messiah Jesus through the gospel. Eph 3:7 I have become a servant of this gospel according to the gift of God's grace that was given me by the working of his power. Eph 3:8 To me, the very least of all the saints, this grace was given so that I might proclaim to the gentiles the immeasurable wealth of the Messiah Eph 3:9 and help everyone see how this secret that has been at work was hidden for ages by God, who created all things. Eph 3:10 He did this so that now, through the church, the wisdom of God in all its variety might be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realm Eph 3:11 in keeping with the eternal purpose that God carried out through the Messiah Jesus our Lord, Eph 3:12 in whom we have boldness and confident access through his faithfulness.*

7. Sealed on God’s foundation

The third part of divine foundation is related with “the doctrine of Christ”, with God’s omniscience and His elected.

2 Tim. 2:19. He knows them who belong to Him

2Ti 2:19 *However, God's solid foundation still stands. It has this inscription on it: "The Lord knows those who belong to him," and "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord must turn away from evil."*

Eph. 1:4-6. Before the foundation of the world

Eph 1:4 *just as he chose us in the Messiah before the creation of the universe to be holy and blameless in his presence. In love Eph 1:5 he predestined us for adoption to himself through Jesus the Messiah, according to the pleasure of his will, Eph 1:6 so that we would praise his glorious grace that he gave us in the Beloved One.*

Eph. 1:13-19. Therefore, we are "sealed" by God

Eph 1:13 *You, too, have heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed in the Messiah, you were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, Eph 1:14 who is the guarantee of our inheritance until God redeems his own possession for his praise and glory. Eph 1:15 Therefore, because I have heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, Eph 1:16 I never stop giving thanks for you as I mention you in my prayers. Eph 1:17 I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus, the Messiah, the most glorious Father, would give you a wise spirit, along with revelation that comes through knowing the Messiah fully. Eph 1:18 Then, with the eyes of your hearts enlightened, you will know the confidence that is produced by God having called you, the rich glory that is his inheritance among the saints, Eph 1:19 and the unlimited greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his mighty strength,*

Hebr. 9:14. Cleansed by Him from dead works

Heb 9:14 *how much more will the blood of the Messiah, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from dead actions so that we may serve the living God!*

1 Pet. 2:5. And added to the foundation

1Pe 2:5 *you, too, as living stones, are building yourselves up into a spiritual house and a holy priesthood, so that you may offer spiritual sacrifices that are acceptable to God through Jesus, the Messiah.*

8. Cleansed vessels

These Christians are functioning as “cleansed vessels”, sanctified and purified for honourable works (2 Tim. 2:21). They are the people who:

2 Tim. 2:22 Call on the Lord out of a pure heart;

2Ti 2:22 Flee from youthful passions. Instead, pursue righteousness, faithfulness, love, and peace together with those who call on the Lord with a pure heart.

Hebr.10:22,23 Cleansed from an evil conscience;

Heb 10:22 let us continue to come near with sincere hearts in the full assurance that faith provides, because our hearts have been sprinkled clean from a guilty conscience, and our bodies have been washed with pure water. Heb 10:23 Let us continue to hold firmly to the hope that we confess without wavering, for the one who made the promise is faithful.

1Cor.3:12,17 Purified as gold, silver, precious stones;

1Co 3:12 Whether a person builds on this foundation with gold, silver, expensive stones, wood, hay, or straw,

1Co 3:17 If anyone destroys God's sanctuary, God will destroy him, for God's sanctuary is holy. And you are that sanctuary!

1 John 2:20 Sealed with the Holy Spirit;

1Jn 2:20 You have an anointing from the Holy One and know all things.

1 Pet. 1:22 Purified in their souls;

1Pe 1:22 Now that you have obeyed the truth and have purified your souls to love your brothers sincerely, you must love one another intensely and with a pure heart.

John 15:10 Obedient to Christ.

Joh 15:10 If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love.

9. Holding on to the Truth in love

Believers that have cleansed themselves from the vessels of dishonour and separated themselves from all injustice in the “House of the Lord” will want to join those who “call on the Lord out of a pure heart.” They have no desire for dispute but are “kind to everyone and capable to teach with meekness those who oppose, so God can change them and lead them to accept the truth” (2 Tim. 2:23-26).

Because these preachers “hold on to the Truth in Love”, unbelievers will “*come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will.*”

10. A dwelling place of God in the Spirit

When Christians renew their focus on the foundations of their faith, they will express the following features;

They are:

Col. 3:14 Connected with each other in love;

Col 3:14 Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which ties everything together in unity.

Hebr. 3:4,6 As living stones of God’s House;

Heb 3:4 After all, every house is built by someone, but God is the builder of everything.

Heb 3:6 but the Messiah was faithful as the Son in charge of God's household, and we are his household if we hold on to our courage and the hope in which we rejoice.

Eph. 2: 21, 22. A dwelling place of God in the Spirit;

Eph 2:21 In union with him the whole building is joined together and rises into a holy sanctuary for the Lord. Eph 2:22 You, too, are being built in him, along with the others, into a place for God's Spirit to dwell.

1Pet.2:9,10 As a royal priesthood;

1Pe 2:9 But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people to be his very own and to proclaim the wonderful deeds of the one who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.

1Pe 2:10 *Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God. Once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.*

Rev. 5:6-14 To give all the glory to the Lamb;

Rev 5:6 *Then I saw a lamb standing in the middle of the throne, the four living creatures, and the elders. He looked like he had been slaughtered. He had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent into all the earth. Rev 5:7 He went and took the scroll from the right hand of the one who sits on the throne. Rev 5:8 When the lamb had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders bowed down in front of him. Each held a harp and a gold bowl full of incense, the prayers of the saints. Rev 5:9 They sang a new song: "You are worthy to take the scroll and open its seals, because you were slaughtered. With your blood you purchased people for God from every tribe, language, people, and nation. Rev 5:10 You made them a kingdom and priests for our God, and they will reign on the earth." Rev 5:11 Then I looked, and I heard the voices of many angels, the living creatures, and the elders surrounding the throne. They numbered 10,000's times 10,000 and thousands times thousands. Rev 5:12 They sang with a loud voice, "Worthy is the lamb who was slaughtered to receive power, wealth, wisdom, strength, honor, glory, and praise!" Rev 5:13 I heard every creature in heaven, on earth, under the earth, and on the sea, and everything that is in them, saying, "To the one who sits on the throne and to the lamb be praise, honor, glory, and power forever and ever!" Rev 5:14 Then the four living creatures said, "Amen!", and the elders bowed down and worshiped.*

Heb.13:12-15 To offer the "fruit of their lips".

Heb 13:12 *That is why Jesus, in order to sanctify the people by his own blood, also suffered outside the city gate. Heb 13:13 Therefore go to him outside the camp and endure the insults he endured. Heb 13:14 For here we have no permanent city but are looking for the one that is coming. Heb 13:15 Therefore, through him let us always bring God a sacrifice of praise, that is, the fruit of our lips that confess his name.*

11. The foundation of the heavenly Jerusalem

Without holiness, no one will see the Lord, according to Hebrews 12:14.

Heb 12:14 *Pursue peace with everyone, as well as holiness, without which no one will see the Lord.*

This holiness is marked with the peace of God, which will recognise the heavenly Jerusalem as the City of God (John 16:33; Rom. 5:1; 14:17; Gal. 4:26; Rev. 21:2, 10,27).

Joh 16:33 *I have told you this so that through me you may have peace. In the world you will have trouble but be courageous—I have overcome the world!"*

The foundation of this peace is the finished work of the Lord Jesus at the cross of Golgotha. Paul writes about this in Col. 1:20.

"...and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross."

12. Desire for the heavenly City of God

Rev. 21:22-24 Where God's Lamb is its light

Rev 21:22 *I saw no temple in it, because the Lord God Almighty and the lamb are its temple. Rev 21:23 The city doesn't need any sun or moon to give it light, because the glory of God gave it light, and the lamb was its lamp. Rev 21:24 The nations will walk in its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it.*

Rev. 22:16,17 To which everyone is invited

Rev 22:16 *"I, Jesus, have sent my angel to give this testimony to you for the churches. I am the root and descendent of David, the bright morning star." Rev 22:17 The Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" Let everyone who hears this say, "Come!" Let everyone who is thirsty come! Let anyone who wants the water of life take it as a gift!*

2 Pet. 1:19. He only is the true Morning Star

2Pe 1:19 *Therefore we regard the message of the prophets as confirmed beyond doubt, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a lamp that is shining in a gloomy place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.*

13. The intercessory prayer of the Lord Jesus Christ

When Christians come together on *this* foundation, Christ will bless them and their works. There will be a blessing on their testimony, because the Lord Jesus Himself prays for them. His intercession results in the extension of *"the dwelling place of God in the Spirit"* with *"living stones"* (1 Peter 2:5, Eph. 2:22).

"I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their Word: that they may all be one, as You, Father are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. And the

glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.” (John 17:20-23)

14. A Biblical task

Peter and Paul leave us with a commission for all Christians who gather in Jesus' Name on the foundation of the doctrine of His apostles and prophets. Peter wrote in 1 Peter 2:1-6:

“Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, as new-born babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby, if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious. Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious. You also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. Therefore, it is also contained in the Scripture; “Behold, I lay in Zion. A chief cornerstone, elect, precious, and he who believes on Him will by no means be put to shame.”

15. The admonition of the apostle Paul

Paul admonishes us to spread God's Word: *“Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching”* (2 Tim. 4:2).

May the Lord Jesus help us to practise this!

Questions

1. Who is the true Foundation of the Church?
2. What can be said about wisdom and power?
3. In which manner can we stick to faith and hope?
4. What is the basis of the “doctrine of the apostles”?
5. Say something about the meaning of “sealing”
6. Explain how you can be a “clean vessel”
7. How can we hold on to God’s Truth in love?
8. How do we stay together as “living stones”?
9. Explain the value of intercession and worship.

CHAPTER 2

Salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ (Flyer 4)

1. What is salvation?

Salvation is deliverance from the penalty, corruption, and power of sin. It is eternally more important than being saved from fire, deep water, illness, or loneliness.

📖 Study: Romans 6:14, 23 and Titus. 3:4-6.

Rom 6:14 *For sin will not have mastery over you, because you are not under Law but under grace.*

Rom 6:23 *For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in union with the Messiah Jesus our Lord.*

2. What is sin?

Sin is any thought, word, or deed that either violates or falls short of complete conformity to God's holy laws.

📖 Study: Rom. 3:23; James 4:17; 1 Jn. 3:4.

Rom 3:23 *since all have sinned and continue to fall short of God's glory.*

Jac 4:17 *Therefore, anyone who knows what is right but fails to do it is guilty of sin.*

1Jn 3:4 *Everyone who keeps living in sin also practices disobedience. In fact, sin is disobedience.*

In short, Jesus and His apostles taught that sin is anything that does not reflect selfless love for God and others.

📖 Study: Mt. 22:34-40.

Mat 22:34 *When the Pharisees heard that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, they met together in the same place. Mat 22:35 One of them, an expert in the Law, tested him by asking, Mat 22:36 "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" Mat 22:37 Jesus told him, "'You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.'*

Mat 22:38 This is the greatest and most important commandment. Mat 22:39 The second is exactly like it: 'You must love your neighbor as yourself.' Mat 22:40 All the Law and the Prophets depend on these two commandments."

3. What did God do to provide salvation?

He became a member of the human race in the person of Jesus, lived sinless as our substitute to fulfil God's righteous demands.

📖 Study: John 1:1, 14; 2 Cor. 5:21

Joh 1:1 *In the beginning, the Word existed. The Word was with God, and the Word was God.*

Joh 1:14 *The Word became flesh and lived among us. We gazed on his glory, the kind of glory that belongs to the Father's unique Son, who is full of grace and truth.*

2Co 5:21 *God made the one who did not know sin to be sin for us, so that God's righteousness would be produced in us.*

The Lord Jesus suffered and died on the cross to bear the penalty for our sins and rose from the grave to break the power of death and defeat Satan. In other words, He accepted full responsibility to pay the price for the consequences of our sins.

📖 Study: Mt. 20:28; Rom. 4:23-25; 1 Cor. 15:3-4; Acts 2:24; Heb. 2: 14-15.

Mat 20:28 *That's the way it is with the Son of Man. He did not come to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many people."*

Rom 4:23 *Now the words "it was credited to him" were written not only for him Rom 4:24 but also for us. Our faith will be regarded in the same way, if we believe in the one who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. Rom 4:25 He was sentenced to death because of our sins and raised to life to justify us.*

1Co 15:3 *For I passed on to you the most important points that I received: The Messiah died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 1Co 15:4 he was buried, he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures—and is still alive!—*

Act 2:24 *But God raised him up and put an end to suffering of death, since it was impossible for him to be held by it.*

Heb 2:14 *Therefore, since the children have flesh and blood, he himself also shared the same things, so that by his death he might destroy the one who has the power of death (that is, the devil) Heb 2:15 and might free those who were slaves all their lives because they were terrified by death.*

4. For whom did Christ die?

Jesus died once and for all people. All have fallen short of their original purpose to know God, to glorify Him, and to enjoy Him forever.

📖 Study: Jn. 3:16; 2 Cor. 5: 14-15; Jn. 17:3; 1 Cor. 10:31; Rev. 7:15-17; 21:1-4.

Joh 3:16 *"For this is how God loved the world: He gave his unique Son so that everyone who believes in him might not be lost but have eternal life.*

2Co 5:14 *The love of the Messiah controls us, for we are convinced of this: that one person died for all people; therefore, all people have died. 2Co 5:15 He died for all people, so that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for the one who died and rose for them.*

Joh 17:3 *And this is eternal life: to know you, the only true God, and the one whom you sent—Jesus the Messiah.*

1Co 10:31 *Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God.*

Rev 7:15 *That is why: "They are in front of the throne of God and worship him night and day in his Temple. The one who sits on the throne will shelter them. Rev 7:16 They will never be hungry or thirsty again. Neither the sun nor its heat will ever beat down on them, Rev 7:17 because the lamb in the centre of the throne will be their shepherd. He will lead them to springs filled with the water of life, and God will wipe every tear from their eyes."*

Rev 21:1 *Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, because the first heaven and the first earth had disappeared, and the sea was gone. Rev 21:2 I also saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared like a bride adorned for her husband. Rev 21:3 I heard a loud voice from the throne say, "See, the tent of God is among humans! He will make his home with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them, and he*

will be their God. Rev 21:4 He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There won't be death anymore. There won't be any grief, crying, or pain, because the first things have disappeared."

Note: Christ died for those who are sinners by nature (Ps. 51:5), disobedient by choice (Rom. 3:23), spiritually dead (Eph. 2:1,5), unable to please God (Rom. 8:8), and under His wrath (Jn. 3:36; Rom. 1:18).

Psa 51:5 *Indeed, in iniquity I was brought forth; in sin my mother conceived me.*

Rom 3:23 *since all have sinned and continue to fall short of God's glory.*

Eph 2:1 *You used to be dead because of your offenses and sins, Eph 2:2 that you once practiced as you lived according to the ways of this present world and according to the ruler of the power of the air, the spirit that is now active in those who are disobedient. Eph 2:3 Indeed, all of us once behaved like them in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of our flesh and senses. By nature, we were destined for wrath, just like everyone else. Eph 2:4 But God, who is rich in mercy, because of his great love for us Eph 2:5 even when we were dead because of our offenses, made us alive together with the Messiah (by grace you have been saved),*

Rom 8:8 *Indeed, those who are under the control of human nature cannot please God.*

Joh 3:36 *The one who believes in the Son has eternal life, but the one who disobeys the Son will not see life. Instead, the wrath of God remains on him.*

Rom 1:18 *For God's wrath is being revealed from heaven against all the ungodliness and wickedness of those who in their wickedness suppress the truth.*

5. What is repentance?

It is a term used by John, the Baptist, Jesus, Paul, and Peter.

📖 Study: Mt. 3:1-2; 4:17; Acts 2:38; 20:21.

Mat 3:1 *About this time, John the Baptist appeared, preaching in the Judean wilderness Mat 3:2 and saying, "Repent, because the kingdom from heaven is near!"*

Mat 4:17 *From then on, Jesus began to preach and to say, "Repent, because the kingdom from heaven is near!"*

Repentance is that change of attitude about one's self, one's sin, and God, which involves the whole personality-mind, emotions, and will. In varying degrees, it always accompanies true faith.

Sorrow for sin often accompanies it and helps give evidence that genuine repentance has occurred.

📖 Study: 2 Cor. 7:9-10.

2Co 7:9 *Now I am happy, not because you had such sorrow, but because your sorrow led you to repent. For you were sorry in a godly way, and so you were not hurt by us in any way. 2Co 7:10* *For having sorrow in a godly way results in repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regrets. But the sorrow of the world produces death.*

6. Who will be saved to be born-again?

Salvation is offered to everyone and is freely given to all who believe on Jesus Christ, so they become born-again by faith. Jesus said: *"The one who comes to Me, I will by no means cast out"* (Jn. 6:37).

📖 Study: Mt. 11:28; Jn. 1:12; 3:15-16, 36; 6:40, 47; 11:25-26; 20:31; Acts 16:31; Rom. 10:9-10; John 3:3-5.

Mat 11:28 *"Come to me, all of you who are weary and loaded down with burdens, and I will give you rest.*

Joh 1:12 *However, to all who received him, those believing in his name, he gave authority to become God's children,*

Joh 3:15 *so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life. For God So Loved the World Joh 3:16* *"For this is how God loved the world: He gave his unique Son so that everyone who believes in him might not be lost but have eternal life. Joh 3:36* *The one who believes in the Son has eternal life, but the one who disobeys the Son will not see life. Instead, the wrath of God remains on him.*

Joh 6:40 *This is my Father's will: That everyone who sees the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him to life on the last day." Joh 6:47* *Truly, I tell all of you with certainty, the one who believes in me has eternal life.*

Joh 11:25 *Jesus told her, "I am the resurrection and the life. The person who believes in me, even though he dies, will live. Joh 11:26* *Indeed, everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe that?"*

Joh 20:31 *But these have been recorded so that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and so that through believing you may have life in his name.*

Act 16:31 *They answered, "Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you and your family will be saved."*

Rom 10:9 *If you declare with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. Rom 10:10 For one believes with his heart and is justified and declares with his mouth and is saved.*

Joh 3:3 *Jesus replied to him, "Truly, I tell you with certainty, unless a person is born from above he cannot see the kingdom of God." Joh 3:4 Nicodemus asked him, "How can a person be born when he is old? He can't go back into his mother's womb a second time and be born, can he?" Joh 3:5 Jesus answered, "Truly, I tell you with certainty, unless a person is born of water and Spirit he cannot enter the kingdom of God.*

7. How do we receive salvation?

By faith alone. Neither zealous commitment to good works nor careful observances of religious ritual play a part in obtaining salvation.

 Study: Eph. 2:8-10; Rom. 4:1-12; Gal. 3:1-9

Eph 2:8 *For by such grace you have been saved through faith. This does not come from you; it is the gift of God Eph 2:9 and not the result of actions, to put a stop to all boasting. Eph 2:10 For we are God's masterpiece, created in the Messiah Jesus to perform good actions that God prepared long ago to be our way of life.*

Rom 4:1 *What, then, are we to say about Abraham, our human ancestor? Rom 4:2 For if Abraham was justified by actions, he would have had something to boast about—though not before God. Rom 4:3 For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness." Rom 4:4 Now to someone who works, wages are not considered a gift but an obligation. Rom 4:5 However, to someone who does not work, but simply believes in the one who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness. Rom 4:6 Likewise, David also speaks of the blessedness of the person whom God regards as righteous apart from actions: Rom 4:7 "How blessed are those whose iniquities are forgiven and whose sins are covered! Rom 4:8 How blessed is the person whose sins the Lord will never charge against him!" Rom 4:9 Now does this blessedness come to the circumcised alone, or also to the uncircumcised? For we say, "Abraham's faith was credited*

to him as righteousness." Rom 4:10 Under what circumstances was it credited? Was he circumcised or uncircumcised? He had not yet been circumcised but was uncircumcised. Rom 4:11 Afterward he received the mark of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. Therefore, he is the ancestor of all who believe while uncircumcised, in order that righteousness may be credited to them. Rom 4:12 He is also the ancestor of the circumcised—those who are not only circumcised, but who also walk in the footsteps of the faith that our father Abraham had before he was circumcised.

Gal 3:1 You foolish Galatians! Who put you under a spell? Was not Jesus the Messiah clearly portrayed before your very eyes as having been crucified? Gal 3:2 I want to learn only one thing from you: Did you receive the Spirit by doing the actions of the Law or by believing what you heard? Gal 3:3 Are you so foolish? Having started out with the Spirit, are you now ending up with the flesh? Gal 3:4 Did you suffer so much for nothing? (If it really was for nothing!) Gal 3:5 Does God supply you with the Spirit and work miracles among you because you do the actions of the Law or because you believe what you heard? Gal 3:6 In the same way, Abraham "believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness." Gal 3:7 You see, then, that those who have faith are Abraham's real descendants. Gal 3:8 Because the Scripture saw ahead of time that God would justify the gentiles by faith, it announced the gospel to Abraham beforehand when it said, "Through you all nations will be blessed." Gal 3:9 Therefore, those who believe are blessed together with Abraham, the one who believed.

Salvation is not found in our efforts for God but in trusting what Jesus has done for us. All God requires is that we call out to Him in faith and ask Him to save us. On that basis, He gives salvation. Everything else follows.

📖 Study: Rom. 10:13

Rom 10:13 "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

8. What is saving faith?

It is trust in the Lord Jesus. It is, believing that God, based on Christ's substitution death and resurrection, forgives, and accepts all who trust in Him and rely on Him alone for salvation. It is therefore not what we **do** but what we **believe** that counts. If what we believe is right, *doing* right will follow. Good works are the fruit and the evidence, not the ground or the cause.

📖 Study: Rom. 3:21-26; 4:1-25; 5: 1-2; Eph. 2:8-10; Eph. 2:10; 1 Jn. 3:7-10.

Rom 3:21 *But now, apart from the Law, God's righteousness is revealed and is attested by the Law and the Prophets — Rom 3:22 God's righteousness through the faithfulness of Jesus the Messiah—for all who believe. For there is no distinction among people, Rom 3:23 since all have sinned and continue to fall short of God's glory. Rom 3:24 By his grace they are justified freely through the redemption that is in the Messiah Jesus, Rom 3:25 whom God offered as a place where atonement by the Messiah's blood would occur through faith. He did this to demonstrate his righteousness, because he had waited patiently to deal with sins committed in the past. Rom 3:26 He wanted to demonstrate at the present time that he himself is righteous and that he justifies anyone who has the faithfulness of Jesus.*

Summary

Now we know how to be saved by faith in Jesus Christ the Lord, we will give a summary of all the 8 points we studied.

So, we know now that the Lord Jesus offers us all His salvation. This salvation cannot be obtained by doing good works or joining in any religion, but through the faith that we receive from God.

This happens through the preaching of God's Word and the acceptance of the sacrifice of the blood of the Lord Jesus for your personal forgiveness of sin.

When you confess the sin you remember, God will forgive you, because Jesus died for that sin on the cross of Golgotha!

The Bible says in the letter of John: *"If we confess our sins, He (God) is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).*

The same apostle John wrote while he was in the prison on the island Patmos that Jesus will return soon, to take all the born-again believers in the new created heaven, earth, and the golden Jerusalem. This is the perfect place in the house of God. He is the Father of all believers.

Jesus said to John and you: *"Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with Me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done.... Blessed are those who washed their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life and may go through the gates into the city".*

However, there is also another side of all these nice promises. The Lord warned also those who are not willing to be saved by the blood of Christ and said: ***"Outside are the dogs, those who practice magic arts, the sexually immoral, the murders, the idolaters and everyone who loves and practices falsehood"***.

*The Lord Jesus ended His last message with the words: “**I, Jesus, have sent My angel to give you this testimony for the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, and the bright Morning Star.**” (Look at the last book of the Bible, Revelation 22:12-16).*

Rev 22:12 *"See! I am coming soon! My reward is with me to repay everyone according to his action. Rev 22:13 I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end. Rev 22:14 "How blessed are those who wash their robes so that they may have the right to the tree of life and may go through the gates into the city! Rev 22:15 Outside are dogs, sorcerers, immoral people, murderers, idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood. Rev 22:16 "I, Jesus, have sent my angel to give this testimony to you for the churches. I am the root and descendent of David, the bright morning star."*

Questions for self-study:

1. What means Romans 6:23 for you?
2. What tells Rom. 3:23-25 you?
3. What did God do to provide salvation?
4. For whom did Christ die? (1 Joh. 2:2)
5. Explain the word "repentance"
6. Who will be saved? (Joh. 3:36)
7. How do we receive salvation? (Joh. 3:18)
8. What is saving faith? (Acts 10:39-44)
9. How can you receive eternal life?

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CHAPTER 3

Rebirth; a transformation to eternal life (Flyer 5)

Every world religion knows its own “conversion”. Generally speaking, this means a change in the way of thinking and the way of living. Believers are also invited to convert (Rev. 3:3), this means the reconciliation with God and renewal of mind and life (Rom. 12:1).

***Rev 3:3** So remember what you received and heard. Obey it, and repent. If you are not alert, I will come like a thief, and you won't know the time when I will come to you.*

***Rom 12:1** I therefore urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercies, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices that are holy and pleasing to God, for this is the reasonable way for you to worship.*

For a Christian, this renewal means to express Christ according to biblical standards in his everyday life. This change of mind corrects the old traditional thinking. Both **mind** and **conscience** are under a new influence. After a decision of faith, this eventually causes a total change in a person's life course.

The purpose of conversion

It is necessary to distinguish between the word conversion, or the deed of repentance and purpose on the one hand and the shown fruit on the other hand. For this reason, preachers who call to repentance will also point to the purpose. They will show what the fruit of repentance is.

These fruits range from gaining a spiritual insight, receiving eternal life, forgiveness of sins and freedom from guilt. Giving a public testimony of these changes can be focussed on **men**, rather giving God the **honour and glory**.

A genuine repentance according to biblical standards is “to turn to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven...” (1Thes. 1:9,10).

People who turned to God are called “**Christians**” (Acts 11:26; 26:28; 1Peter 4:16).

***1Th 1:9** For people keep telling us what kind of welcome you gave us and **how you turned away from idols** to serve a living and true God **1Th 1:10** and to wait for his Son whom he raised from the dead to come back from heaven. This Jesus is the one who rescues us from the coming wrath.*

***Act 11:26** ...and for a whole year they were guests of the church and taught many people. It was in Antioch that the disciples were first called **Christians**.*

Act 26:28 Agrippa asked Paul, "Can you so quickly persuade me to become a **Christian**?"

1Pe 4:16 But if you suffer for being a **Christian**, do not feel ashamed, but glorify God with that name.

A conversion is a humiliation or extradition of oneself

When someone is presented with the need for repentance, it usually is met by unwillingness. It hurts one's pride to acknowledge that the previous lifestyle is a "fata morgana."

The Bible even refers to this as **"...walking in the futility of their mind, having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God..."** (Eph. 4:17,18).

Eph 4:17 Therefore, I tell you and insist on in the Lord not to live any longer like the gentiles live, thinking worthless thoughts. **Eph 4:18** They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of their ignorance and hardness of heart.

Men are inherited selfish and rather prefer to rely on (group) securities – sinful entertainment, customs and morals - that have been established in the past. (John 3:19,20).

Joh 3:19 And this is the basis for judgment: The light has come into the world, but people loved the darkness more than the light because their actions were evil. **Joh 3:20** Everyone who practices wickedness hates the light and does not come to the light, so that his actions may not be exposed.

The bible speaks about the necessity **"...to put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts"** (Eph. 4:22). In the Bible, these old traditions, habit and spiritual experiences, are identified as **"basic principles of the world"** and **"commandments and doctrines of men"** or **"self-imposed religion"** (Coll. 2:20-23).

Among these "doctrines of men" are rituals to connect to the invisible world. None of these rituals have ever been approved by God. Every false doctrine finds its roots in these "illegal" acts (1Tim. 4:1; 2Cor. 11:3,4,14).

1Ti 4:1 Now the Spirit says clearly that in the last times some people will abandon the faith by following deceitful spirits, the teachings of demons,

2Co 11:3 However, I am afraid that just as the serpent deceived Eve by its tricks, so your minds may somehow be lured away from sincere and pure devotion to the Messiah. **2Co 11:4** For if someone comes along and preaches

another Jesus than the one we preached, or should you receive a different spirit from the one you received or a different gospel from the one you accepted, you are all too willing to listen. 2Co 11:14 And no wonder, since Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light.

Their preachers turn out to be “false apostles” who lead their followers in bondage of law (2Cor.11:20).

2Co 11:20 *You tolerate anyone who makes you his slaves, devours what you have, takes what is yours, orders you around, or slaps your face!*

A real apostle is a messenger who calls for conversion and reconciliation with God (2Cor. 5:20).

2Co 5:20 *Therefore, we are the Messiah's representatives, as though God were pleading through us. We plead on the Messiah's behalf: "Be reconciled to God!"*

Therefore, it is important “to test the spirits, whether they are of God”. If they are, they will preach a true repentance.

To convert is to bid farewell

The power of group dynamics - to which every individual is exposed - can be so strong that it blocks the choice to repent. Family ties, social status, traditional customs, threats by ruling classes, economic advantages, etc.: all are influences that can prevent someone to repent. This applies to every kind of conversion, regardless of its nature and orientation. **Conversion always means a farewell.**

In some cases, a convert is obliged to perform some ritual acts in public, thus expressing a farewell to old traditions and achievements. This may cause enmity among the members of a family, a tribe, a group or a congregation. It may cause social isolation and economical loss as well (John 9:22; 12:42).

Joh 9:22 *His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews, since the Jews had already agreed that anyone who acknowledged that Jesus was the Messiah would be thrown out of the synagogue.*

Joh 12:42 *Yet many people, even some of the authorities, believed in him, but because of the Pharisees they did not admit it, so they would not be thrown out of the synagogue.*

Therefore, it is a strong recommendation to “count the cost” of every conversion (Luke 14:28).

Luke 14:28 *"Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. He will first sit down and estimate the cost to see whether he has enough money to finish it, won't he?"*

In respect of these facts, we can say that discipleship – no matter who is to be followed - means a farewell to old life. A person is surrendering to a total dependency on his or her leader. For a Christian, this means to follow the Lord Jesus and His messengers. **God will provide** (Gen. 45:11; Fil. 4:19).

Gen 45:11 *I'll provide for you there, since there are still five years of famine left to go, and you, your households, and everything you own would have otherwise become impoverished.*

In Jewish-Christian circles, this “bidding farewell” is **expressed in baptism**, a kind of “funeral” (Acts 2:38, Rom. 6:1-4).

Act 2:38 *Peter answered them, "Every one of you must repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus the Messiah for the forgiveness of your sins. Then you will receive the Holy Spirit as a gift.*

Rom 6:1 *What should we say, then? Should we go on sinning so that grace may increase? Rom 6:2 Of course not! How can we who died as far as sin is concerned go on living in it? Rom 6:3 Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into union with the Messiah Jesus were baptized into his death? Rom 6:4 Therefore, through baptism we were buried with him into his death so that, just as the Messiah was raised from the dead by the Father's glory, we too may live an entirely new life.*

Conversion is a testimony

Conversion asks for a personal faith-confession. Mass conversions, such as during John's preaching of the “baptism of conversion” meant a public recounting of a sinful life -style. This can be renounced according to ancient rituals among e.g. members of the Turkish, Muslims and Roman-Catholic communities.

Even the “church of Satan” knows a kind of “ritual of renunciations”, in which a convert denies his old principles of life by treading or spitting on ritual objects of his former life - or performing other indecent acts.

The Jewish-Christian act of baptism is a “transition to new life”, done by confession of sin and faith, public judgment, cleansing of old life and a change in lifestyle (Math. 3:6; 10:32; Acts 8:37; 19:18-30; Rom. 6:3-7; Eph. 4:20-25; 1Thes. 1:5-10).

Mat 3:6 *being baptized by him in the Jordan River while they confessed their sins.*

Mat 10:32 *"Therefore, everyone who acknowledges me before people I, too, will acknowledge before my Father in heaven.*

Act 8:37 *And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God (KJV).*

Act 19:18 *Many who became believers kept coming to confess and talk about what they had been doing. Act 19:19 Moreover, many people who had practiced occult arts gathered their books and burned them in front of everybody. They estimated their value and found them to have been worth 50,000 silver coins. Act 19:20 In that way the word of the Lord kept spreading and triumphing a riot at Ephesus. Act 19:21 After these things had happened, Paul decided to go through Macedonia and Achaia and then to go on to Jerusalem, saying, "After I have gone there, I must also see Rome." Act 19:22 Then he sent two of his helpers, Timothy and Erastus, to Macedonia, while he himself stayed in Asia a while longer. Act 19:23 Now about that time a great commotion broke out concerning the Way. Act 19:24 By making silver shrines of Artemis, a silversmith named Demetrius provided a large income for skilled workers. Act 19:25 He called a meeting of these men and others who were engaged in similar trades and said, "Men, you well know that we get a good income from this business. Act 19:26 You also see and hear that, not only in Ephesus, but almost all over Asia, this man Paul has won over and taken away a large crowd by telling them that gods made by human hands are not gods at all. Act 19:27 There is a danger not only that our business will lose its reputation but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis will be brought into disrepute and that she will be robbed of her majesty that brought all Asia and the world to worship her." Act 19:28 When they heard this, they became furious and began to shout, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!" Act 19:29 The city was filled with confusion, and the people rushed into the theatre together, dragging with them Gaius and Aristarchus, Paul's fellow travellers from Macedonia. Act 19:30 Paul wanted to go into the crowd, but the disciples wouldn't let him.*

Rom 6:3 *Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into union with the Messiah Jesus were baptized into his death? Rom 6:4 Therefore, through baptism we were buried with him into his death so that, just as the Messiah was raised from the dead by the Father's glory, we too may live an entirely new life. Rom 6:5 For if we have become united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his. Rom 6:6 We know that our old natures were crucified with him so that our sin-laden bodies might be rendered powerless and we might no longer be slaves to sin. Rom 6:7 For the person who has died has been freed from sin.*

Eph 4:20 *However, that is not the way you came to know the Messiah. Eph 4:21 Surely you have listened to him and have been taught by him, since truth is*

in Jesus. Eph 4:22 Regarding your former way of life, you were taught to strip off your old nature, which is being ruined by its deceptive desires, Eph 4:23 to be renewed in your mental attitude, Eph 4:24 and to clothe yourselves with the new nature, which was created according to God's image in righteousness and true holiness. Eph 4:25 Therefore, stripping off falsehood, "let each of us speak the truth to his neighbor," for we belong to one another.

1Th 1:5 *for the gospel we brought did not come to you in words only, but also with power, with the Holy Spirit, and with deep conviction. Indeed, you know what kind of people we proved to be while we were with you, acting on your behalf. 1Th 1:6 You became imitators of us and of the Lord. In spite of a great deal of suffering, you welcomed the word with the joy that the Holy Spirit produces. 1Th 1:7 As a result, you became a model for all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia. 1Th 1:8 From you the word of the Lord has spread out not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place where your faith in God has become known. As a result, we do not need to say anything about it. 1Th 1:9 For people keep telling us what kind of welcome you gave us and how you turned away from idols to serve a living and true God 1Th 1:10 and to wait for his Son whom he raised from the dead to come back from heaven. This Jesus is the one who rescues us from the coming wrath.*

Summary

We found in this study about conversion, or a life changing repenting:

- **a change/renewal of mind**
- **a change/renewal of feelings**
- **a change/renewal of life**
- **a change/renewal of will**
- **a change/renewal of guidance**
- **a change/renewal of heart**
- **a change/renewal of future**

Repentance should be preached. People should come to realise that they are in danger of eternal rejection if they don't turn to God, confess and get rid of their sins (Rom. 2:6-8; 2Cor. 5:11; Acts 17:19-31).

Rom 2:6 *For he will repay everyone according to what that person has done: Rom 2:7 eternal life to those who strive for glory, honor, and immortality by patiently doing good; Rom 2:8 but wrath and fury for those who in their selfish pride refuse to believe the truth and practice wickedness instead.*

2Co 5:11 *Therefore, since we know what it means to fear the Lord, we try to persuade people. We ourselves are perfectly known to God. I hope we are also really known to your consciences.*

Act 17:19 *Then they took him, brought him before the Areopagus, and asked, "May we know what this new teaching of yours is? Act 17:20 It sounds rather strange to our ears, and we would like to know what it means." Act 17:21 Now all the Athenians and the foreigners living there used to spend their time doing nothing else other than listening to the latest ideas or repeating them. Paul Addresses the Areopagus. Act 17:22 So Paul stood up in front of the Areopagus and said, "Men of Athens, I see that you are very religious in every way. Act 17:23 For as I was walking around and looking closely at the objects you worship, I even found an altar with this written on it: 'To an unknown god.' So, I am telling you about the unknown object you worship. Act 17:24 The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth. He doesn't live in shrines made by human hands, Act 17:25 and he isn't served by people as if he needed anything. He himself gives everyone life, breath, and everything else. Act 17:26 From one man he made every nation of humanity to live all over the earth, fixing the seasons of the year and the national boundaries within which they live, Act 17:27 so that they might look for God, somehow reach for him, and find him. Of course, he is never far from any one of us. Act 17:28 For we live, move, and exist because of him, as some of your own poets have said: 'For we are his children, too.' Act 17:29 So if we are God's children, we shouldn't think that the divine being is like gold, silver, or stone, or is an image carved by humans using their own imagination and skill. Act 17:30 Though God has overlooked those times of ignorance, he now commands everyone everywhere to repent, Act 17:31 because he has set a day when he is going to judge the world with justice through a man whom he has appointed. He has given proof of this to everyone by raising him from the dead."*

John the Baptist preached the "baptism of conversion" (Acts 19:4). He was a pioneer to make way for the Lord Jesus, Who would come to baptise with the Holy Spirit.

Act 19:4 *Then Paul said, "John baptized when they repented, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, in Jesus."*

Repentance is necessary to be saved from the coming Judgement of the Lord - His wrath about sin. The wages of sin are death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom. 6:23; Heb. 10:27; Gen. 2:16,17).

Rom 6:23 *For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in union with the Messiah Jesus our Lord.*

Heb 10:27 *... but only a terrifying prospect of judgment and a raging fire that will consume the enemies of God.*

Gen 2:16 *The LORD God commanded the man: "You may freely eat from every tree of the garden, Gen 2:17 but you are not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, because you will certainly die during the day that you eat from it."*

Repentance is also necessary to escape from the influence of Satan, who pretends that the wages of disobedience would **not** be death. This rebellious angel promises knowledge of good and evil. Although seemingly attractive to be a kind of God, indeed created to show God's image, **however, to do Satan's will would bring nothing but misery and death** (Ps. 82:5-8; John 10:25-39; Gen. 3:4, 5).

Psa 82:5 *They neither know nor understand; they walk about in the dark while all the foundations of the earth are shaken. Psa 82:6 "Indeed I said, 'You are gods, and all of you are sons of the Most High. Psa 82:7 **However, as all human beings do, you will die, and like other rulers, you will fall.**' Psa 82:8*

*Joh 10:25 Jesus answered them, "I have told you, but you do not believe it. The actions that I do in my Father's name testify on my behalf, Joh 10:26 **but you do not believe because you do not belong to my sheep.** Joh 10:27 **My sheep hear my voice. I know them, and they follow me.** Joh 10:28 I give them eternal life, they will never be lost, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. Joh 10:29 What my Father has given me is more important than anything, and no one can snatch it from the Father's hand. Joh 10:30 **I and the Father are one.**" Joh 10:31 Again the Jews picked up stones to stone him to death. Joh 10:32 Jesus replied to them, "I have shown you many good actions from my Father. For which of them are you going to stone me?" Joh 10:33 The Jews answered him, "We are not going to stone you for a good action, but for blasphemy, because you, a mere man, are making yourself God!" Joh 10:34 Jesus replied to them, "Is it not written in your Law, 'I said, "You are gods"?' Joh 10:35 If he called those to whom a message from God came 'gods' (and the Scripture cannot be disregarded), Joh 10:36 how can you say to the one whom the Father has consecrated and sent into the world, 'You are blaspheming,' because I said, 'I am the Son of God'?" Joh 10:37 If I am not doing my Father's actions, do not believe me. Joh 10:38 But if I am doing them, even though you do not believe me, believe the actions, so that you may know and understand that the Father is in me and I am in the Father." Joh 10:39 Again they tried to seize him, but he slipped away from them.*

Repentance implies a renunciation of "dead works". These "works" are generally not glorifying God (Rom. 1:21).

Rom 1:21 *For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him. Instead, their thoughts turned to worthless things, and their senseless hearts were darkened.*

For this reason, the bible refers to them as “dead works” of which we need to repent (Heb. 9:14).

Heb 9:14 *how much more will the blood of the Messiah, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from dead actions so that we may serve the living God!*

Repentance implies that we bury our old lives. Our old life caused death (Eph. 2:1).

Eph 2:1 *You used to be dead because of your offenses and sins,*

Therefore, we identify ourselves with the death of Christ Jesus (Rom. 6:1-4).

Rom 6:1 *What should we say, then? Should we go on sinning so that grace may increase? Rom 6:2 Of course not! How can we who died as far as sin is concerned go on living in it? Rom 6:3 Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into union with the Messiah Jesus were baptized into his death? Rom 6:4 Therefore, through baptism we were buried with him into his death so that, just as the Messiah was raised from the dead by the Father's glory, we too may live an entirely new life.*

This union with the Lord Jesus means that we are being “circumcised” of our sinful roots and our own search for redemption apart from Christ (Col. 2:11-13).

Col 2:11 *In union with him you were also circumcised with a circumcision performed without human hands by stripping off the corrupt nature by the circumcision performed by the Messiah. Col 2:12 When you were buried with the Messiah in baptism, you were also raised with him through faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead. Col 2:13 Even when you were dead because of your offenses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with him when he forgave us all of our offenses,*

Keeping this in mind, we can “forget what is behind” but remain conscious of the need of “the cleansing from our old sins” lest we become proud and short-sighted (Phil. 3:14; 2 Peter 1:9).

Php 3:14 *I keep pursuing the goal to win the prize of God's heavenly call in the Messiah Jesus.*

2Pe 1:9 *For the person who lacks these qualities is blind and short-sighted and has forgotten the cleansing that he has received from his past sins.*

Repentance acknowledges the righteousness of God's Judgement. When the Holy Spirit convicts us of sin, He shows the necessity of God's Judgement because of His righteousness (John 16:8; Acts 2:27,38).

John 16:8 *When he comes, he will convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment...*

Act 2:27 *For you will not abandon my soul to Hades or allow your Holy One to experience decay.*

Act 2:38 *Peter answered them, "Every one of you must repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus the Messiah for the forgiveness of your sins. Then you will receive the Holy Spirit as a gift.*

The Cross of Calvary fully depicts His righteousness (Rom.6:6; Col.2:13-15).

Rom 6:6 *We know that our old natures were crucified with him so that our sin-laden bodies might be rendered powerless and we might no longer be slaves to sin.*

Col 2:13 *Even when you were dead because of your offenses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with him when he forgave us all of our offenses, Col 2:14 having erased the charges that were brought against us, along with their obligations that were hostile to us. He took those charges away when he nailed them to the cross. Col 2:15 And when he had disarmed the rulers and the authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in the cross.*

Only in the Last Judgement the world will know this complete justification (Isa 26:9).

Isa 26:9 *My soul yearns for you in the night; my spirit within me searches for you. **For when your judgments come upon the earth, the world's inhabitants learn righteousness.***

Baptism of conversion

In Acts 19:1-5 we read about some followers of John the Baptist who had been **converted but had not yet received the Holy Spirit**. This was due to a lack of understanding of the **completed** work of salvation of Christ or even ignorance of this fact.

Act 19:1 *It was while Apollos was in Corinth that Paul passed through the inland districts and came to Ephesus. He found a few disciples there Act 19:2 and asked them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" They answered him, "No, we haven't even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." Act 19:3 He then asked, "Then*

into what were you baptized?" They answered, "Into John's baptism." Act 19:4 Then Paul said, "John baptized when they repented, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, in Jesus." Act 19:5 On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

This lack of knowledge (or understanding) blocked the Holy Spirit to give assurance of our salvation; that their sins has been forgiven, even though they had been confessed while baptized. Many true and good willing believers are still longing to have this assurance and ask for it every day. That means in fact, that they live under the law of Moses, trying to live according God's will, but they experience that they can't keep the law as is written in Rom. 7:14-24. **They are not sealed with God's Spirit.**

Rom 7:14 For we know that the Law is spiritual, but I am merely human, sold as a slave to sin. **Rom 7:15** I don't understand what I am doing. For I don't practice what I want to do, but instead do what I hate. **Rom 7:16** Now if I practice what I don't want to do, I am admitting that the Law is good. **Rom 7:17** As it is, I am no longer the one who is doing it, but it is the sin that is living in me. **Rom 7:18** For I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but I cannot carry it out. **Rom 7:19** For I don't do the good I want to do, but instead do the evil that I don't want to do. **Rom 7:20** But if I do what I don't want to do, I am no longer the one who is doing it, but it is the sin that is living in me. **Rom 7:21** So I find this to be a principle: when I want to do what is good, evil is right there with me. **Rom 7:22** For I delight in the Law of God in my inner being, **Rom 7:23** but I see in my body a different principle waging war with the Law in my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin that exists in my body. **Rom 7:24** What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is infected by death?

So, they are not sure if they go to heaven. **Without God's Spirit it is impossible to be assured that God is your Father in Christ** (Rom. 8:9b, 14-17).

Rom 8:9b And if anyone does not have the Spirit of the Messiah, he does not belong to him. **Rom 8:14** For all who are led by God's Spirit are God's children. **Rom 8:15** For you have not received a spirit of slavery that leads you into fear again. Instead, you have received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba! Father!" **Rom 8:16** **The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.** **Rom 8:17** Now if we are children, we are heirs - heirs of God and co-heirs with the Messiah - if, in fact, we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.

You can only be sure of God's forgiveness when you confess the sins and believe that the Lord Jesus died for you on the cross to save you!

Joh 1:12 However, to all who received him, those believing in his name, he gave authority to become God's children, **Joh 1:13** who were born, not merely in a genetic sense, nor from lust, nor from man's desire, but from the will of God.

Joh 3:16 *"For this is how God loved the world: He gave his unique Son so that everyone who believes in him might not be lost but have eternal life.*

Believe and give thanks to the Lord Jesus for His death of reconciliation for you, a sinner (Rom. 5:1-11)!

Rom 5:1 *Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus the Messiah. Rom 5:2 Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace by which we have been established, and we boast because of our hope in God's glory. Rom 5:3 Not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, Rom 5:4 endurance produces character, and character produces hope. Rom 5:5 Now this hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us. Rom 5:6 For at just the right time, while we were still powerless, the Messiah died for the ungodly. Rom 5:7 For it is rare for anyone to die for a righteous person, though somebody might be brave enough to die for a good person. Rom 5:8 But God demonstrates his love for us by the fact that the Messiah died for us while we were still sinners. Rom 5:9 Now that we have been justified by his blood, how much more will we be saved from wrath through him! Rom 5:10 For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, will we be saved by his life! Rom 5:11 Not only that, but we also continue to boast about God through our Lord Jesus the Messiah, through whom we have now been reconciled.*

The Lord Jesus Christ died for you! To be able accept this, you need to hear the "Gospel of grace and salvation" (Acts 20:18-21).

Act 20:18 *When they came to him, he told them, "You know how I lived among you the entire time from the first day I set foot in Asia. Act 20:19 I served the Lord with all humility, with tears, and with trials that came to me through the plots of the Jews. Act 20:20 I never shrank from telling you anything that would help you nor from teaching you publicly and from house to house. Act 20:21 I testified to both Jews and Greeks about repentance to God and faith in our Lord Jesus.*

Paul preached it and as a result the people came to understand and believed the full gospel where-after they were sealed with the Holy Spirit Who came to dwell in them! (Eph. 1:13).

Eph 1:13 *You, too, have heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed in the Messiah, you were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit,*

The “Conversion to life”

Acts 10 and 11 describes a “conversion to life” witnessed by Peter. On preaching the gospel, gentiles received the Holy Spirit. In Acts 11, Peter is called to give an account of this event before the Jews who had also accepted Christ to be the Messiah. He had eaten with the gentiles – who had also accepted Christ. According to the law of Moses, the Jews declared him unclean. However, when Peter explained the situation, the Jewish believers came to understand that a real “conversion to life” had taken place (Acts 11:18)!

Act 11:18 *When they heard this, they calmed down, and praised God, saying, "So God has given repentance that leads to life even to gentiles."*

This kind of repentance can be compared with a rebirth, as described in John 3:3-5, a work of the Holy Spirit. This is of course, a birth from **heaven**, not by the human will of men (the law), but by God’s will and grace only (John 1:13)!

A rebirth from **heaven** is always **sealed by the Holy Spirit** and gives full assurance of a believer’s eternal salvation (Rom. 8:16).

Rom 8:16 *The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.*

Questions

1. The Hindus know the word “Rebirth”, what is the difference in Christianity?
2. What is the difference between being born-again and just the repentance of sin?
3. Is it possible to be a disciple without being baptised?
4. Is it possible to be a disciple without being born-again?
5. What is the difference between to be repented and to be born-again?
6. When do NT believers receive the Holy Spirit in our time?

CHAPTER 4

Eternal Salvation, what it is (Flyer 124)

There are many misunderstandings about this doctrinal statement of salvation. However, indeed, God does not want to lose those He has called to salvation (2 Petr. 3:9; 1 Tim. 2:3,4)!

2Pe 3:9 *The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some people understand slowness, but is being patient with you. He does not want anyone to perish, but wants everyone to repent*

1Ti 2:3 *This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, 1Ti 2:4 who wants all people to be saved and to come to know the truth fully. .*

So, each reader of the Bible must ask himself what the above-mentioned Bible verses from 2 Petr. 3:9 and 1 Timothy 2:4 really says about the clear will of God about eternal salvation!

1. God does not wish that any should perish, that is the global will of God.
2. But in the same time, God asks all people for repentance: "that all should reach repentance."
3. Who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the Truth (1 Tim. 2:4).

God and His predestined believers and the lost ones

John 10:28 "They will never be lost, and no one will snatch them out of My hand."

John 17:12 "and not one of them became lost, except the one who was destined for destruction"

2 Cor. 4:3 "the Gospel is veiled to those who are dying", the god of this world blinded their minds

Ez. 18:23 "Have I any pleasure that the wicked should die? He should return from his ways."

2 Ths. 2:10 "Those who are dying refused to love the Truth that would save them..."

Rom. 9:17,18 "Pharaoh was raised up for the very purpose, to demonstrate Gods power", but was lost...

Both group of men are of course known by God. The doctrine of predestination is difficult to understand because it has to do with the secret will of will of God as Creator (Romans 9:14-18).

Rom 9:14 *What can we say, then? God is not unrighteous, is he? Of course not! Rom 9:15 For he says to Moses, "I will be merciful to the person I want to be merciful to, and I will be kind to the person I want to be kind to." Rom 9:16 Therefore, God's choice does not depend on a person's will or effort, but on God himself, who shows mercy. Rom 9:17 For the Scripture says about Pharaoh, "I have raised you up for this very purpose, to demonstrate my power through you and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth." Rom 9:18 Therefore, God has mercy on whomever he chooses, and he hardens the heart of whomever he chooses.*

However, the Bible is very clear about this difference between the so called "predestination" and "foreknowledge" of God.

The reason of different doctrinal explanations, and the result

"What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may abound?" (Rom. 6:1).

The above-mentioned verse makes clear that there were some people who claimed to be "Christians", but who did not realize that God asks for holiness. The apostle Paul and Peter warned often that those kinds of (fake) Christians would slip in into the church as house of God with vessels of clay and vessels of pure gold (Acts 20:29,30; Mat. 7:15-23; Judas: 4; 2 Thes. 2:10; 2 Tim. 2:20).

Act 20:29 *I know that when I'm gone savage wolves will come among you and not spare the flock. Act 20:30 Indeed, some of your own men will arise and distort the truth in order to lure the disciples into following them.*

Mat 7:15 *"Beware of false prophets who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are savage wolves. Mat 7:16 You will know them by their fruit. Grapes aren't gathered from thorns, or figs from thistles, are they? Mat 7:17 In the same way, every good tree produces good fruit, but a rotten tree produces bad fruit. Mat 7:18 A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, and a rotten tree cannot produce good fruit. Mat 7:19 Every tree that doesn't produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into a fire. Mat 7:20 So by their fruit you will know them."*

I Never Knew You! *Mat 7:21 "Not everyone who keeps saying to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will get into the kingdom from heaven, but only the person who keeps doing the will of my Father in heaven. Mat 7:22 Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord,*

Lord, we prophesied in your name, drove out demons in your name, and performed many miracles in your name, didn't we?' Mat 7:23 Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Get away from me, you who practice evil!'"

Jud 1:4 *For some people have slipped in among you unnoticed. They were written about long ago as being deserving of this condemnation because they are ungodly. They turn the grace of our God into uncontrollable lust and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus the Messiah.*

2Th 2:10 *and every type of evil to deceive those who are dying, those who refused to love the truth that would save them.*

2Ti 2:20 *In a large house there are not only utensils made of gold and silver, but also those made of wood and clay. Some are for special use, while others are for ordinary use.*

The work of Bible Scholars

Some Scholars tried to make this difficult doctrinal statement of Paul more understandable (2 Pet. 3:16).

2Pe 3:16 *He speaks about this subject in all his letters. Some things in them are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, leading to their own destruction, as they do the rest of the Scriptures.*

Greek scholars put much attention on the needed self-purification, pointing to verses as Php. 2:12,

"Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling," however, often without mentioning that God is always is at work in His chosen people, because. Gods Spirit dwells in them, Who works out God's eternal plan for His people He bought by the blood of His Own Son, according Php 2:13.

Php 2:12 *And so, my dear friends, just as you have always obeyed, not only when I was with you but even more now that I am absent, continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling. "For it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure."*

We read that also about the Father in John 5:17 and in connection with John 10:27-30, **"But Jesus answered them, My Father is working until now, and I am working"**.

However, the Body of Christ has only (from eternity chosen) “pure vessels”, but sometime those vessels felt into the mud, because of some sin, what has to be confessed, because it disturbed the relationship between the born-again believer and the Father. The Lord Jesus says that he or she needed to be cleansed! (Eph. 1:4; 1 Cor. 6:11; 2 Tim. 2:21; 1 John 3:3; 1 Petr. 2:9; 1John 1:8-10).

Eph 1:4 *just as he chose us in the Messiah before the creation of the universe to be holy and blameless in his presence.*

1Co 6:11 *That is what some of you were! But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of our Lord Jesus the Messiah and by the Spirit of our God.*

2Ti 2:21 *Therefore, if anyone stops associating with these people, he will become a special utensil, set apart for the owner's use, prepared for every good action.*

1Jn 3:3 *And everyone who has this hope based on him keeps himself pure, just as the Messiah is pure.*

1Pe 2:9 *But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people to be his very own and to proclaim the wonderful deeds of the one who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.*

Jn 1:8 *If we say that we do not have any sin, we are deceiving ourselves and we're not being truthful to ourselves. 1Jn 1:9 If we make it our habit to confess our sins, in his faithful righteousness he forgives us for those sins and cleanses us from all unrighteousness. 1Jn 1:10 If we say that we have never sinned, we make him a liar and his word have no place in us.*

But, at the other side, God has also chosen some people from the **begin** (not **before**) of His creation to fulfil His holy will and to fulfil His plans and the prophecies of His true prophets. But, those chosen people were often not real believers. Some of these chosen people who were fulfilling Gods will, were:

Ex. 9:16 *“But for this purpose I have raised you up, to show you my power, so that my name may be proclaimed in all the earth.”*

1 Chron. 5:26 *“So the God of Israel stirred up the spirit of Pul king of Assyria, the spirit of Tiglath-Pileser king of Assyria, and he took them into exile, namely, the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, and brought them to Halah, Habor, Hara, and the river Gozan, to this day.”*

2 Chron. 36:22 *“Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the*

spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom and also put it in writing.”:

2Ch 36:23,24 *“Thus says Cyrus king of Persia, ‘The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he has charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever is among you of all his people, may the LORD his God be with him. Let him go up.’”*

Isa 45:13 *“I have stirred him up in righteousness, and I will make all his ways level; he shall build my city and set my exiles free, not for price or reward,” says the LORD of hosts.”*

1 Kings 11:14 *“And the LORD raised up an adversary against Solomon, Hadad the Edomite. He was of the royal house in Edom.”*

Acts.1:16,17 Here we learn that there is a difference between predestination and being chosen to do Gods will to fulfil the prophecies (see verse 23-26) *“And they prayed and said, “You, Lord, who know the hearts of all, show which one of these two You have chosen to take the place in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place.” And they cast lots for them, and the lot fell on Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.”*

Rom. 9:17 *“For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, “For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I might show my power in you, and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth.”*

2 Petr. 2:1-3 This is a very difficult to explain verse, because we had to know that Jesus bought the **whole** earth (Mat. 13:44, 38), include some people who claimed to be a prophet, but they were declared to be false prophets...

“But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction. And many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of truth will be blasphemed. And in their greed, they will exploit you with false words. Their condemnation from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep.”

The Biblical contra the (false) doctrinal statement

Now about the doctrine about eternal salvation. I will make two lines. First what the Bible teaches, then what modern Scholars teach wrote:

The Bible says:

1. All men are called to repentance, some are chosen to fulfil Gods will, *but not all are predestined!* (Isa. 31:6; Mat. 3:1-3).

Isa 31:6 *Turn back to him, yes to him whom your people have so greatly betrayed, you people of Israel.*

Mat 3:1 *About this time, John the Baptist appeared, preaching in the Judean wilderness Mat 3:2 and saying, "Repent, because the kingdom from heaven is near!" Mat 3:3 He was the one the prophet Isaiah was referring to when he said, "He is a voice calling out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way for the Lord! Make his paths straight!'"*

2. There is a difference between the church as House of God, with wooden and golden vessels, and as Body of Christ and holy Temple, with his before the creation chosen ones, being destined to be perfect into the image of Christ (2 Tim. 2:20; Eph. 2:21; Rom. 8:29).

2Ti 2:20 *In a large house there are not only utensils made of gold and silver, but also those made of wood and clay. Some are for special use, while others are for ordinary use.*

Eph 2:21 *In union with him the whole building is joined together and rises into a holy sanctuary for the Lord.*

Rom 8:29 *For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that the Son might be the firstborn among many brothers.*

3. See the difference between “foreknown” and “chosen” before birth and chosen before the creation to be Jesus’ Bride (Eph. 1:4,5,11,23; 2 Cor. 11:2; Rev. 21:9).

Eph 1:4 *Just as he chose us in the Messiah before the creation of the universe to be holy and blameless in his presence. **Eph 1:5** In love He predestined us for adoption to himself through Jesus the Messiah, according to the pleasure of his will, **Eph 1:11** In the Messiah we were also chosen when we were predestined according to the purpose of the one who does everything that he wills to do, **Eph 1:23** which is his body, the fullness of the one who fills everything in every way.*

4. Once destined before the creation to be God's child (John. 1:12,13), you can do a sin, being rebellious, but because God's indwelling Spirit will bring you back to the Father by confessing the sin (John 14:16,17; 1John 1:8,9; 2:27; 3:5).

Joh 14:16 *I will ask the Father to give you another Helper, to be with you always. Joh 14:17* *He is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor recognizes him. But you recognize him, because he lives with you and will be in you.*

1Jn 1:8 *If we say that we do not have any sin, we are deceiving ourselves and we're not being truthful to ourselves. 1Jn 1:9* *If we make it our habit to confess our sins, in his faithful righteousness he forgives us for those sins and cleanses us from all unrighteousness.*

1Jn 2:27 *The anointing you received from God abides in you, and you do not need anyone to teach you this. Instead, because God's anointing teaches you about everything and is true and not a lie, abide in him, as he taught you to do.*

1Jn 3:5 *You know that the Messiah was revealed to take away sins, and there is not any sin in him.*

5. Being born-again, you are sealed with the Holy Spirit, baptized in Christ's Body. Nobody can take you out Christ's hands (John 3:3; 10:28; 17:9,11)!

Joh 3:3 *Jesus replied to him, "Truly, I tell you with certainty, unless a person is born from above he cannot see the kingdom of God."*

Joh 10:28 *I give them eternal life, they will never be lost, and no one will snatch them out of my hand.*

Joh 17:9 *I am asking on their behalf. I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those you gave me, because they are yours.*

Joh 17:11 *I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father protect them by your name, the name that you gave me, so that they may be one, as we are one.*

6. God warned not His Own that they can lose their salvation, but their fellowship with their heavenly Father! (1 Cor. 1:9; 1 John 1:6,7).

1Co 1:9 *Faithful is the God by whom you were called into fellowship with his Son Jesus the Messiah, our Lord.*

1Jn 1:6 *If we claim that we have fellowship with him but keep living in darkness, we are lying and not practicing the truth. **1Jn 1:7** But if we keep living in the light as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.*

7. The work of salvation is not our work, but Gods work (John 1:13; 15:16; Phil.3:12,13; Rom.3:10,11; 5:10; Rev. 17:14).

Joh 1:13 *who were born, not merely in a genetic sense, nor from lust, nor from man's desire, but from the will of God.*

Joh 15:16 *You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you. I have appointed you to go and produce fruit that will last, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he will give it to you.*

Php 3:12 *It's not that I have already reached this goal or have already become perfect. But I keep pursuing it, hoping somehow to embrace it just as I have been embraced by the Messiah Jesus. **Php 3:13** Brothers, I do not consider myself to have embraced it yet. But this one thing I do: Forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead,*

Rom 3:10 *As it is written, "Not even one person is righteous. **Rom 3:11** No one understands. No one searches for God.*

Rom 5:10 *For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, will we be saved by his life!*

Rev 17:14 *They will wage war against the lamb, but the lamb will conquer them because he is Lord of lords and King of kings. Those who are called, chosen, and faithful are with him."*

To be God's co-workers has to do with the labor Christ is doing in us and we work that out as He shows us how we have to do (Eph. 2:10; Rom. 12:1,2)

Eph 2:10 *For we are God's masterpiece, created in the Messiah Jesus to perform good actions that God prepared long ago to be our way of life.*

Rom 12:1 *I therefore urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercies, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices that are holy and pleasing to God, for this is the reasonable way for you to worship. **Rom 12:2** Do not be conformed to this world, but continually be transformed by the renewing of your minds so that you may be able to determine what God's will is—what is proper, pleasing, and perfect.*

8. God has in Christ chosen us at the time we were still His enemies (Col. 1:21-23).

Col 1:21 *You who were once alienated with a hostile attitude, doing evil, Col 1:22 he has now reconciled by the death of his physical body, so that he may present you holy, blameless, and without fault before him. Col 1:23 However, you must remain firmly established and steadfast in the faith, without being moved from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven and of which I, Paul, have become a servant.*

However, ones saved by grace and the blood of Jesus, we became **a holy priesthood**. So, we have to work out the will of God, to purify ourselves, of course, in the power of God's Holy Spirit, Who dwells in each true born-again Christian (2 Pet. 1:3-11; 1 John 3:3).

2Pe 1:3 *His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through the full knowledge of the one who called us by his own glory and excellence. 2Pe 1:4 Through these he has given us his precious and wonderful promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature, seeing that you have escaped the corruption that is in the world caused by evil desires. 2Pe 1:5 For this very reason, you must make every effort to supplement your faith with moral character, your moral character with knowledge, 2Pe 1:6 your knowledge with self-control, your self-control with endurance, your endurance with godliness, 2Pe 1:7 your godliness with brotherly kindness, and your brotherly kindness with love. 2Pe 1:8 For if you possess these qualities, and if they continue to increase among you, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in attaining a full knowledge of our Lord Jesus, the Messiah. 2Pe 1:9 For the person who lacks these qualities is blind and short-sighted and has forgotten the cleansing that he has received from his past sins. 2Pe 1:10 So then, my brothers, be all the more eager to make your calling and election certain, for if you keep on doing this you will never fail. 2Pe 1:11 For in this way you will be generously granted entry into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus, the Messiah.*

1Jn 3:3 *And everyone who has this hope based on him keeps himself pure, just as the Messiah is pure.*

9. Indeed, “sin is unpardonable if one refuses to ask God to pardon it”... But, the indwelling Holy Spirit brings the true believer by discipline on time to confession (1 John 1:9,10).

1Jn 1:9 *If we make it our habit to confess our sins, in his faithful righteousness he forgives us for those sins and cleanses us from all unrighteousness. **1Jn 1:10** f we say that we have never sinned, we make him a liar and his word have no place in us.*

- 10.Indeed, a so called “believer” can “trampling the Son of God.” The question is if this “believer” was born-again, or only for a time inspired by the Holy Spirit (Mat. 7:22,23; 13:21)?

Mat 7:22 *Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, we prophesied in your name, drove out demons in your name, and performed many miracles in your name, didn't we?' **Mat 7:23** Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Get away from me, you who practice evil!'"*

Mat 13:21 *but since he doesn't have any root in himself, he lasts for only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes along because of the word, he immediately falls away.*

11. There are true Christians and fake “Christians”. Both can “fall back from God’s grace and the faith as doctrine” (Gal. 5:4; 1 Cor. 3:15; 2 John 1:9). For the first is restoration possible, the other not!

Gal 5:4 *Those of you who are trying to be justified by the Law have been cut off from the Messiah. You have fallen away from grace.*

1Co 3:15 *If his work is burned up, he will suffer loss. However, he himself will be saved, but it will be like going through fire.*

2Jn 1:9 *Everyone who does not remain true to the teaching of the Messiah, but goes beyond it, does not have God. The person who remains true to the teaching of the Messiah has both the Father and the Son.*

Modern scholars wrote:

1. Many are called but few chosen (Matthew 20:16; 22:14), we are left wondering who was fore-known and who was predestined.

Mat 20:16 *"In the same way, the last will be first, and the first will be last, because many are called, but few are chosen."*

Mat 22:14 *because many are invited, but few are chosen."*

2. A safe approach to this is to understand that predestination applies to the church as a whole group. In other words, in the beginning God knew that He would raise up the church to do its work in the world and to nurture His called-out ones.
3. God foreknew several individuals before their births (Isaac, Jacob, Samson, David, Solomon, Jeremiah, John the Baptist, etc.
4. However, God's **foreknowledge** and **predestination** "to adoption as sons, according to the good pleasure of His will" (Ephesians 1:5) **is not an absolute guarantee of salvation and eternal life (!)**.
5. The Bible is unambiguous in its assertions that a person can lose his salvation (see, for instance, Hebrews 2:1-3; 3:12; 4:1; 6:4-8; 10:26-31).

Heb 2:1 For this reason we must pay closer attention to the things we have heard, or we may drift away, **Heb 2:2** because if the message spoken by angels was reliable, and every violation and act of disobedience received its just punishment, **Heb 2:3** how will we escape if we neglect a salvation as great as this? It was first proclaimed by the Lord himself, and then it was confirmed to us by those who heard him,

Heb 3:12 See to it, my brothers, that no evil, unbelieving heart is found in any of you, as shown by your turning away from the living God.

Heb 4:1 Therefore, as long as the promise of entering his rest remains valid, let us be afraid! Otherwise, some of you will fail to reach it,

Heb 6:4 For it is impossible to keep on restoring to repentance time and again people who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have become partners with the Holy Spirit, **Heb 6:5** who have tasted the goodness of God's word and the powers of the coming age, **Heb 6:6** and who have fallen away, as long as they continue to crucify the Son of God to their own detriment by exposing him to public ridicule. **Heb 6:7** For when the ground soaks up rain that often falls on it and continues producing vegetation useful to those for whom it is cultivated, it receives a blessing from God. **Heb 6:8** However, if it continues to produce thorns and thistles, it is worthless and in danger of being cursed, and in the end will be burned.

Heb 10:26 For if we choose to go on sinning after we have learned the full truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, **Heb 10:27** but only a terrifying prospect of judgment and a raging fire that will consume the enemies of God. **Heb 10:28** Anyone who violates the Law of Moses dies without mercy "on the testimony of two or three witnesses." **Heb 10:29** How much

*more severe a punishment does you think that person deserves who tramples on God's Son, treats as common the blood of the covenant by which it was sanctified, and insults the Spirit of grace? **Heb 10:30** For we know the one who said, "Vengeance belongs to me; I will pay them back," and again, "The Lord will judge his people." **Heb 10:31** It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God!*

6. If an individual could not lose his salvation, then why does God provide so many passages warning us of the possibility?
7. While God is sure of His ability to work out the salvation of every person He calls, each person has his part to play, that is, he must believe and cooperate with God throughout the sanctification process, growing in the image of His Son, Jesus Christ.
8. This is why the apostle Paul urges us to *“work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure”* (Philippians 2:12-13). ***In other words, though God chooses us, we must answer with our choice to obey and follow Him.***
9. An individual's sins could cause him ***to lose this awesome opportunity...*** A sin is unpardonable if one refuses to ask God to pardon it.
10. A person can also turn away from God so wilfully that he becomes a rebel against God, repudiating his former belief and *“trampling” the Son of God underfoot* (Hebrews 10:29).
11. Hebrews 10:26-27 indicates that this is also the fate of those who *“sin wilfully after receiving the knowledge of the Truth.”* (see also Hebrews 6:8).

Heb 10:26 *For if we choose to go on sinning after we have learned the full truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, **Heb 10:27** but only a terrifying prospect of judgment and a raging fire that will consume the enemies of God.*

CHAPTER 5

The work of the Holy Spirit (Flyer 123)

Partly taken from Hugo Bouter

“And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spoke the word of God with boldness” (Acts 4:31).

Strange fire in the Church

In charismatic and ecumenical circles, believers ask for the Holy Spirit to come down to receive the Holy Spirit. For those believers it is customary to call the Holy Spirit directly and to pray to the Spirit to come and descend. One expects a new outpouring of the Spirit.

What the Bible says

(a) Acts 2 teaches us that the Holy Spirit has descended on earth in response to Christ's exaltation in heaven. ***These are salvation facts that cannot be repeated.***

Even in Peter's Pentecostal message in Acts 2, *the Spirit itself is not invoked*, but we read: *“Anyone calling on the name of the Lord will be saved” (Acts 2:21).*

After conversion and faith, the unconditional and sure promise applies: (...) and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38). *“On that day about three thousand people were saved, baptized, and sealed with the Spirit” (41b)*

In Acts 8, the gift of the Holy Spirit was also poured out on the Samaritans and in Acts 10 on believers from the Gentile nations. This is also the result of the preaching of the Word, ***not of the calling of the Spirit.***

b) The **indwelling** of the Holy Spirit in the congregation, which consists of Jews and Gentiles, has since been an established fact ***that cannot be repeated.***

The indwelling of the Spirit in the individual believer is also *a reality from conversion*. When we have believed, we are sealed with the Holy Spirit of the promise (Eph 1:13). *This cannot be repeated, for the Spirit remains with us and is in us forever (John 14: 16-17).*

The fulfilment with the Holy Spirit

The **fulfilment** with the Holy Spirit, sent by the Father, is another theme. **The fulfilment of the Spirit is renewable. It is even an assignment:** (..) God ordered: *"be filled with the Spirit" (Eph 5:18).*

*However, they do not take place by directly calling on the Spirit, **but by removing any hindrances that impede and stand in the way of the already present and indwelling Spirit.***

In Acts 4, see how the congregation raises its voice to God in prayer, and a few farther we read: *"And as they prayed, the place was gathered, moved; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit "* (Acts 4:24, 31).

The proof of the fulfilment with the Spirit was then not speaking in foreign languages but **being free to testify:** *"they spoke the word of God with boldness where they were."*

According to Luke 11:13 the Holy Spirit is given by the Father to those who ask Him, namely, in repentance and rebirth. This is in accordance with John 14 and 16, where we see that the Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son and is sent to earth by both divine Persons.

The Spirit now here testifies of the exalted Christ **and wants to glorify Him.** *The Spirit does not claim honor for Himself. He also does not speak from Himself but speaks what He hears from the Father and the Son (John 16: 13ff.).*

That is why we do not find a direct prayer to the Spirit anywhere in Scripture, **nor is He directly worshiped** - *though He is God, just like the Father and the Son.*

The Spirit holds itself, so to speak, in the background. **Christians worship the Father and the Son**, who has become the Lamb slain for us; and we do this by the Holy Spirit (Eph 2:18; Phil 3:3; Hebrews 13:15).

Eph 2:18 *For through him, both of us have access to the Father by one Spirit.*

Php 3:18 *For I have often told you, and now tell you even with tears, that many live as enemies of the cross of the Messiah.*

Heb 13:15 *Therefore, through him let us always bring God a sacrifice of praise, that is, the fruit of our lips that confess his name.*

In accordance with this, the coming of the Comforter, the Spirit as our Guide, is described in Acts 1 as the promise of the Father. That promise had been

heard by the disciples of Christ, and that is why they have continued in one accord in prayer until the day of Pentecost (Acts 1:4,14).

Act 1:4 *While he was meeting with them, he ordered them, "Don't leave Jerusalem. Instead, wait for what the Father has promised, about which you heard me speak.*

Act 1:14 *With one mind all of them kept devoting themselves to prayer, along with the women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers.*

They have prayed, waiting **for** the Spirit, but not **to** the Spirit. *For true Christians, who therefore have the Spirit permanently inhabited, the prayer 'Come, Holy Spirit' is therefore inappropriate.*

It is also inappropriate for the unconverted, for they must turn to God with repentance of their sins and accept Christ as (their) Lord and Savior. *Then they will receive the Holy Spirit, who is God's gift (see Acts 8:19-20; 10:44-45).*

Act 8:19 *and said, "Give me this power too, so that when I lay my hands on someone, he will receive the Holy Spirit." **Act 8:20** But Peter told him, "May your money perish with you because you thought you could obtain God's free gift with money!*

Act 10:44 *While Peter was still making this statement, the Holy Spirit fell on all the people who were listening to his message. **Act 10:45** Then the circumcised believers who had come with Peter were amazed that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the gentiles, too.*

c) **The invocation of the Holy Spirit**

The Spirit is not communicated through mediation or manipulation of people. **The Spirit is, so to speak, not available separately from Christ.** The living water always comes from the Rock, that is, Christ (1 Corinthians 10:4).

1Co 10:4 *and drank the same spiritual drink, for they drank from the spiritual rock that went with them. That rock was the Messiah.*

And we must speak like Moses **to** the Rock, pray to Him, that is Christ, to get water in abundance for the people of God (compare Numbers 20:7-8).

Num 20:7 *The LORD told Moses, **Num 20:8** "Take the rod, gather the community together, and then you and your brother Aaron are to speak to the rock right before their eyes. It will release water. As you bring water to them from the rock, the community and the cattle will be able to drink.*

Strange fire, where it comes from?

It is legitimate to pray in the end times for a revival, but the danger is inherent in charismatic teachings that one arrives at “strange fire”, that not comes from God, even as the manifestations like the so-called Toronto blessing, which have little or nothing to do with the Holy Spirit (cf. also Lev 9 and 10).

The so called “Baptism with fire”

There is confusion about baptism with fire. The latter concept is not about devotion, but about the fire of the **judgment** at the second coming of Christ. He will purify His threshing floor thoroughly, bring the wheat together in the shed, and burn the chaff with unquenchable fire (Mat. 3:11-12).

Mat 3:11 *I am baptizing you with water as a token of repentance, but the one who is coming after me is stronger than I am, and I am not worthy to carry his sandals. It is he who will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. Mat 3:12* *His winnowing fork is in his hand. He will clean up his threshing floor and gather his grain into the barn, but he will burn the chaff with inextinguishable fire."*

The baptism with the Spirit into one Body

The Biblical “baptism with the Spirit” took place on the day of Pentecost, *the baptism with fire is still future and relates to judgment in the end time*. The **tongues as of fire** and the language wonder in Acts 2 indicate the current **judgment of hardening** that has come upon the people because of the rejection of the Messiah (compare 1 Corinthians 14:20-22; Isa 28:10-13).

1Co 14:20 *Brothers, stop being childish in your thinking. Be like infants with respect to evil but think like adults. 1Co 14:21* *In the Law it is written, "By means of other languages and through the mouths of foreigners I will speak to this people, but even then, they will not listen to me," declares the Lord. 1Co 14:22* *Other languages, then, are meant to be a sign, not for believers, but for unbelievers, while prophecy is meant, not for unbelievers, but for believers.*

Isa 10:10 *As my hand has reached to the idolatrous kingdoms whose carved images were greater than those of Jerusalem and Samaria, Isa 10:11* *will I not deal with Jerusalem and her idols as I have dealt with Samaria and her images?" Isa 10:12* *For the Lord has finished all his work against Mount Zion and against Jerusalem; he will punish the speech that comes from that wilful heart of Assyria's king and the haughty look in his eyes. Isa 10:13* *He keeps bragging: "I've done it by the strength of my hand, and by my wisdom, because I'm so clever. I removed the boundaries of peoples and plundered their treasures; like a bull I brought down those who sat on thrones.*

We can see from Leviticus 9 and 10 that the **fire is always judicious fire**. It consumes either the sacrifice (Lev 9:24), or the opponents of God's Word (Lev 10:2).

Lev 9:24 *A fire came down from the LORD's presence and consumed the burnt offering on the altar as well as the fat. When the people saw it, they shouted and fell on their faces.*

Lev 10:2 *So a fire came out from the LORD's presence, incinerated them, and they died while in the LORD's presence.*

This chapter also teaches us in a type that true worship, worship in Spirit and Truth (John 4:23), can only be based on the finished work of Christ who has been substituted for us God's judgment.

Joh 4:23 *Yet the time is coming, and is now here, when true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth. Indeed, the Father is looking for people like that to worship him.*

The sin of Nadab and Abihu in the institution of the sacrificial service is similar to that of Ananias and Sapphira in the early days of the Church - a sin that also led to death (Acts 5).

The fire that had been ignited by God Himself had to stay on and should not go out (Lev 6:12-13).

Lev 6:12 *"The fire on the altar is to be kept burning continuously without being extinguished. The priest is to burn wood on it every morning, arrange burnt offerings over it, and then burn the fat contained in the peace offerings over it. **Lev 6:13** The fire is to continue to burn on the altar and is never to be extinguished."*

Therefore, purely human thoughts and ideas about worship should be rejected as a strange fire. We have to reject this kind of doctrine. The apostle Paulus warned the believers in Ephesus: *"For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also, of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them"* (Acts 20:29-30).

Stay away from those false teachers, because Satan himself can appear as an angel of light, showing another Jesus, spirit, and another gospel, *"And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light"* (2 Cor. 11:3,4, 14,15). **See also about false apostles, false prophets and false miracle doers:**

Luke 22:3,14; Mat. 26:23; 7:22; John 6:70; 13:24-30; 2 Cor. 11:13; Jude: 12.

CHAPTER 6 (Flyer 40)

Discipleship, an outline (Ev. A.v.d. Sande)

1. Discipleship, following Jesus as Lord.

To know how to be a real disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ, you must realize that there are 5 different types of discipleship. You can be:

1. A disciple of Moses
2. A disciple of John the Baptist
3. A disciple of Jesus
4. A disciple of one of the apostles
5. A disciple of a false teacher (guru)

In fact, a real disciple will be as the Nazarene in the Old Testament, such as Samson, Samuel the prophet and John the Baptist were (Numbers 6:1-21). A disciple is a follower of a person and is dedicated to serve the (spiritual) leader or teacher.

Before we decided to be a disciple, we must think about the following questions:

1. What *is* a disciple?
2. What should you know about discipleship?
3. Which *person* do you follow as a disciple?
4. What is the *first* step toward discipleship and what is the goal?
5. What is the *second* step toward discipleship?
6. What must a disciple lay aside?
7. What are the *following* steps?
8. What must a disciple put on?
9. What will be the *result* of discipleship?
10. What does it mean "to take up your own cross"?
11. Which person receives the *honor* of real discipleship?

At least, a real disciple bear fruit for the Lord because he or she knows and follow the following points:

1. Living in the Word leads to serving in teaching or preaching
2. Prayer in faith will lead to our service in worship or intercession
3. Communion with believers lead to a pastoral service
4. Witness into the world leads to evangelization

What the word ‘disciple’ means

Most of the born-again Christians never got any further than becoming a child of God. **They know they are saved and there is some progress in knowledge, but they never grew to become a disciple.**

The word ‘disciple’ means literally: ‘follower of a certain doctrine’ and many people are. But the word involves more. I personally like the meaning: ‘being a follower.’ A follower of Jesus is someone following Him.

Matthew 9:9: ‘As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector’s booth. ‘Follow Me’, He told him, and Matthew got up and followed Him.”

Study also in this connection: Mark 2:14 and Luke 5:22.

John 1:43: *‘The next day Jesus decided to leave for Galilee. Finding Philip, He said to him, ‘Follow Me.’*

John 21:22: *‘Jesus answered, ‘If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you? You must follow Me.’*

Quite a blessing that Levi, Philip, Peter, and many others made the right choice and they became followers of Jesus Christ.

Read in Matthew 19:21; Marc 10:21 and Luke 18:22 the story of the rich young man:

- **He met the right person – Jesus Christ.**
- **He had the right attitude and fell on his knees.**
- **He asked the right questions: ‘What must I do inherit eternal life?’**
- **However, He made the wrong choice: ‘And when he heard this, he became very sad, be-cause he was a man of great wealth.’**

The Lord Jesus asks us to follow Him. Are we willing to do so?

2. What you should know about discipleship.

It is important for born again Christians to realize, that we not only consciously commit sins, but also unconsciously.

We also have to confess unconsciously committed sins. It is blame toward our God and it blocks our spiritual growth.

Leviticus 5:17: *'If a person sins and does what is forbidden in any of the Lord's commands, even though he does not know it, he is guilty and will be held responsible.'*

A child of the Lord has to account for the negligence of sins. Paul writes even four times in 1 Corinthians 6:2,9,16 en 19: *'Do you not know?'*

There existed different matters of which they were unaware of, while living in sin. *A spiritual growth process will achieve discipleship.*

In 1 John 2:12-15 we read about children, young men, and fathers. That process of spiritual growth must take place in the lives of all God's children. Take note to the accusation in the direction of the believers in Hebrew.

1Jn 2:12 *I am writing to you, little children, because your sins have been forgiven on account of his name. 1Jn 2:13* *I am writing to you, fathers, because you have known the one who has existed from the beginning. I am writing to you, young people, because you have overcome the evil one. 1Jn 2:14* *I have written to you, little children, because you have known the Father. I have written to you, fathers, because you have known the one who has existed from the beginning. I have written to you, young people, because you are strong and because God's word remains in you and you have overcome the evil one. 1Jn 2:15* *Stop loving the world and the things that are in the world. If anyone persists in loving the world, the Father's love is not in him.*

Hebrews 5:11-12: *'We have much to say about this, but it is hard to explain because you are slow to learn. In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again.'*

Some questions:

- Have you made a choice to become a follower of Jesus Christ?
- Is there a healthy spiritual growth in your life? If not, why not?
- Can you already endure the solid food for your soul?

3. The first step toward discipleship.

The first step on the road to discipleship is confessing the matters, which I have neglected.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20: *'Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore, honour God with your body.'*

Romans 12:1: *'Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God, which is your spiritual worship.'*

Did you discover your sins of negligence? If so, confess them to the Lord and He will grant you forgiveness. Read 1 John 1:9.

1Jn 1:9 *If we make it our habit to confess our sins, in his faithful righteousness he forgives us for those sins and cleanses us from all unrighteousness.*

4. The second step toward discipleship.

The second step toward discipleship asks for a calculation of the cost. Study this with the following Bible verses in mind: Luke 14:25-35.



Luke 14:25 *Now large crowds were traveling with Jesus. He turned and told them, Luke 14:26 "If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father, mother, wife, children, brothers, and sisters, as well as his own life, he can't be my disciple. Luke 14:27 Whoever doesn't carry his cross and follow me can't be my disciple. Luke 14:28 "Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. He will first sit down and estimate the cost to see whether he has enough money to finish it, won't he? Luke 14:29 Otherwise, if he lays a foundation and can't finish the building, everyone who watches will begin to ridicule him Luke 14:30 and say, 'This person started a building but couldn't finish it.' Luke 14:31 "Or suppose a king is going to war against another king. He will first sit down and consider whether with 10,000 men he can fight the one coming against him with 20,000 men, won't he? Luke 14:32 If he can't, he will send a delegation to ask for terms of peace while the other king is still far away. Luke 14:33 In the same way, none of you can be my disciple unless he gives up all his possessions." Salt Without Taste Is Worthless Luke 14:34 "Now, salt is good. But if the salt should lose its taste, how can its flavour be restored? Luke 14:35 It is suitable neither for the soil nor for the manure pile. People throw it away. Let the person who has ears to hear, listen!"*

This scripture tells us even three times when we cannot be a disciple of Jesus and on the other hand it appeals us to sit down first and estimate the cost.

Some examples from the Bible:

- ❑ We read in Daniel 1:18 that Daniel resolved not to defile himself with the royal food of the King of the wine, which the King drank. Therefore, he requested the chief official to defile himself.
- ❑ We read in Matthew 19:16 that the price was too high for the rich young man for he had great wealth.

- Demas was a co-worker with the apostle Paul, but during one of Paul's journeys he dropped out. Demas left him for the sake of the worldly desires and he departed unto Thessalonica as we can read in 2 Timothy 4:10.

2Ti 4:10 *because Demas, having fallen in love with this present world, has abandoned me and has gone to Thessalonica. Crescens has gone to Galatia, and Titus to Dalmatia.*

Question: *What example do we carry out in our daily life?*

5. The third step toward discipleship.

The third step towards following Jesus asks for a new devotion.

Study in this connection: **Matthew 16:13-17**. In this part of the Scripture, we see on the one side the question: *'Who do people say the Son of man is?'* And on the other side the question to the disciples *'Who do you say I am?'*

Who is Jesus Christ for us?

- a) Is He John the Baptist? **Is He a forerunner, or is He the way to God?**
- b) **Is He Elijah?** Is He a miracle-worker, a prophet to us, or is He more than Elijah, the Son of God, and the Son of men?
- c) Is He Jeremiah? **Is He someone to us, turning us inside out? With His preaching and dividing the Word straight, or is He the Lord Jesus, so much more to us than anyone else?**

May the Lord grant us, that the testimony of Simon Peter will become our testimony also: *'You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God!'*

6. The fourth step toward discipleship.

The Fourth step toward discipleship leads us on the way to remission and assurance. Hebrews 9:14 says: ***'How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God.'***

Philippians 3:14: *'I press on towards the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenwards in Christ Jesus.'*

7. The cross of the disciple.

A disciple of Christ is someone, who allows Christ to be the Lord of his Life.

Luke 9:23 states: *'Then he said to them all: 'If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow Me.'*



Jesus says here that we have to do 3 things:

- 1) **Deny yourself.**
- 2) **Take up our cross daily.**
- 3) **Follow Christ.**

The first obligation

The first obligation for a disciple is to deny us. **That does not mean to neglect your identity but to give up your ego minded life. Let us therefore draw a heart visualizing our life. This heart re-presents the fact that we are totally set-aside for Christ. Anyone refusing to deny himself cannot become a disciple.**

Luke 14:26 states: *'If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters -, yes, even his own life – he cannot be my disciple.'* **This simply means that other than Jesus, no one can be of more importance to us.**

The heart '*maintaining in Christ.*'

If this heart represents your life, Christ should fill the complete heart, which means that He should have priority over everything. The Christian life means Christ living within you.

John 15:5 states: *'I am the vine, you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from Me, you can do nothing.'* **'What can we do without remaining in Christ? Nothing.**

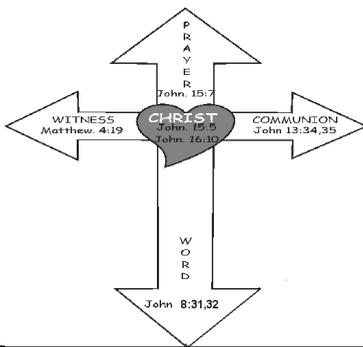
Christ says, that He is the vine and we are the branches. He wants His life living through us. Is this the kind of life that we would like to experience most?

God has provided us with a manner, in which Christ will be in the centre of our life. That is the second obligation, which we spoke of: *'Take up your cross daily.'* *'Denying yourself'* is the negative side of discipleship and *'take up your cross'* is the positive side.

By taking up your cross, you place Christ in the centre of your life. Jesus said in **Luke 14:27**: *'And anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.'*

Let us illustrate this point by drawing a cross around the heart. Jesus said, that you have to carry your cross daily. What actually happens by carrying a cross? You go beyond self-denial into a redeeming service. Cross bearing and serving others demand discipline.

Let us take the parts, which Jesus demands, from a disciple and illustrate them in the drawing of the cross.



Vertical below 'Word.'

The first part we must appropriate in our life is: 'Living in the Word.' The way to let Christ live in us is by having His Word within us. Jesus says in **John 8:31-32**: *'If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth and the truth will set you free.'*

How do we know that we really are His disciples? By abiding in His Word. The Word of God is our food. We cannot grow if the Word does not feed us regularly. We receive the Word in different ways: by listening to a sermon, personal Bible reading and memorizing it, to think about it and making it a part of our daily life. To make Christ the Lord in your life means that we long for studying the Word regularly. To abide in the Word also means to obey the Word. **Jesus said in John 15:10**: *'If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love.'*

Vertical over: 'Prayer.'

The second part that which characterizes the life of a disciple is: 'Praying in faith.' A part of living in Christ is living in prayer. Jesus said in **John 15:7**: *'If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you.'*

Notice 1: Christ, Word, and Prayer. If we remain in Christ and His Word abides in us, we may ask what we want, and it shall be done unto you.

Notice 2: The vertical beam of the cross marks the relation between God and man and the fundamental ways, in which we can communicate with God and the way He communicates with us.

The right side of the crossbeam: 'Communion.'

The third part in the life of a disciple is the communion of saints. Living in Christ means that we must try to live in communion with our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Jesus said in John 13: 34-35: *'A new commandment I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. All men will know that you are my disciples if you love one another.'*

Jesus said, that loving one another is the way to show that we are disciples. **God has given us the ideal place to grow: His church.**

The church is not a building or an organization, al-though both are used. The congregation is a group of believers united together to carry out the administration of Christ into this world.

You will never find a well-balanced Christian, who does not have communion with a local group of believers. The congregation is the Body of Christ. Remaining in Christ means also living in His body, de congregation.

The left side of the crossbeam: 'witness.'

The fourth part in the life of a disciple is: *'Witness in the world.'* **To witness is speaking to others about Jesus Christ.** Jesus said in Matthew 4:19: *'come, follow me', Jesus said, and I will make you fishers of men.'* John 15:8 states: *'This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.'*

Jesus said, that bearing much fruit is the way to show that we are His disciples. **To wit-ness is the natural result of our continuing in Christ. If we live in the Word daily, pray in faith and have communion with believers, it will become natural and normal to speak with others about Christ, who lives in our hearts. Bearing-fruit is more than to witness, but it always encloses witness.**

From abiding in Christ to bearing fruit.

The third obligation, which Jesus mentions in Luke 9:23 is: *'To follow Him.'* If we abide in Christ, this will always result in bearing fruit. Fruit does not necessarily grow fast, but it grows continuously, and it ripens in the season. Bearing fruit is the normal and natural result within a Christ centred life.

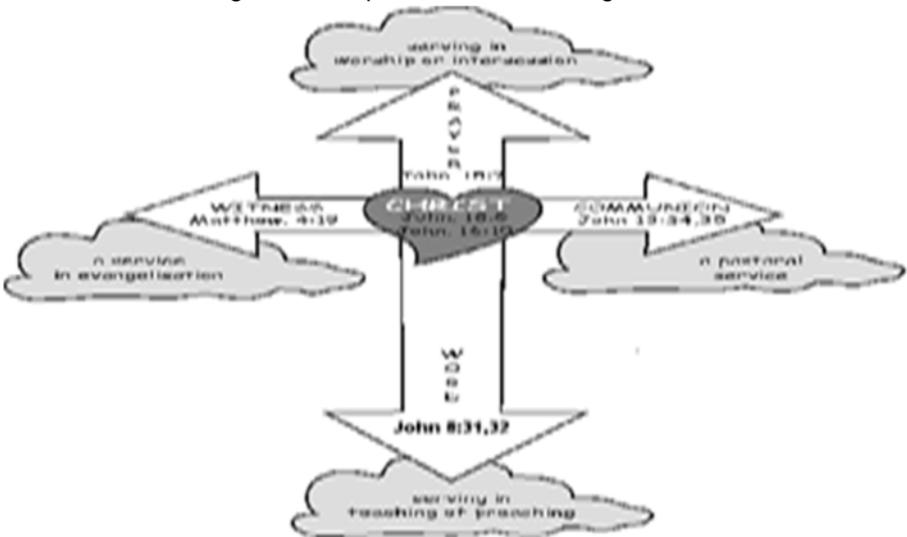


Look again at the heart in the centre of the cross in the light of John 15:5.

Our life in Christ should grow and develop continuously. (Draw circle-like lines from the centre of the circle to the outer ends of the cross).

Bearing fruit has a direct connection with the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. (Galatians 5:22-23). **While the fruit of the Spirit grows within your life, you will reach others in many ways by your helpfulness.**

Let us make clouds by the arrows of the cross. They symbolize the fact, that our fruit bearing should express itself in serving:



- 1) Living in the Word leads to serving in teaching or preaching.
- 2) Prayer in faith will lead to our service in worship or intercession.
- 3) Communion with believers leads to a pastoral service in the congregation.
- 4) Witness into the world leads to evangelization.

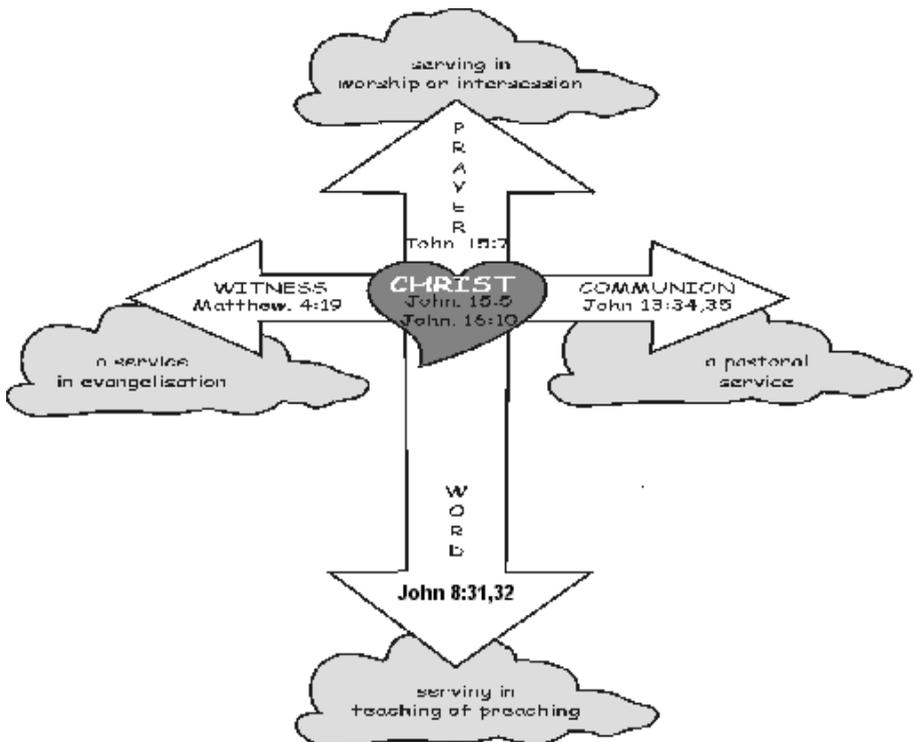
Along both sides of the horizontal beam we find rendering in service.

In John 15:13 Jesus said: 'Greater love has no-one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends.'

These 5 ranges of service from a disciple comprehend the full serving field of a disciple and from the congregation of Christ.

Our goal in discipleship is expressed in 2 Timothy 2:21: 'If a man cleanses himself from the latter, he will be an instrument for noble purposes, made holy, useful to the Master and prepared to do any good work.'

It is necessary that we grow in all 5 parts to be able to cope with life and to be ready and useful for the Lord. If we develop all these parts, our life will be well balanced and fruitful.



DISCIPLESHIP

QUESTIONS BY CHAPTER 6

- 1 Is being a disciple the same as being a born-again believer? (Explain your answer)
- 2 Why was the rich young man not a real “good boy” or disciple?
- 3 What can we do with the so called “unconscious” sin?
- 4 In what manner can we make the choice to be a disciple of Christ?
- 5 What will be a true hindering for spiritual grow?
- 6 When is the believer ready to take “solid food”?
- 7 Describe some reasons for the lack of growth in the spiritual life of a believer (read 1 Cor. 3:2; Heb. 5:11,12; 1 Tim. 3::7-11; 4:13-16; 5:13; 6:9,10, 14 with 2 Tim. 2:4,5,15,18; 3:6-9,12; 4:2,5).
- 8 What is your responsibility to serve the body of Christ and with what kind of skills?
- 9 What is the important second step toward discipleship?
- 10 Write down some names of faithful believers in Old- and New testament
- 11 What does it mean to you to have “a new devotion”?
12. What does it mean to you that Jesus is not only your Saviour, but also your Lord and Friend? (Read John 15)
13. Write down the 4th step toward discipleship
14. What kind of daily cross do you have to bear?
15. Tell some personal impressions while you read the following words:
 1. The Word of God
 2. Prayers
 3. Communion
 4. Witness
 5. Bearing fruit(s)

CHAPTER 7

Churchplanting and Assembly Life (Flyer 20)

“... that you might straighten out what was left unfinished...” (Tit 1:5a).

The first steps of an evangelist, Church planter or missionary

“I planted the seed...I laid a foundation as an expert builder, and someone else is building on it” (1 Cor. 3:6a, 10a).

Before anyone can be a so called “Church planter” or missionary worker, we must be sure that we had heard the personal call of the Lord Jesus: Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have command you.” In the Acts we read about this important and life changing call of the Lord Jesus: *“For this is what the Lord has commanded us: ‘I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth’” (Acts 13:47; Isaiah 42:6; 49:6).*

This call was in the first place for the Lord Jesus Himself But because He has chosen to live within and for the believers, who are members of His body, *this Godly call must be heard by every true believer.* Paul realized this and claimed this call for himself and his followers.

The foundation of the Church

It is known that in the Old Testament there was no Church. The Church was promised but was only formed on the day of Pentecost. The Centre and Head of the Church is the Lord Jesus. In the letters of Paul, we read this when he wrote: *“For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified...”*

“Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God’s people and members of God’s household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus Himself as the Chief cornerstone.”

“In Him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in Him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by His Spirit” (1 Cor. 2:2; Eph. 2:19-22).

The subject of Gospel preaching

Of course, the subject of our preaching is the Lord Jesus Himself and our faith in Him and His words. In the letter to the Romans we read more about the gospel preaching of the Lord Jesus and the apostles.

We see that the words of Jesus are words of faith: "But what does it say? 'The Word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart, ' that is, the Word of faith we are proclaiming'" (Rom. 10:8). *Without faith it is impossible to get real peace with God (Rom. 5:1).*

But, all the members of the body of Christ ought to be preachers of this Gospel of grace and faith. We all have the order to proclaim this "Gospel of grace" to all men, because faith will come through hearing the Gospel message.

Real faith does not come in the first place by seeing a wonder or sign. *"Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the Word of Christ... Now faith is being sure of what we hope for... By faith we understand... For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith - and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God - not by works, so that no one can boast" (Rom. 10: 17; Heb. 11: 1-3a; Eph. 2:8,9).*

Preaching, faith and good works in the society and Church

In the beginning of their Christian life, many young believers will try to do the Lord's work in their own power. They are willing to give their human power and knowledge to the Lord Jesus and they will ask for leading how to do His work as His disciples. But the Lord does not want in the first place our human knowledge, power, works or faith based on a sign or wonder, but our whole being, with all that we are and have, as a sacrifice to Him. *"Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God. This is your spiritual act of worship" (Rom. 12:1).*

So, we see that God not only is asking for our human knowledge, talents or power, but our complete being as a living sacrifice! All that we do in our own power will bring us under the law so that we don't live any longer living under grace only. *"I would like to learn just one thing from you: Did you received the Spirit by observing the law, or by believing what you heard? Then Jesus told him (Thomas): Because you have seen Me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed" (Gal.3:2,5; John 20:29).*

Basic doctrine for Church planting

The basic doctrine for the Christian worker who does the work of a Church planter, missionary or evangelist, is of course based on *"the sound instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ and godly teaching"* or *"the teaching of Christ"* (1 Tim.

6:3b; 2 John vs.9). He must be “a good minister of Christ Jesus, brought up in the truths of the faith and of the good teaching...” (1 Tim. 4:6b).

He must also “watch his life and doctrine closely” than “he will save both himself and his hearers... so that God’s name and his teaching may not be slandered” (verse 16; 1 Tim. 6:1b). He must devote himself and his hearers “to the apostles’ teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer” (Acts 2:42).

Every week believers world-wide gathered to the name of the Lord Jesus will bring their collected money to help the poor (1 Cor. 16:1-3).

1Co 16:1 Now concerning the collection for the saints, you should follow the directions I gave to the churches in Galatia. **1Co 16:2** After the Sabbath ends, each of you should set aside and save something from your surplus in proportion to what you have, so that no collections will have to be made when I arrive. **1Co 16:3** When I arrive, I will send letters along with the men you approve to take your gift to Jerusalem.

The breaking of bread and the Lord’s Table

The foundation of the Lord’s worker or the so-called “Church planter” or missionary, is in fact based on the death of Christ (1 Cor. 2:2).

1Co 2:2 For while I was with you I resolved to know nothing except Jesus the Messiah, and him crucified.

The message of the cross “is foolishness to those who are perishing. But to the real believers who are being saved it is the power of God” (1 Cor. 1:18).

This fundamental preaching has to do with Christ as the Lamb of God, Who died for our sins on the cross of Golgotha: “For Christ, our Passover Lamb, has been sacrificed. Therefore, let us keep the Feast, not with the old yeast, the yeast of malice and wickedness, but with the bread without yeast, the bread of sincerity and truth...” (1 Cor. 5:8).

The apostle Paul connected this feast with the breaking of bread on the first day of the week and wrote: “Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ and is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one loaf, we all partake of the one loaf, to have a part in the Lord’s table... For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said: ‘This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me.’ In the same way, after supper, He took the cup, saying: ‘This cup is the new covenant in

My blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of Me.' For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes" (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 10: 16,17, 21b; 11:23-26).

The foundation of the Church planter and his preaching

We learned from what is written that all our activities as the Lord's disciples must be based on the message of the cross and the death of Christ. From the beginning of the first message about the forgiveness of sin through a bloody sacrifice, we see that this message is based on the sacrifice of a lamb (Ex. 12:13; Heb. 11:28).

Exo 12:13 *The blood will be a sign for you on the houses where you are. I'll see the blood and pass over you. There will be no plague to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.*

Heb 11:28 *By faith he established the Passover and the sprinkling of blood to keep the destroyer of the firstborn from touching the people.*

Therefore, the remembrance of the Lord's dead at His table (or altar, see Malachi 1:7,12; 2:13) must be the point from which the believer goes out for any activity or preaching.

Mal 1:7 *By presenting defiled food on my altar. And you ask, 'How have we defiled you?' By saying 'The Table of the LORD is contemptible.'*

Mal 1:12 *"But you are profaning my name by saying that the Table of the LORD is defiled and that its fruit and its food are contemptible.*

Mal 2:13 *" This is another thing you do: you flood the altar of the LORD with tears, weeping and wailing because he no longer pays attention to your offering nor takes pleasure in it from your hand.*

Noah, Abraham, Moses, Joshua, Samuel, Gideon, David, Solomon and the reassembled remnant people of Israel did so: *"Despite their fear of the people around them, they built the altar on its foundation..."*

We too, *"have an altar, from which those who minister at the tabernacle have no right to eat...Let us, then, go to Him (Jesus as the Lamb of God) outside the camp, bearing the disgrace He bore. For here we do not have an enduring city, but we are looking for the city that is to come. Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise - the fruits of lips that confess His name"*

Readings: Gen. 8:20; 12:7; 33:20; Ex. 24:4; Joshua 8:30; Judges 6:24; 2 Sam. 24:18; 1 King 3:4; Ezra 3:3; Heb. 13:10,13-15.

The example and preaching of the apostle Paul

Let us follow the example of the apostle Paul's preaching through Asia.

1. The worker must have a personal faith in the forgiveness of sin through the blood of Christ and a personal call of the Lord Jesus to be His disciple. Being sure that the blood of Christ saves him.

Read: 2 Cor. 13:5; Gal. 1:1, 11-16; Gal. 2:9a; Eph. 1:3-8; 4:11; Rom. 12:3-11.

2Co 13:5 *Keep examining yourselves to see whether you are continuing in the faith. Test yourselves! You know, don't you, that Jesus the Messiah lives in you? Could it be that you are failing the test?*

Gal 1:1 *From Paul, an apostle not sent from men or by a man, but by Jesus the Messiah, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead. Gal 1:11* *For I want you to know, brothers, that the gospel that was proclaimed by me is not of human origin. Gal 1:12* *For I did not receive it from a man, nor was I taught it, but it was revealed to me by Jesus the Messiah. Gal 1:13* *For you have heard about my earlier life in Judaism, how I kept violently persecuting God's church and was trying to destroy it. Gal 1:14* *I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries, because I was far more zealous for the traditions of my ancestors. Gal 1:15* *But when God, who set me apart before I was born and who called me by his grace, was pleased Gal 1:16* *to reveal his Son to me so that I might proclaim him among the gentiles, I did not confer with another human being at any time,*

Gal 2:9 *So when James, Cephas, and John (who were reputed to be leaders) recognized the grace that had been given me, they gave Barnabas and me the right hand of fellowship, agreeing that we should go to the gentiles and they to the circumcised.*

Eph 1:3 *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus, the Messiah! He has blessed us in the Messiah with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realm, Eph 1:4* *just as he chose us in the Messiah before the creation of the universe to be holy and blameless in his presence. In love Eph 1:5* *he predestined us for adoption to himself through Jesus the Messiah, according to the pleasure of his will, Eph 1:6* *so that we would praise his glorious grace that he gave us in the Beloved One. Eph 1:7* *In union with him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our offenses, according to the riches of God's grace Eph 1:8* *that he lavished on us, along with all wisdom and understanding,*

Eph 4:11 *And it is he who gifted some to be apostles, others to be prophets, others to be evangelists, and still others to be pastors and teachers,*

Rom 12:3 For by the grace given to me I ask every one of you not to think of yourself more highly than you should think, rather to think of yourself with sober judgment on the measure of faith that God has assigned each of you. **Rom 12:4** For we have many parts in one body, but these parts do not all have the same function. **Rom 12:5** In the same way, even though we are many people, we are one body in the Messiah and individual parts connected to each other. **Rom 12:6** We have different gifts based on the grace that was given to us. So, if your gift is prophecy, use your gift in proportion to your faith. **Rom 12:7** If your gift is serving, devote yourself to serving others. If it is teaching, devote yourself to teaching others. **Rom 12:8** If it is encouraging, devote yourself to encouraging others. If it is sharing, share generously. If it is leading, lead enthusiastically. If it is helping, help cheerfully. **Rom 12:9** Your love must be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good. **Rom 12:10** Be devoted to each other with mutual affection. Excel at showing respect for each other. **Rom 12:11** Never be lazy in showing such devotion. Be on fire with the Spirit. Serve the Lord.

2. The worker must be humble, accepted in own assembly as worker in God's House and His vineyard with a good testimony from abroad.

Read: Mat. 11:28,29; Rom. 12:16; 1 Pet. 5:5; Phil. 2:14-16; 1 Thes. 1:7; 5:12,13; 1 Tim. 3:1-16; Acts 6:3; 1 Cor. 16:10,15,16; Tit. 1:7-9

Mat 11:28 "Come to me, all of you who are weary and loaded down with burdens, and I will give you rest. **Mat 11:29** Place my yoke on you and learn from me, because I am gentle and humble, and you will find rest for your souls,

Rom 12:16 Live in harmony with each other. Do not be arrogant, but associate with humble people. Do not think that you are wiser than you really are.

1Pe 5:5 In a similar way, your young people must submit to the elders. All of you must clothe yourselves with humility for the sake of each other, because: "God opposes the arrogant, but gives grace to the humble."

Php 2:14 Do everything without complaining or arguing **Php 2:15** so that you may be blameless and innocent, God's children without any faults among a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine like stars in the world **Php 2:16** as you hold firmly to the word of life. Then I will be proud when the Messiah returns that I did not run in vain or work hard in vain.

1Th 1:7 As a result, you became a model for all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia. **1Th 5:12** Brothers, we ask you to show your appreciation for those who work among you, set an example for you in the Lord, and instruct you. **1Th 5:13** Hold them in the highest regard, loving them because of their work. Live in peace with each other.

1Ti 3:1 *This is a trustworthy saying: The one who would an elder be, a noble task desires he. 1Ti 3:2 Therefore, an elder must be blameless, the husband of one wife, stable, sensible, respectable, hospitable to strangers, and teachable. 1Ti 3:3 He must not drink excessively or be a violent person, but instead be gentle. He must not be argumentative or love money. 1Ti 3:4 He must manage his own family well and have children who are submissive and respectful in every way. 1Ti 3:5 For if a man does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church? 1Ti 3:6 He must not be a recent convert, so that he won't become arrogant and fall into the devil's condemnation. 1Ti 3:7 He must be well thought of by outsiders, so he doesn't fall into disgrace and the trap set for him by the devil.*

Qualifications for Deacons

1Ti 3:8 *Ministers, too, must be serious. They must not be two-faced, addicted to wine, or greedy for money. 1Ti 3:9 They must hold firmly to the secret of the faith with clear consciences. 1Ti 3:10 But they must first be tested. Then, if they prove to be blameless, they may become ministers. 1Ti 3:11 Their wives must also be serious. They must not be gossips, but instead be stable and trustworthy in everything. 1Ti 3:12 Ministers must be husbands of one wife and must manage their children and their families well. 1Ti 3:13 Those ministers who serve well gain an excellent reputation for themselves and will have great assurance by their faith in the Messiah Jesus.*

The Mystery of Godliness

1Ti 3:14 *I hope to come to you soon. However, I'm writing this to you 1Ti 3:15 in case I am delayed, so that you may know how to behave in God's household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth. 1Ti 3:16 By common confession, the secret of our godly worship is great: In flesh was he revealed to sight, kept righteous by the Spirit's might, adored by angels singing. To nations was he manifest, believing souls found peace and rest, our Lord in heaven reigning!*

Act 6:3 *Therefore, brothers, appoint seven men among you who have a good reputation, who are full of the Spirit and wisdom, and we will put them in charge of this work.*

1Co 16:10 *If Timothy comes, see to it that he does not have anything to be afraid of while he is with you, for he is doing the Lord's work as I am. 1Co 16:15 Now I urge you, brothers — for you know that the members of the family of Stephanas were the first converts in Achaia, and that they have devoted themselves to serving the saints — 1Co 16:16 to submit yourselves to people like these and to anyone else who shares their labor and hard work.*

Tit 1:7 Because an overseer is God's servant manager, he must be blameless. He must not be arrogant or irritable. He must not drink too much, be a violent person, or make money in shameful ways. **Tit 1:8** Instead, he must be hospitable to strangers, must appreciate what is good, and be sensible, honest, moral, and self-controlled. **Tit 1:9** He must be devoted to the trustworthy message that agrees with what we teach, so that he may be able to encourage others with healthy doctrine and refute those who oppose it.

3. The worker must know the destiny of this ungodly world, the way of salvation, the position, and destination of the Church as the body of Christ and the house of God.

Read: 1 Thes. 4:13-18; 2 Thes. 2:1-12; 1 Pet. 1:13-19; 2 Pet. 3:3-18; John 3:16; Tit. 2:11-15; 3:4-9; Acts 10:34-44; 13:47; 17:30,31; 26:16-19; 1 Thes. 4:13-18; 1Tim. 3:14-16; 4:6.

The Coming of the Lord

1Th 4:13 But we do not want you to be ignorant, brothers, about those who have died, so that you may not grieve like other people who have no hope. **1Th 4:14** For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so through Jesus God will bring those who have died with him. **1Th 4:15** For we declare to you what the Lord has told us to say: We who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who have died. **1Th 4:16** With a shout of command, with the archangel's call, and with the sound of God's trumpet, the Lord himself will come down from heaven, and the dead who belong to the Messiah will rise first. **1Th 4:17** Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the Lord in the air. And so, we will be with the Lord forever. **1Th 4:18** So then, encourage one another with these words.

2Th 2:1 Now we ask you, brothers, regarding the coming of our Lord Jesus, the Messiah, and our gathering together to him, **2Th 2:2** not to be so quickly upset or alarmed when someone claims that we said, either by some spirit, conversation, or letter that the Day of the Lord has already come. **2Th 2:3** Do not let anyone deceive you in any way, for it will not come unless the rebellion takes place first and the man of sin, who is destined for destruction, is revealed. **2Th 2:4** He opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god and object of worship. As a result, he seats himself in the sanctuary of God and himself declares that he is God. **2Th 2:5** Don't you remember that I repeatedly told you about these things when I was still with you? **2Th 2:6** You know what it is that is now holding him back, so that he will be revealed when his time comes. **2Th 2:7** For the secret of this lawlessness is already at work, but only until the person now holding it back gets out of the way. **2Th 2:8** Then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will destroy with the breath of his mouth, rendering him powerless by the manifestation of his coming.

2Th 2:9 The coming of the lawless one will be accompanied by the power of Satan. He will use every kind of power, including miraculous signs, lying wonders, 2Th 2:10 and every type of evil to deceive those who are dying, those who refused to love the truth that would save them. 2Th 2:11 For this reason, God will send them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie. 2Th 2:12 Then all who have not believed the truth but have taken pleasure in unrighteousness will be condemned.

1Pe 1:13 *Therefore, prepare your minds for action, keep a clear head, and set your hope completely on the grace to be given you when Jesus, the Messiah, is revealed. 1Pe 1:14 As obedient children, do not be shaped by the desires that used to influence you when you were ignorant. 1Pe 1:15 Instead, be holy in every aspect of your life, just as the one who called you is holy. 1Pe 1:16 For it is written, "You must be holy, because I am holy." 1Pe 1:17 If you call "Father" the one who judges everyone impartially according to what they have done, you must live in reverent fear as long as you are strangers in a strange land. 1Pe 1:18 For you know that it was not with perishable things like silver or gold that you have been ransomed from the worthless way of life handed down to you by your ancestors, 1Pe 1:19 but with the precious blood of the Messiah, like that of a lamb without blemish or defect.*

2Pe 3:3 *First of all you must understand this: In the last days mockers will come and, following their own desires, will ridicule us 2Pe 3:4 by saying, "What happened to the Messiah's promise to return? Ever since our ancestors died, everything continues as it did from the beginning of creation." 2Pe 3:5 But they deliberately ignore the fact that long ago the heavens existed, and the earth was formed by God's word out of water and with water, 2Pe 3:6 by which the world at that time was deluged with water and destroyed. 2Pe 3:7 Now by that same word, the present heavens and earth have been reserved for fire and are being kept for the day when ungodly people will be judged and destroyed. 2Pe 3:8 Don't forget this fact, dear friends: With the Lord a single day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a single day. 2Pe 3:9 The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some people understand slowness, but is being patient with you. He does not want anyone to perish but wants everyone to repent. 2Pe 3:10 But the Day of the Lord will come like a thief. On that day the heavens will disappear with a roaring sound, the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done on it will be exposed. 2Pe 3:11 Since everything will be destroyed in this way, think of the kind of holy and godly people you ought to be 2Pe 3:12 as you look forward to and hasten the coming of the day of God, when the heavens will be set ablaze and dissolved and the elements will melt with fire. 2Pe 3:13 But in keeping with his promise, we are looking forward to new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home.*

Final Words

2Pe 3:14 So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to have the Lord find you at peace and without spot or fault. **2Pe 3:15** Think of our Lord's patience as facilitating salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him. **2Pe 3:16** He speaks about this subject in all his letters. Some things in them are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, leading to their own destruction, as they do the rest of the Scriptures. **2Pe 3:17** And so, dear friends, since you already know these things, continually be on your guard not to be carried away by the deception of lawless people. Otherwise, you may fall from your secure position. **2Pe 3:18** Instead, continue to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus, the Messiah. Glory belongs to him both now and on that eternal day! Amen.

Joh 3:16 "For this is how God loved the world: He gave his unique Son so that everyone who believes in him might not be lost but have eternal life.

Tit 2:11 For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all people. **Tit 2:12** It trains us to renounce ungodly living and worldly passions so that we might live sensible, honest, and godly lives in the present age **Tit 2:13** as we wait for the blessed hope and glorious appearance of our great God and Savior, Jesus the Messiah. **Tit 2:14** He gave himself for us to set us free from every wrong and to cleanse us so that we could be his special people who are enthusiastic about doing good deeds. **Tit 2:15** These are the things you should teach. Encourage and refute with full authority. Do not let anyone look down on you.

Tit 3:4 In grace our Savior God appeared, to make his love for mankind clear. **Tit 3:5** It was not for deeds that we had done, but by his steadfast love alone, he saved us through a second birth, renewed us by the Spirit's work, **Tit 3:6** and poured him out upon us, too, through Jesus the Messiah our Savior true. **Tit 3:7** And so, made heirs by his own grace, eternal life we now embrace. **Tit 3:8** This saying is trustworthy. I want you to insist on these things, so that those who have put their faith in God may devote themselves to good actions. These things are good and helpful to other people. **Tit 3:9** But avoid foolish controversies, arguments about genealogies, quarrels, and fights about the Law. These things are useless and worthless.

Act 10:34 Then Peter began to speak: "Now I understand that God shows no partiality. **Act 10:35** Indeed, whoever fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him in any nation. **Act 10:36** He has sent his word to the descendants of Israel and brought them the good news of peace through Jesus the Messiah. This man is the Lord of everyone. **Act 10:37** You know what happened throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John preached. **Act 10:38** God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and

with power, and because God was with him, he went around doing good and healing everyone who was oppressed by the devil. Act 10:39 We are witnesses of everything Jesus did in the land of the Jews, including Jerusalem. "They hung him on a tree and killed him, Act 10:40 but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear — Act 10:41 not to all the people, but to us who were chosen by God to be witnesses and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. Act 10:42 He also ordered us to preach to the people and to testify solemnly that this is the one appointed by God to be the judge of the living and the dead. Act 10:43 All the prophets testify to this: everyone who believes in Jesus receives forgiveness of sins through his name." The Holy Spirit Falls on the Gentiles Act 10:44 While Peter was still making this statement, the Holy Spirit fell on all the people who were listening to his message.

Act 13:47 For that is what the Lord ordered us to do: 'I have made you a light to the gentiles to be the means of salvation to the very ends of the earth.'"

Act 17:30 Though God has overlooked those times of ignorance, he now commands everyone everywhere to repent, Act 17:31 because he has set a day when he is going to judge the world with justice through a man whom he has appointed. He has given proof of this to everyone by raising him from the dead."

Act 26:16 But get up and stand on your feet, for I have appeared to you for the very purpose of appointing you to be my servant and witness of what you have seen and of what I will show you. Act 26:17 I will continue to rescue you from your people and from the gentiles to whom I am sending you. Act 26:18 You will help them understand and turn them from darkness to light and from Satan's control to God, so that their sins will be forgiven, and they will receive a share among those who are sanctified by faith in me.' Act 26:19 "And so, King Agrippa, **I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision.**

The rapture of the Church

1Th 4:13 But we do not want you to be ignorant, brothers, about those who have died, so that you may not grieve like other people who have no hope. 1Th 4:14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so through Jesus God will bring those who have died with him. 1Th 4:15 For we declare to you what the Lord has told us to say: We who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who have died. 1Th 4:16 With a shout of command, with the archangel's call, and with the sound of God's trumpet, the Lord himself will come down from heaven, and the dead who belong to the Messiah will rise first. 1Th 4:17 Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the Lord in the air. And so, we will be with the Lord forever. 1Th 4:18 So then, encourage one another with these words.

The Mystery of Godliness

1Ti 3:14 *I hope to come to you soon. However, I'm writing this to you 1Ti 3:15 in case I am delayed, so that you may know how to behave in God's household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth. 1Ti 3:16 By common confession, **the secret of our godly worship is great: In flesh was He revealed to sight, kept righteous by the Spirit's might, adored by angels singing. To nations was he manifest, believing souls found peace and rest, our Lord in heaven reigning!***

1Ti 4:6 *If you continue to point these things out to the brothers, you will be a good servant of the Messiah Jesus, nourished by the words of the faith and the healthy teaching that you have followed closely.*

4. The worker must accept difficulties and persecution during his work for Christ.

Read: Romans 12:1,2; 1 Thes. 2:4-16; 2Tim. 3:10-12; John 15:18-21; 16:33.

A Living Sacrifice

Rom 12:1 *I therefore urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercies, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices that are holy and pleasing to God, for this is the reasonable way for you to worship. Rom 12:2 Do not be conformed to this world, but continually be transformed by the renewing of your minds so that you may be able to determine what God's will is — what is proper, pleasing, and perfect.*

1Th 2:4 *Rather, because we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, we speak as we do, not trying to please people but God, who tests our motives. 1Th 2:5 As you know, we did not come with flattering words or with a scheme to make money. God is our witness! 1Th 2:6 We did not seek praise from people—from you or from anyone else — 1Th 2:7 even though as apostles of the Messiah we might have made such demands. Instead, we were gentle among you, like a nursing mother tenderly caring for her own children. 1Th 2:8 We cared so deeply for you that we were determined to share with you not only the gospel of God but our very lives. That is how dear you were to us. 1Th 2:9 Brothers, you remember our labor and toil. We worked night and day so that we would not become a burden to any of you while we proclaimed the gospel of God to you. 1Th 2:10 You and God are witnesses of how pure, honest, and blameless our conduct was among you who believe. 1Th 2:11 You know very well that we treated each of you the way a father treats his children. 1Th 2:12 We comforted and encouraged you, urging you to live in a manner worthy of God, who calls you into his kingdom and glory. 1Th 2:13 Here is another reason why we constantly give thanks to God: When you received God's word, which you heard from us, you did not accept it as the word of humans but for what it really is — the word of God, which is at work in you who believe.*

1Th 2:14 For you, brothers, became imitators of the churches of God in Judea that are in union with the Messiah Jesus. You suffered the same persecutions from the people of your own country as they did from those Jews 1Th 2:15 who killed the Lord Jesus and the prophets, who have persecuted us, and who please neither God nor any group of people, 1Th 2:16 as they try to keep us from telling the gentiles how they can be saved. As a result, they are constantly adding to the number of sins they have committed. However, wrath has overtaken them at last!

2Ti 3:10 But you have observed my teaching, my way of life, my purpose, my faith, my patience, my love, my endurance, 2Ti 3:11 and how I was persecuted and suffered in Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra. What persecutions I endured! Yet the Lord rescued me from all of them. 2Ti 3:12 Indeed, all who want to live a godly life in union with the Messiah Jesus will be persecuted.

Joh 15:18 "If the world hates you, you should realize that it hated me before you. Joh 15:19 If you belonged to the world, the world would love you as one of its own. But because you do not belong to the world and I have chosen you out of it, the world hates you. Joh 15:20 Remember what I told you: 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they kept my word, they will also keep yours. Joh 15:21 They will do all these things to you on account of my name, because they do not know the one who sent me.

Joh 16:33 I have told you this so that through me you may have peace. In the world you will have trouble but be courageous - I have overcome the world!"

5. The worker must know what his or her personal gift(s) and talents would be. Read: Eph. 4:11; Acts 20:10; Rom. 12:6-8; 1 Cor. 12:4-11,28; 14:1,12,24-26.

Eph 4:11 And it is he who gifted some to be apostles, others to be prophets, others to be evangelists, and still others to be pastors and teachers,

Act 20:10 But Paul went down, bent over him, took him into his arms, and said, "Stop being alarmed, because he's still alive."

Rom 12:6 We have different gifts based on the grace that was given to us. So, if your gift is prophecy, use your gift in proportion to your faith. Rom 12:7 If your gift is serving, devote yourself to serving others. If it is teaching, devote yourself to teaching others. Rom 12:8 If it is encouraging, devote yourself to encouraging others. If it is sharing, share generously. If it is leading, lead enthusiastically. If it is helping, help cheerfully.

1Co 12:4 Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit, 1Co 12:5 and there are varieties of ministries, but the same Lord. 1Co 12:6 There are varieties of results, but it is the same God who produces all the results in everyone.

1Co 12:7 To each person has been given the ability to manifest the Spirit for the common good. **8** To one has been given a message of wisdom by the Spirit; to another the ability to speak with knowledge according to the same Spirit; **9** to another faith by the same Spirit; to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit; **10** to another miraculous results; to another prophecy; to another the ability to distinguish between spirits; to another various kinds of languages; and to another the interpretation of languages. **11** But one and the same Spirit produces all these results and gives what he wants to each person.

1Co 12:28 God has appointed in the church first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then those who perform miracles, those who have gifts of healing, those who help others, administrators, and those who speak various kinds of languages.

1 Cor. 14:1,12,24-26 "Keep on pursuing love, and keep on desiring spiritual gifts, especially the ability to prophesy. **12.** In the same way, since you're so desirous of spiritual gifts, you must keep on desiring them for the upbuilding of the church. **24-26,** But if everyone is prophesying, when an unbeliever or an uneducated person comes in he will be convicted and examined by everything that's happening. 1Co 14:25 His secret, inner heart will become known, and so he will bow down to the ground and worship God, declaring, "God is truly among you!" 1Co 14:26 What, then, does this mean, brothers? When you gather, everyone has a psalm, teaching, revelation, other language, or interpretation. **Everything must be done for upbuilding.**

6. If the worker is married, the whole family must have a godly testimony among family, assembly members and the secular world, having natural and spiritual authority.

Read: 1 Tim. 3:1-14

1Ti 3:1 This is a trustworthy saying: The one who would an elder be, a noble task desires he. 1Ti 3:2 Therefore, an elder must be blameless, the husband of one wife, stable, sensible, respectable, hospitable to strangers, and teachable. 1Ti 3:3 He must not drink excessively or be a violent person, but instead be gentle. He must not be argumentative or love money. 1Ti 3:4 He must manage his own family well and have children who are submissive and respectful in every way. 1Ti 3:5 For if a man does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church? 1Ti 3:6 He must not be a recent convert, so that he won't become arrogant and fall into the devil's condemnation. 1Ti 3:7 He must be well thought of by outsiders, so he doesn't fall into disgrace and the trap set for him by the devil.

Qualifications for Deacons

1Ti 3:8 Ministers, too, must be serious. They must not be two-faced, addicted to wine, or greedy for money. **1Ti 3:9** They must hold firmly to the secret of the faith with clear consciences. **1Ti 3:10** But they must first be tested. Then, if they prove to be blameless, they may become ministers. **1Ti 3:11** Their wives must also be serious. They must not be gossips, but instead be stable and trustworthy in everything. **1Ti 3:12** Ministers must be husbands of one wife and must manage their children and their families well. **1Ti 3:13** Those ministers who serve well gain an excellent reputation for themselves and will have great assurance by their faith in the Messiah Jesus. **1Ti 3:14** I hope to come to you soon. However, I'm writing this to you.

7. There must be a good testimony as a steward, having the responsibility to spend the money that believers collected for the missionary work or for the poor.

Read: 1 Tim. 3:2-4; Acts. 15:25,26; 16:1,2; 1 Cor. 16:3.

1Ti 3:2 Therefore, an elder must be blameless, the husband of one wife, stable, sensible, respectable, hospitable to strangers, and teachable. **1Ti 3:3** He must not drink excessively or be a violent person, but instead be gentle. He must not be argumentative or love money. **1Ti 3:4** He must manage his own family well and have children who are submissive and respectful in every way.

Act 15:25 So, we have unanimously decided to choose men and send them to you with our dear Barnabas and Paul, **Act 15:26** who have risked their lives for the sake of our Lord Jesus, the Messiah. **Act 16:1** Paul also went to Derbe and Lystra, where there was a disciple named Timothy, the son of a believing Jewish wife whose husband was a Greek. **Act 16:2** Timothy was highly regarded by the brothers in Lystra and Iconium.

1Co 16:3 When I arrive, I will send letters along with the men you approve to take your gift to Jerusalem.

Let us now read Acts 20:7-36.

vs. 7 Here we see the foundation of Gospel preaching. For believers all their actions for the Lord is based on Christ' cross. They will proclaim that fact, the death of Christ for their sins, at the Lord's table. The first Christians did this daily in a believer's house or in a rented public room. Later regularly at the first day of the week, our Sunday. *Read: Acts 2:42, 46; 1 Cor. 10:15-17; 11:23-34.*

vs. 17 A Church planter calls often together responsible brethren, who are willing to receive more education, having already respect from the believers of their home assembly.

Read: Acts 6:2-7; Acts 15:2,6,22,30; 16:4; 28:17; Gal. 3:9,10; 1 Thes. 5:12,13; Eph. 4:8-13; 1 Tim. 3:1-15; 2 Tim. 1,2,15,22; 4:4; Tit. 1:5.

vs. 18 People must see a practical Christian life in the worker. To be a real follower of the Lord Jesus Christ, showing His attitude, has more influence than many words.

Read: Acts 20:35; Gal. 4:19; 2 Thes. 3:7-13

vs. 19 The Holy Spirit shows us the attitude and humility of the Lord Jesus. The best way to teach people in God's holy Word is to be in their own houses, living among them in the same, often poor, circumstances.

Read: 1 Cor. 16:15-19; 2 Cor. 1:7; Acts 20:33,34

vs. 20 Our preaching must be done in a very practical and simple way. We must give the hearers our help, spiritually and practically, so they can understand what we preach from the Bible.

Praying together during house meetings and in public will be a very powerful skill.

Read: Mat. 18:20; Mark 14:38; Acts 1:14; 2:42; 12:12; 13:2,3; 16:13; 20:36; 21:5; Luke. 18:1; Col. 1:9; 1 Thes. 3:10; 5:17; Neh. 8:8,9.

vs. 21 The message begins with preaching that there is only one God and that everybody lives in sin being under the judgment and discipline of the holy God. Through truly repentance to God, accepting Christ sacrifice and only after confession of sin, God will give peace and salvation only.

Read: Mat. 3:1-12; Acts 2:38-41; 10:34-48; 16:30,31; 17:22-31.

vs.22-24 When we preach the "Gospel of God's grace" and that there will be salvation in the name of Jesus only, often there will be many difficult reactions, attacks, sorrows and hardships. Sometimes people will try to put the preacher in prison or he will be in danger of his life.

Read: Acts 4:12; John 15:20; 16:33; Gal. 4:16; 2 Cor. 11:23-12:10; 1 Thes. 2:14,15; 3:4; 2Thes.1:4-7; 2Tim. 3:12; 1 Pet. 4:12-19; Rev. 7:13,14.

vs. 25 The preaching about the "Kingdom of God" needs explanation and a special protection against the spiritual and physical attacks of Satan. It is a misunderstanding to believe that the kingdom of God with its power and glory is already here. For the Church it is not yet the time to reign, but the time to suffer with Jesus outside the camp. The present and secret kingdom is only a reality for real born-again believers.

Read: Acts 1:6-9; Luke 8:1; 13:20; 17:20,21; 19:11; 22:16-18; Acts 14:22; 28:23; 1 Cor. 4:20; Mat. 7:21; 2 Tim. 4:18; 1 Cor. 4:1-16; Heb. 13:12-14; Joh. 3:3-5.

vs. 26-28 Preaching the Gospel is not only a call to repentance, but also to discipleship and sanctification, teaching how to please and serve God as a living stone, and as a light in His house and in this world. Within this house and this world, we are all responsible to be God's watchmen.

Read: Mat. 28:19; Luke 6:40; Acts 6:1,7; 14:21,22; 19:9; 2 Cron. 30:3,15,17,24; 31:18; 35:6; 1 Cor. 11:28; 1 Thes. 3:13; 4:3-7; 1 Tim. 2:15; Heb. 12:14; 1 Pet. 1:2; Ez. 20:40,41; 1 Joh. 3:3; 1 Tim. 1:18,19; 3:15; 5:10; 6:11-14; 2Tim. 2:20-22; 1 Pet. 1:12-17,22; 2:1-5; Eph. 5:8; Phil 2:15; 1 Thes. 5:5; 1 Joh. 1:7; John. 12:36; Mat. 5:14-16; Ez. 3: 17-21.

vs. 29-31 To be an evangelist, prophet, teacher, shepherd, counsellor or watchman is a responsible task, because someone will defile the house of God with false doctrine and worldly lifestyle. They turned their back to the Lord, being backsliders, losing their faith attracting weak believers, drawing them away from Christ, making them followers of men and human systems.

Read: 1 Tim. 1:18-20; Heb. 6:1-8; 2 Pet. 2:1-3, 12-22; Col. 2:8, 16-23.

vs.32-37 A counsellor needs to know the lies of Satan and his tricks, putting on the whole armour of God, knowing the difference between good and bad. Often, he needs the gift of "distinguishing of spirits". He knows how to build up the flock of God, helping the poor in a wise way, having a daily relationship with God through prayer, working sometimes as a tentmaker to help others.

Read: Heb. 5:13,14; 1 Cor. 12:10; 1 Tim. 1:3-11; 4:11-16; 2 Tim. 1:13,14; 2:14-18; 3:14-17; Acts 18:3; 2 Thes. 3:6-16.

May the Lord protect us!

The Church and Assembly Life (Flyer 128)

Partly taken from the Grove City Conference USA 2018

Why should I attend the assembly in our town? There are probably a lot of places that have nicer buildings, more people, a choir, a sports program, a band, and a host of other activities that are designed to make them attractive, to entertain and to attract large numbers of people. We feel that it would be good to explore this question with our young people again.

Our exercise is to have a much clearer understanding of what our Lord Jesus was referring to when he said: ***“I will build my Assembly”***.

I will ask the question again, “Why go to the assembly of true believers”? What is special about gathering to the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ? Is there something special about our gathering point being a person and not a place? We feel that it is essential for you to be able to answer these questions!

We would like to start at the beginning with the first mention of the Church in Matthew and the establishment of the Church as seen in Acts. We would like to take distinct areas up each day with you and build upon the foundation that has been laid in scripture. I will ask some questions to start our discussions.

1. Where is the Church mentioned in the *Old Testament*?

2. Where is the first mention of the Church in the *New Testament*?

- a. Discuss who this was revealed to and by whom?
- b. In what tense is the building of this Church spoken of?
- c. Discuss the meaning of the word “Church” or “Assembly”?

3. Where is the second mention of the Church in the *New Testament*?

- a. How many people are mentioned?
- b. Who does the gathering?
- c. What is the significance of the word “together”
- d. Unto what are they gathered?
- e. Discuss the promise connected with this gathering.

4. Before going into the book of Acts, let us discuss 1 Corinth 12:13a, *“For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body...”*

What does that mean in our time?

5. Let us now discuss Acts chapter 1 & 2

- a. Why are they in Jerusalem? Acts 1 vs 4
- b. What kind of room are they in? Acts 1 vs 13. Discuss
- c. Discuss the events of vs 1 thru 8 of Chapter 2.
- d. What actually happened in these verses – see 1 Corinth 12:13
- e. The people of what nation composed the Church? .

6. Now let us look at Acts 2:42

- a. Discuss the commitment and walk of the disciples at this time.
- b. Discuss the Apostles doctrine and fellowship.
- c. How is the Apostles doctrine & fellowship expressed?
- d. How is it maintained?

7. Let us discuss Acts 8:5, 6, 14, 15

- a. What do we know about the relationship between Jews & Samaritans?
- b. What was unusual about the conversion of the Samaritans?
- c. Do you think the Jews were happy to have Samaritans in their meetings?
- d. Who did God send to Samaria? From where? What did they see?
- e. What is the significance? Discuss in light of 1 Corinth 12:13
- f. Now the Church is made up of &

8. Let us discuss Acts 10:44-48

- a. Cornelius was not a Jew nor a Samaritan. What was he?
- b. Who went to Cornelius? What nationality was he?
- c. What happened of significance in vs 44?
- d. Now the Church is made up of: & 1 Corinth 12:13

9. Let us discuss Acts 19:1-6

- a. Whose disciples, were they?
- b. What baptism had they been baptized unto?
- c. What had they not received?
- d. Upon reception of the Holy Spirit, the baptism of the Spirit is complete.

10. Discuss Eph. 1:22, The Church which Christ said that he “would build” is now seen as a present reality. **Discuss**

11. Living in the day of ruin, what to do now?

What a glorious time this must have been! There was the introduction of something entirely new upon the earth and God used miracles and signs and wonders to get the attention of those just like you and me.

We saw tongues in Chapter 2 and we hear of those who were sick being put in the streets so that just the shadow of Peter as he passed by might overshadow them and the word says they “were healed everyone”! Acts 5: 15. Then we read of Paul in Chapter 19:11 that “*from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them.*” What times these must have been!!

The Gospel was preached with POWER and thousands were gloriously saved. But when God is working – be assured that Satan is very busy also and we are going to look today at the evidence of Satan’s working as well as the failure that we are all a part of.

12. Let us go back to Acts 2:42 for a reference point.

What Scriptures can we look at to get a glimpse of what would bring an end to this wonderful time?

13. Acts 5, Ananias & Sapphira

- a. Were they believers?
- b. What specifically were they guilty of?
- c. Who had they lied to?
- d. What was the penalty?

14. What kind of seeds do we see in 1 Corinthians?

- a. Division - Chapter 1 – verse 10
- b. Contention – because they were following men.
- c. They were glorying in the “wisdom of this world”!
- d. A carnal condition was OK!
- e. Immorality could be tolerated!
- f. Divorce was acceptable!
- g. Gifts could be used as man wanted to use them!
- h. God’s order in creation was ignored, head coverings could be ignored.
- i. The Lord’s Supper was treated as just a common meal!

15. What happened in Acts 20:29,30?

- a. Grievous wolves would come in from the outside!
- b. And from among your own selves shall men arise. Discuss

16. What happened in 2 Timothy 1:15?

- a. How many in Asia had turned away?
- b. Who had they turned from – what does this mean?
- c. Were they still under Christian profession?

17. What happened in 2 Timothy 3:1-9?

- a. Of whom is this terrible deterioration spoken of?

18. How serious was this evident decline?

Discuss Jude verses 3 & 4

19. Finally, look at Revelation Chapter 3:14-22

- a. How does verse 15 describe their condition?
- b. How did their analysis of their condition differ from that of the Lord Jesus?
- c. In this final Church – where is the Lord Jesus?
- d. What will the end be of this Christian profession?

My how things have changed! We have gone from “**ORDER**” in the House of God to “**DISORDER**” – from a **day of glory** to a **day of ruin** in so short a time.

So, what is the believer to do – where is he to turn in such a day of confusion. How good to have set before us that while **MANY THINGS HAVE CHANGED!**

However, there are also many things that have not changed. Therefore, we want to spent time on those unchanged things.

LORD, WHAT WILT THOU HAVE ME TO DO?

Let us take Acts 2:42 again as starting point:

The circle represents things as they were, and you could see clearly who made up the Church. ***They were all together and there were no divisions, because*** the Holy Spirit’s presence was recognized, and the saints were “continuing steadfastly”. They expressed this fellowship in the “breaking of bread” and it was sustained by “prayer”.

What has happened to the larger circle?

Only one thing! It is smaller. What has caused this? Do you remember the “seeds” that we looked at that had been sown? They have germinated and grown, and the effects are seen by the many denominations and sects that have left the original ground of gathering.

Acts 2:42. Perhaps some wanted to be known by their views on baptism – others on tongues – others liked the rituals of Judaism – others preferred a one-man ministry – still others felt we should be keeping the law – who could begin to give the reasons for all the various denominations that are around us today? Are the ones who have left this original circle still believers? Do they possess gifts from the risen, ascended, head of the Church? Are there souls saved among these saints? Are they going to be taken up in the rapture when Christ comes? The answers to these questions are obviously “yes” and we are not to doubt the sincerity of these believers.

But, the question for us today is: Where would the Lord have me to be?

1. THE “GROUND OF GATHERING”

*This Biblical ground has not changed, despite of the failure that is around us (and that we are a part of). **We still can meet on the ground that there is just one Body.***

- a. How has the failure altered Matthew 18:20?
- b. Does the Spirit still “gather together”?
- c. Can we still gather “unto His name”?
- d. Will the Lord Jesus still be in the midst of His believers?

2. GOD HAS NOT CHANGED – AND “GOD IS FAITHFUL

By Whom we have been called unto the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord? 1 Cor. 1:9.

3. THE LORD JESUS HAS NOT CHANGED – But, what to do when men have failed to follow His commands? *“Jesus Christ is the same, yesterday, today and forever!” Hebrews 13:8*

4. THE SPIRIT OF GOD HAS NOT CHANGED, but, when men have failed?

5. THE WORD OF GOD HAS NOT CHANGED!

The Apostles are gone – But, do we have still their teachings? (1 Cor. 4:9)

6. WHAT ABOUT THE GIFTS that are described in 1 Corinthians 12?

- a. The Word of wisdom
- b. The Word of knowledge, etc.

7. WHAT ABOUT THE MEN as is given in Eph. 4, *Evangelist, Teachers, Pastors*? Do these men still function thru the power of the Holy Spirit? We will find the answer below, when we learn the functions of believers in the House of God:

The Church as the House of the Living God (Flyer 129)

The House of God, which is the Church of the living God, is the Pillar and ground of the Truth. 1 Tim 3:15

Thus far in our studies, we have had before us the Body of Christ. We have seen that it is made up of all believers. We have seen that he adds to this body. The unity of this body is not ours to maintain but His.

Now we are going to spend time looking at the Church of the living God in another way and that is as:

1. Why is Paul writing to Timothy in the above verse? What is one of the key words in this verse?
2. Put simply, I am going to learn that when I speak about the House of God, I am going to have to do with my own position in this House.
3. Discuss the word - Responsibility
4. How is order established in this House? How is order maintained?
5. Who has "rights" in this house?
6. How has the failure that we are a part of changed this? Would we still try and maintain "His rights" when failure is everywhere?
7. Discuss – "Holiness becometh thine house, O Lord, for ever" Psalm 93
8. Discuss the gifts that Christ has given and the setting wherein they are exercised. Why is this important?
9. Discuss the role of the Holy Spirit. Is he an influence or is He a Person?
10. Let's discuss the Assembly meetings we see in Scripture.

Think about this statement: *"According to the purpose of Him Who worketh all things after the counsel of His Own will."* Eph. 1:11

We want to end up seeing what our God is going to do in spite of the failure of men – in spite of our unfaithfulness - aside from anything we can imagine the things we are going to look at are going to happen. The line of responsibility is certainly an important area for us to be occupied with. But, alongside it is the line of God's purposes that are unailing, because they set in the middle the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now Let's look at Ephesians 1:10 and 11.

1. Who is going to gather?
2. What is he going to gather?
3. When will this take place?
4. Who does it depend upon?
5. What is it according to?

Let's also look at Ephesians 5:27.

1. Who is going to do the presenting?
2. What kind of church is going to be presented?
3. Look at the description - who has maintained it?
4. Who does this depend upon?

What else do we learn that is going to happen in reference to our Lord Jesus Christ?

1. PHILIPPIANS 2:10,11

- a. How many knees are going to bow?
- b. At what are they going to bow?
- c. What locations does scripture give as to these beings.

2. 1 TIMOTHY 6:15

Discuss: *"He shall shew" – "the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords".*

3. In spite of all the failure – difficulties – discouragement, etc., what Day did the Apostle Paul look forward to?

Let's end with a bit of discussion on 2 Timothy 4:7,8.

- a. Discuss the three things he had done.
- b. What is "laid up" for him.
- c. Who will give it to him.
- d. What kind of a judge is he?

CHAPTER 8

Recognising true and false Prophecies (Flyer 59)

“Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves...But if all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all” (Mat. 7:15; 1Cor.14:24).

The need for the gift of discerning of spirits

The verses mentioned above can create confusion. How we come to know what is false and what is true prophecy? Therefore, we must ask the Lord Jesus to give among us the gift of discerning of spirits, because not everyone has this gift. *“To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues” (1Cor.12:10).*

Lessons from King Jehoshaphat

In the time of the kings of Israel the nation was split into ten and two tribes, because of the sin of Solomon, who committed idolatry (1King 11:1-13).

King Jehoshaphat, a grandchild of Solomon, followed in the beginning the good example of his forefather David. But because his intermarriage with the family of Achab, an idol server, he mixed the true religion of God with a false priesthood, copied from the temple in Jerusalem.

So, in his time the people of God were serving idols on the hill and the true God in the temple, such as Solomon did (1Ki.15:14; 22:43; 11:7).

The result of wrong associations

The apostle Paul often warned for wrong associations with worldly Christians or unbelievers to work together in religious matters. He wrote that to the defiled believers in 1Cor.5:11,12 and 2Cor.6:14-18.

*“But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is **called a brother** be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such a one no not to eat. For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within? But them that are without God judged. Therefore, put away from among yourselves that wicked person...” “Be ye **not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what part hath he that***

*believeth with an infidel? **And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.***

Lessons to learn from the story in 1 King 22

The story of king Jehoshaphat of Judah and the wicked king Ahab of the ten tribes of Israëil is written special for the Christians to learn a great lesson about danger associations and wrong fellowships, so wrote Paul: *“Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand. Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer.*

Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall” (1Cor.10:6-12).

The work of false and true prophets

Reading chapter 22 we must learn how we can protect ourselves for false priesthood and false prophesying (2 Pet. 2:1-3; Jude 17-23; Luke 22:3,14,21,31,32; Mat. 7:22; 26:23).

First, we must be obedient to Gods commands, otherwise we are in danger to fall in idolatry and wrong associations as king Jehoshaphat or witchcraft as king Saul. In the begin Christians will start in a good way, but because a lack of good teaching, soon they become backsliders and are in danger to be involved in bad companionships. So many young Christian are in danger to fall in the same tricks as king Jehoshaphat several times felt.

Even in the New Testament we learn that Godly brethren can made false statements and start wrong associations with family members or respected but defiled leading brethren. We read that in Acts 15:39; Gal. 2:11-13.

Act 15:39 *The disagreement was so sharp that they parted ways. Barnabas took Mark and sailed to Cyprus,*

Gal 2:11 But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he was clearly wrong. **Gal 2:12** Until some men arrived from James, he was in the habit of eating with the gentiles, but after those men came, he withdrew from the gentiles and would not associate with them any longer, because he was afraid of the circumcision party. **Gal 2:13** The other Jews also joined him in this hypocritical behavior, to the extent that even Barnabas was caught up in their hypocrisy.

We will see now what we can learn from 1 King 22;

1. Wrong decision to go to an unfaithful family member to see if there was a possibility to work together in the fight with a communally enemy.
2. The result can be an invitation to work together in a (spiritual) fight against an enemy who tried to destroy Gods people, without asking for Gods permission and leading.
3. To have a communally enemy and the willingness of other religious people to fight against spiritual forces will not say that you are in good company! The truth is just contrary!
4. To have a lot of well-spoken “prophets” who speaks in the name of God, is not a proof that they are true prophets!
5. Ones associate with the wrong person or organization, you are in danger to receive false prophesies and counsel!
6. Only when we ask for the leading of the Holy Spirit, Who always leads into the Word of God only, our conscience can be cleansed from guilt.
7. False prophets speak about success, but true prophets are often hatred.

Saved by confession, repenting and prayers

The end of the story is found in chapter 22:7-37. We learn in those verses that the King was worried about his decision and asked for another prophet. But this man was not loved by king Ahab because he always warned him when he did wrong. However, Ahab called on request this true prophet and this man told the king of Judah what would happen to the king Ahab in the future. He saw in the heavenly realm a kind of gathering of holy angels, who were asking to give some counsel how God could destroy Ahab and his army. He said;

“I saw the LORD sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing by him on his right hand and on his left. And the LORD said, Who shall persuade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth in Gilead? And one said on this

*manner, and another said on that manner. **And there came forth a spirit, and stood before the LORD, and said, I will persuade him. And the LORD said unto him, Wherewith? And he said, I will go forth, and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And he said, Thou shalt persuade him, and prevail also: go forth, and do so. Now therefore, behold, the LORD hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets, and the LORD hath spoken evil concerning thee***” (1 King 22:19-23).

Saved by grace through God’s protection

King Jehoshaphat of Judah was saved through the protection of the Lord God, because he heard the prayer for help. King Ahab hid himself removing the clothes of a king, bringing his family member in great danger. But God opened just on time the eyes of the attackers and they went away from the king of Judah. However, sad to say, this weak man made later the same mistake as he did now, being again involved in business association. The Lord God must destroy the whole business to make money for Gods people in a wrong association and alliance with wicked but religious people (2King 3:7).

However, later it seems he learned a little his lesson and died in peace (1 King 22:43-50).

We as Christians are involved in a holy war!

From the story above we learn the truth of Eph. 6:12-18. Not all the so-called “Christian Alliances” are good places to have undefiled fellowship! Even within the church are wrongdoers, often rich and in power, the so called “prosperity Gospel preachers” who earn a lot of money from the believers.

Sometimes they do miracles and healings, but most time not based on a sound doctrine. Their preaching and actions are often mixed with all kind of pagan traditions, using the name of Jesus as a kind of mantra, using their own soul or mind power calling it “positive thinking”. They often repeated the name of Jesus as a “mantra”. In this way demons can slip in to defile a whole church (Mat.6:7; 7:21-23; 2 Cor. 11:13-15).

Warning for false prophets in the end time

Paul warned the believers; *“Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there comes a falling away first,*

*and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; **Who opposed and exalted himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.***"

It is foretold by the apostles and true prophets

"Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withhold that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming."

Satan creates miracles to blind unbelievers

*"Even him, **whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness**" (2Thes.2:1-12).*

Identifying true prophecies

- 1. True prophesy (2Pet. 1:19-21)**
- 2. What it does (1Cor. 14:3, 33-25)**
- 3. How it works (1Pet. 4:10,11)**
- 4. How it must be done (2Tim. 2:1,2,23-26; Rom. 12:7,8)**
- 5. Why it must be done (2Tim. 3:1-5; 4:3; Eph. 4:14-16)**
- 6. Where it comes from (1Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:11,12)**
- 7. What would be the result (1Cor. 14:24,25; Acts 11:28-30)**

Identifying false prophecies

- 1. Lead astray from Gods Word through demonic miracles (Ex. 7:11; 2 Thes. 2:7-12; 3:2; Rev. 16:14; 19:20).**
- 2. It creates immorality, invite unclean spirits (Hos. 4:12; 5:4)**

3. **It hardened the hearth and conscience** (Ex. 8:32; Tit.1 :15)
4. **It creates false adoration of miracle doers** (Acts 8:9-11)
5. **It defiles the Gospel, blinds the mind** (Acts 13:6; Isa 29:13)
6. **It creates immoral false believe** (1 Cor. 5:1; 2Pet. 2:14,15; 2Th. 2:9-12)
7. **It misleads true converted young believers** (2Pet. 2:12-19)

CHAPTER 9

Important tasks of a Church or community leader (Flyer 39)

(John 6:63; Acts 6:4; 1 Cor. 3:6; Heb. 4:12; Rev. 19:10)

1. **Taking care of the lambs and sheep of the Lord Jesus** (John 21:15,16).
2. **Encouraging each other** (Acts 14:22; 15:36; 1 Th. 1-5; Acts 20:34,35).
3. **Straighten out what was left unfinished** (Tit. 1:5-11).
4. **Appointing, recognizing leaders** (Acts 6:2-7;14:23;15:22-27;18:24-28; 1Tim. 3:1-15)

(1) RESPONSIBILITY OF CHRISTIAN LEADERS

1. Putting Christ as our Example (1 Pet. 2:21).
2. Humble yourself first before you serve Christ and His Body (Phil. 2:1-11).
3. Hold Christ' commands (John 15:10)
4. Be rooted in God's love (Eph. 3:17; John 14:23).
5. Be guided through the Holy Spirit (John 16:13, 14; Rom. 8:14).
6. Showing a spiritual and moral life through God's holy Word (John 13:14).
7. Seek the outcast, invite all men to come into Jesus' arms (Mat.18:11; Mark. 10:13-16).
8. Go to streets and slumps in town and village (Mat. 22:9,10; 11:28; Acts 8:4,25).
9. Seek fellowship by prayer and fasting with leaders in your church (Acts 13:1-4).
10. Preach the Word, recognize elders (Acts 15:25, 26; 2 Tim. 4:2).
11. Bring structure in Bible groups and home assemblies (Tit. 1:5, 14-16; Acts 4:35; 6:3).
12. Recognize elders and other servants (1 The. 5:12, 13; 1 Tim. 3:1-15; 2 Tim. 1:6-8; 2:14, 15).
13. Recognize local overseers and deacons (1 Tim. 3:1-15; 4:11; Tit. 1:5-11).
14. Give honour to God's workers, help financial and practical (1 Tim. 5:17-25).

15. Be humble, being an example for the members of Christ' Body (1 Pet. 5:1-7).
16. Build up the faith of God's children (1 Thes. 3:1-8; 5:14; Phil. 2:19-22; 25-30).
17. Recognize gifts in the local assembly (Eph. 4:7, 11-16; Rom. 12:4-8).
18. Point out elders and believers with moral authority (Acts 14:23; 1 Tim. 5:17-25).
19. Recognize gifted women who serves with practical help (Phil. 4:1-3).
20. Recognize the position of women in the congregations (1 Cor. 14:34-38).
21. Know your place as a woman believer in the gatherings (1 Tim. 2:9-15).
22. When Laying hands (1 Tim. 4:14; 5:22; 2 Tim. 1:2; Numbers 27:18-23; Acts 4:35; 6:3).
23. Money transfers and doctrine (1 Cor. 16:1; 2 Cor. 8:16-24; Acts 15:25-35).
24. Being an example (Acts 20:31-36).

(2) THE PERSONALITY AND QUALIFICATIE OF CHRISTIAN LEADERS

- 2.1. No double tongue (Micah 6:8, 11,12; James 1:8,26; Isaiah 29:13; Ez. 33:31,33; Eph. 4:25).
- 2.2. Not wasting money (Isaiah 46:6; Mat. 10:9; 2 Cor. 8:21,22).
- 2.3. No hidden idolatry (Micah 6:10).
- 2.4. Full of grace and compassion, no idle words (John 1:14; Eph. 5:4, 16-20; Rom. 12:9-21).
- 2.5. No trust on high position men or own qualification or knowledge (Jer. 17:5; Micah 7:4,5).
- 2.6. Not quick angry (Mat. 5:19,44; Tit. 1:7; James 1:19,20; Ps. 37:8; Eph. 4:26; Prov. 15:1).
- 2.7. No wrath or revenge (Micah 7:9,18; 1 Pet. 2:19; Rom. 12:19).
- 2.8. Not jealous (Gal. 5:20; 1 Sam. 18:8; 19:9,10; 16:13,14).

- 2.9. Speaks words full of wisdom and grace (Col. 4:5,6; Prov. 18:21; John 6:63; Rev. 19:10).
- 2.10. Having good fellowship, testimony in family and abroad (Prov. 31; 1 Tim. 3:7; Acts 15:26).
- 2.11. Stimulate social/pastoral visits and children work, special for gifted sisters (Phil. 4:2,3, see note).
- 2.12. Correct errors in a Biblical, pure, kind, humble and faithful way (2 Tim. 2:14-26).

(3) OUR HUMAN WILL AND OWN RESPONSIBILITY

One of the theological issues what churches has divided in Church history is the question about the freedom of the human will. From the beginning the human creature was perfect, having a so called “free will” to be obedient to God the creator or to be rebellious. Our intellect cannot understand this. What we understand from the Bible and history is that the human will is no longer free to do Gods will, because Satan controls the will of everyone who is not saved by the blood of Jesus Christ.

According what is written in Roman 7:14 and 15 everyone understands by experience that the human will is not free, but controlled by the human flesh, government, society and Satan. The power to resist the will of others is weak, most time even powerless, controlled by sin.

(4) ASSISTANCE FROM ABOVE

When we recognize this, we try to seek assistance from the Lord Jesus, because **only God as Creator can set the human will back under His control** (Phil. 2:13). *Only when we give our will, future and own weakness into Gods hand, He will restore the human will, putting it back under His control again.*

We as repented and born-again Christians are now responsible to be obedient to our Creator, so we make not the same fault as the first men or the flock of Israël (Gen. 2:16,17; 3:6; 1 Cor. 10:1-13; Rom. 16:19; Phil. 2:12).

(5) FREE FROM GODS WRATH AND SINS POWER

An article writer in Daily Bread wrote for the date on November 17th, 2012 about this subject; *“When we receive Christ, His death and resurrection sets us free from the penalty and the power of sin, thus enabling us to say “no” and “yes” in everyday life. **We can now say “no” to the desires of the flesh, or “youthful***

lusts” that Paul mentioned in 2 Tim. 2:22. And we can say “yes” to “righteousness” (right behaviour), “faith” (right believe), “love” (right response) and “peace” (right focus). As we’re cleansed daily, we’ll be useful for the master, prepared for every good work” (2 Tim. 2:21). Therefore, we are agreeing with the conclusion of the Daily Bread writers; *Right thinking leads to right living.*

(6) THE WORK OF FAITHFUL SISTERS

In the Church meetings a woman is not permitted to take the place of a brother in preaching or leading (1Cor.14:34; 1Tim.2:11,12). However, according 1Cor. 11:5-16 is it clear that she, while singing with the others, she often prophesies and prays with covered hair. Outside the Church meetings she is active as:

1. Teachers for (own) children, bring them to Christ (Mrk.10:13-16; 1Tim.2:9-15)
2. Teachers and prophetesses, counsellors, house visiting, prayers (Judg.4:4-9; 2Kings 22:14-30; 1Cor.14:34-38; Tit.2:3-5; Acts 16:14; 9:36; Luk.8:3).
3. Deacon work, special for widows and orphans, taking their place (1Tim.2:9-15; 5:10; Phil. 4:1-3; 1Thes.5:12,13).
4. Children and women teachers (1Tim.5:10; Acts 16:13,14; 18:26; 2Ti.1:5; Rom.16:3-15).
5. Evangelization work, assisting leaders, missionaries (Rom.16:3-6; 2Joh.4,5).
6. Teaching sewing, making clothes, carpets etc. (Proverbs 31; Acts 9:39; 18:1-3).
7. Writer, (school)teacher, witness, keeping, practising Gods word (Jo.20:18; Luk.1:26-38; Jo.2:3-5)

(7) SUMMARY (See Rom. 12:6-8; Eph. 4:8-16)

There are:

- 1) Evangelists,
- 2) Teachers,
- 3) Shepherds (counsellors),
- 4) Deacons,
- 5) Prophets,
- 6) Helpers (all),
- 7) Children workers,
- 8) Apostles (church planters).

Notes:

Point 1-3; 5-7, all the members of one Body, men and women can work for Jesus. Point 4, shows men and/or women, pointed by the local members and their leaders. Point 8, all men, sometimes assisted by godly women (see Peter).

Note: Apostles are in our time often called “Church planters” or “missionaries”.

CHAPTER 10

The dispensation of law and the Church in the New Testament (Flyer 47)

By Patrick Neff

Not long ago I was driving on a scenic mountain road in Arizona and decided to let my car coast downhill. Suddenly, I saw a bright flash of light. I had just driven through an automated-camera speed trap.

A few weeks later I received a letter sporting a picture of me and my license plate and a ticket for \$ 187. I had broken the law, albeit unintentionally. And my punishment as a lawbreaker was an expensive ticket.

In somewhat the same way, the Mosaic Law was given to Israel as a code of conduct, a "radar gun" to reveal transgressions and levy penalties on the transgressor. The dispensation of Law began with the Mosaic Covenant when Israel was in the wilderness of Sinai. On hearing the covenant's terms, the Israelites enthusiastically responded with confidence, "*All that the LORD has spoken we will do*" (Ex. 19:8).

However, the Hebrew Scriptures often speak of Israel's disobedience. Most of Israel's history was not one of success.

The dispensation of Law was instituted for at least five reasons.

1. To magnify God's holiness. The prophet Habakkuk many years later spoke of God's holiness when he said, "*You are of purer eyes than to behold evil and cannot look on wickedness*" (Heb. 1:13).

The Law stresses the holiness of God (Ex. 20:18-26). When we compare ourselves with others, we may appear good. But when forced to compare ourselves with God, we should quickly recognize His moral purity and our moral pollution.

2. To reveal man's sinfulness (Rom. 3:19-20; James 1:23). The Law acted like a mirror, showing the Israelites their imperfections.

3. To show the Israelites how to live in a moral society. It was given to keep them from hurting and destroying one another. People were created in the image and likeness of God. Therefore, we have moral natures and are called to live on a higher moral plane than animals.

4. To show the Israelites their need of a Saviour. The Levitical sacrificial system used blood as a purifying agent. Thus, the book of Hebrews says, "*According to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission*" (Heb. 9:22).

People go to physicians because they know they are sick. What would prompt people to turn to the Saviour? A realization of their sinfulness and need of forgiveness.

The apostle Paul wrote, "*Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith*" (Gal. 3:24).

The Law was given to show mankind its true condition, its need of a Saviour, and to point us to "*the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world*" (Jn. 1:29).

The Law was not given to impart salvation, nor did it guarantee any Israelite that he or she would go to heaven. Salvation has always been by faith. The Law was given to show the *need* of salvation by contrasting man's sinfulness with God's holiness.

For someone to be saved by keeping the Law, he had to keep it perfectly. He could never stumble: "*For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all*" (James 2:10).

5. To demonstrate God's grace and mercy. Despite Israel's failure to keep the Law, God provided redemption. The Levitical sacrifices made it possible for those with sincere hearts to have their sins covered. And the once-for-all death of His Son, Jesus the Messiah, has provided final, lasting atonement. Although Israel failed under the dispensation of Law, God's gracious promises to regather, restore, and fully redeem Israel will be fulfilled in the Millennial Kingdom.

The dispensation of Law ended at the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Today, in the dispensation of grace, God expects people to be guided not by the Law but by the Holy Spirit.

When individuals realize their sinfulness and need of forgiveness from a holy God, they are to go in faith to the only One who ever kept the Law perfect: Jesus the Messiah.

He takes their sinfulness and clothes them in His righteousness. In this way they are clothed with His righteousness, not having [their] own righteousness, but "*the righteousness which is from God by faith*" (Phil. 3:9).

The ultimate purpose of the Law is to show both Jews and Gentiles their sinfulness and point them to the One of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke: "*but He*

was wounded for our transgressions He bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement for our peace upon Him and by His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way, and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all" (Isa. 53:5,6).

The role of Replacement contra Dispensationalism Theologians

Replacement theologians make the grievous error of interpreting the Old Testament by reading the New Testament back into it. Doing so is the only way they can make their argument. However, if you take God's Word progressively, in its literal and historical context, as God revealed it to us, you will not believe in Replacement Theology. Clearly, Replacement theologians believe the State of Israel has no theological reason to exist. They call it a "mistake in history" and see its creation as the "original sin." ***Dispensationalists know better and Dispensationalism makes better sense.***

Understanding the Differences

Dispensationalism is a system of biblical interpretation that sees God working with mankind in different ways at different times in history. It is based on a consistent, literal interpretation of Scripture.

*While salvation has always been by grace through faith, dispensationalists believe the Bible teaches the ultimate purpose of history is not the salvation of man but, rather, **the glorification of God.***

Dispensationalists believe God has two distinct programs for history: one for Israël and one for the Church.

The rapture of the Church

Shortly thereafter the Jewish people were scattered, and the church began (Acts 2). Today we are in the Church Age. But the Bible says the church will be caught up and taken out of this world. We call that the Rapture. And with it, the Church Age will come to an end.

After the Rapture, the seven-year Tribulation will begin. many will come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ after the Rapture, but they will not be part of the Church. The Church (also called the Bride of Christ) will be in heaven with its Bridegroom, Jesus (Rev. 4:1; 19:6-9). At the end of the Tribulation, Christ will return to Earth and set up His Millennial Kingdom. He will confine Satan, restore Israel and elevate it above all nations, establish His throne in Jerusalem, and rule the world from there.

Patrick Neff. Director of Church Ministries for The Friends of Israel and James A. Showers

CHAPTER 11

The rapture; a controversial topic (Flyer 85)

Readings: John.14:1-6; 1Thes.4:13-17

Already 2000-year Christians discussed about the time the Lord Jesus would return in glory as He promised. Even in the Old Testament there are verses that God (in Jesus) would come to judge the earth **while true believers would be in rest and peace that time of trouble** (Isa 57:1,2).

When people reject the grace and commands of the Lord, they are in real danger to face the wrath of God (Habakkuk 3:3-16; 2Pet. 3:12; Heb.10:26-31; 2Tim. 4:8; 2Th. 1:7-10; Col. 3:6).

Read: John.14:1-3; Mat. 25:31-32; Rev.3:11; Habakkuk 3:16b; John 14:1-3.

What the Holy Spirit revealed to Paul

In his first letter to the Thessalonians Paul made some remarkable statements. (1 Thess. 1:3-10).

1. They were holy and practical faithful Christians, who worked out their faith in labour, love, patience and hope in the Lord Jesus (1:3).
2. They were really born again and saved (1:4).
3. They received the Gospel and became powerful and fruitful followers of Christ and Paul, while heavily persecuted (1:5-8).
4. They were examples for others and were waiting for the return of Jesus (1:7,10).

Encouragement needed through teaching

This true and faithful believer however they were in need to be encouraged to receive more information about the end time and resurrection of believers when Jesus would return, because their faith was tempted (1 Thes. 3:1-5).

The call to be blameless in holiness.

Paul repeated Jesus' Words about His second coming and asked the Lord Jesus for the believers ***'that He may establish their hearts blameless in holiness before God the Father when their Lord Jesus Christ returns'*** (3:13).

The descending of the Lord Jesus.

After Paul repeated his call for holiness (1 Thes. 4:1-12) he continues to explain that it was not needed to be worried about the already fallen asleep of fellow brethren (1 Thes. 4:13; 1 Cor. 15:51-58).

At the time Jesus died and rose again, He took in that time the first fruits of His labour out of the grave (Mat.27:50-53).

This can be seen as a kind of promise. He would do the same with true believers who wait for Him (Gal. 1:4).

He brings us in the same way in the paradise as the repented criminal. Those criminals confessed, after hearing the cry of Jesus for forgiveness for His enemies, at the right moment his sin and believed in King Jesus and His Kingdom (Mat.27:52).

This criminal asked Jesus to remember him when He entered His kingdom in Heaven and believed in the grace the Lord Jesus He would offer each sinner who believed in Jesus forgiveness. This grace and forgiveness were and is based on the blood of Jesus on the cross and His suffering as Lamb of God (Luc. 23:43; 24:26).

The Lord Jesus was made by the Holy God the so called "sin offering" for the sins of the world (2Cor.5:18-21; Heb.4:10,14-16; 9:11-15, 23-26).

The resurrection of believers

Paul continued his explanation about the reunion of believers with Christ in 1Thes.4:15-18 saying in few points;

1. Paul used only Jesus' own Words for his explanation of the so called 'rapture'.
2. It is possible that we would not die, being still alive at the moment Jesus returns!
3. But the beloved ones who died before shall rise from the grave that moment as in the time of Jesus after He rose from the grave.
4. We all together will hear the sign of Jesus' return from heaven, when the trumpet of God sounds **to call all believers from the grave. the others will remain in the grave** till the great white throne of God appears (Rev.20:4-6; 11-15).

5. After hearing the trumpet of God **all true believers in Chris will be 'caught up together with the resurrected ones to meet the Lord in the air.'***

*The last sentence has to do with the prophesy of Enoch written in Gen. 5:24; 2 Thes. 1:4-10; 2:1-8; 1 Thes. 1:10; 5:8; Jude vs. 14 and Isa. 57:1, 2.

Genesis 5:24; *“And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him.”*

Isaiah 57:1,2; *“The righteous perished, and no man laid it to heart: and merciful men are taken away, none considering **that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come. He shall enter peace: they shall rest in their beds, each one walking in his uprightness.**”*

2 Thes.1:2-10; *“Grace unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith growth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other abounded; So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure: Which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer:”*

We see, it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you. And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;

When He shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day. (see Rev. 19:11-16; Hab. 3:13-16).

1 Thes.1:10; *“And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which **delivered us from the wrath** to come.”*

1 Thes. 5:8, 9; *“But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for a helmet, the hope of salvation. For God **hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.**”*

Jude 1:14,15. *“And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, **Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard***

speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him” (see also Rev. 2:24-29; 19:11-16).

May God helps us to stay blameless, now in this time of grace and the time that Jesus returns to take us up in the clouds, to be for eternity with Him Who loves us so much being so patient with us! (2 Pet. 3:11-15).

Remember: The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance...and account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation. (2Pet.3:9, 15a).

My prayer is that all Christians continue should walk in the Light, doing the work of His ambassador, to do good as He did. (See, Mat. 24:45-47; 2 Kor. 5:20-22; Heb. 10:23-25; Jude: 20-22; Tit. 3:14; 2 Pet. 3:11-18; Acts 10:34-48; Hab.3:2,12,16; Rev.19:11-16; Heb.10:26-31; 2:3; 2Pet.3:11-18; Micah 7:7,18-20).

QUESTIONS

- 1Thes. 4:13-17 What is the base of your hope?
- 1 Cor. 15:12-25 Is my faith based on Christ' resurrection?
- Mal. 3:1-6 How we will meet Him?
- Isa 57:1,2 Shall He find us in peace and faith?
- 1Thes.1:3-10 Are we as the Thessalonians?
- 1Thes.3:13 Shall we be that time blameless?
- 1 Thes. 4:13,16 Be alert, the Lord comes soon!
- Mat.24:44-47 How he will find us?
- 2Tim.4:8 Can he give us a crown?
- Rev.22:12 Are we expecting Jesus' award?
- Rev.7:8-12 Shall we receive the white robes?
- Rev.16:15 Shall we be finding on our watch?
- 1 Thes. 5:4-11 Don't sleep, awake (Rom. 13:11)
- Rev.22:10 Jesus invite each who hear!

SUMMARY

1 Kor. 15:52 The rapture is a revealed secret
Gal. 1:4 Because Jesus gave Himself for us
John. 14:1-3 To take us by His returning to heaven
Phil. 3:20 Because our citizenship is in heaven.
1 Thes. 1:9,10 Jesus protect us from God's wrath
1 Thes. 4:13-17 Who died in Christ rise from the grave
1 Thes. 5:9 We are not destined to receive wrath
1 Kor. 15:51-54 They get a total new immortal body
Phil. 3:20 Conform the risen Body of Jesus Christ
1 Thes. 4:16 At the time He calls us with a command
Rev. 2:23; 22:12 To receive a full reward (2 Jn. 1:8)
1 Thes. 4:18 The rapture doctrine is comforting
Titus 2:12 It made Christians holy and faithful
1 Thes. 5:8 It warned us to put on Gods Armor
James 4:7 It submit us to God, resisting Satan (2 Pet. 3:14).

CHAPTER 12

Christ' revelation in the future (Flyer 116)

"When Christ, Who is our life, shall be manifested, then shall ye also with Him be manifested in glory" (Col. 3:4).

In the whole Bible, every reader can find the glory and manifestation of Christ. In the creation, in His power, His wisdom, in His chosen people and in the Church.

Let us look in the New Testament how we can see the glory of the Lord in the Gospels and the letters of His apostles.

Christ' glory in the Gospel of John

John 1:1-3. The Lord Jesus as almighty Creator, the Eternal One, united with the Father and the Holy Spirit. Three in One, the so called by theological scholars "Holy Trinity", the Word of God.

John 1:4,5,9,10,11. Jesus as the Light and Life of the world, however, not accepted or understood by the world, rejected by His own people of Israël.

John 1:12,13. But accepted by those who believed in God's love and forgiveness, being born from above.

John 1:14-17. *"And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us. And we beheld His glory, the glory of the only begotten Son of the Father, full of grace and Truth."*

John 1:18. *"The One Who is declared, honoured and glorified by His Father Who gave His only begotten Son for lost people who would accept Him as their Saviour and Lord" (John 3:16; 1 Tim. 3:16; 1 John 3:16).*

Christ' glory in the 1st Chapter of Romans

Rom 1:3. *"Jesus as the Son of God, however as Man dwelling among us, but without sin, was born of the seed of David, according to the flesh, "*

Rom 1:4. *"Declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, became for all what is created the Lord, because the resurrection from the dead."*

Rom 1:16. *"For His Gospel of peace, grace and forgiveness is the power of God unto salvation, to everyone that believeth;"*

Rom 1:18. *“But Christ is also the Judge, Who will bring unto unbelievers the wrath of God, coming from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hinder the Truth in unrighteousness;”*

Rom 1:32. *“Who, knowing the ordinance of God, that they that practise such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but also consent with them that practise them.”*

Christ’ glory in the 1th Chapter of 1th Corinth

1 Cor. 1:3. *“Grace to you and peace is revealed from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.”*

1 Cor. 1:9. *“God is faithful, through whom ye were called into the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord.”*

1 Cor. 1:18. *“For the Word of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us who are saved it is the power of God.”*

1 Cor. 1:21. *“Seeing the wisdom of God., not seen by the world because it was God’s good pleasure through the foolishness of the preaching to save them that believe.”*

1 Cor. 1:24. *“Christ is for believers who are called, both Jews and Greeks, the power of God, and the wisdom of God.”*

Christ’ glory in the 1th Chapter of 2th Corinth

2 Cor. 1:2 *“God send to us Grace and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.”*

2 Cor. 1:3,4. *“God, the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and all com-fort; comfort us in all our affliction, that we may be able to comfort them that are in any affliction, through the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.”*

2 Cor. 1:18-20. *“God is faithful, His Word is not yea and nay. For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, Who was preached among you by us, even by me and Silvanus and Timothy, was not yea and nay, but in him is yea. For how many so ever the promises of God be, in Him is the yea: wherefore also through Him is the Amen, unto the glory of God through us.”*

2 Cor. 1:21,22. *“Christ established us with you in Christ, and anointed us, is God; Who also sealed us, and gave us the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.”*

2 Cor. 1:24. Only the Lord Jesus can claim His Lordship over us, nor men, even not the apostle Paul who said: *“Not that we have lordship over your faith but are helpers of your joy: for in faith ye stand fast.”*

Christ’ revelation in the 1th Chapter of Colossians

Col. 1:13. *“Christ delivered His own from the darkness into His Light, to bring us in His eternal Kingdom and in His Love.”*

Col 1:14. *“In Whom we have our redemption, the forgiveness of our sins:”*

Col 1:15. *“Christ is the Image of the invisible God, the First-born of all creation.”*

Col. 1:16a. *“For in Him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth,”*

Col. 1:16b. *“Jesus as Lord and Creator made all things, the visible and invisible, even powerful thrones or dominions or principalities; all things have been created through Him, and unto Him;”*

Col 1:17. *“Christ Jesus is before all things, and in Him all things consist.”*

Col. 1:18. *“And He is the Head of the Body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things He might have the pre-eminence.”*

Col. 1:19. *“For it was the good pleasure of the Father that in Him should all the fulness of God dwell;”*

Col. 1:20a. *“Through Christ Jesus as Lord all things what was separated from God, stolen by Satan, would be reconcile back unto Himself,”*

Col. 1:20b. *“Having made peace through the blood of His cross; through him, I say, whether things upon the earth, or things in the heavens.”*

Christ ‘ glory in the book of Revelation

Rev. 1:4. *“Christ, as the risen One, gives to His chosen believers Grace and peace, from Him Who is and Who was and Who is to come; and from the seven Spirits that are before his throne;”*

Rev. 1:5. *“Jesus Christ is the faithful Witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the Ruler of the kings of the earth. He loveth us, loosed us from our sins by His blood;”*

Rev. 1:6. *“He made us to be a kingdom, to be priests unto his God and Father; to Him be the glory and the dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”*

Rev. 1:7. *“Behold, He cometh with the clouds (Jude:14); and every eye shall see Him, and they that pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth shall mourn over Him. Amen.”*

Rev. 1:8. *“Christ Jesus the Lord is the Alpha and the Omega, saith the Lord God, Who is and Who was and Who is to come, the Almighty.”*

Rev. 1:13-15. *“The resurrected Jesus walks among the candlesticks (churches) and is seen as One like a son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about at the breasts with a golden girdle.” (See this Image also in Dan. 7:9-22).*

Rev. 20:2 *“And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years,”*

Rev. 20:3 *“and threw him into the pit, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he might not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were ended. After that he must be released for a little while.”*

Rev. 20:4 *“Then I saw thrones and seated on them were those to whom the authority to judge was committed. Also, I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.”*

Rev. 20:5 *“The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended. This is the first resurrection.”*

Rev. 20:7 *“And when the thousand years are ended, Satan will be released from his prison.”*

Rev. 20:6 *“Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him for a thousand years.”*

Eph. 3:21. *“Unto Him be the glory in the Church and in Christ Jesus, unto all generations for ever and ever. Amen.”*

CHAPTER 13 FORGIVENESS

1. Introduction.

The following three questions return frequently when giving pastoral help:

- Has the Lord God really forgiven all my sins?
- How can I receive forgiveness of sins when I cannot confess to anyone?
- How do I get so far to be able to forgive myself as well?

Remark: Guilt is often the reason of spiritual stand still.

2. Who can forgive sins but God alone?

We find the above question in Mark 2:7. **It is about the cure of a paralytic. Before this cure takes place, Jesus says: 'My son, your sins are forgiven.'**

This was a nuisance to the scribes. **Nobody can forgive sins but God alone. They were fully right.** Their thoughts were not wrong, but their conclusion on Jesus Christ was just drawn too fast. True scribes could have known from the Old Testament that Jesus is the Son of God and He had the power to forgive sins on earth.



📖 Read Mark 2:10.

Why can God alone forgive sins? **Forgiveness has to do with forgetting and doing away all sins and guilt.** That is something we people cannot do. **Therefore, it is very important to aim the spotlight at the Lord God.**

Micah 7:18-19: *'Who is a God like Thee, pardoning iniquity. He will tread our iniquities under foot. Thou will cast all our sins into the depths or the sea.'*

Nehemiah 9:17b: *'Thou art a God ready to forgive, gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and didst not forsake them.'*

Psalms 99:8: *'You was a forgiving God to them.'*

Psalms 86:5: *'For Thou, o Lord, art good and forgiving, abounding in steadfast love to all who call on Thee.'* See Psalms 32:1 and 85:3.

Isaiah 55:7: *'For He will abundantly pardon.'* **Remark: Forgiveness starts from God and not from people.**

3. No forgiveness without shedding of blood.

This subject speaks clearly: no and without. **Still we know that many people want to believe almost everything what is written in the Bible except the gospel about the atonement through the blood of Christ. The preaching about the blood of Christ often meets resistance.**

What is the reason for the resistance we often see when we preach about the blood of Christ?

- ❖ It presses charges to us people who have sinned and owe God.
- ❖ The blood of Christ speaks about the defeat of Satan and his demonic powers.
- ❖ Others find it anaesthetic (scary, nasty, bad and conflicting with good taste).

For God the blood is sacred!

Leviticus 17:11: *'For the life of a creature is in the blood; and I have given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar; it is the blood that makes atonement by reason for one's life.'*

Everything God has spoken is sacred!

Exodus 24:6-8: Gods covenant with Moses was ratified with the blood.
Read also Hebrews 9:19-24.

Hebrews 10:1-8: Speaks about the first covenant. Still God took no pleasure in all these sacrifices and offerings. They were only a cover to open the way to an earthly tabernacle.

Isaiah 1:11-13: Sometimes the offerings were an abomination to God.

Isaiah 42:1: His delight was in the True Offering, Jesus Christ.
See also Matthew 3:17, 12:18 and 17:5.

2 Peter 1:17b: *'This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.'*

The second covenant only exists through the blood!

Matthew 26:28: *"For this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins."*

4. Forgiveness; Some examples from the Bible:

Israel: Psalms 103:6-14. (*Summarizing the many places in the Scriptures*).

People of Nineveh: Bible book Jonah.

David: Psalms 40 and Psalms 116.

Peter: John 21:15-17.

Samaritan woman: John 4:3 and further, Eph. 1:7; 1 John 1:9; Col. 2:13-14.

Remark: We may rightfully speak of the certainty of forgiveness.

5. Preaching forgiveness.

Forgiveness should be an ever-returning theme in our preaching. **This is a thought, which is supported through the whole Bible:**

Luke 3:3: John the Baptist: ***'And he went into all the region about the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.'***

Luke 24:47: The Lord Jesus: ***'And that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.'***

Acts 13:38-39: Paul: ***'Let it be known to you therefore, brethren, that through Him forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you, and by Him every one that believes is freed from everything from which you could not be freed by the law of Moses.'***

Acts 2:38: Peter: ***'Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.'***

6. The way to forgiveness.

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and the Son of man prepared the way to forgiveness.

John 14:6: ***'Jesus said to him: 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but by Me.'***

Read also: 1 John 2:1-2 and Acts 4:12.

Which way should we go to receive forgiveness?

Isaiah 59:12b: *'We know our iniquities.'*

Proverbs 28:13: *'He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy'*

Isaiah 1:18: *'Come now, let us reason together.'*

Numbers 14:20: *'And the Lord said, 'I have pardoned, according to your word.'*

Acts 10:43: *'To Him all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins through His name.'*

7. Forgive one another as your father forgave you.

Study the following verses on this subject:

Colossians 3:13: ***'Forbearing one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.'***

Ephesians 4:32: ***'Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.'***

Remark: The above remark is almost impossible to bring into practice for many people who have been damaged by others. Never force someone to forgive the other person but go along with them to the cross of Christ, and ever again recognize what Christ has done for us.

 Read in this context 2 Corinthians 5:14.

8. The fruit of forgiveness.

The fruit of the forgiveness is, that we can love other people with the love of the Lord Jesus. **This love, expressed in the forgiveness of our sins, has already been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit (see Romans 5:5).**

The word 'forgiveness minded' means that someone quickly forgives. The Bible calls on us in Philippians 2:5: 'Have this mind among yourselves, which you have in Christ Jesus.' Christ is our example and He always should be.

 Please study the part of Romans 8:5-7.

9. The prayer for forgiveness.

Anyone who speaks about Moses, the great servant of the Lord, knows that he was the mediator of the Old Testament. **The man who prayed for the people of God putting his own life at stake:**

Moses: Exodus 32:31-32 and 17:8-16.

Aaron: Hebrews 5:1-4: **The High Priest who was the only one who may enter the most holy place to offer gifts and sacrifices for the sins.**

Jesus Christ: Hebrews 4:14-16: **He is the mediator of the new covenant.**

 Make a study of the High priesthood of Christ in the Hebrews letter.

What a complaint in Ezekiel 22:30: ***'I sought for a man among them who should build up the wall and stand in the breach before me for the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found none.'***

Questions: Do we, according to 1 Peter 2:9, have a call to a royal priesthood, fulfilling our task the way God expect it from us? Are we, just as in Matthew 6:5-6, going into our room before God?

10. No forgiveness.

There is no forgiveness for:

Mark 3:29: *'But whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness but is guilty of an eternal sin.'*

Hebrews 9:27: *'And just as it is appointed for men to die once, and after that comes judgment.'*

2 Thessalonians 2:10: At the revelation of the antichrist all those will perish, who passed the chance to be saved.

11. Future forgiveness.

Those who read the prophecies in the Old Testament know that the remnant of Israel will be saved. **The places in the scriptures on this subject are too many to include in this lesson.**

 Study on this subject Zephaniah 3:9-20; Ezekiel 37-48; Daniel 9-12; Zechariah 12 t/m 14 and Acts 5:31.

QUESTIONS BY CHAPTER 13

1. Which three questions might develop in the mind regarding forgiveness?
2. What would be the spiritual condition of one who need to receive forgiveness?
3. What was the reason of the scribes' anger about the forgiveness which Jesus offers?
4. Give some Bible verses about Godly forgiveness.
5. Why it is possible for the holy God to forgive sin?
6. When will the sacrifices of men become an abomination before God?
7. Explain what is written in Matt. 26:28 and Heb. 4:16; 8:12,13; 9:14.
8. Which theme must we always have in our preaching?
9. Explain the way to forgiveness.
10. What does Paul tell us in Col. 3:13 about forgiveness?
11. What is the fruit of forgiveness?
12. Give some examples how we can pray for forgiveness for the sins of others.
13. When is there no possibility for forgiveness?
14. What does it mean, "forgiveness in the future"?

THE CHURCH AND FRUITFUL CHRISTIANITY

Workbook



This workbook contains a collection of special Bible studies, taken from the hundreds of Bible course flyers for Africa and India. It gives an outline of Biblical topics, given to appointed Church leaders in Africa and India on request of Christian brethren in Kenya, Uganda and Burundi. These seminar topics are also available in our website www.adullam.nl

For many years we were able by God's grace and inspiration to teach hundreds of Bible topics in seminars about Church developing, spiritual growth, Christian suffering, and disaster or conflict management with some seminars for youth how to be protected against HIV AIDS.

Because the present troubles in some African and Indian countries and in places where the Christians undergo disaster, poverty, terrorism, persecution, tribe conflicts, competition, jealousy, even among Church leaders, the need for Christian counselling literature and seminars is increasingly felt.

Therefore, our international Adullam workers produced many Biblical counselling flyers and brochures for Bible school students and pastors, but also for community leaders and officials within the local Government.

We pray and hope that many people will read or download those lectures from our website www.adullam.nl

The apostle Paul wrote: *"Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way, death became to all men, because all sinned – breaking a command – the many died by the trespass of the one man – how much more did God's grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, overflow the many!"*

May God bless the readers and the counselling lectures!

Your International Adullam Ministries Field Director, C.B. Beekhuizen