



New Member Orientation

*Pleasant Hill Missionary Baptist
Church*

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Pleasant Hill Church: A Journey of Purpose and Faith

New Member Orientation Guide

Welcome to Pleasant Hill Church

We are delighted to welcome you into our community of faith. Your journey with Pleasant Hill Church begins with a step of purpose, commitment, and spiritual growth.

The Power of Purpose

Understanding the mission of the church is vital—our purpose unites us and gives meaning to every ministry.

Our Church Community

Belonging: At Pleasant Hill, you will find a place to flourish, contribute, and connect. Our ministries serve all ages and backgrounds, fostering an environment of love, service, and discipleship.

Growth: We believe in nurturing spiritual maturity through studying the Word, engaging in prayer, and building relationships that uplift and inspire.

Service: Each member is encouraged to discover their unique gifts and use them to glorify God and build up the Body of Christ.

Mission Statement

The mission or purpose for anything is its reason for existence. It is unfruitful to be a part of any organization without first knowing its purpose. The purpose of the church should define the reason for the ministries of the church and shed light upon what the function of the church is. In essence, the purpose of the church is what the church is all about.

What is the church? The church is two-fold in being (we will deal with this question in greater detail later). In its basic form, the church is the temple of God in all believers. This is representative of the church within the individual. **1 Corinthians 6:19** teaches us that the temple of God or the church is within us. This ideology admonishes us to keep our bodies pure and holy before God, for they are the inner dwelling place of God and the center of private worship.

In its collective form, the church is the visible assembly of believers for corporate worship and instruction. The concept of church was founded by Christ in Matthew 16:18, and materialized by the Apostles in Acts 2:41-47. The word Church, as you will learn, is the Greek word Ecclesia, (ek = "out of," Kaleo = "to call") an assembly of the believers called-out of the world. The assembling together of the Saints for corporate worship is not forsaken according to the admonishment in Hebrew 10:25.

Method of Membership

How to become a member

As a general policy of Pleasant Hill Church (Hereinafter referred to as PHC), prospective members must have accepted The Lord Jesus Christ as their personal savior and Lord. Completion of the New Member Development Class is mandatory, this assures both the member and the church that the unity between them will be one of spiritual compliance, understanding and maturity.

1) CANDIDATE FOR BAPTISM

(Matthew 28:19-20) All candidates for Baptism must make an open, Public **(Acts 2:38)** confession of their faith and belief in Jesus Christ, and **(Acts 8:36-38)** their acceptance of Christ as their Savior and Lord. The method of Baptism of PHC is immersion by water **(Romans 10:9, 10) (Romans 6:1-9)**. However, one is neither saved nor condemned by baptism. Baptism serves as an outward symbolic expression of the believer's union into the body of Christ, through the atoning process of His death and resurrection. Baptism is, the outward confession of an inward conversion.

2) CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE/BY LETTER

Any person having already accepted Christ as their personal Savior and Lord and wishes to unite with "PHC" is permitted, upon proper completion of New Member Orientation. The consideration is their prior Christian experience. A written Letter of dismissal and/or

recommendation from their former church may be sent as a statement of their relationship and dedication to that church. The stipulation of uniting with “PHC” under this provision would be that the former church be a Christian church of like faith.

3) RESTORATION

Any **member** of a local assembly of like faith who has, for any reason, fallen out of fellowship with his/her church or has left for a lengthy period of time and failed to unite with another church of like faith, may be restored upon of their desire/request to do so. (**Gal 6:1-3**)

We recognize three (3) methods of Membership Termination

DEATH LETTER EXCLUSION

1) DEATH

One is understandably excused from this earthly assembly of believers – through physical death.

2) REQUESTED LETTER OF DISMISSAL

A member in proper fellowship is excused from this fellowship should she or he relocate, and/or desire to join another fellowship. A letter of dismissal/recommendation will be issued upon request.

3) WITHDRAWN FELLOWSHIP OR EXCLUSION

Withdrawing a member from fellowship is a matter of church discipline. This is done with the hope in reconciling the member through repentance and restoring them to fellowship in the body of Christ. Any act of withdrawn fellowship or exclusion constitutes removal of the Right Hand of Fellowship and membership rights of the individual in question. Such withdrawals and/or exclusions will be conducted in accord with I Corinthians 5:4-7, 11; II Thessalonians 3:6-11 and Matthew 8:15-18.

THE BIBLE

THE WORD OF GOD

MODULE 1 LESSON 1

It is important for a young Christian to start right; therefore, the first lesson is designed to help establish your faith in the Bible, for it is the word of God. Keep in mind that the Bible is not a book of philosophy, although it is philosophical. Do not go to the Bible for scientific treatise. However, there is no discrepancy between ascertained facts of science and the Bible. The Bible is not a book of history but is found accurate when recording history. The Bible was given to man from God, revealing Jesus Christ, the Son of God as Savior (**John 14:6**). He is the center and the circumference. It is all about Christ from Genesis to Revelation (**John 5:39**). The Bible is as high above all other books as the heavens are above the earth. Someone has said of the Bible: "Read it to be wise, believe it to be safe and practice it to be right."

1. **THE BIBLE IS THE INSPIRED WORD OF GOD**
(**READ II TIMOTHY 3:16-17**).
2. **THE BIBLE CAN BE A DIFFICULT BOOK TO UNDERSTAND**
(**READ I CORINTHIANS 2:14-16**).
3. **THE BIBLE IS A BOOK OF ONENESS**
(**READ II PETER 1:21**).
4. **THE BIBLE CLAIMS SPECIAL POWERS**
(**HEBREWS 4:12**).
5. **THE BIBLE COMMANDS THE BELIEVER TO STUDY THE SCRIPTURES**
(**READ II TIMOTHY 2:15**).

1. THE BIBLE IS THE INSPIRED WORD OF GOD

"All scripture is given by the inspiration of God." (**II Timothy 3:16-17**) By inspiration we mean that the Holy Spirit exerted His supernatural influence upon the writers of the Bible. Therefore, the scriptures are God inspired, word for word. By this we mean that every word in the original text is fully and equally inspired in all its teachings. The Bible does not just contain the word of God; it is the word of God.

The writers of the Bible did not write by natural inspiration, or an act of the human will. "Holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" (**II Peter 1:21**). David said, "The Spirit of the Lord spoke to me, and His word was on my tongue" (**II Sam. 23:2**).

- (1) The Holy Spirit is the Author of the Bible (**II Peter 1:21**).
- (2) Man is the instrument used by the Holy Spirit to write the Bible.
- (3) Results: the infallible Word of God. Therefore, the Bible is free from error and absolutely trustworthy (**Psalms 119:89; Matthew 24:35**).

2. THE BIBLE CAN BE A DIFFICULT BOOK TO UNDERSTAND (I COR. 2:14).

The Bible is a difficult book because it came from the infinite to the finite, from the unlimited, all-powerful God, to limited man. Therefore, the Bible can be hard to understand. Since the Bible is from God, and therefore spiritual, before one can fully understand its teachings, he or she must be born of the Spirit (**John 3:6**). Not only born of the Spirit but filled with the Spirit as well (**Eph. 5:18**). Always approach the Bible praying that the Holy Spirit will guide you to a better understanding of His Holy Word; or it will remain a difficult, closed book (**John 16:12-15**).

3. THE BIBLE IS A BOOK OF ONENESS (II PETER 1:21)

The oneness or unity of the Bible is a miracle. It is a collection of 66 books, written by over 35 different authors, in a period of approximately 1500 years. Represented in the authors is a cross section of humanity, educated and uneducated, including kings, fisherman, public officials, farmers, and physicians. Included in the subjects are religion, history, law, science, poetry, drama, biography, and prophecy. Yet its various parts are as harmoniously united as the parts of the human body.

For 35 authors, with such varied backgrounds, writing on so many subjects over a period of approximately 1500 years in absolute harmony is a mathematical impossibility. It could not happen! Then how do we account for the Bible? The only adequate explanation is "Holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit."

4. THE BIBLE CLAIMS SPECIAL POWERS (HEBREWS 4:12).

"For the word of God is quick and powerful"

- (1) The Bible claims dividing powers as a sword. The Bible will separate man from sin (**Ps. 119:11**), or sin will separate man from the Bible (**Is. 59:2**).
- (2) The Bible claims reflecting power as a mirror (**James. 1: 22-25**). In the Bible, we see ourselves as God sees us, as sinners (**Rom. 3:23**).
- (3) The Bible claims cleansing power as water (**Eph. 5:26**). King David prayed that God would "wash him from iniquity" and "cleanse him from his sin" (**Ps. 51:2**).
- (4) The Bible claims reproductive power as a seed (**I Peter 1:23**). We are children of God because we have been born into the family of God by the incorruptible seed of God. This is the new birth (**John. 3:1-7**).
- (5) The Bible claims nourishing power as food (**I Peter 2:2**). The Bible is spiritual food for the soul. Christians must study the Word of God to remain strong in the Lord.

5. THE BIBLE COMMANDS THE BELIEVER TO STUDY THE SCRIPTURES.

Study to show thyself approved unto God is a command (**II Tim. 2:15**). As you study the Bible, you will discover that it does not contain the Word of God; it is the Word of God! You must also keep in mind that the Word of God contains the Words of God as well as the words of Satan, demons, angels and man, both good and bad. God is truth and cannot lie. Satan is a liar, and the truth is not in him, he is known as the father of lies (**John 8:44**). Man is natural and is therefore limited and does not always speak the truth.

To illustrate, in **(Matt. 22:15-46)** Jesus is speaking with the Pharisees, of the Herodians, and the Sadducees. They were trying to entangle Jesus in His teachings, that they might accuse Him of breaking God's Law. Their words were spoken with evil intent, revealing the thinking of the natural man, along with the words of God that came from the lips of Jesus.

As you study the Bible, always answer these important questions:

- (1) Who is speaking, God, demons, angel, or man?
- (2) Who is being spoken to, Israel, the Gentiles, the Church; to men in general or to some individual man or being?
- (3) How can this Scripture be applied to my own life to make me a better Christian?

GOD THE FATHER

MODULE 1 LESSON 2

The Bible reveals God as the only infinite and Eternal Being, having no beginning and having no ending. God is self-existent. The concept of God's self-existence is affirmed in several key scriptures, highlighting His independence and eternal nature.

Key Scriptures on God's Self-Existence -- Exodus 3:14: "God said to Moses, 'I AM WHO I AM.' And He said, 'Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, "I AM has sent me to you.'""

This verse emphasizes God's eternal existence and self-sufficiency, indicating that He is the source of His own being.

John 5:26: "For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son also to have life in Himself." This verse illustrates that both the Father and the Son possess self-existence, affirming their divine nature.

There are other scriptures that collectively affirm the theological concept of God's self-existence, illustrating His independence, eternal nature, and the fact that He is the source of all life and existence.

Man is natural and cannot know God by wisdom. Job said, "Canst thou by searching find out God?" --(**Job 11:7**) God is a divine and infinite person and can be known only by revelation. In the Old Testament He revealed Himself to and through His prophets. In the New Testament He reveals Himself through His Son, Jesus Christ (**Heb. 1:1-3**).

1. THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

(READ HEBREWS 11:5-6)

2. THE PERSONALITY OF GOD

(READ I THESSALONIANS 1:9)

3. THE NATURE OF GOD

(READ I JOHN 4:8)

4. THE GRACE OF GOD

(READ EPHESIANS 2:8-9)

5. THE TRINITY OF GOD

(READ MATTHEW 3:16-17)

1. THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

The Bible nowhere attempts to prove or argue the existence of God. "For he that cometh to God must believe that He is." The Bible opens by announcing the sublime fact of God and His existence. "In the beginning God.... (**Gen.1: 1**). There are two very practical arguments in support of the existence of God. These arguments are not conclusive; however, they are food for thought:

- (1) The argument from cause and effect. This argument says everything that began owes its existence to a cause. For example, we have a clock; thus we have a

clock maker. We have a building; we must have a builder. We have a creation; thus there must be a creator.

- (2) This creation could not have come into existence without an intelligent, personal creator any more than a book could write and produce itself.
- (3) Anthropology argument. This argument says man's moral and intellectual nature argues for a moral and intellectual creator.

2. THE PERSONALITY OF GOD

The Bible reveals God as a personality. He is called "the living and true God". One who possesses self-consciousness and self-determination. His personality is shown in what He does such as:

- (1) God Love. "God so loved the world" (**John 3:16**).
- (2) God hates. "These six things doth the Lord hate" (**Pr. 6:16**).
- (3) God cares. "He careth for you" (**I Peter 5:7**).
- (4) God grieves. "It grieved Him at His heart" (**Gen. 6:6**).

Only a personality can love, hate, care, and grieve; therefore, God must be a living, eternal, and personal being.

3. THE NATURE OF GOD

There are four definitions of God in the Bible. Since God cannot be defined, they are incomplete. However, they do throw light upon the nature of God. These definitions are:

- (1) "God is Love" (**I John. 4:8**). This is the nature of God in His divine compassion.
- (2) "God is Light" (**I John. 1:5**). This is the nature of God in His divine character.
In God there is no darkness.
- (3) "For our God is a consuming Fire" (**Heb. 12:29**). This is the nature of God in His divine holiness.
- (4) "God is Spirit" (**John. 4:24**). This is the nature of God in his divine essence. The Attributes of God, reveal His divine nature. Do not think of His Attributes as being abstract, but as vital mediums through which His holy nature is unveiled.
Some attributes that ascribe God are:
 - (a) Life (**John. 5:26**)
 - (b) All knowledge (**Ps. 147:5**)
 - (c) All power (**Rev. 19:6**)
 - (d) Filling the universe with His presence is ascribed to God (**Ps. 137:7-10**)

God is everywhere present, but He is not in everything. If God were in everything, man could worship any object, and he would be worshipping God. God is a spirit being. "And they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth."

4. THE GRACE OF GOD

Grace is the unmerited love and mercy of God in action. It is His divine favor toward an undeserving human race. There are seven facts about God's grace:

- (1) The grace of God saves forever (**Rom. 8:38**).
- (2) The grace of God is unconditional; that is we are not saved as a result of works
- (3) The grace of God is sufficient (**II Cor. 12:9**).
- (4) The grace of God makes no discrimination (**Rev. 22:17**).
- (5) The grace of God justifies (**Rom. 3:23-24**).
- (6) The grace of God makes all believers heirs (**Tit. 3:7**).
- (7) The grace of God teaches believers how to live (**Tit. 2:11-12**).

The grace of God is nothing less than the unlimited love of God expressed in the gift of His Son, our savior. It is the undeserved love of God toward sinners.

5. THE TRINITY OF GOD

By the Trinity of God we mean His tri-personal existence as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; three distinct persons in one God.

- (1) The Father is recognized as God (**I Pet. 1:2**) and is all fullness of the Godhead invisible (**John. 1:18**).
- (2) The Son is recognized as God (**Heb. 1:8**) and is all the fullness of the Godhead manifested in the flesh (**John. 1:14**).
- (3) The Holy Spirit is recognized as God (**Acts 5:3-4**) and is all the fullness of the Godhead acting upon man, convicting him of sin (**John. 16:7**) and guiding believers into all truth (**John. 16:12-15**).
- (4) The doctrine of the Trinity is not explicit in the Old Testament, but is rather implied, "And God said let us make man..." (**Gen. 1:26**).
- (5) The doctrine of the Trinity is revealed in the New Testament. In the New Testament we see Christ (God the Son) being baptized, God the Father speaking from heaven, and God the Holy Spirit descending like a dove (**Matt. 3:16-17**). "We are baptized in the name (NOT NAMES) of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" (**Matt. 28:19**).
- (6) Even creation implies the doctrine of the Trinity. In creation we have space, matter and time in one creation. In space, we have length, breadth, and height in one space. In matter, we have energy, motion, and phenomenon in one substance. In time, we have past present and future in one time. In man, we have body, spirit, and soul in one man (**I Thess. 5:23**).
- (7) In the Holy Trinity, we have Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in one God.

JESUS CHRIST

THE SON OF GOD

MODULE 1 LESSON 3

Christianity differs from all other religions, because it is more than a religion, it is the life of the Son of God made living in man. Christ is Christianity, and Christianity is Christ. He is the supreme object of each book of the New Testament and fulfills all the promises of God in the Old Testament, from His incarnation to His second coming as "Lord of lords, and King of kings" (**Rev. 17:14**). He is the God-man (truly God, and truly man). Christ Jesus in glory, exalted above all creatures, having "all power in heaven and earth in His hand" (**Matt. 28:18**).

During His earthly ministry, He claimed to be God incarnate (God in human flesh). Christ is all that He claimed to be (**Rev. 1:8**). Before His claim can be denied, there are some things that must be accounted for:

- His Virgin Birth
- His holy, sinless life
- His many miracles
- His vicarious death and His bodily resurrection

1. THE DEITY OF JESUS CHRIST

(READ JOHN 1:1)

2. THE HUMANITY OF JESUS CHRIST

(READ ROMANS 1:3-4)

3. THE VIRGIN BIRTH OF JESUS CHRIST

(READ LUKE 1:26-35)

4. THE DEATH OF JESUS CHRIST

(READ PHILIPPIANS 2:18)

5. THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST

(READ MATTHEW 28:1-20)

6. THE ASCENSION AND THE SECOND COMING OF JESUS CHRIST

(READ ACTS 1:9-11)

1. THE DEITY OF JESUS CHRIST

The deity of Jesus Christ or his God nature is well revealed in the New Testament. Some facts are:

- (1) He is called God by the apostle John (**John. 1:1**).
- (2) He is declared to be King of kings and Lord of lords.
- (3) He is called God by the apostle Thomas (**John. 20:28**).
- (4) He is called God by God the Father (**Heb. 1:8**).
- (5) He claimed to be God in that He was with God the Father before creation (**John. 17:5**).
- (6) He claimed to be God in that He was before Abraham (**John. 8:51-59**).
- (7) Jesus received worship and only God is to receive worship (**Matt. 14:33**).
Angels are not to be worshipped (**Rev. 22:8-9**).
- (8) Man is not to be worshipped (**Acts 10:25-26**).

- (9) He forgives sin and only God can forgive sin (**Mark 2:5-11**).
- (10) He is creator and maker of all things (**Col. 1:16**).
- (11) He is the sustainer of all things (**Heb. 1:3**). Only God can control the universe.
- (12) He has all power in heaven and in earth in His hand. Only God has all power (**Matt. 28:18**).
- (13) He walked upon the blue waters of the Galilean Sea. The winds and the waves obey His commands. He healed all manners of sickness and disease. He even raised the dead. He gave sight to the blind and restored hearing to the deaf. He cast out demons and caused the lame to walk. He turned water into wine and fed a multitude of five thousand-plus, with a little boy's lunch.

2. THE HUMANITY OF JESUS CHRIST (ROMANS 1:3-4)

The humanity of Jesus Christ is seen in his human parentage (**Matt. 2:11**).

- (1) He developed as a normal human being (**Luke 2:52**).
- (2) He was subject to all the sinful infirmities of human nature:
 - (a) He hungered (**Matt. 4:2**).
 - (b) He thirsted (**John. 19:28**).
 - (c) He was weary (**John. 4:6**).
 - (d) He wept (**John. 11:35**).
 - (e) He was tempted (**Heb. 4:15**).

Jesus was all man, and yet He is more than man. He is not God and man but He is the God-man. He is God in human flesh. His two natures are bound together in such a way that the two become one, having a single consciousness and will.

3. THE VIRGIN BIRTH OF JESUS CHRIST (LUKE 1:3-4).

The virgin birth of Jesus Christ is without parallel in human history. It was by the virgin birth that God became man; one perfect person but two natures: one nature being that of the almighty God, and the other being that of man. Man without sin (**Heb. 4:15**).

The prophet Isaiah prophesied that a virgin would conceive and bear a son and shall call his name Immanuel (God with us) (**Isa. 7:14**). Again Isaiah prophesied saying "for unto us a child is born and a son is given" (**Isa. 9:6-7**). This means that God gave His only begotten Son who was with Him from eternity, and the child was born of a virgin. God gave His Son to us. Now according to prophecy, Jesus was to be born in Bethlehem (**Mic. 5:12**). Joseph, Jesus' earthly father, along with Mary, Jesus' earthly mother, went up to Bethlehem to be registered for the census thus fulfilling this prophecy (**Luke 2:1-7**).

4. THE DEATH OF JESUS CHRIST (PHILIPPIANS 2:8)

The death of Jesus Christ is mentioned over 120 times in the New Testament and is spoken of many times by the prophets in the Old Testaments. Some facts about the death of Jesus are:

- (1) The death of Jesus Christ was vicarious (**Matt. 20:28**). He was God's substitute for sinners (**II Cor. 5:21**). On the cross Christ was man sin for sinners. By faith in Him the sinner is made righteous with the righteousness of God.
- (2) The death of Jesus Christ was natural (**John. 19:31-37**). By a natural death, we mean His spirit and soul were separated from his body.

- (3) The death of Jesus Christ was unnatural. (**Rom. 6:23**). By an unnatural death, we mean that since he was sinless, in that He "did not sin" (**I Pet. 2:22**) "had no sin" (**I John 3:5**) "knew no sin" (**II Cor. 5:21**), before He could die He had to be made sin for us, therefore His death was unnatural.
- (4) The death of Jesus Christ was preternatural (**Rev. 13:8**). By this we mean that the death of Jesus Christ was not an afterthought with God; it was the first thought of God.
- (5) The death of Jesus Christ was supernatural (**John. 10:17-18**). Jesus said, "No man taketh my life from me." Then He said, "I lay it down by myself (supernaturally)." Then He said, "I have the power to take it up again (supernaturally)." This Jesus did on the cross, and three days and three nights later; He took life up again when He arose from the dead. Only God in the form of a man could die a vicarious, natural, and unnatural, preternatural, and supernatural death

5. THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST (MATT. 28:1-20)

Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life" (**John 11:25**). The resurrection of Jesus Christ was the doctrine of every disciple, the faith of every true believer, the courage of every martyr, the theme of every sermon, and the power of every evangelist.

Luke tells us that we have "many infallible proofs" of his resurrection (**Acts 1:3**). Let us look at some of these "infallible proofs" according to eyewitnesses:

- (1) After his Resurrection He appeared first to Mary Magdalene (**John 20:11-18**)
- (2) He appeared to the women returning from the sepulcher (**Matt. 28:5-10**)
- (3) Then He appeared to Peter. (**Luke 24:13-31**)
- (4) To Emmaus disciples (**Luke 24:13-31**).
- (5) To the apostles, Thomas not present (**Luke 24-36-43**).
- (6) Again, to the apostles, Thomas present (**John 20:24-29**).
- (7) To the seven by the Sea of Tiberias (**John 21:1-23**)
- (8) To over five hundred brethren (**I Cor. 15:6**).
- (9) He was seen by James (**I Cor. 15:7**).
- (10) He was seen again by the eleven apostles (**Matt. 28:16-20** also **Acts 1:3-12**).
- (11) He was seen of Stephen the first martyr (**Acts 7:55**).
- (12) He was seen of Paul on his way to Damascus (**Acts 9:3-6**) also (**I Cor. 15:8**).

Many of these eyewitnesses died martyr's deaths because they preached the resurrection of Jesus Christ. They were glad to die living for Christ. They had the "infallible proofs." When Jesus was arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane, all His disciples "forsook and fled" (**Matt. 26:56**). From this time until after His resurrection, the disciples lived in fear. They did not believe that He would rise from the dead (**John 20:9**). Had Jesus not come from the dead, the cross would have been the end of Christianity. After the death of Jesus, we see His disciples dejected, discouraged, and defeated. The death of Jesus meant but one thing to them: the end. How do we account for the great change that came into their lives three days and three nights later? The only logical explanation is that they had the "Infallible proofs" that He had risen from the dead and was alive forevermore. They saw Him, talked with Him, touched Him and ate with Him.

Now look at some “infallible proofs” according to circumstantial evidence:

1. The change that came into the lives of the disciples after the Resurrection – from fear to unlimited courage. They rejoiced in persecution (**Acts 5:40**). They chose death, with the faith in the resurrected Christ, rather than to deny that faith and be delivered (**Heb. 11:35**).
2. The early church began worship on the first day of the week, the day of the resurrection. It was not a law – it was spontaneous (**Acts 20:7**) for almost two thousand years, the church has worshipped on the first day. For the Christian, every Sunday is Easter.
3. The early Christians went everywhere with the word of the Resurrection (**Acts 8:1-4**).
4. The empty tomb – for if Jesus is not alive, what happened to His Body? The Roman guards were paid to say; “His disciples came by night and stole him away while we slept.” (**Matt. 28:12, 13**) Firstly, the disciples lacked courage. Had the disciples stolen His body, then how do you account for the fact that they suffered, and most of them died. Secondly, no one was ever arrested or brought to trial for stealing the body of Jesus. It is evident that the governing officials did not believe the story of the guards. Thirdly, the guards could have been put to death for sleeping while on watch. Fourth, if they were asleep, how could they have known it was the disciples who “stole” the body? Fifth, had the enemies of Jesus moved the body, they could have produced it and brought a quick end to Christianity, which they would have.
5. The grave clothes found in the empty tomb are proof of the Resurrection (**John 20:1-10**). Had friend or foe stolen the body, they would not have removed the grave clothes, since He had been dead for three days and nights. When John saw the grave clothes and recognized they were folded the same, as when they were wrapped about the body, he knew that a miracle had taken place. Jesus came out of the clothes, and they collapsed without disturbing the folds. They were left in the empty tomb as “infallible proof”; and when John saw and understood, he believed that Jesus had been raised from the dead.
6. The Ascension and Second Coming of Jesus Christ (**Acts 1:9-11**)
After forty days of instructing His disciples, the risen Christ ascended on high and is seated at the right hand of the Father. (**Heb. 10:13**). Two men brought the message of His second coming to the apostles. The coming of Jesus Christ is of such importance, that it is mentioned over three hundred times in the New Testament.
 - (1) He is coming to take His church to be with Him (**I Thess. 4:16, 17**); also (**John 14:1-6**).
 - (2) He is coming to judge the nations (**Matt. 25:31-46**).
 - (3) He is coming to save Israel (**Rom. 11:25, 26**)
 - (4) He is coming to sit upon the throne of David (**Luke 1:31-33**; also **Isa. 9:6, 7 OT**).
 - (5) He is coming to bring righteous government to the earth (**Heb. 1:8**).Jesus Christ is coming back to this earth again. “Even so, come Lord Jesus.” (**Rev. 22:20**)

The Holy Spirit

MODULE 1 LESSON 4

The Holy Spirit is God and He is co-eternal and co-existent to the Father and the Son. Never refer to the Holy Spirit as “it” or an influence. He is God the Holy Spirit and is set forth in the Bible as being distinct from Father and Son. In the Genesis account of creation, the Holy Spirit is seen actively engaged in the work of creation, along with the Father and Son. In the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit came upon men to empower them for service; but, when they were disobedient, he departed from them.

When David sinned against the Lord, he prayed, “Take not your Holy Spirit from me” – **(Psalm 51:11 OT)**. In the New Testament, after Pentecost, we see the Holy Spirit indwelling in the believer, never to depart, filling and empowering for service. The study of the person and work of the Holy Spirit is of utmost importance. A scriptural understanding of God the Holy Spirit will make all of us better Christians and faithful servants of God.

1. The Deity of the Holy Spirit

Read (Acts 5:3, 4)

2. The emblems of the Holy Spirit.

Read (Luke 3:16)

3. Sins against the Holy Spirit.

Read (Matthew 12:31, 32)

4. The work of the Holy Spirit.

Read (John 16:7-14)

5. The fruit of the Holy Spirit.

Read (Galatians 5:22, 23)

I. The Deity of the Holy Spirit.

In dealing with Ananias, Peter revealed the deity of the Holy Spirit when he said, “Ananias, why has Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost (Spirit)...thou has not lied unto men, but unto God.” In this scripture it is very clear that the Holy Spirit is God, and He is co-eternal and co-existent with the Father and Son. His deity is also set forth in that He possesses divine attributes:

(1) He is everywhere present in the universe **(Psalm 139:7-10 OT)**

(2) He has all Power. **(Luke 1:35)**

(3) He has knowledge. **(I Corinthians 2:10, 11).**

(4) He is eternal. **(Hebrews 9:14).**

His deity is revealed in that His name is coupled in equality with the name of the Father and Son:

(1) In the baptism of the believer. **(Matthew 23:19)**

(2) In the apostolic benediction. **(II Corinthians 13:14).**

His deity is seen in relation to the life and ministry of Jesus Christ.

(1) The Holy Spirit conceived Jesus. **(Luke 1:35)**

(2) He was anointed by the Holy Spirit for the service. **(Acts 10:38)**

(3) He was led by the Holy Spirit. **(Matthew 4:1)**

(4) He was crucified in the power of the Holy Spirit. **(Hebrews 9:14)**

(5) He was raised from the dead by the power of the Holy Spirit. **(Romans 8:11)**

(6) Jesus gave commandments to the apostles and the church through the Holy Spirit.
(Acts 1:2)

If Jesus needed to depend solely upon the Holy Spirit during His life and ministry here on the earth, can we afford to do less?

II. The Emblems of the Holy Spirit.

It is often difficult to impart truth using mere words. Frequently they reveal only half- truth, leaving the other half hidden. The writers of the Bible used certain emblems when unfolding the mysteries of the Holy Spirit, because they illustrate more about Him than volumes can contain. They are:

- (1) Fire as an emblem (**Luke 3:16**) Fire speaks of His consuming, purifying power in the life of the believer (**Acts 2:3; also Isaiah 6:1-7 OT**)
- (2) Wind as an emblem (**John 3:8**) Wind speaks of His hidden depth in His mighty regenerating power.
- (3) Water as an emblem (**John 7:37-39**) Water speaks of His power to fill the believer to overflow with spiritual life.
- (4) Seal as an emblem (**Ephesians 1:13**) Seal speaks of His ownership of the believer; it is a finished, eternal transaction.
- (5) Oil as an emblem (**Acts 10:38**) Oil speaks of His power to anoint for service.
- (6) Dove as an emblem (**Mark 1:10**) The dove speaks of His gentle, tender, peaceful nature. We may know “the peace of God, which passeth all understanding” (**Philippians 4:7**) only when we fully surrender to God.

III. Sins against the Holy Spirit

This is a solemn study because the Holy Spirit is God and can be sinned against by both the believer and the unbeliever. May He help you search your heart as you consider:

- (1) The sin of blaspheming the Holy Spirit (**Matthew 12:31, 32**). This sin is committed by unbelievers. It is often called the “unpardonable sin”. It has no forgiveness. The enemies of Jesus committed it when they accused him of casting out devils by the power of Satan (**Matthew 12:24**) when Jesus claimed to cast them out by the “Spirit of God.”
- (2) The sin of resisting the Holy Spirit (**Acts 7:51**). The unbeliever when rejecting Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord commits this sin.
- (3) The sin of grieving the Holy Spirit (**Ephesians 4:30-32**). This sin is committed by believers. We grieve him unless He controls our lives to the glory of Jesus Christ.
- (4) The sin of quenching the Holy Spirit (**I Thessalonians 5:19**). This sin is committed by Christians when known sin is allowed to go un-confessed. (**I John 1:9, also Isaiah 59:1,2 OT**)
- (5) The sin of lying to the Holy Spirit (**Acts 5:1-11**) The sin of Ananias and Sapphira was deception, born of jealousy. They tried to mock God (**Galatians 6:7**). The Holy Spirit can be sinned against, because He is God.

IV. The work of the Holy Spirit: (John 16:7-14)

In instructing His disciples, regarding the coming of the Holy Spirit, Jesus said, “If I go not away, the comforter will not come unto you: but if I depart, I will send Him unto you. And when He has come, He will...”

- (1) Convict men of the sin of unbelief. (**verse 9**)
- (2) Convict men that Jesus is the righteousness of God. (**verse 10; also, Romans 10:3,4**).
- (3) Convict men that the power of Satan has been broken. (**verse 1:1**)
- (4) Regenerate the believer. (**John 3:5; also Titus 3:5**)
- (5) Indwell the believer. (**I Corinthians 6: 19, 20**)
- (6) Seal the believer. (**Ephesians 1:13, 14**)
- (7) Baptize the believer. (**Galatians 5:16-18**)
- (8) Infill the believer. (**Ephesians 5:18**)

(9) Empower the believer. (**Acts 1:8**)

(10) Lead the believer. (**Galatians 5:16-18**)

(11) Administer spiritual gifts to the believer (**I Corinthians 12:1-11**). The Holy Spirit came on the day of Pentecost, to remain with the church until it is complete and presented to the Lord at His coming. Just as Jesus Christ finished the work He came to do in the flesh, so the Holy Spirit will finish the work He came to do in the church.

V. The Fruit of the Holy Spirit. (Galatians 5:22,23)

“The fruit of the Spirit is love.” Only as we live in love can we fulfill the will of God in our lives. The believer must become love-inspired, love mastered, and love driven (**II Corinthians 5:14**). Without the fruit of the Spirit (love), we are just a religious noise (**I Corinthians 13:1**). “The fruit of the Spirit is love,” “and it is manifested in joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance:

(1) Joy is love’s strength.

(2) Peace is love’s security.

(3) Long-suffering is love’s patience.

(4) Gentleness is love’s conduct.

(5) Goodness is love’s character.

(6) Faith is love’s confidence.

(7) Meekness is love’s humility.

(8) Temperance is love’s victory.

Against such there is no law.”

A Holy Spirit-controlled man needs no law to cause him to live a righteous life. The secret of a Spirit-controlled life is found in dedication to God (**Romans 12:1,2**) Put your all on the altar, and the Holy Spirit will fill your heart with the love of God (**Romans 5:5**).

SIN

MODULE 2 LESSON 1

In considering the question of sin, we are faced with two startling facts.

The first is that man makes so little of sin. To some, it is an illusion----a religious mirage---the invention of some fanatic. It is denied, joked about, and laughed at by man. Many, who believe sin to be a fact, continue in it with little thought of its penalty.

The second fact is that God makes so much of sin. God said, “the soul that sinneth, it shall die” (**Ezek. 18:20 OT**). “The wages of sin is death” (**Rom. 6:23**). All sin is an abomination unto God (**Prov. 6:16-19 OT**), and He hates those who work iniquity (**Ps. 5:5 OT**). Moses said “All that unrighteously, are an abomination unto the Lord” (**Deut. 25:16 OT**). Sin is an evil force. Its presence cannot be escaped in this life, but it can be overcome by the power of God.

1. **The Origin of Sin**
Read (**Jude 1:6**)
2. **What is Sin?**
Read (**I John 3:4**)
3. **How sin entered into the World.**
Read (**Rom. 5:12**)
4. **The results of sin.**
Read (**Ephesians 2:1**)
5. **God’s remedy for sin.**
Read (**II Corinthians 5:21**)

I. THE ORIGIN OF SIN (Read Jude 1:6)

(A) The origin of sin is one of the mysteries of the Bible. “The secret things belong unto the Lord our God” (**Deut. 29:29 OT**). Its origin is one of the “secret things” that will remain wrapped in obscurity. Sin was first noted in the heart of Satan. He was created a perfect being, “...till iniquity was found in thee” (**Ezek. 28:11-19 OT**). Satan fell from perfection when he exerted his will above the will of God. Five times he said, “I will” (**Isa. 14:12-17 OT**). It was his will over God’s will—this is sin. It is believed that Satan, when first created, was ruler of this earth (**Gen 1:1 OT**) and that he fell through self-will; and at his fall, the earth “became without form and void” (**Gen 1:2 OT**). Isaiah tells us that God created the earth “not in vain” (**Isa. 45:18 OT**). “He did not create it a chaos. “The earth was a perfect creation in (**Gen. 1:1 OT**). Something happened that caused a catastrophe, and the earth became “without form and void” (**Gen. 1:2 OT**), but it was not created thus. It is believed that some of the angels, along with Satan, sinned by leaving their first estate. This does not prove that Satan was the originator of sin, but it does reveal sin in the heart of Satan before God created man.

II. WHAT IS SIN? (Read 1 John 3:4)

II (A) It is impossible to deny the existence of sin, when the whole world is in conflict between good and evil. If sin were not a fact, there would be no crime; we would not need jails or prisons, we would need no locks on our doors, or vaults for our valuables. To some, sin is being indiscreet; or it is a weakness of the flesh. To others, it is the absence from good.

To the some scholars, sin is ignorance; and to the evolutionist, it is the nature of the beast. The latest theory is that sin is a disease, to be treated by science, because man is not a sinner--he is only sick. To others, Sin is a form of selfishness, but God declares that:

- (1) Sin is a transgression of the law (**I John 3:4**)
 - (2) Sin is coming short of the glory of God (**Rom. 3:23**)
 - (3) Sin is rebellion against God (**Isa.1: 2 OT**)
 - (4) Sin is unbelief; it makes God a liar (**I John 5:10**)
 - (5) Sin is going your own way, planning your life according to your own will, without seeking the will of God (**Isa.53: 6 OT**)
 - (6) All unrighteousness is sin (**I John 5:17**)
- Sin is a folly to deceive you a force to destroy you, and a fact to condemn you. Sin is a volitional act of disobedience against the revealed will, of God.

III. HOW SIN ENTERED INTO THE WORLD (Read Rom. 5: 12).

III (A) "By one man sin entered into the world" (**Rom. 5:12**). The fall of man is found in **Genesis 3:1-24 (OT)**. When Adam sinned, his seed became corrupt (**I Peter 1:23**). Therefore, we are sinners, because we are born in sin (**Ps. 51:5 OT**). You do not have to teach children to be bad, but you do have to teach them to be good. You do not have to teach them to lie, but you do have to teach them to tell the truth. "Therefore, as by the offense of one (Adam) judgment came unto all men to condemnation" (**Rom. 5:18**). According to the word of God, all men are judged sinners; all are condemned already. (**John 3:18**). All have sinned (**Rom. 3: 23**). Sin entered the world through our first parents in the Garden of Eden, and "all have sinned, because all are sinners. Man sins by choice, because he is a sinner by nature. Therefore, the dominion that sin has over you is according to the delight you have in it.

IV. THE RESULTS OF SIN. (Read Eph. 2:1)

IV (A) "The wages of sin is death." As a result of man's sin, there are three deaths. Keep in mind that death does not annihilate; it only separates. In the Garden of Eden, it separated man from God spiritually; this is spiritual death. In natural death, it separates the spirit and the soul from the body; this is physical death. In final death, it separates man from the mercy of God forever; this is eternal death.

- (1) **The wages of sin is spiritual death.** Just as sin separated man from God spiritually and drove him from the presence of God out of the Garden, so sin will separate you from God (**Isa.58: 1,2 OT**). The only way back to God is to confess your sins to him (**I John 1:9**) and forsake your sins (**Isa. 55:8 OT**) that you may be restored to fellowship with God.
- (2) **The wages of sin is physical death.** Physical death is a result of sin. Death had no claim on man until man sinned. Now all die, because all are in sin. Death is universal; and, since we have a universal effect, we must have a universal cause, and that cause is universal sin. All men die---the good and the bad--- the young and the old---and man will continue to die until death is destroyed by the Lord Jesus Christ (**I Cor. 15:26**) and is swallowed up in victory (**I Cor. 15:54-57**).
- (3) **"The wages of sin is eternal death".** The soul that sinneth, it shall die. (**Ezek. 18:20 OT**) This is eternal separation from the love of God (**Rev.20: 14**). Once the soul passes beyond the portals of hell, he is lost and lost forever. He will continue to exist, but without hope. He is dammed and dammed to all eternity. Eternal death is eternal separation from God (**Luke16: 19-31**)

VI. GOD'S REMEDY FOR SIN (Read II Cor. 5:21)

V (A) Man not willing to accept God's remedy for his ruin strives to bring about his own salvation by human means.

(1) He strives for self-righteousness, when he needs to be made the righteousness of God **(II Cor. 5:21 and Isa. 64:6 OT)**.

(2) He strives to reform, when he needs to be regenerated **(Titus 3:5)**.

(3) He strives to turn over a new leaf, when he needs a new life **(John 10:10)**

(4) He strives to be justified by the law, when he needs to be justified by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ **(Gal. 2:16)**.

(5) He strives to clean up the old man, when his need is to be made a new man in Christ. **(Eph. 4:24)**

(6) He strives to be saved by good works, when he needs salvation by the grace of God. **(Eph. 2:8,9)**

The only remedy for the ruin of man is the Son of God, being made sin for us on the cross.

The only way to receive this remedy is by faith in Him as personal savior

(John 20:30:31).

JUDGMENTS

MODULE 2 LESSON 2

In the Scriptures, we are instructed to “rightly [divide] the word of truth” **(II Tim. 2:15)**.

This is especially important when studying judgments. Avoid forcing all judgments to fit a single general theory. The “general judgment” theory is the invention of religions and is not

taught in the word of God. There are five separate judgments revealed in the Bible, and they differ as to time, place, and purpose yet, they all have one thing in common; the Lord Jesus Christ is the righteous judge (**John 5:22**).

Everyone—from Adam to the last man to be born on this earth—will stand before the Lord Jesus Christ to be judged.

In the first judgment, the sins of the believer have already been judged in Christ on the cross.

In the second judgment, the believer is to judge self, or be judged by the Lord Jesus Christ and be disciplined.

In the third judgment, all believers must appear at the “judgment seat of Christ” where their works are to be judged.

In the fourth judgment, all nations are to be judged at the Second Coming of Christ.

In the fifth judgment, the wicked dead are to be judged at the great white throne.

1. The judgment of the believers’ sins
(Read **John 5:24**)

2. The judgment of the believer’s self
(Read **I Cor. 11:31,32**)

3. The judgment of the believer’s works.
(Read **II Cor. 5:10**)

4. The judgment of the nations
(Read **Matt. 25:31-46**)

5. The judgment of the wicked
(Read **Rev. 20:11-15**)

1. THE JUDGMENT OF THE BELIEVERS’ SINS (Read John 5:24).

I (A) In the above verse, our Lord tells us that the believer “cometh not into condemnation (judgment)”. “The word” condemnation” is the same word rendered “judgment” (**Matt. 10:15**). Our sins were judged in Christ on Calvary and every believer “Hast passed out of death into life. “This is present salvation. Christ paid for our sins. He was judged in the believer’s stead. The believer will never come into judgment because:

- (1) Jesus Christ paid the penalty, and on the grounds of his substitutional death, the believer is separated from his sins forever. (**Ps. 103:12 OT**).
- (2) The sins of the believer have been “blotted out” and God has promised that He “will not remember their sins” (**Isa.43: 25**)
- (3) Our Lord suffered for our sins, “the just for the unjust” that we might be saved and never come into judgment as sinners (**I Peter 3:18**).

- (4) The believer will not be condemned with the world, because Christ was condemned in place of the believer. “He was made to be sin for us: (**II Cor. 5:21**) Christ was made a curse for us on the cross, and “hast redeemed us from the curse of the law” (**Gal. 3:13**). He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself”. (**Heb. 9:26**). The believer will not come into judgment because his sins have been purged (**Heb. 1:3**).

II. THE JUDGMENT OF THE BELIEVER’S SELF. (Read I Cor. 11:31, 32)

II (A) The judgment of the believer's self is more than judging things in the believer's life. When the believer judges' self, the good and the bad in this life comes to light, and he will confess the bad (**I John 1:9**) and forsake it. (**Isa.55: 7 OT**). However, It is not enough just to judge sin in the believer; he must judge self.

- (1) To judge self is to practice self-abnegation, for when the believer sees self as God sees him, he will renounce self. It is replacing the self-life with the Christ life. (**Col. 3:4**). Christ is the believer's life.
- (2) To judge self is to deny self. This is more than self-denial. Self-denial is denying oneself to the gratification of the flesh. If we practice self-denial only, it is treating the symptom and not the cause. But when we deny self, we are attacking the cause, for in self (that is in the flesh) "dwelleth no good thing". (**Rom. 7:18**) To deny self is to take up our cross and follow Christ (**Mark 8:34-38**).
- (3) To judge self is to lose the self-life and find the Christ-life (**Gal 2:20**).
- (4) To judge self is to no longer be self-conscious but become Christ conscious (**Matt. 28:20**).
- (5) To judge self is to no longer be self-controlled, but to become Christ controlled (**Acts 9:6**).
- (6) To judge self is to no longer practice self-esteem, but to esteem others better than self. (**Phil. 2:3**). To judge self is to become selfless.

III. THE JUDGMENT OF THE BELIEVER'S WORKS (II Cor. 5:10)

III (A) The believer's works will be judged at the "judgment seat of Christ". The term "judgment seat of Christ" is found only twice in the Bible; but is referred to many times. It is found in the above verse; also (**Rom. 14:10**). A careful reading of both verses with the context reveals that only believers will appear at the: judgment seat of Christ." Their works will be judged, not their sins, for we have already seen that the sins of the believer were judged in Christ at Calvary, and "there is therefore now no judgment to them which are in Christ Jesus". (**Rom. 8:1**)

- (1) This judgment will take place "in the air" following the first resurrection. The dead in Christ shall rise first" (**I Thess. 4:14-18**). There will be a thousand years between the resurrections of the saved and the unsaved (**Rev. 20:4,5**). And there will be a thousand years "between the judgment seat of Christ" where only saved will appear and the "great white throne judgment" where only the unsaved will appear.
- (2) At the "judgment seat of Christ," the believer will give an account of himself to God. Therefore, we should look to our own works and not judge the works of others. (**Rom. 14:10-13**).
- (3) It is a most humbling thought to know that some day the believer will face all of his works— "good or bad". Some will be ashamed (**I John 2:28**) and 'suffer loss"—not the loss of salvation, but the loss of rewards. (**I Cor. 3:11-15**). So, whatever you do, do it to the glory of God (**Col.3: 17**).

IV. THE JUDGMENT OF THE NATIONS (MATT. 25:31-46)

IV (A) This judgment is not the judgment of the great white throne (**Rev. 20:11-15**). A careful comparison of the two judgments will establish the following facts:

- (1) The judgment of the nations will take place "when the Son of man shall come in His glory...then shall He sit on the throne of His glory." The great white throne is never called the "the throne of His glory" (**Rev. 20:11-15**).

- (2) At this judgment He will judge the living nations (**Joel 3:11-16 OT**). At the white throne judgment, He will judge the wicked dead.
- (3) At this judgment, there will be no resurrection of the dead. At the great white throne, all the wicked dead are raised; “The sea gave up the dead who were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead who were in them...” (**Rev. 20:13**).
- (4) At this judgment, the judge is God, the King”, judging the living nations in His earthly kingdom. At the great white throne, the judge is God. Judging only the wicked dead.
- (5) At this judgment, there are no books open. At the great white throne, the “books were opened”.
- (6) At this judgment, there are three classes judged; “sheep”—the saved (**Rev. 7:9-17**) “goats”—the unsaved (**III Thess. 1:7-10**); brethren”—the elect of Israel (**Rev. 7:1-8**) also (**Rom. 11:25-28**). At the great white throne, there is only one class, “the dead”.
- (7) At this judgment, the King gives the kingdom to those who have eternal life. At the great white throne, there are no saved and no kingdom; they are all “cast into the lake of fire”.

V. THE JUDGMENT OF THE WICKED (**Rev. 20: 11-15**)

V (A) The great white throne judgment will follow the thousand-year reign of Christ. This is the final judgment, and only the wicked dead will be judged. According to (**Rev. 20:5**), the believers were resurrected a thousand years before this judgment, and their works were judged at the “judgment seat of Christ” (**II Cor. 5:10**).

- (1) At this judgment, the wicked dead will seek a hiding place from the face of the Lord Jesus Christ, the judge. But there is no hiding place.
- (2) At this judgment, the “dead, small and great” will stand before God. But the greatest of the great will be of no value. “There is none that doeth good, no not one” (**Rom. 3:12**).
- (3) At this judgment the “book of life will be opened”. Why the “book of life” if there are no saved at this judgment? The wicked will be shown that God in His mercy provided space for them in the “book of life” so that they are without excuse (**Rom. 1:18-20**).
- (4) At this judgment, the dead will be judged “according to their works”. God is a just God; and since, there are degrees of punishment in hell, some will be punished more than others (**Luke 12; 42-48**).
- (5) At this judgment there will be no acquittal, no higher court to which the lost may appeal. It is lost and lost forever; it is damned to all eternity, and without hope. There is a hell (**Luke 16:19-31**); and in hell, there is no hope, no sympathy, no love, even the love of God does not extend beyond the portals of hell.

REWARDS

MODULE 2 LESSON 3

There is a vast difference in the doctrine of salvation for the lost, and the doctrine of rewards for the saved. Salvation is “the gift of God: not of works” (**Eph.2: 8,9**). Salvation is received by faith in the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ (**John 3:36**). Rewards are according to the works of the believer (**Matt. 16:27**).

A most revealing Scripture concerning rewards is found (**I Cor. 3:8-15**). First, every believer will be rewarded according to his own labor (verse 8). We do not labor for salvation.

Second; we are “laborers together with God” (verse 9)—not for salvation but for rewards.

Third: the believer is to build on the Lord Jesus Christ, the only foundation. (verse 11).

Fourth; the believer has a choice of two kinds of building materials: “gold, silver, precious stones” – this is building with eternal materials; or “wood, hay, stubble” – this is building with temporal materials (**verse 12**) (**II Cor. 4-18**).

The believer who builds on Christ with eternal materials, “gold, silver, precious stones,” shall receive a reward. Those who build on Christ with temporal materials, “wood, hay, and stubble” will receive no reward. The “wood hay, stubble,” works will be destroyed at the “judgment seat of Christ,” and the believer will suffer loss – not the loss of salvation, but the loss of eternal reward.

Some believers will be ashamed at the “judgment seat of Christ” (**I John 2:28**)—ashamed of their works of “wood, hay, stubble”.

(1) The Crown of Life

Read (James 1:12)

(2) The Incorruptible Crown

Read (I Cor. 9:24-27)

(3) The Crown of Rejoicing.

Read (I Thes. 2:19-20)

(4) The Crown of Righteousness (2 Tim. 4:8)

(5) The Crown of Glory (1 Pet. 5:4)

REWARDS ARE CALLED CROWNS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

Crowns describe certain characteristics of eternal life THE CROWN OF LIFE (JAMES 1:12)

I (a) This reward could be called the lover’s crown. Upon examination of the above verse, we discover that the believer finds strength to overcome temptation and endure trails, through the love of God. Paul said, “We glory in tribulations also”. The question is: Do we

today glory in tribulations? We can, only if the “love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit” (**Rom. 5:3-5**). This crown will be given to those who are “faithful unto death” (**Rev. 2:10**). To receive the “crown of life” the believer must love the Lord more than his own life. “Whosoever will save his life (live for self) shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel’s (live for Christ at all cost), the same shall save it”. (**Mark 8:35**). This reward will be given to those who live for Christ and endure temptation, in the power of the love of God (**I Cor. 10:13**).

II. THE INCORRUPTIBLE CROWN: (I COR. 9:24-27)

II (a) Paul makes use of the Greek games to illustrate the Spiritual race of the believer. They ran to win a “corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible crown. No young man could contend in the games unless he was a Greek citizen, born of Greek parents. No unsaved person can participate in the services of the Lord for rewards; only the born of God are eligible (**John 3:3**).

Just as the athlete must deny himself many gratifications of the body, so the believer must “keep under his body, and bring it unto subjection” or he will become a “castaway.”

The Greek games had hard and fast rules for all participants. The New Testament contains the rules for the believer who would enter the Spiritual race to win the incorruptible crown.”

- (1) The believer must deny himself anything that would weigh him down and hold him back (**Heb. 12:1**)
- (2) The believer must keep his eyes fixed on Christ and not look to the right or to the left. (**Heb. 12:2**).
- (3) The believer must find his strength in the Lord (**Eph. 6:10-18**).
- (4) The believer must place his all upon the altar of the Lord (**Rom. 12:1,2**).
- (5) The believer must, by faith, refuse anything that would impede spiritual progress (**Heb. 11:24-29**).

Do not be a spiritual spectator, enter the race and run to win the “incorruptible crown.”

III THE CROWN OF REJOICING. (I THESS. 2:19-20).

III (a) The “crown of rejoicing” is the soul winner’s crown. The greatest work you are privileged to do for the Lord is to bring others to knowledge of Christ a personal Savior. The degree of your joy in heaven will be determined by the souls you have had a part in bringing to Christ. Paul tells the Thessalonians believers that they are his “hope” or joy, or crown of rejoicing” now and when Jesus comes.

- (1) It is wise to win souls to Christ (**Prov. 11:30 OT**).
- (2) It is a work against sin to win souls to Christ (**James 5:20**).
- (3) It is a cause for joy in heaven to win souls to Christ (**Luke 15:10**).
- (4) Every soul winner will shine as the stars forever (**Dan. 12:3 OT**).

HOW YOU CAN WIN SOULS FOR CHRIST:

Witness with your life; live that others may see Christ in you (**II Cor. 3:2 also Gal. 2:20**).

Witness with your mouth, trusting the Holy Spirit to empower the spoken word (**Acts 1:8**).

Witness with your generosity in offerings that others may preach Christ, and you will have “fruit (reward) that may abound to your account” (**Phil. 4:15-17**); also (**II Cor. 9:6**).

God has promised that your labor will not be in Vain in the Lord (**I Cor. 15:58**). The soul winner will not rejoice alone, all of heaven will rejoice with him when he receives the “crown of rejoicing” (**John 4:36**).

IV. THE CROWN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS: (2 Tim. 4:8)

- (A) The “crown of righteousness” is a reward, and it is not to be confused with the “righteousness of God” which the believer receives when he becomes a Christian; for at that time, the believer is “made of righteousness of God in him” (**II Cor. 5:21**). This saving righteousness is a gift to be accepted by the lost. The “crown of righteousness” is a reward to be earned by the saved. If the believer looks for and loves the doctrine of the Second Coming of Christ, it will affect his whole life. Look at the dynamic impact this truth had on the life of the apostle Paul. He could say:
- (1) “I have fought a good fight” (**I Cor. 15:32**). He fought a spiritual battle throughout his Christian life and won. He never surrendered to the enemies of righteousness (**Eph. 6:12**).
 - (2) “I have finished my course.” He had a course to travel. And he did not detour the hard places; neither did he look back (**Luke 9:6,11,62**). He finished his course with his eyes fixed on Christ (**Phil. 1:6**).
 - (3) “I have kept the faith.” He preached all the “counsel of God” –never betraying any of the great doctrines (**Acts 20:24-31**). The apostle looked ahead to the judgment seat of Christ” where the “crown of righteousness” will be given to those who “love His appearing.” How important it is for the believer to look with a heart of love for the Second Coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, that he may receive the “crown of righteousness.”

V. THE CROWN OF GLORY: (1 Pet. 5:4)

- (A) The “crown of glory” is a special reward for the faithful, obedient God-called pastor. He will receive this reward when the “Chief Shepherd shall appear.” It is eternal; “fadeth not away.” Every believer may share in the pastor’s crown of glory.” He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet’s reward” (**Matt. 10:41**). Support your faith, God-called pastor by praying for him and encouraging him in the work of the Lord. Under gird his ministry with God’s and your offerings (**Mal. 3:10**), giving freely of your time to the service of the Lord. And God will reward you for supporting His chosen servant by allowing you to share in your pastor’s reward. The pastor will earn this “crown of glory” by:
- (1) Feeding the church. He is to proclaim the word without fear or favor; and, when necessary, he will “reprove, rebuke and exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine” (**II Tim. 4:2-5**)
 - (2) Taking spiritual oversight of the church. The pastor is responsible to God for the message preached to His people. No pastor should preach to please the people; he is to please the Lord (**Gal. 1:10**).
 - (3) Being an example to the church. He is not to serve for the reward of money. Yet, the church is responsible for caring for his every material need (**I Tim. 5:18**). He is to be a spiritual leader, and not a dictator. He is to walk with God by faith. “And when the chief shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.”

THE CHURCH

MODULE 2 LESSON 4

Just what is this organization to which we belong? For the record's sake, this is an organism. It is the New Testament Church. In a book by Dr. George W. Mcdaniels, we understand that the local church is "an organized body of baptized believers equal in rank and privileges, administering its' affairs under the leadership of Jesus Christ, united in the belief of what he

has taught, covenanting together to do what he commanded, and co-operating with other like bodies in kingdom movements.”

Jesus said, “I will build my church” – **(Matt. 16:18)**. The word ecclesia in the New Testament is used to designate any assembly whether it is political **(Acts 19:39)**, Christian **(Eph: 1:22, 23)**, or national **(Acts 7:38)**. It means a “called out assembly” or “congregation.” God called Israel out of Egypt; they congregated in the wilderness; they were, “the church in the wilderness.” Today God calls the saved out of the world to congregate in worship. This is the church in the world, but not of the world. Unlike the church in the wilderness, the church that Jesus is building will never cease. He said, “The gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”

Only blood washed, born again, spirit-baptized believers constitute the church that Jesus is building. It is called a:

- (1) Mystery-----(**Eph. 3:3-10**)
- (2) Body-----(**1 Cor. 12:12-31**)
- (3) Building----- (**Eph. 2:10-22**)
- (4) Bridge----- (**II Cor. 11:2**)

1. The Church: its foundation-----Matt. 16:13-18

“Upon this rock I will build my church”. Leading up, to this declaration he asked his disciples, “Whom do men say that I the son of man am”? They answered, naming some of the prophets.

Then he said unto them, “but who say ye that I am”? Peter answered, thou art the Christ, the son of the living god.” In verse 13 Jesus spoke of himself as the “son of man”. Now Peter speaks of him as the “Son of the Living God.” Jesus blessed Peter and said that this great truth came from God the Father. Again he said to Peter, thou art, Peter, (petros, a little rock) and upon this rock (petro, a big rock) I will build my church; Jesus did not say that he would build his church upon Peter, but upon himself, the rock of ages. Christ is the sure foundation of his church, and all believers are building stones built into a holy temple in the lord.

2. The Church its head----- (Col. 1:18)

“He is the head of the body, the church,” Christ is the foundation, cornerstone, and head of his church. He is head of the local church, and he is the head of the church in its all-inclusive broader sense, including all born-again, blood-washed, spirit-baptized believers in heaven and earth. The church is more than a religious organization, it is an organism, with Christ as the living head, and it is alive with the life of Christ, made living in each member. –

(1 Cor. 12:1-31)

- (1) The members of the body are given spiritual gifts according to the will of the Holy Spirit **(verses 1-11)**
- (2) The unity of the body is seen in its many members with different operations, all related and coordinated under one head **(verse 12)**.

- (3) All are baptized by one Spirit into one body **(verse 13)**.

- (A) There is one Holy Spirit.
- (B) There is one Holy Spirit baptism.
- (C) There is one body (the church).

This is the church in its broadest sense. You cannot join this church. The only way to become a member of His body is to be Spiritually born (new Birth) ---**(John. 3:1-7)** and baptized into it by the Holy Spirit.

- (4) The members differ one from the other, yet they function as one in the will of God --- **(1Cor. 12:14-18)**
- (5) The least or weakest member is necessary for the proper function of the whole body **(verses 22,23)**
- (6) If one member suffers, the whole body suffers; if one is honored, all are honored **(verse 26)**.
- (7) The members are to covet the best spiritual gifts and minister in love **(verses 31)**.
The lord Jesus Christ has never delegated his authority to anyone. Whether he is pope, pastor, deacon, or the majority of the congregation. "He is head over all things to the church" ---**(Eph. 1:22)** the only absolute and final authority.

3. The church: its organization --- **(Titus 1:4,5)**

There is scriptural evidence of some organization in the local church from its inception. It was a definite and permanent congregation, but not, as we know it today. Paul left Titus in Crete to organize the believers into local church bodies and to set in order the things that are wanted, and to ordain elders in every city. **(verse 5)**.

The local New Testament church is a microcosm of the complete body of Christ in heaven and earth. The word "church" is used over one hundred times in the New Testament, and a great majority of the references refer to the local congregation

Organization in the local church is seen in:

(1) Its officers.

He gave to the Church "apostles" (this refers to the twelve; there are no apostles in the church today), prophets (we have no prophets and have not had since the last book of the New Testament was written), "evangelist" (the evangelist will serve

The church until Jesus comes) and "pastors and ministers," the apostles, prophets and evangelist are ministers at large. Another officer is the deacon. His qualifications are set forth in **(1 Timothy 3:8-13)**. Deacons are never called a board in the scriptures. They are not to run the church; they are ordained to assist the pastor by ministering to the saints **(Acts 6:1-7)**

(2) Membership records ---

The early church must have kept some records of its members. The book of Acts tells us that there were about 120 in the upper room. The account **(Acts 1: 15-26)** reads like the average local church business meeting. Simon Peter is the pastor: he takes the lead and gives direction in choosing one to take the place of Judas. "And they gave their lots" and Matthias was chosen to be an apostle. On the day of Pentecost about 3,000 were added to the Body of Christ by Holy Spirit baptism ---**(1Cor.12: 13.)** And to the local church in Jerusalem by water baptism---**(Act 2:41)**. Again, the records show another 5,000 added ---**(Acts 4:4)**. The scriptures tell us "The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."

(3) ORDINANCES.

- (a) Baptism (baptizo means to immerse). The Lord commands the believer to be baptized. This is the believer's first opportunity to obey His Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. In the early church no one ever questioned water baptism: they obeyed **(Matt. 28: 18-20)** also **(Rom. 6: 1-4)**. Baptism does not save. It is a picture of your faith in His-death, burial and resurrection. It is faith in Christ that saves **(John 3:36)**. The Ordinance of Baptism is an outward symbol of our Faith in the risen Savior.

- (b) The Lord's Supper. There is no power in the Lord's Supper. It is a memorial. The bread is symbolic of His broken body and the wine of His shed blood for the remission of sins. Baptism identifies the believer with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection; and the Lord's Supper is a memorial to be observed by the believer to "show the Lord's death till He comes" (1 Cor. 11:23-34).

4. THE CHURCH, IT'S DISCIPLINE (MATT. 18:15,17).

This is the most difficult and necessary function of the local assembly, and its importance cannot be over exaggerated. "Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven" (1 Cor. 5:6,7) Leaven in the scripture is always a type of evil. The church is to purge out any evil in its membership. The motive for disciplining a brother is love. (1 John 4:7-11) the goal is to restore him to fellowship with His Lord and the church.

"If thy brother shall sin against thee."

- (1) The first step is to be taken by the one sinned against. He is to go to his brother alone, not seeking revenge or self-justification, but to "gain thy brother".
- (2) If he does not repent, the second step is to take one or two believers and go to him again.
- (3) If he will not hear the two of three, the third step is to take it to the church. A good example of church discipline is reported in Paul's letters to the church at Corinth. Paul used strong words calling upon the church to discipline a member for fornication. He wrote, "Put away from yourselves that wicked person." (1 Cor. 5:1-13) In his second letter to the Corinthian church we learn that the man repented and was restored to the fellowship of God's people. Now Paul writes, "Forgive and comfort him...reaffirm your love to him." (2 Cor. 2:3-11) the attitude of the church towards a repenting brother should always be that of forgiveness in love.

5. THE CHURCH: ITS WORSHIP AND WORK

First, the church; its worship", when they saw Him, they worshipped Him". To worship is to bow down in awe; to pay divine honors to God and humble, reverent homage. There are three essentials in worship:

- (1) **Faith** "The people believed; ...then they bowed their heads and worshipped". (Ex. 4:31)
- (2) **Spirit**, "Those who worship Him must worship Him in Spirit" (John 4:23,24). Spiritual worship is worship directed by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit" (Phil. 3:3).
- (3) **Truth**, "Those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth" (John 4:24) Jesus Christ is truth, "I am the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6). Therefore, there can be no pretense or hypocrisy in true worship. The parable of the Pharisee and the publican illustrates true and false worship (Luke 18: 9-14). The publican worshipped in truth, and he went home justified. The Pharisee worshipped in religious pride, and he went home rejected.

Second, the church: its work. "For from you the word of the Lord has sounded forth" (1 Thess. 1:8). The church in Thessalonica did the work of the Lord so well that the apostles did not have to evangelize Macedonia and Achaia. The church shared its faith with the lost, and after all, that is the main work of the church. By this, in the space of two years, all who dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord, Jesus, both Jews and Greeks".

All of Asia did not journey to Ephesus to hear Paul. It is evident that the believers went everywhere sharing the gospel. The work of the church is to go with the gospel, because:

- (1) The church is commissioned to work (**II Cor. 6:1**)
- (2) The church must work for Christ and with the Holy Spirit (**Acts 5:32**).
- (3) The church must work for Christ in this world (**Matt. 13-36-43**) also (**Mark 16:15**)
- (4) The need for the church to work is great. (**John 4:35**)
- (5) The time for the church to work is now. (**II Cor. 6:2**)
- (6) The church must work until Jesus returns to judge the works of the saints (**II Cor. 5:10**).
- (7) The church will be rewarded for its works (**I Cor. 3:9-15**). God's program for the local church is **COME AND WORSHIP, GO AND WORK** (witness) (**Acts 8:1-4**).

(5) THE CHURCH: IT'S POWER.

On the day of Pentecost, the church received power to evangelize the world. When the hundred and twenty came down from the upper room, they came in the dynamics of the Holy Spirit. It was a spiritual phenomenon issuing forth in joyful ecstasy and miracle-working power, resulting in conviction of sin. "Repentance toward our Lord Christ" (**Acts 20:21**). Some were empowered for special service, but all received power to witness.

The real power of the church is not found in:

- (1) Modern buildings or unique methods of preaching and teaching.
- (2) It's great wealth or how that wealth is used.
- (3) The church's prominence or popularity. The Laodicean church was the first bragging congregation (**Rev. 3:14-22**), but not the last.

They said, "We are rich." **God said they were poor.**

They said, "We are wealthy." **God said they were wretched.**

They said, "We do not need anything." **God said they needed everything.**

They said, "We are busy in the church." **God said they were miserable.**

They said, "We have a vision." **God said they were blind.**

They said, "We are clothed in fine garments." **God said they were naked.**

They said, "We are satisfied." **God said they made Him sick.**

You can always recognize a Holy Spirit-powered church. The evidence is obvious; they have power to:

- (1) **Evangelize:** They share their faith with the lost and souls are saved. Evangelism is the only way to make full proof of your ministry (**II Tim. 4:5**). When a church is not involved in winning souls, it grieves the Holy Spirit and is void of power.
- (2) **Reproduce:** Souls are born into the family of God by incorruptible seed, which is the Word of God (**I Pet. 1:23**). The spirit-filled believer sows the seed; this is evangelism. The Holy Spirit hovers over the seed, convicting and leading the lost to repentance. This is the spiritual birth.
- (3) **Change:** people (**Acts 2:37-41**); places (**Acts 5:28**) and things (**Matt. 17:20, 21**)
- (4) **Turn** the world upside down (**Acts 17:6**)

This is the power that filled the upper room congregation on the day of Pentecost. That power is with the believer today in the person of the Holy Spirit. He is the power of the church.

(6) THE CHURCH: IT'S FUTURE.

The true church of Jesus Christ has a glorious, victorious future in the world, in the air, in the kingdom, and in eternity; it cannot fail. "The gates of Hades shall not prevail against it" (**Matt. 16:18**)

- (1) The future of the church in the world.

At Pentecost the Holy Spirit set the course for the church as it journeys from the upper room to the Rapture. It is to:

- (a) Wage War (**Eph. 6:10-18**).
- (b) Run a race (**Heb. 12:1,2**).
- (c) Work in Love (**I Cor. 3:9**).

The church of Jesus Christ will emerge triumphant for “we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us” (**Rom. 8:35-39**). The church cannot fail because Christ is the head, the Holy Spirit is its’ power, and the Word of God is its’ guide.

(2) The future of the church in the air.

We shall be caught up (**I Thessalonians 4:17**).

- (a) In our incorruptible bodies (**I Cor. 15:42-44**).
- (b) To meet the Lord in the heavens and for the great majority of the church we will see Him in His resurrected body for the first time (**I John 3:2**).
- (c) That our works may be judged at the judgment seat of Christ (**II Cor. 5:10**). This is the bema judgment.
- (d) That we may be rewarded or suffer loss of reward (**I Cor. 3:11-15**).

(3) The future of the church in the kingdom.

- (a) The twelve apostles will sit on the thrones and judge the twelve tribes of Israel (**Matt. 19:28**).
- (b) All who overcome the evils of Christendom (Laodicea) will sit with Christ on His Kingdom Throne (**Rev. 3:21**).
- (c) We shall reign with Him a thousand years (**Rev. 20:4-6**).

(4) The future of the church in eternity.

After the kingdom reign of one thousand years there will be “a new heaven and a new earth” (**Rev. 21:1**). The earth will be restored to its original, created state (**Gen. 1:1 OT**). God’s earthly people, Israel will inherit the new earth. (**Ex. 32:13 OT**). The church, His bride, will remain in His presence forever. If in His human form He is in the new heaven or the new earth, we will be with Him, to see Him, to serve Him and to worship Him. He will continue to bestow upon His bride the riches of His eternal without end) to begin to comprehend the greatness of His grace.

PRAYER

MODULE 3 LESSON 1

Prayer is as old as man, as universal as religion, and as instinctive as breathing. (Gen. 4:26 OT). All men of all faiths practice it in some form. Prayer springs from the heart with a need – a man's ability to encounter. Prayer is man's acknowledgment of a being higher than himself.

Most men try to pray, yet so few know how. There are two kinds of prayers: the prayer that does not reach God and the prayer that does reach God This is illustrated by our Lord in the parable of the Pharisee and the publican (Luke 18:9-14). Both men went to the same place, at the same time, for the same purpose—to pray.

The Pharisee prayed in his religious pride, expecting God to answer because he thought himself worthy. He informed God of his own goodness, that he was better than others. He boasted of his good works. He said, "I fast; I give". This is the kind of prayer that does not reach God. This is unrighteous prayer.

Now look at the publican and his prayer. He came to God in great humility, conscious of his unworthiness, confessing himself a sinner, and begging for mercy. This is the kind of prayer that does reach God. This is righteous prayer.

It is a rare privilege to pray; because it brings you in close fellowship with God, admitting your need for him and your utter dependence upon Him.

1. What is Prayer?

(Read Matt. 7:7-11)

2. Why Pray?

(Read Luke 18:1)

3. How to Pray?

(Read Matt. 6:9)

4. Where to Pray?

(Read Acts 12:5)

5. Hindrances to Prayer?

(Read I Peter 3:7)

6. Does God answer all Prayers?

(Read John 15:7)

I. What is Prayer (Read Matt. 7:7-11)

I (A) Prayer is asking and receiving, it is talking with God. It is making your request known unto Him in faith. The above scripture is so simple on the surface that we are in danger of failing to recognize its immensity. Our Lord instructs the believer to ask, seek, and knock, because these three words cover the whole spectrum of prayer.

(1) Prayer is asking and receiving, when you know the will of God regarding a need, whether it is material or spiritual, you can ask and receive. This is prayer according to the revealed will of God (**John 5:14,15**).

(2) Prayer is seeking and finding, when you do not know the will of God regarding a need, whether it be material or spiritual, then you are to seek His will in prayer concerning this need until you find it. This is prayer for knowledge of the unrevealed will of God in a specific need (**Col. 3:1 also Jer. 29: 12, 13 OT**).

- (3) Prayer is knocking and opening, when you know the will of God, and yet you find a closed door, you are to knock and keep on knocking until God opens the door. This is a tenacious prayer-prayer for mountain moving faith. Knocking prayer perseveres until the impossible becomes possible. This is a miracle-working prayer. **(Matt. 17:14-21)**, All things are possible when you ask, seek, and knock.

II. WHY PRAY (Read Luke 18:1)

- (1) Because Jesus said, **“Men ought always pray.”** Prayer is imperative. You are commanded to pray **(Matt: 26:41)**
- (2) Because prayer is the only way to get things from God. “Ye have not because ye ask not” **(James 4:2)**
- (3) Because there is joy in Prayer **(John 16:24)**
- (4) Because prayer will deliver you out of all your troubles **(Ps. 34:6 OT)**
- (5) Because prayer can unlock the treasure chest of God’s wisdom **(James 1:5)**
- (6) Because prayer is a channel of power **(Jer. 33:3 OT)**
- (7) Because it is a sin not to pray **(I Sam. 12:23 OT)**
- (8) Because sinners can be saved when they pray in faith **(Rom. 10:13,14)**.
- (9) Because Jesus, while here in the flesh, prayed often to the Father. Now if Jesus, the son of God, needed to pray, then we should “pray without ceasing” **(Thess. 5:17)**

III. HOW TO PRAY (Read Matt. 6:9)

III (A) “After this manner therefore pray ye”. Our Lord gave this as a model prayer after one of his disciples said unto Him, “Lord teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples”. **(Luke 11:1)**.

- (1) We are to pray to “Our Father which art in Heaven,” because He is all wise, all loving, and all powerful, We are also instructed to pray in the name of Jesus **(John 14:13,14)**, depending on the meditative influence of the Holy Spirit **(Rom. 8:26,27)**.
- (2) We are to pray for his will to be done in everything.
- (3) We are to pray for the coming of the Kingdom. **(Matt. 25:31-46)**
- (4) We are to pray for our daily necessities.
- (5) We are to pray for forgiveness, and practice forgiving others.
- (6) We are to pray for the leading of the Lord, and deliverance from evil.
- (7) We are to pray in faith, for “without faith, it is impossible to please Him” **(Heb. 11:5,6)**.
- (8) We are to always pray for others.

IV. HINDRANCES TO PRAYER (Read I Peter 3:7)

V. When prayers are not answered, you should examine yourself in the light of God’s Word. If you find anything not pleasing to God, confess it, believing God for forgiveness that your prayers may be answered. **(I John 1:9)**.

- (1) An unharmonious relationship between husband and wife will hinder prayer **(I Peter 3:1-7)**
- (2) Selfishness will hinder prayer **(James 4:3)**
- (3) An unforgiving spirit will hinder prayer **(Matt. 5:22,24)**. Many Christians go without answers to prayer because they have wronged others, or have been wronged and have failed to humble themselves and seek reconciliation.
- (4) Unbelief will hinder prayer **(James 1:6,7; also Heb. 11:6)**,

(5) Known sin in the heart will hinder prayer (**Isa. 59:1,3; OT also Ps. 66:18 OT**). When you pray, go to God in all humility. Ask Him to reveal anything in your life that is not pleasing to Him. Then judge it; confess it, calling it by name and forsake it. Pray in all simplicity and earnestness, believing, and God will hear and answer.

VI. DOES GOD ANSWER ALL PRAYER? (READ John 15:7).

VI (A) The Bible is filled with answered prayers from Genesis to Revelation. You are commanded to pray, and God has promised to answer (**Jer. 33:3 OT**). In the above scripture John 15:7 there are two requirements for answers to prayer. First you are to abide in Him; that is to continue in Him. It means to remain in His perfect will at all cost. (**Rom. 12:1,2**). Second, His words are to abide in you; they are to become a vital part of your life. You are to be filled with, and guided by His words. (**Col.3: 16,17**). Meet these two requirements and your prayers will be answered.

(1) The answer is sometimes immediate. Peter walked on water to go to Jesus, and as he began to sink, he prayed “Lord save me”. The answer was immediate (**Matt. 14:22-31**).

(2) The answer is sometimes delayed (which means wait.) The delay is according to His will (**Rom.8: 28**). The resurrection of Lazarus is a good example of delayed answer to prayer. Lazarus was sick. Mary and Martha sent for Jesus to come and heal him. But Jesus delayed coming until Lazarus was dead and in the tomb for four days. Then He came and raised Lazarus from the dead. The answer was delayed but not denied (**John 11:1-44**).

(3) The answer is sometimes “no” When God answers with a “no”. He always accompanies the answer with peace (**Phil. 4:6,7**) and grace. (**II Cor. 12:7-10**).

(4) The answer is sometimes different from what you expect. You prayed for patience and God sends tribulation-because your “tribulation worketh patience” (**Rom. 5:3**). God answers all your prayers-not according to your wishes, but according to His perfect will.

THE ABUNDANT LIFE

MODULE 3 LESSON 2

“...I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly” (**John 10:10**). The only way into eternal life is through faith in Christ as personal Savior

(John 3:15). But do not stop here; to have eternal life is great---but there is more. Christ came that you might have life more abundantly. All believers have life, but not all have abundant life. You are living beneath your privilege if you are a believer and not enjoying the abundant life.

For life to be abundant, it must have abundant resources, and the only unlimited source of life is in the person Jesus Christ the Son of God **(John 14:6)**. To possess this fuller life, the believer must abide in Him **(John 15:1)**. Dynamic, abundant living is not for just a few—it is God’s norm for all believers. It is spiritual life in depth, and without it, the Christian life becomes inane and meaningless.

If you do not have abundant life within you, you will soon yield to the carnal (fleshly) life around you **(I Cor.: 3:1-4)**. Carnal life is circumstance controlled; the abundant life is Holy Spirit controlled. The carnal Christian life leads to defeat; the abundant life leads to victory in Christ. Man seems to know everything about life except how to live it abundantly. From this moment on, determine not to be satisfied with anything less than God’s best: living abundantly.

THE ABUNDANT LIFE IS YIELDED LIFE (Rom.6: 10-13)

1(A) How to live the abundant life is not secret; it is revealed in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. “In that he died, he died unto sin once, but that he liveth, he liveth unto God” (above verse 10). Faith that saves identifies you with Christ in His death—this is eternal life. Faith that yields identifies you with Christ in His resurrection—this is the abundant life **(Col. 3:1-4)**.

(1) It is one thing to have eternal life by faith. It is quite another thing to have abundant life by faith.

(2) It is one thing for you to be “made the righteousness of God in him **(II Cor. 5:21)**; it is another thing for you to realize His righteous life is in you. **(John 3:7)**.

(3) It is one thing for you to live in Christ **(II Cor. 5:17)**; it is another thing for Christ to live His life through you **(Col. 1:27)**.

In (Rom. 10-13), the believer has a choice. He may yield unto God by faith and enjoy the abundant life, or he may yield unto sin and endure a defeated life (Rev. 3:1). God would have you know the power of a yielded life; it will lift you above circumstances that circumvent abundant living. The Abundant life begins when you yield to Him as Master, allowing Him to live His life through you by faith.

Without being separated, you can have a relationship with God, but you cannot have fellowship with Him. You may be united to Him in Calvary but separated from Him in Sin **(Isa. 59:1,2 OT)**. Without separation, you can have influence without power, movement without achievement; you may try but not trust; serve, but not succeed, war but not win. Without separation unto God from Sin, your whole Christian life will be “wood, hay, stubble,” the abundant life is made possible by the death burial and resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and made a reality by being separated unto Him.

THE ABUNDANT LIFE IS A SPIRIT-FILLED LIFE (Eph. 4:18-20)

IV (A) The Holy Spirit indwells every believer, you may be immature, weak and imperfect; but, if you have been “born again” of the Spirit **(John 3:3-7)**, He dwells in you **(I Cor. 6:19 also Rom 8:9)**. It is one thing for you to have the Holy Spirit dwelling in you, but does the Holy Spirit have you, that He may fill you with the abundant life: The abundant life

is not found in environment or circumstances, or in the things you may possess. It is found in infilling of the Holy Spirit. “Be filled with the Spirit” it is a command. You may be filled many, many times (**Acts 2:4**) also (**Acts 4:31**). The apostles that were filled in Acts chapter 2 were filled again in Acts chapter 4. To be filled with the Holy Spirit is to be Spirit-possessed, Spirit-empowered, Spirit-led and Spirit-controlled. (**Acts 8:26-40**).

- (1) You are filled with the Spirit that you might have Joy (**Eph. 4:19,20**).
- (2) You are filled with the Spirit for service. (**Acts 11:22-24**).
- (3) You are filled with the Spirit for power to witness (**Acts 1:8** also **Acts 2:4-7**).
- (4) You are filled with the Spirit for the hour of persecution (**Acts 7:54-60**).
- (5) You are filled with the Spirit that you may “walk in the Spirit” (**Gal 5:16-26**).
- (6) You are filled with the Spirit that the Spirit may lead you. (**Rom. 8:14**).

How can you be filled with the Holy Spirit? First you must desire Him to fill you. Second, you must ask Him to fill you; third, you must believe that He does fill you (**John 4:14** also **John 7:37, 38**).

THE ABUNDANT LIFE IS A MATURE LIFE (II Peter 3:18)

V (A) “But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (above verse). The scriptures reveal four stages of spiritual growth in the Christian Life.

(1) The Baby stage (**I Cor. 3:1-4**). A baby thinks only of self, and if denied the things desired, it will raise a rumpus. It seeks to own, its feelings are easily hurt, and it is often jealous. A baby lives to be served—it never serves. It drinks milk and cannot eat strong meat. It cries but never sings. It tries to talk but never makes sense. These infant characteristics are so prominent in the lives of many church members. They have been born into the family of God but have failed to develop spiritually. They are spiritual babies—carnal Christians.

(2) The little child stage (**John 2:12**). Some Christians grow to be little children spiritually but stop there. Here are some of the characteristics of children: they are often untruthful, envious, and cruel. If rebuked, they become martyrs; if crossed they are resentful and often make a scene. They are talebearers, repeating everything they hear (In adults it is called gossip). They are given to emotional outbursts and are easily puffed up. They love praise and will accept it from any source. They seek only things that appeal to self. Are you a spiritual child?

(3) The young man stage (**I John 2:13**). Many do not reach spiritual growth to that of a young man. He is strong, virile and is well able to overcome his enemy. He has a vision of the future and faith and courage to tackle it. He is preparing for his productive years. You too, can become a young man spiritually by “putting away childish things” (**I Cor. 13:11**) and grow.

(4) The father stage (If **John 2:13**) this stage of spiritual development can be reached by all, but so few ever attain it. The spiritual father has peace with God (**Rom. 5:1**) He knows the peace of God (**Phil 4:7**).

(5) He rejoices in his spiritual children (**I Thess. 2:19** also **I Tim. 1:2**) He has learned contentment under all circumstances (**Phil. 4:11**). He knows the only source of true strength (**Phil. 4:13**). He does not brood over the past, but looks to the future (**Phil. 3:13,14**). He knows that all good things work together in his life for his eternal good. (**Rom. 8:28**). He enjoys abundant life now and will enjoy it in the life to come. (**Eph. 2:7**)

FAITH

MODULE 3 LESSON 3

“The just shall live by faith.” This declaration of the Christian’s principle of life is found four times in the Bible: (**Hab. 2:1-5 OT**); also (**Rom. 1:17; Gal. 3:10, 10; and Heb. 10:38**).

In Habakkuk we see the difference between the lives of the unjust and the just. The unjust are puffed up and live by their own self-sufficiency. But the just live by faith---their confidence is in God. To them faith is more than a philosophy of life; it is the very principle of life (**Hab. 2:4 OT**). The just shall live his whole life by faith. He is saved by faith (**Acts. 16:31**); he is kept by faith (**I Peter 1:5**) and he lives by faith (**Gal. 2:20**). His faith shall be tried many times and, in many ways, (**I Peter 1:7**), but faith will always be vindicated, because it is more than equal to any occasion. Faith knows how to wait on the Lord (**Is. 40:31 OT**) and it is always victorious. (**I John 5:4**).

Faith defies reason; it moves mountains (**Matt. 17:14-21**). Faith does not always face facts; it never gives up (**Heb. 11:32-39**). Faith says, "God is working out His perfect will in my life, and I can wait, endure and suffer." Faith does not make anything easy, but it does make all things possible.

1. What is Faith

(Read **Heb. 11:1-3**)

2. The Importance of faith

(Read **Eph. 6:16**)

I. WHAT IS FAITH (**Heb. 11:1-3**)

I (a) "Now faith is the substance (title deed) of things hoped for..." Your faith is your title deed to eternal life. Just as a title deed is evidence of real estate, your faith is evidence of your eternal estate in God (**II Cor. 4:18**).

- (1) Faith is taking God at his word and asking no questions (**Heb. 11:6**).
- (2) Faith is knowing that: All things work together for good to them that love God" (**Rom. 8:28**). Faith does not believe that all things are good, or that all things work well. It does believe that all things (good or bad) work together for good to them that love God.
- (3) Faith has two sides. One side has to do with the intellect; it is an intellectual conviction that Jesus Christ is God. The other side has to do with the will. It is a volitional surrender of the will to Jesus Christ as Master. This is seen when Thomas believed and confessed, "My Lord and My God" (**John 20: 28**). "My Lord---this was volitional surrender; "My God---this was intellectual conviction. Together you have saving faith (**John 20:31**) Saving faith is an intellectual conviction that Jesus is God, and a volitional surrender to Him as Lord (Master) of your life. By faith, the mind trusts in God, the heart responds to the love of God; the will submits to the commands of God; and the life obeys in the service of God.
- (4) Faith is paradoxical. It goes beyond reason. It believes without understanding "why." It sings in prison (**Acts 16:25**). It glories in tribulation (**Rom. 5:3**). It chooses to suffer (**Heb. 11:25**). It accepts all things as a part of God's will (**Phil. 1:12**).

You are not born with this faith; it comes by hearing the "Word of God" (**Rom. 10:17**). This is why we are commanded to preach the gospel to every creature, that they may hear and believe (**Rom. 10:13,14**).

II. THE IMPORTANCE OF FAITH (**EPH 6: 16**)

II (a) The shield of faith is a vital part of the Christian's armor. You must put on the "whole armor of God" (**Eph. 6:10-18**), because the Christian Life is warfare, a spiritual conflict. As Paul names the different parts of the Christian's armor, he comes to the shield and emphasizes its importance by saying, "Above all, taking the shield of faith..."---for with the shield of faith nothing can hurt; you are more than conquerors through Him (**Rom. 8:37**).

The importance of faith is seen in that:

- (1) You cannot be saved without faith (**John 3:36**).
- (2) You cannot live victoriously all over the world without faith (**John 5:4**)
- (3) You cannot please God without faith (**Heb. 11:16**)
- (4) You cannot pray without faith (**Jas. 1:6**)
- (5) You cannot have peace with God without faith (**Rom. 5:1**)
- (6) You cannot have joy without faith (**I Peter 1:8**)
- (7) You are justified by faith and not by works (**Gal. 2:16**)
- (8) You are to live by faith (**Gal. 2:20**)
- (9) You are made righteous by faith (**Rom. 10:1-4**)
- (10) Christ dwells in your heart by faith (**Eph. 3:17**)
- (11) The Holy Spirit is received by faith (**Gal. 2:3**)
- (12) “Whatsoever is not of faith is sin. (**Rom. 14:23**)

Faith is important because it honors God, and God always honors faith.

REPENTANCE

MODULE 3 LESSON 4

“He that covereth his sin shall not prosper: but whosoever confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy” (**OT Proverbs 28:13**)

God desires truth in the inward parts (**Ps. 51:6 OT**) and commands all men everywhere to repent (**Acts 17:30**). The sinner must repent before he can become the recipient of salvation by grace through faith (**Eph. 2:8, 9**). The saved must practice repentance if he is to enjoy unbroken fellowship with **God (Job 42:1-6 OT)**. Someone said, "I repented before I understood the meaning of the word, but since then as a Christian I have repented many times."

Repentance is the gift of **God (Acts 5:31)** also (**Acts 11:18**). "The goodness of **God** leadeth thee to repentance." (**Rom. 2:4**) The goodness of **God** is not merited; therefore, the result of **His** goodness, which is repentance, is a gift. This gift of repentance is an inward change produced by the convicting power of the **Holy Spirit** as the work of **God** is proclaimed (**Acts 2:37, 38**) also (**John 16: 7-11**). The results, repentance toward God and faith toward our **Lord Jesus Christ**" (**Acts 20:21**); faith that **Christ** died for our sins, and that He was buried and that **He** rose from the dead (**I Cor. 15:1-4**).

Repentance qualifies a man for salvation, but it takes faith in **Christ** to acquire it. True repentance is always coupled with faith. It is impossible to have saving faith and not repent. "Repentance toward **God**, and faith toward our **Lord Jesus Christ**" are essential and inseparable in salvation.

Faith without repentance is the ultimate of hypocrisy, and repentance without faith in the death, burial and resurrection of **Christ** is sheer folly.

1. Repentance Defined (**Read II Peter 3:9**)
2. Repentance – The Importance of (**Read Acts 17:30**)

First, let us see what repentance is not:

1. **Sorrow. (I Cor.7: 9, 10).** Human sorrow is unsanctified remorse and has no redemptive capability. It is nothing more than the wounded pride of getting caught in a sin and having one's lust go unfilled. That kind of sorrow leads only to guilt, shame, despair, depression, self-pity, and hopelessness. People can die from such sorrow (**Ps. 32:3,4**).
Penance. Penance is an act on the part of the guilty to render payment for sin. It is to try in some way to atone for wrongs done against **God** or man. **God** calls all men to repentance, not to do penance. Penance is not repentance.
 - **Jesus** did not say, do penance and believe the gospel. **He** said, "Repent ye, and believe the gospel." (**Mark 1:15**).
 - Peter did not say, do penance and be baptized every one of you in the name of **Jesus Christ**. He said, "repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of **Jesus Christ** for the remission of sin." (**Acts 2:38**)
 - Paul did not say **God** commanded all men everywhere to do penance. He said, "**God** commanded all men everywhere to repent." (**Acts 17:30**). If penance is repentance, then salvation is not the gift of **God**, and we are not saved by grace through faith (**Eph. 2:8, 9**).
2. **Reformation** - Reformation is a change brought about by the efforts of man for self-glory (**Matt. 12:43-45**). It is a turning away from known sin, or giving up a bad habit, or trying to overhaul the old nature, or turning over a new leaf, or making restitution. So reformation is not repentance.

Second, let us see what repentance is:

1. Repentance is a change. The change is always evidenced in three elements.
 - The intellectual element, a change of mind.
 - The emotional element, a change of heart.
 - The volitional element, a change of will.
2. The parable of the prodigal is a perfect illustration of repentance. He had a change of mind, a change of heart, and a change of will (**Luke 15:11-32**).
 - The intellectual element, “He came to himself.”
 - The emotional element, “I have sinned.”
 - The volitional element, “I will arise and go to my father.”

The prodigal had a change of mind; and his change of mind lead to a change of heart; and his change of heart lead to a change of will. No one is ever saved until he “wills” to be (**Rev. 22:17**). Repentance is a change; of mind, of heart, and of will.

The Importance of Repentance

Repentance is so important that **God** commands “all men everywhere to repent.” (**Acts 17:30**)

1. The lost are to repent. **Jesus** said, I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance (**Matt. 9:13**). Again, **He** said, “Except ye repent ye will likewise perish (**Luke 13:3-5**).
2. Backsliders are to repent. Paul said, “now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance” (**II Cor. 7:9**). There were carnal Christians in the church at Corinth. In Paul’s first letter to them, he called upon the church to discipline the guilty. In his second letter he rejoiced because the guilty repented.
3. Local churches are to repent. In the book of Revelation, chapters 2 and 3, our Lord sent seven letters to seven local churches. He called upon five of the seven to repent.
 - The church at Pergamos was to repent because she permitted the doctrine of Balaam to be taught, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.
 - The church at Thyatira was to repent because she suffered Jezebel to teach and seduce God’s servants to commit fornication.
 - The church at Sardis was to repent because she was a dying congregation.
 - The church at Laodicea was to repent because she thought she was rich and did not need anything. In her opinion, she had arrived. She did not know that she was neither hot nor cold, but lukewarm and God was ready to spew her out of His mouth.
 - The Lord calls upon these five local churches to repent or else He would remove their candlestick and they would cease to be a light in darkness.
 - ✓ The lost are to repent or perish.
 - ✓ The backslider is to repent or be disciplined.
 - ✓ The local church is to repent or lose its effectiveness in a world lost in sin.

The New Birth

MODULE 4 LESSON 1

It is of the utmost importance that we have a clear understanding of what Jesus meant, when speaking with Nicodemus. He said, “Ye must be born again.” The new birth is a spiritual birth. It is as much a birth as the natural birth; it is not just a figure of speech. The first birth

is of the “seed of man”. The second birth is of the “seed of God” (**I Peter 1:23**). Therefore, you cannot become a child of God by joining the church, any more than a monkey could become a man by joining the human race. He might act like a man, dress like a man, and try to live like a man – but he would still be a monkey. Now, if by some miracle, the monkey could be born again of the “seed of man”, then -- and only then could he become a man. The only way to become a child of God is to be “born from above” by the “incorruptible seed of God.”

What is the new birth?

The new birth is a new creation (**II Cor. 5:17**).

The new birth is a spiritual resurrection (**Eph. 2:1-9**).

The new birth is regeneration (**Titus 3:5**).

The new birth is partaking of the divine nature of God (**II Peter 1:4**).

The new birth is receiving Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, by faith (**John 1:12**).

The new birth is being made the righteousness of God (**II Cor. 5:21**).

The new birth is compulsory if you are to become a child of God: “Ye must be born again.”

I. Jesus and the two Births (John 3:1, 2)

In the above Scriptures, we see Jesus and Nicodemus face to face – Jesus the Son of God, and Nicodemus the son of natural man. Nicodemus was a very religious man, but he was not a child of God. What a shock it must have been to learn that his religion was not enough! Religion alone never is. He came to Jesus, addressing Him as “a teacher come from God.” Jesus knew Nicodemus, as He knows all men (**John 2:24, 25**), and Jesus knew that Nicodemus needed more than a teacher – he needed a Savior. He needed more than religion – he needed regeneration. He needed more than law – he needed life. Jesus began by going right to the point when He said, “Ye must be born again. Nicodemus asked, “How can a man be born when he is old?” Then Jesus pointed out the dissimilarity in the two births. “That which is born of flesh is flesh” (the flesh will never change); “That which is born of the spirit is spirit” (the spirit will never change). First let us take a brief look at the flesh birth.

1. It produces an old, sinful nature (**Ps. 51:5 OT**).
2. It produces a corruptible nature (**I Peter 1:23**).
3. It produces an old nature under the sentence of death (**Rom. 6:23**).
4. It produces an old nature that makes every unsaved person a child of the devil (**I John 3:10 also John 8:44**).

Second, let us say a word about the new birth:

1. It produces a sinless nature (**I John 3:9**).
2. It produces a nature that cannot sin (**I John 3:9**).
3. It produces a righteous nature (**II Cor. 5:21**).
4. It produces a divine nature (**II Peter 1:4**).

Every born-again person has two natures: the old from the old birth, and the new from the new birth. By the old birth, we are children of the flesh; by the new birth, we are the children of God. This is why “Ye must be born again.”

II The New Birth issues a New, Sinless Nature (I John 3:9)

First John 3:9 is one of the most misunderstood verses in the Bible. Do not try to understand this verse in the light of personal experiences, keep in mind that the above verse is speaking of the new nature – not the old nature – because the old nature is not born of God. The old nature is born of fallen man (flesh) and is depraved. The new nature is born of God (spirit) and is holy.

First let us see what this verse says about the new nature:

1. The new nature does not commit sin, because it is the product of the “seed of God.” In other words, the new nature cannot sin.
2. The new nature cannot sin, because it is the divine nature of God (**II Peter 1:4**); and since God cannot sin, the new nature that results from His holy seed cannot sin.

Now, let us see what the Bible says about the new Nature:

1. The old nature does sin any time you let it sin (**Rom. 6:12**). As a child of God, you will keep under the old nature (**I Cor. 9:27**) by not yielding to the desires of the flesh; or the old nature will keep you under, and you will live a defeated Christian life (**Rom. 6:13**).
2. There is nothing good in the old nature (**Rom. 7:18**). The power to live a righteous life cannot be found in the old nature, it can be found only in the new nature (**Gal. 2:20**). In short nature is a matter of ownership. Before salvation the old nature, owned you. However, the old nature (old owner) is still present and you can choose to deny the ownership of the “new” and walk according to the “old”.
3. Examine your Christian Walk in the light of God’s Word (**Rom. 8:5, 6**).

III The New Birth – Its THREEFOLD PROOF (I JOHN 5:1)

Every “born again” child of God has the threefold proof of the new birth – proof that he is a child of God. This threefold proof is First, inward proof; second, outgoing proof; and third, outward proof.

1. “Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God (**I John 5:1**) my faith is Christ – that He is God – is personal evidence that I am a child of God (**I John 5:10-13**). This is inward proof of the new birth.
2. “Everyone that loveth is born of God.” (**I John 4:7-11**) We are to love our fellow man with the love of God. This we are not capable of doing in the flesh; we must let God love man through us (**Rom. 5:5**). This is outgoing proof of the new birth.
3. “Everyone that doeth righteousness is born of Him” (**I John 2:29**). If you are born of God you will make a practice of doing right at all times and at all cost (**II Cor. 5:17**). This is outward proof of the new birth.

If you do not have the threefold proof of the new birth, now is the time to get on your knees and accept Jesus Christ as your personal Savior – by faith in His vicarious death, burial, and resurrection.

GOD’S PLAN FOR SALVATION

MODULE 4 LESSON 2

There are seven facts revealed in God’s plan for salvation, and as you study them, keep in mind that this is God’s plan – not man’s – it is God’s. There is no other plan that can save your lost soul and make you a child of God (**Acts 4:12**).

1. IT IS A FACT THAT GOD LOVES YOU (**JOHN 3:16**).
2. IT IS A FACT THAT YOU ARE A SINNER (**ROM. 3:23**).
3. IT IS A FACT THAT YOU ARE NOW DEAD IN SIN (**ROM. 6:23**).
4. IT IS A FACT THAT CHRIST DIED FOR YOU (**ROM. 5:6-8**).
5. IT IS A FACT THAT YOU CAN BE SAVED BY FAITH IN THE LORD JESUS CHRIST (**ACTS 16:30, 31**).
6. IT IS A FACT THAT YOU CAN BE SAVED AND KNOW IT (**JOHN 5:10-13**).
7. IT IS A FACT THAT YOU ARE NOW A CHILD OF GOD AND NOW YOU ARE TO OBEY HIM (**ACTS 5:29**).

PENALTY – POWER – AND PRESENCE OF SIN

God's salvation is threefold: First, Christ appeared on this earth to save you from the penalty of sin, by putting away your sin by the sacrifice of Himself on the cross (**Heb. 9:26**).

Second, He appeared in heaven, in the presence of God, after His resurrection, to save you from the power of sin. (**Heb. 9:24 also I John 2:1, 2**). Third, He will appear again on this earth, the second time, as "Lord of lords, and King of kings" (**Rev. 17:14**) to save you from the very presence of sin (**Heb. 9:28**).

Now, let's talk about the seven facts of salvation with an open mind and a receptive heart, that God may bring salvation to your soul.

I. IT IS A FACT THAT GOD LOVES YOU (John 3:16**)**

It is an eternal fact that God loves you with an everlasting love that cannot be fathomed; it is so boundless that it can only be known by faith. The little word "so" in the above verse is most expressive. It gives you some concept of the magnitude of God's love. God so loved you, that He gave His only begotten Son, to be made sin for you, that you might be made the righteousness of God in Him (**II Cor. 5; 21**).

Jesus Christ was made that which God hates: sin – that you might be made that which God loves: righteousness. Because God loves you, you can exchange your sins for His righteousness. Could you ask for greater evidence of love? Calvary is proof that God loves, and longs to save you. Before proceeding to the next fact, admit to yourself "God loves me."

II. IT IS A FACT THAT YOU ARE A SINNER (ROM. 3:23**)**

What is sin?

Sin is the transgression of the law (**I John 3:4**)

Sin is unbelief; it calls God a liar (**I John 5:10**)

Sin is active rebellion against God (**Isa. 1:2 OT**)

Sin is passive rebellion against God (**Isa. 1:2 OT**)

All unrighteousness is sin (**I John 5:17**)

God, who cannot lie, said: All have sinned. "All" includes you. You have sinned against God by thought, word and deed. You have committed sins of commission and sins of omission. In the sight of God, you are a lost sinner.

Before proceeding to the next fact, admit to yourself: "I am a lost sinner, because I have sinned."

III. IT IS A FACT THAT YOU ARE NOW DEAD IN SIN (**ROM. 6:23**)

You have already confessed and admitted that you are a sinner. Now God would have you know that the “wages of sin is death.” You are dead in sin until you accept Christ as your personal Savior. The Apostle Paul said, “you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sin” (**Eph. 2:1**). To be saved is to be made spiritually alive in Christ.

What is death?

Death is Spiritual Separation. Your sins have separated you from God; you are dead in your sins.

Death is Physical Separation. It separates the spirit and the soul from the body.

Death is Eternal Separation. If you remain lost in your sins, you will stand before God at the great white throne judgment. And there your sins will separate you from the mercy of God forever; this is hell (**Rev. 20:11-15**). You know that God loves you, and that you are a sinner – dead in sin. Before proceeding to the next fact, admit to yourself: (I am dead in sin.)

IV. IT IS A FACT THAT CHRIST DIED FOR YOU (**ROM. 5:6-8**)

He died for those who are unlike God: this includes you. “While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” (verse 8)

“For he (God the Father) hath made him (God the Son) to be made sin for us, who know no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him” (**II Cor. 5:21**). “For as much as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold...But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot” (**I Peter 1:18, 19**).

“For Christ also hath once suffered for sin, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but quickened in the spirit (**I Peter 3:18**).

“Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures.” (**I Cor. 15:3**)

In the light of those wonderful Scriptures, will you now thank God for His great love in sending His Son to bear your sins in His own body on the cross, and admit to yourself that: “Christ died on Calvary for me.”

V. IT IS A FACT THAT YOU CAN BE SAVED BY FAITH IN THE LORD JESUS CHRIST (**ACTS 16:30, 31**)

The Philippian jailer asked Paul and Silas: “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” The answer was quick in response, and positive in content: “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.” Paul and Silas preached the gospel to the jailer and those in his house; they believed and were saved.

What is this gospel that saves when believed?
First, it is: “that Christ died for your sins”
Second: “that He was buried.”
Third: “that He rose again the third day” **(I Cor. 15:3, 4)**

Jesus Christ the God-man died for you, was buried for you, and rose from the dead for you and is now at the right hand of the Father interceding for you. **(I John 2:1)**

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth” **(Rom. 1:16)**. The gospel is the power of God unto salvation only when you believe. Your faith in Jesus Christ releases the power of God that saves your soul.

The man born blind received physical sight by a miracle; but spiritual sight came when Jesus asked, “Dost thou believe on the Son of God?” He answered, “Lord, I believe.” **(John 9:35-38)**. Salvation came to Thomas when he believed and confessed, “My Lord and My God” **(John 20:24-29)**.

When you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, you will be saved **(Rom. 10:9, 10)**.

Accept Him know by faith, and pray this prayer: Lord Jesus, I know you love me, because You died on the cross bearing my sins. Thank You, Lord, for revealing to me my lost, sinful condition. I confess that I am a sinner, dead in sin, and cannot save myself. I do now by faith, gladly accept you as my personal Savior, and thank You, Lord, for eternal salvation. Amen.

- VI. IT IS A FACT THAT YOU CAN BE SAVED AND KNOW IT (I JOHN 5:10-13)**
“...That ye may know that ye have eternal life...(above verse 13). Upon the authority of God’s Word, you can be saved and know it. Your faith in God’s infallible Word is your assurance of salvation.” He that believeth on the Son hath (present tense) everlasting life.” **(John 3:36)**

The Bible is a book of certainties. It strengthens convictions and establishes beliefs. God would have you know:

That you are now a child of God **(I John 3:2)**

That you have been made the righteousness of God in Christ **(II Cor. 5:21 also Rom. 10:1-4)**.

That you are now a new creature in Christ **(II Cor. 5:17)**.

That you are now a son and heir of God **(Gal. 4:7)**. Could you have greater assurance that is found in God’s infallible Word? “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.” **(Matt. 24:35)**.

- VII. IT IS A FACT THAT YOU ARE NOW A CHILD OF GOD AND YOU ARE TO OBEY HIM. (ACTS 5:29)**
“We ought to obey God rather than men.” (Above verse). You now belong to Jesus Christ. He is your Lord and Master, and “no man can serve two masters” **(Matt. 6; 24)**. Determine now to obey your Lord and Master, Jesus Christ, in all things:

- Unite with a New Testament church. “And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved” (**Acts 2:47**)
- Follow Him in the ordinance of baptism (**Acts 2:41**). Baptism does not save; it is a witness of your faith in the death, burial and resurrection of Christ (**Rom. 6:4**).
- Join a Sunday School Class and study the Word with God’s children (**II Tim. 2:15**).
- Attend the worship services of your church (**Heb. 10:25**). You need the preaching of God’s word and Christian fellowship.
- Be a Faithful steward (**I Cor. 4:2**). All that you are and have belongs to God. “Ye are not your own. For ye are bought with a price...” (**I Cor. 6:19, 20**).
- Make time in your daily life to pray and read God’s Word that you may grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

How To Witness Effectively

MODULE 4 LESSON 3

One day as Jesus walked by the Sea of Galilee He saw two men, Simon, called Peter, and Andrew, his brother. They were fishermen. “And he saith unto them, follow me, and I will make you fishers of men” (**Matt. 4:19**). Soul winners are made not born. Therefore, to be an effective witness, you must be taught, trained, and motivated by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus took three years to teach and train His disciples in the art of soul winning. After His resurrection He instructed them to stay in Jerusalem and ‘wait for the promise of the Father” (**Acts 1:4-8**). When the disciples asked Jesus if the time had come for Him to restore the kingdom of Israel, He answered, “It is not for you to know the time or the seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me...”

On the day of Pentecost, the hundred and twenty received power to witness and any believer who acquires the know-how can be an effective soul winner.

He can know that he and the Holy Spirit are a witnessing team. Peter said, “We are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, WHOM GOD HATH GIVEN TO THEM THAT OBEY HIM” (**Acts 5:32**). Therefore, when you witness remember that “your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you” (**I Cor. 6:19,20**).

1. The Importance of witnessing

When you witness, trust the Holy Spirit to do three things:

(1) Illuminate the mind of the unbeliever.

All lost souls are in spiritual darkness (**II Cor. 4: 3, 4**).

(2) Stir the heart of the unbeliever.

As Peter preached Christ, the listeners “were pricked in their heart” (**Acts 2:37**).

(3) Move the will of the unbeliever.

The prodigal returned home when he came to himself and said, “I will arise and go to my father” (**Luke 15:18**).

You may be up to date in all-modern techniques of soul winning and be able to quote the necessary Scriptures without flaw; but if you do not evangelize in the power of the Holy Spirit, your soul winning efforts will be ineffective.

1.The Importance of Witnessing

(Read Rom. 10-13-17)

2.The Qualification of a Witness

(Read (Col. 2:6,7)

3.The Approach

(Read John 1:40-42)

4.The follow through (Read Matthew 13:3-8; 18-23)

1(A) “For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved”. Do not lift this text out of context. There are three questions in verse 14 that must be considered along with verse 13, they are:

First question, how then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed?” The answer is the lost cannot call on the Lord to be saved until they believe--.

(1) That Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures.
 (2) And that He was buried,
 (3) And that He rose again the third day according to the scriptures” (**I Cor. 15:1-4**)
 Second Question, “How shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? The answer is, the lost cannot believe in Him until they hear the good news of salvation.

(1) The Eunuch had to hear to believe (**Acts 8:26-39**).
 (2) Paul had to hear to believe (**Acts 9: 1-18**).
 (3) Cornelius had to hear to believe (**Acts 10: 1-4**).
 (4) The Philippian jailer had to hear to believe (**Acts 16: 25-40**).
 Third Question, How shall they hear without a preacher (witness)? “The answer is, they cannot hear the good news of salvation without a witness.

- (1) Three thousand were saved at Pentecost because the 120 witnessed.
- (2) The Eunuch was saved because Philip witnessed.
- (3) Paul was saved because Stephen witnessed (**Acts 7:54-60**), and Jesus the God-man witnessed, and Ananias witnessed (**Acts 9:1-18**).
- (4) Cornelius and his house were saved because Peter witnessed.
- (5) The Philippian jailer and his house were saved because Paul and Silas witnessed.
- (6) You were saved because someone witnessed you. According to the Word of God the lost cannot be saved without a witness. They must have a witness to hear; they must hear to believe; they must believe to call; and they must call to be saved. But they cannot call until they believe, and they cannot believe until they hear, and they cannot hear without a witness. “So, then faith (saving faith) comes by hearing (**Rom. 10: 17**). We are not born with saving faith; it comes only when we hear the gospel. Therefore, it is of utmost importance that every born-again child of God obey the great commission to evangelize, to GO WITH THE GOSPEL.

II. THE QUALIFICATION OF A WITNESS (**Col. 2: 6,7**)

II (A) A QUALIFIED WITNESS IS ONE WHO IS:

(1) Established in the faith. (Got to know before you go) To be established in the faith is to be rooted and grounded in God’s word. Peter said, “Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of hope that is in you with meekness and fear.” (**I Peter 3:15**).

(2) Saved and knows it. I know that I am saved because God tells me so in His word and God cannot lie.

We have the:

(A) Witness of the spirit (**Rom. 8:16**)

(B) The witness of the word (**I John 5:13**)

(C) The witness of saving faith, “He that Believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself (**I John 5:9,10**).

(3) Separated. Paul said that he was “separated unto the gospel of God “(**Rom. 1:1-16**). This is a positive separation and Paul analyzed it as:

- (a) A holy desire to share spiritual gifts.
- (b) A holy purpose to bear fruit.
- (c) A holy obligation to pay a spiritual debt.
- (d) A holy eagerness to share the gospel.
- (e) A holy boldness to exalt the cross.

In short to be separated unto the gospel is to share the Good News with the lost.

III: The Approach. (**John 1:40-42**)

III (a) There are two ways to approach the prospect. The first is:

- (1) The direct approach. This approach can be used when witnessing to:
 - (1) A relative. Andrew used the direct approach to bring his brother Simon Peter to Christ. (Above verses 40-42).
 - (B) A friend. Philip the apostle used the direct approach to bring Nathaniel to Jesus Verses 45 and 46.
 - (C) The concerned. Jesus used the direct approach to win Nicodemus (**John 3:1-21**)
- (d) The seeker. Paul and Silas used the direct approach to lead the Philippian jailer to Jesus (**Acts 16:19-34**)

The second is:

- (2) The indirect approach. This approach can be used when witnessing to:
 - (a) A stranger. Jesus used the indirect approach to witness to the Samaritan woman (**John 4:7-26**)
 - (b) The religious. Philip the evangelist used the indirect approach to lead the Ethiopian eunuch to Christ (**Acts 8:26-39**)

The method in either case will vary according to the leading of the Holy Spirit. Whether you use the direct or the indirect approach be sure to follow through until you have presented God's plan of salvation and invited them to accept Christ as their personal Savior.

IV. The Follow Through (**Matt. 13-3-8; 18-23**)

IV (A) The parable of the sower illustrates the importance of the follow-through. Only one fourth of the soil was ready for the seed, so only one fourth of the seed brought forth fruit. Jesus explains the parable in (Verses 18-23), and we learn that:

- (1) The sower is the witness.
- (2) The seed is the word of God.
- (3) The soil is the heart.

We also learn that there are four types of hearts. They are:

- (1) The hard heart: this is the wayside soil, fertile but hard.
- (2) The shallow heart: this is the stony soil, fertile but depthless.
- (3) The worldly heart: this is the thorny soil, fertile but possessed.
- (4) The understanding heart: this is good soil, fertile and prepared.

The lesson here is a simple one if we expect the seed, the word of God to bear fruit; the heart must be made ready. The hard heart must be broken; the shallow heart must be given depth; and the worldly heart must be taught that the things of this world are temporal (**Mark 8:36,36**) This requires time, work, and patience.

Very few souls are won to Christ in the first encounter. You may be sent to be the sower (the one who plants). Another may be sent to water what has been planted. In any case always remember to let the Lord lead you in your witnessing.