

BIBLE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Bible Questions and Answers

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INTRODUCTION

How do you say what needs to be said so that those who hear it or read it can understand it? How do you take a set of basic truths and make them sound interesting and challenging? Surely there is no better way than to use a question and answer format. This is what I have done in this series of sermons. A number of major subjects have been chosen, questions have been asked concerning them, and then scriptural answers have been given. It is my prayer that many of your own personal questions have been answered within the framework of these studies.

As usual, these lessons were prepared originally for our radio broadcasts from Colombo, Sri Lanka. By producing them in this form, we hope that it will be possible to reach even more souls for Christ.

Keep in mind that Bible questions can truly be answered only from the Bible. Please settle for nothing less. Remember that the Bible is the truth, and the truth never contradicts itself. Neither will it deceive a person or cause one to be lost. A misunderstanding of it will do those things, but the truth itself will not. We urge you to study it, to believe it and obey it so that you may be saved.

J.C. Choate
Church of Christ
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CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
1. God	9
2. Christ	14
3. The Holy Spirit	20
4. The Bible	26
5. Sin	32
6. Authority	38
7. The Gospel	44
8. Faith	50
9. Baptism	56
10. The Church	62
11. The Organization of the Church	68
12. The Name	74
13. Unity	80
14. The Way to Heaven	86
15. Worship	91
16. The Day of Worship	97
17. Music in Worship	103
18. Prayer	109
19. The Lord's Supper	114
20. Giving	120
21. The Christian Life	126
22. Marriage	132
23. Falling Away	138
24. False Teaching	144
25. Worldliness	149
26. The Hereafter	155

Lesson 1

GOD

Thank you, and I greet you with this period of Bible Study in the name of Jesus Christ.

For our lesson at this time we are going to attempt to answer some of your questions about God. We will go to the Bible to do this and we hope that you will think seriously about the things that will be said. If you have additional questions, please send them to us and we'll get to them as soon as we can.

First, Who is God? What is his nature? Where did he come from? Christ tells us that he is a Spirit. He says, "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." (John 4:24). That means that he is not like man with a physical body or one who has a physical image. John wrote, "No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us." (1 John 4:12). As to God himself, we read that he was in the beginning, that is, when all things were created. He was not a part of the creation, but he was the one that created all things. We read in Genesis 1:1, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." He is therefore without beginning or ending. He has always been and will always be. He is eternal. He is deity. He is all-powerful, all-

knowing, all-seeing, and all-hearing. The Psalmist David declared, "Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God." (Psalms 90:1, 2). He continues, by saying, "For this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death." (Psalms 48:14).

Second, Is there more than one God? The Scriptures tell us again and again that he is but one, that he alone exists. Paul says that there is "... One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." (Ephesians 4:6). When God gave the ten commandments to Moses, he said, "I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God . . ." Exodus 20:2-5). Hundreds of years later when Paul was at Athens, he said, "... Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you. God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth,

and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring. Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device." (Acts 17:22-29). Yes, there are many gods and goddesses, man-made gods and goddesses, in this world. They come in all forms and sizes. They are made out of wood, stone, and other materials. Some men claim to be god. Many worship nature, animals, or the moon and stars. But they are all without life or will die in time. They cannot respond to man's needs. They do not have the ability to save one. We are therefore not to worship them. There is but one true and living God, and he is the one that made us all. He lives, blesses, and can save. Only in him do we have hope.

Third, How do we know that God exists? There are two ways. First, we may know by the things we see all around us, the creation itself, the world and all things therein, even ourselves. Speaking of those who had rejected God, and had begun to worship the creature more than the creator, Paul said, "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse." (Romans 1:20). Second, God has spoken to us through his word as revealed in the Bible. The Hebrew writer said, "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the

prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds." (Hebrews 1:1, 2). Then Paul said, "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9). Please notice that the Lord is coming back one day to punish two types of people, and those would be the ones who do not know God and those who have not obeyed the gospel. All should know that God exists because of the creation itself. Then if one comes to believe in God, he needs to seek to know God's will, and he may do this by going to God's word, the Bible, to learn of the gospel, or the good news of Jesus Christ, and how one can be saved by obeying that gospel. If one learns of that gospel, and fails to obey it, then the Lord will come to punish him. If he believes in God, learns of the gospel, and obeys that gospel, then the Lord has promised to save him in this world and to give him the hope of eternal life. (Mark 16:15, 16).

Fourth, What are some other facts about God? For one thing, he is said to be the essence of love. John wrote, "He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love". (1 John 4:1). On another occasion, John recorded these words: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved."

(John 3:16, 17). Now while God loves man, and has shown his love for man, what type of love does the Lord expect us to have for him? Jesus said, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." (Matthew 22:37). But what will one do if he loves God? Christ, his Son, said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." (John 14:15).

We would conclude then by saying that God lives today, that there is but one God, that we should believe in him, obey him, and serve him, so that we may be saved in this world and in the world to come. The Hebrew writer says, "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." (Hebrews 11:6). As with love, if we believe in him, then we will obey him. That means then that we will repent of our sins, confess our faith in Christ as being his son, and then we will be baptized, immersed in water, that we might have the remission of our sins, and be added to his church. (Acts 17:30; Romans 10:10; Acts 2:38, 47).

Thank you for listening and please let us hear from you. I hope to be with you again at the regular time. Until then, I bid you goodbye.

Lesson 2

CHRIST

Thank you, and in the name of Christ I welcome you to another period of Bible Study.

During these times together we are answering various questions from the Bible. Our questions just now will have to do with Christ. Let me remind you that if you have questions about Christ or other Bible subjects, please send them to us so that we can answer them on some future broadcast.

First, What relationship does Christ have with God? Was Christ created by God? How could he be God's Son? To begin with, the Scriptures tell us that Christ was with God in the beginning, that he participated in the creation. We read, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth". (Genesis 1:1). We are told that the Hebrew word for God includes not only God the Father, but also God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. These three are also mentioned in Matthew 28:19, 20 and Ephesians 4:4-6, as well as in other passages. They are also referred to as being the Godhead. (Acts 17:29; Romans 1:20; Colossians 2:9). But does that mean that we are talking about three distinct Gods? Not at all. There are three persons in the Godhead, but still they are one.

But getting back to the creation, when man was

created, God said, "... Let us make man in our image, after our likeness . . ." (Genesis 1:26). Please notice that God said, "Let us." Who was there with God? As already pointed out, that was Christ and the Holy Spirit. Concerning Christ, we read, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made." (John 1:1-3). Paul wrote of him, "Who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist." (Colossians 1:15-17). This truth is also affirmed in Hebrews 1:1, 2.

No, Christ was not created by God. Had he been created then he would be no more than any other man, and being a man, he would have been unable to die for the sins of the world, since he would have also been in need of a saviour. But in what way was he God's Son? Certainly God did not have a human-like relationship with some female goddess with the result that Christ was born from that union. Rather, Christ was there with God, was on a par with God, was equal with God and the Holy Spirit, and was therefore deity. Paul explained what happened like this: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself,

and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Philippians 2:5-11). From this scripture, and other passages of scripture, we see that Christ was there with God, but when man sinned and needed a saviour then it was Christ who humbled himself and was willing to come into this world of sin by being born of woman in likeness of man, to live among men, to be tempted as man was tempted, and finally to offer himself as a sacrifice upon the cross for the sins of the world. In the story of the birth of Jesus, when Mary questioned how it would be possible for her to give birth to Jesus since she had not been with man, the record says, "And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." (Luke 1:35). Therefore to be born as he was, then he was spoken of as being the Son of God.

Second, But give some background on the coming of Christ. After man had sinned and the consequences of his sin was revealed, God also spoke to the serpent, or the devil, and said, "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." (Genesis 3:15). Bible scholars admit that this was the first reference to the fact that Christ would eventually enter the world. On doing so, Satan would be able to bruise the heel of Christ, which means that he would be

able to hinder him some, but that Christ would be able to bruise Satan's head or that he would be able to give Satan a fatal blow. The prophets had much to say about the coming of Christ. As a matter of fact, they foretold of his birth, where he would be born, of his work, and of his death, burial, and resurrection, as well as many other things. Read Isaiah 53, if you have a Bible.

Isaiah 7:14 records the prophecy of how Christ would be born of a virgin. It says, "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." This was fulfilled when the Virgin Mary, according to Matthew 1:20, 21 and Luke 1 and 2, miraculously gave birth to Christ in the city of Bethlehem. He had no earthly father since he was conceived in Mary of the Holy Ghost. This was another proof that Christ was more than just another man, he was the Son of God.

Third, Why did Christ have to die on the cross? Paul tells us that we are all sinners (Romans 3:23) and "... while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Romans 5:8). In other words, man could not save himself, and therefore he needed a saviour. Christ being without sin (Hebrews 4:15) was able to shed his blood that we might have forgiveness of our sins. (1 Corinthians 15:3). Paul said, "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Romans 6:23). Peter wrote, "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not;

but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously: Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls." (1 Peter 2:21-25). John tells us, "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." (1 John 1:7).

Fourth, But how could the death of one man make it possible for anyone to be saved? Because Christ was more than an ordinary man. He was the Son of God, he was without sin, and on dying on the cross, he was buried, and then he was resurrected from the grave to return to the Father in heaven to sit down at the right hand of God to be King of kings and Lord of lords and to be man's saviour. (1 Corinthians 15:1-4; Acts 2).

Fifth, What then must man do to be saved? He must believe that Christ is the Son of God. Christ said, "I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins." (John 8:24). Next, he must repent of his sins or turn away from those things that are bad and wrong. Christ says that we must repent or perish. (Luke 13:3). Then we are told that he must publicly confess that Christ is the Son of God. Christ himself said, "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess before my Father which is in heaven." (Matthew 10:32). And finally, he must be baptized. Christ said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." (Mark 16:16). Now

when one does that then the Lord saves him and adds him to his church. (Acts 2:47).

Do you believe in Christ? Will you obey him? I pray that you will. If we can help you, please let us know.

But that is all the time I have. Until next time, I bid you goodbye.

Lesson 3

THE HOLY SPIRIT

Thank you, and I come to you again in the name of Christ.

It is great to be back with another period of Bible Study. As you know, we are dealing with various Bible questions on these programmes and if you have some questions that you would like to have answered, please send them to us and we'll get to them as soon as we can.

For our study at this time we are going to be considering some questions that have to do with the Holy Spirit. Many people are confused about the Holy Spirit and his work and we hope we can clear up some of these misunderstandings as we go to the Bible to learn about this person.

First, In what sense should we think of the Holy Spirit? Certainly we should not think of the Spirit as an it or something. Neither should we classify him as some type of ghost or mysterious figure. It is true that the King James Version of the Bible, for example, refers to him as being the Holy Ghost, and out of this grows the idea that he is some spooky spirit, but other versions refer to him as the Spirit, and because he is on a par with God and Christ, because he is deity, then he is spoken of as being the Holy Spirit. (Ephesians 4:30; 1 Timothy 4:8). I'll hasten to say that we'll be referring to him as

being both the Holy Spirit and the Holy Ghost, since he is known by both names, and inasmuch as we will be quoting from the King James Version which generally speaks of him as being the Holy Ghost. Finally, remember that the Holy Spirit is a person, often referred to as being the third person in the Godhead. Christ said, "Go ye therefore, and teach ye all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen." (Matthew 28:19, 20). We also read in Ephesians 4:4-6 that there is one God, one Lord, or Christ, and one Spirit, which is the Holy Spirit. Being associated with God the Father, and Christ the Son, then they are spoken of in the scriptures as the Godhead as recorded in Acts 17:29; Romans 1:20; and Colossians 2:9.

Second, How does the Holy Spirit work in relation to God the Father and Christ the Son? To get the overall picture of God and Christ working together, we must go all the way back to the beginning of creation, and even then, God, Christ and the Holy Spirit existed before that, since all three are eternal in thier very nature. But the Holy Spirit joined them in the creation in the beginning (Genesis 1:1) and Genesis 1:2 says that "the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." The Psalmist David stated, "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?" (Psalms 139:7). The Holy Spirit was to be sent upon God's people in the last days. Joel declared, "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your

young men shall see visions: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit." (Joel 2:28, 29). This was fulfilled in Acts 2 when the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the Apostles and all who obeyed God received the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Third, What role did the Holy Spirit play when Christ was born into this world? For that we'll go to the Scriptures. The record says, "Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a publick example, was minded to put her away privily. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost." (Matthew 1:18-20). Luke gives this account: "And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, since I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall over-shadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." (Luke 1:30-35). And so it came

to pass.

Fourth, after the birth of Christ, in what way did the Holy Spirit operate? First, we read of him in connection with the baptism of Christ. "Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John to be baptized of him. But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said into him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Matthew 3: 13-16).

Fifth, To whom did Christ promise the baptism of the Holy Spirit? Christ promised to baptize with the Holy Spirit (Matthew 3:11), and on another occasion he said, "Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power." (Mark 9:1). The power here was having reference to the Holy Spirit. In John 15:26, 27, Christ promised the Apostles, "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning." Jesus said the Comforter or the Holy Spirit would come on them after his departure, that is, after his death, burial, and resurrection, and his return to the Father in Heaven. (John 16:7-13).

Sixth, When did the power of the Holy Spirit come

upon the Apostles? Just before the Lord returned to the Father in Heaven, he said to the Apostles, "And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." (Luke 24:49). Again, he said, "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." (Acts 1:8). Then when we turn to Acts 2, and in fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel, we have the Holy Spirit being poured out on the Apostles there in Jerusalem, which means that they were immersed in the Spirit. With his coming upon them then he was to call to their minds all that Christ had taught them, guide them into all truth, enable them to speak in other languages and to perform miracles to convince the people that they had been sent of God and that they were preaching the truth.

Seventh, Did any others receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit? No, since the baptism of the Holy Spirit was promised only to the Apostles. That would also mean that there are none today who have the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The Apostles did lay their hands on selected ones that they might have the miraculous power of the Holy Spirit (Acts 6 and 8), but they could not in turn give it to others, and again that means that there are none today who can do miraculous things, speak in tongues, etc.

Eighth, Is it possible to receive the Holy Spirit today? Yes, all who obey the gospel, that is, all who believe in the Lord, repent of their sins, confess Christ as the Son of God, and are baptized for the remission of their sins, receives the gift of the Holy Spirit. Peter and the

Apostles told those on the day of Pentecost who had become believers in Christ, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." (Acts 2:38). This gift of the Holy Spirit of course carried with it no miraculous power.

Ninth, How does the Holy Spirit work today? He guided select ones in both Old Testament times and New Testament times to write down God's word, and therefore the Spirit speaks and works today through the word. And as already stated, all who obey the Lord receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, but I repeat, that does not mean that he gives us any miraculous power. Miraculous power existed only before the Scriptures were given in written form. Now that we have God's word we do not need any miracles to confirm the word or for the Holy Spirit to miraculously lead us to God. The Holy Spirit does all of that through the written word. If we will not believe and obey God on the basis of what the scriptures teach then the Holy Spirit cannot help us because in rejecting the written word we would be rejecting the Holy Spirit.

My prayer is that you will receive the word of the Spirit, obey God, that you might be saved and that you might be a member of the Lord's family, his church.

Lesson 4

THE BIBLE

Thank you, and I greet in you the name of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

Welcome to this broadcast where we will spend the next few minutes in a study of God's word.

We will continue our Question and Answer type study by dealing with a number of questions that have to do with the Bible itself.

First, What does the word Bible mean? It is from the Greek word, Biblos, which means, The Book. Actually, it is a book of books. The Bible consists of a total of 66 books, 39 of which make up the Old Testament section and 27 are to be found in the New Testament portion.

Second, Could you explain the significance of the Old Testament and the New Testament and their differences, if there be any? The word testament means covenant, agreement, or will. God gave a testament or will to his people in the long ago. Eventually, he gave a new testament or will. That made the first one old. That is why we speak of the Old Testament and the New Testament. All of it is the word of God but the Old Testament is no longer binding since the Lord gave a new will for his people. To illustrate: the government may make a law, and as long as that law is binding then the citizens of the country must obey it. But suppose the

government decides to abolish that law and replace it with a new and better law. Then that means that we are no longer bound to keep the first law, but rather, we must obey the new law. It is just that simple when it comes to the old and new testaments. The Hebrew writer explains it like this: "... Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away." (Hebrews 8:8-13).

Third, When did the New Testament become binding? The Hebrew writer continues, by saying, "And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while

the testator liveth." (Hebrews 9:15-17). Again, he says, "Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." (Hebrews 10:9, 10). All of this means then that when Christ died upon the cross, he took away the old law or testament and he brought into force the New Testament. We are therefore under the New Testament law and that means that we must obey that law to please God.

Fourth, Who wrote the Bible? Was it done by one person or many? It is interesting to note that over 40 people participated in the writing of the Scriptures. They wrote over a period of hundreds of years, came from many different backgrounds, and lived in several countries. Yet, they harmoniously wrote one story. How could even two persons today write a story that would agree?

Fifth, Does that mean that the Bible was written by human beings? It is true that human beings were used to pen it, but they were inspired of God to do it. In other words, they were guided by the Holy Spirit to write the things that they did. We read concerning the promise of the Holy Spirit to the Apostles, "Howbeit when he the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come." (John 16:13). Peter wrote, "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." (2 Peter 1:20, 21). Then Paul said, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for

correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." (2 Timothy 3:16, 17).

Sixth, Does this mean then that what we read in the Bible is God's word for man today? That is true. The Hebrew writer said, "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds." (Hebrews 1:1, 2). He continues, by saying, "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip, For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?" (Hebrews 2:1-4). But what does all of this mean? It means that God has always spoken to man. In the beginning God spoke directly to man. Later he spoke to man through the prophets. And finally, he speaks to man through his Son, Jesus Christ, as written down in the pages of the New Testament of the Bible. That word was confirmed by signs and miracles. The word then is powerful. We read, "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." (Hebrews 4:12). Concerning Christ, it is said, "And many other signs

truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name." (John 20:30, 31).

Seventh, What can the Scriptures do for us that the word of man cannot do? In the first place, there is a vast difference in what God says and in what man says. Christ said, "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." (John 17:17). Again, he said, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:32).

Eighth, But how can the word of God make us free? If we will hear it, believe it, and obey it, then it can save us. Paul says, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Romans 10:17). James says that we must be doers of the word. (James 1:22). Christ clearly said, "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." (Revelation 22:14).

Ninth, What are the commandments of God? Christ said to his Apostles, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." (Mark 16:15, 16). Then when we turn to the book of Acts, we have one case after another of where the gospel was preached, or the good news of the death, burial and resurrection, and those who heard it, believed in God and Christ, his Son, repented of their sins, confessed Christ as being the Son of God, and were baptized, buried in water, for the remission of their sins. (Acts 2:38; Acts 8). Now those that did that were saved

and were added to the Lord's church. (Acts 2:47). Not only so, but those who will do that today will also be saved.

Tenth, But what else does the Bible teach? It tells us about the Lord's church, worship, how to live the Christian life, heaven, hell, eternity, and everything that man needs to know to be saved in this world and in the world to come. (2 Peter 1:3).

Eleventh, How long will the Bible last? Christ said that his word would stand forever. (Matthew 24:35). He also reminds us that we will one day be judged by it. (John 12:48).

Do you believe in God? Do you believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God? Do you believe his word? Will you obey the Lord that you might be saved? I pray that you will.

But until next time, I bid you goodbye.

Lesson 5

SIN

Thank you, and greetings to you in the name of Christ.

We are happy to be with you for the purpose of studying the Bible. If you have a Bible or New Testament, please get it out and read with us the Scriptures that we'll be using.

For our lesson at this time we will be asking and answering some questions about sin.

First, What is sin? This is a good question and naturally if we are going to deal with the subject of sin then we need to know what it is. We don't hear all that much about it any more, but for those who are familiar with it then they think of it as being that which is bad, wrong, evil, wicked, ungodly, and being that which is the opposite of what is good and right. John defines sin as follows: "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law." (1 John 3:4). Sin is also defined to be that of missing the mark. In other words, God's law is there but when one does not live up to it or when one breaks it, he misses the mark or sins.

Second, How does sin relate to the Devil or Satan? Again, John says, "He that committed sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose

the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." (1 John 3:8). Then he added, "All unrighteousness is sin." (1 John 5:17). Paul even says that "... whatsoever is not of faith is sin." (Romans 14:23). Then James declares, "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." (James 4:17).

Third, Who is guilty of sin? Infants or babies are not sinners, even though there are many religious people who say they are. As a matter of fact, most of the religious world believes that babies are born into this world with sin. They teach that these babies inherited the sin of Adam. Of course the Bible does not teach this since each one will be responsible for his own sin. The man of God in the long ago declared that "the soul that sinneth, it shall die." (Ezekiel 18:4). Christ taught that when it comes to children, that of such is the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 18:1-3). But if infants and children are not sinners, then who is guilty of sin? All accountable beings, those who have reached the age where they know right from wrong, then they have become sinners. Of this class of people, Paul said, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." (Romans 3:23). Christ says that those who sin are the servants of sin. We read, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin." (John 8:34). Paul declared, "For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness." (Romans 6:20). All of this means then that when one disobeys God or does those things that are bad and wrong then he becomes a sinner, that is, as he lives in sin then he is a servant of sin, and that as such he is considered to be an enemy of God, one who is separated from God.

Fourth, What are some of the specific sins listed in the Scriptures? Paul refers to some of them as being the works of the flesh. He says, "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, and uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." (Galatians 5:12-21). On another occasion, Paul referred to those who sin, or those who break the law of God, as being the unrighteous. Of them, he said, "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God." (1 Corinthians 6:9, 10). Strange as it may sound, but there are those in our time who glory in these and many other sins. Terrorists, murderers, and killers call in to take credit for their wicked acts. Homosexuals have gone public with their practices and even make demands for themselves. Many of the movie stars of the day tell of their love affairs, of living outside of marriage, and of even having children. Abortion is upheld as being good and right. Drinking strong drink, drugs, gambling, and bribery are widespread. These things are passed off as normal practices, but my friends, the Bible says that all of these things, and hundreds and thousands of others, are bad and wrong. They are sinful, they are not good and should be rejected. Just because man may accept them, that does not make them right.

Fifth, What are the consequences of sin? Those who break God's law will have to pay a heavy price. For example, those who are immoral may contract a disease that will finally kill them. What about Aids, for example? Paul says, "For the wages of sin is death . . ." (Romans 6:23). Even those who escape the consequences of sin in this world will have to face God at the judgment. There they will not be able to escape. When we turn to Romans 1, we read of a group of people who had become so wicked and corrupt that even God gave up on them. This is a lengthy statment, but we need to hear it. Paul writes, "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleaness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen. For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is

against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whispers, backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, Without understanding covenant-breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them." (Romans 1:18-32). Now isn't that something? May the Lord help us to turn our backs upon all such things. But that's just talking about the works of the flesh. What about all of the religious sins that are committed, following men, teaching things that are contrary to God's will, and so on? These sins will also destroy. (Matthew 7:21-23; Romans 16:17, 18; 2 John 9).

Sixth, What has God done to make it possible for one to be saved from sin? First, God seeing that man was in sin, lost, and without hope, then he sent his Son into this world to die upon the cross that man might be saved. (John 3:16, 17). We are told that Christ shed his blood that man might have the remission of his sins. (Matthew 26:28). Second, even though God has provided salvation for man through the grace and mercy of giving his Son to die on the cross, that does not mean that he can be saved from his sins. In other words, for man to be saved

then he must believe in God, and believe that Christ is the Son of God. (Hebrews 11:6; John 14:1). He must repent of his sins. (Luke 13:3). He must confess Christ as being the Son of God. (Matthew 10:32). And finally, he must be baptized, buried in water, for the remission of his sins. (Acts 2:38). Now when a sinner does this then the Lord forgives him, saves him, and makes him a member of his family, the church. (Acts 2:47). If he will then remain faithful to the Lord, walking in the light as he is in the light, then the blood of Jesus Christ will continue to cleanse him of his sin. (1 John 1:7). Finally, being faithful unto death, heaven will be his eternal home. (Revelation 2:10).

Doesn't this sound better than living in sin, suffering the consequences of sin, to die the death of a sinner, and finally to be cast into eternal torment? If you don't want that to happen to you, then turn to the Lord while you may.

Thank you for listening, and goodbye till next time.

Lesson 6

AUTHORITY

Thank you, and I bring you greetings in the name of Christ.

It is a real pleasure to be back with this period of Bible Study.

We'll continue with our series of lessons that have to do with Bible Questions and Answers.

Our subject for this study will have to do with the authority of Christ or authority in religion.

First, What is authority? The power or right to act, to speak, and to direct; to reign, to have dominion, to rule. It means strength.

Second, Who has such power in religion? Christ is said to have that power or authority. We read, "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen." (Matthew 28:18-20). It was said of the people of Jesus day, "And they were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes." (Mark 1:22). It was said of Jesus, "Never man spake like this man." (John 7:46).

Peter said concerning Christ, "Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him." (1 Peter 3:22).

Continuing, Paul says, in speaking of Christ, "In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence." (Colossians 1:14-18). To the Philippian Christians, Paul said, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Philippians 2:5-11).

Now, let's see what we have here. Christ came from God to declare his will. He came speaking as one having authority, and he even stated that he had all power in heaven and earth. Christ died that man might be saved

and returned to the Father in heaven to sit down at the right hand of God with angels, authorities, and powers being made subject unto him. By him were all things made that were made, and therefore he is over all, and being made head of the body, the church. His name has been exalted above every name, that at his name every knee should bow in heaven and in earth and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

Third, What else is said about Christ having power or authority? It was something that was even foretold by the prophets. After Peter and the Apostles had preached the gospel to the people in Jerusalem, the record goes on to say, "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began. For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people. Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days. Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities." (Acts 3:19-26). Please note that God would raise up a

prophet like unto Moses and that all should hear the things that he would have to say. And he continued by saying that those who refused to hear him would be destroyed, that is, they could not be saved in this world or the world to come.

Fourth, How does the Lord convey his word to us? We read in Matthew 17:5 that God said concerning his Son, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." The Hebrew writer says that God has spoken to man in times past in different ways, but in these last days he speaks to us through his Son. (Hebrews 1;1, 2). Therefore, whatever the Lord has said then we must believe it and obey it. We read concerning him, "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." (Hebrews 5:8, 9). Christ therefore says that we are not to add to his word or to subtract from it. (Revelation 22:18, 19).

Fifth, How are we to show respect for the authority of Christ? We are to believe in him. (John 14:1). If we refuse to believe in him then we will be lost. (John 8:24). Then we must repent of our sins. Why must we repent? Because Christ said that we should, and he has asked us to turn away from those things that will hurt us or destroy us. Christ said that we should repent or perish. (Luke 13:3). Peter said that the Lord would have all men everywhere to come to repentance. (2 Peter 3:9). Next, Christ would have us to confess him before men. He said, "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven." (Matthew

10:32, 33). Finally, he has asked us to be baptized. He said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." (Mark 16:16).

Sixth, Now why should we obey those commands? Because Christ is man's Saviour and he has said that we should do those things to be saved.

Seventh, What if we refuse to obey the Lord? Then he will not save us, but at the same time he has the power to reject us. Christ says, "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." (John 12:48).

Eighth, What will the Lord do if we obey his teaching? He will save us and add us to his church. (Acts 2:38; Acts 2:47).

Ninth, But what about Moses and the Law? Remember that it was said that a prophet like unto Moses would be raised up and that all would hear him and those that would not hear him would be destroyed? (Acts 3:22, 23). We are not under the law of Moses, but under the law of Christ. (James 1:25).

Tenth, What about religious leaders of our day who speak with the authority of their churches or religions? They are false prophets and teachers and they stand condemned before God and those who listen to them and follow them will also be lost. Christ himself said, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I

profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." (Matthew 7:21-23). Christ warned that many false prophets or teachers would arise. (Matthew 24:11). John pleads, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits (preachers or teachers) whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." (1 John 4:1).

Eleventh, So who has all authority? Christ and Christ alone. Therefore, we must submit ourselves to him and comply fully with his will if we are to be saved. If we refuse to do so, and we can do that if we so desire, then we will be lost.

It is my prayer that you will accept Christ as your Lord and Saviour. If we can be of further help to you with these matters, please let us know.

Thank you for listening and goodbye till next time.

Lesson 7

THE GOSPEL

Thank you, and I come to your again in the name of Christ.

How are you? I pray that all goes well for you and that you have a few minutes that you can devote to a study of God's word. We are attempting to answer some questions from the Bible, and I might add that if you have questions or comments to make about this programme that we would welcome your card or letter.

For this time, we are going to be asking and answering some questions about the gospel of Christ.

First, What does the word gospel mean? Speaking of the importance of taking the gospel to a lost world, Paul says, "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" (Romans 10:13-15).

Second, But what is the basis for that good news? Again, we will let Paul answer that question. In speaking to the Corinthians, he said, "Moreover, brethren, I

declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures." (1 Corinthians 15:1-4). Please notice that he said that he had preached the gospel to them, that they had received it, and through their obedience to it that they were saved, that is, unless they had believed in vain or had impure motives. But notice further that he said that he had delivered or preached to them how that Christ had died for their sins, had been buried, and had arisen from the grave. So the gospel, that is, the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, is good news. The good news is that Christ made it possible for us to be saved, to be resurrected from the grave when Jesus returns, and to have an eternal home in heaven.

Third, Now, how does one apply the gospel to his life so that it can save him. Referring back to Paul's statement; he said that he had preached the gospel to them, that they had received it, and that they had been saved by it. But what all is involved in receiving the gospel and being saved by it? Turn with me to Mark 16:15, 16, and we'll allow Christ himself to explain that to us. He said to the Apostles just before he returned to the Father in heaven: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." (Mark 16:15, 16). According to Christ himself, he said that the gospel was to be

preached, that is, his death, burial, and resurrection, and that those who heard the gospel would be expected to meet certain conditions in order to be saved by it.

Fourth, What do you mean by conditions? Conditions would be terms, requirements, commands, or specific things that one would be expected to do.

Fifth, But doesn't the Bible teach that we are saved by grace? According to Ephesians 2:8, 9 and Titus 3:5 we are told that we are saved by the grace and mercy of God and not by the works of our own righteousness. It is true that we cannot save ourselves, that we cannot do enough good works to be saved, but regardless of what we do, how many commands that we obey, still if we are saved it will be by the grace and mercy of God. Just because one complies with a few conditions that does not mean that one is earning his salvation. One cannot expect to be saved by the grace of God, however, if he refuses to comply with the Lord's will concerning salvation.

Sixth, What then would be some of the conditions or terms of pardon? As we read in Mark 16:15, 16, it would not only be necessary to hear the gospel, but one would also have to believe the gospel, and to believe the gospel means that one would have to believe in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and he would have to believe in God because it was God who sent Christ into this world to die on the cross that man might be saved. Paul declared, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Romans 10:17). In Mark 16:16 Christ said that one must believe. Paul stated in Romans 10:10 that with a heart one believes unto righteousness. The Hebrew writer said, "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them

that diligently seek him." (Hebrews 11:6). Then Christ added, "Ye believe in God, believe also in me." (John 14:1). Again, he said, "I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he ye shall die in your sins." (John 8:24).

Seventh, Are there other conditions of the Lord or of the gospel that one must comply with to be saved? Yes, there are. Another would be repentance. But what is repentance? It is that of turning away from one's sins or that which is bad and wrong in one's life. How can one expect the Lord to save him if he is going on to do those things that condemned him in the first place? In other words, if one has been lying then he quits lying and begins to tell the truth. If he has been stealing then he quits taking those things that do not belong to him and he begins to work to make his own living. That is repentance. Christ said that one must repent or perish. (Luke 13:3). Paul said that God commands all men everywhere to repent. (Acts 17:30). Peter stated the same in 2 Peter 3:9. After the Apostles had preached the gospel to the people on the day of Pentecost in the city of Jerusalem, and after a large number of them had become believers, they then asked what else they should do. The record says, "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." (Acts 2:38).

Eighth, What condition follows repentance? As we read through the Scriptures, and especially the cases of conversion in the books of Acts, then we see that those who obeyed the Lord confessed their faith in Christ as the Son of God. After Philip had preached Christ to the man from Ethiopia, and he wanted to be baptized, Philip

said that he could if he believed with all of his heart that Jesus Christ was the Son of God. It was then that he said that he believed in Christ, and only then did Philip baptize him. (Acts 8:36-38). Christ said that if we would confess him before men that he would confess us before his Father in Heaven. (Matthew 10:32).

Ninth, Are there other conditions to salvation? There is one more. This one is baptism, a burial in water. (Acts 8; Colossians 2:12). We have already read Acts 2:38 where it said that on repenting and being baptized that one could have remission of his sins. Christ said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." (Mark 16:16). The Scriptures also tell us that baptism puts one into Christ and his church. (Romans 6:3, 4; 1 Corinthians 12:13).

Tenth, But why is baptism so important? Actually, each thing that the Lord has asked one to do to be saved is important. But through complying with these conditions and terms of pardon, and especially in baptism, one depicts the Lord's death, burial, and resurrection. (Romans 6). Christ physically died, was buried, and was resurrected from the grave. In obedience to Christ, one dies to his sins, is buried in the waters of baptism, and is resurrected from the watery grave to a new life. This is spoken of as a new birth (John 3:3-5), and a new life in Christ. (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Eleventh, But how can one obey the gospel? As we have already seen, by obeying the commands or complying with the conditions of the gospel. Paul said that the Lord would come back to take vengeance on those who do not obey the gospel. (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9). Peter wanted to know what would happen to those who obeyed not the gospel. (1 Peter 4:17). The answer is obvious

from Paul's statement.

Twelveth, How many gospels do we read about in the Scriptures? Just one, and Paul said that he had preached that one gospel, and if there be those who preached another gospel then the curse of God would be upon them. (Galatians 1:6-9).

Thirteenth, What are the promises of the gospel? Salvation and the gift of the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2:38). Being added to the Lord's church, being in Christ. (Acts 2:47; Galatians 3:26, 27). And to sum it all up, having all spiritual blessings in Christ and the hope of eternal life. (Ephesians 1:3; 1 Corinthians 13:13).

Now then, you have heard the gospel. The question is, Will you believe it and obey it? You must if you are to be saved in this world and in the world to come. We pray that you will. If we can help you with your study, answer your questions, or assist you in your obedience, please let us know.

Thank you for listening, and goodbye for now.

Lesson 8

FAITH

Thank you, and in the name of Jesus Christ I greet you with this period of Bible study.

For our lesson at this time we are going to ask some questions about faith and then we'll go to the Bible for the answers.

First, What is faith? That is a question that has been asked many times. It is also a question that is difficult to answer. The best definition we can give from the scriptures is found in Hebrews 11:1. There the writer says, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." In other words, we believe in God because of the many evidences that tells us that he lives. We have never seen him, but still we have every confidence that he exists. Neither have we seen Jesus Christ and the Apostles but we believe that they lived several hundred years ago. Why do we believe? Because the Scriptures tell us so. Also, we believe that they lived because of all of the influence that they have had on the world. There are so many things, people, and places in the world today that we have never personally seen, but again, we believe that they exist because of the evidences that suggest that they exist. There may be writings or we may have heard some of these people by means of radio or we may have seen them

on TV. Faith would also be defined as belief or trust.

Second, Does this mean then that our faith comes from hearing the word of God? That is true. Paul said, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing the word of God." (Romans 10:17). It might be pointed out that this would be true whether one is reading the word of God or hearing it preached. In either case one is hearing the word of God.

Third, What does the word of God consist of today? It has come to us in the form of the Bible, including both the Old Testament and the New Testament. God has spoken and then that which he has said was written down and passed on down to us. (Hebrews 1:1, 2). Paul says that it is all given by the inspiration of God. (2 Timothy 3:16, 17). So when we read and study the Scriptures, then faith is produced, that is, we believe what we read and then we act upon it.

Fourth, But hasn't God revealed his will in other ways or given additional revelation in recent times? No, God does not speak to people today through angels, visions, dreams, and suchlike. Neither does he speak through man today to reveal new truths or to give additional information. Many claim all of these things but according to the word of God itself we are not to add to it or to subtract from it. (Revelation 22:18, 19). Then Peter said that the Lord has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3) and Paul said that the Scriptures completely furnish us unto every good work. (2 Timothy 3:16, 17). James calls it the perfect law of liberty. (James 1:25). Then Paul stated to the Galatians that he had preached the gospel to them but if another came and preached another gospel or something that was contrary to what he had already preached, then he said

that the curse of God would be upon him. He said that would be true if he preached another gospel or even if an angel came from heaven and preached some new gospel. Now if that be true, then how could anyone claim that some new revelation has been given? Certainly none has been given. We already have the full and complete and final revelation of God. If we will believe it and do what it teaches then we can be saved in this world and have the hope of eternal life.

Fifth, How many faiths or beliefs are there? The Apostle Paul tells us that there is but one faith? If we have but one Bible, and it contains the word of God, and we all believe it, then we will all believe the same thing. That means then that there is but one faith. But someone says, "Yes, but we may see it differently and end up in believing different things." Does that mean that we would blame God with giving us a book that we cannot understand and therefore we would be divided on what we believe? Surely God is not responsible, but if we believe differently then it is man's fault. It would be obvious in that case that someone does not believe what the Scriptures teach.

Sixth, In the end, does it really matter what we believe? We hear the statement made all the time that it doesn't matter what you believe just so long as you are honest and sincere. Yes, but we can be honestly and sincerely mistaken. We may honestly and sincerely believe that one can be saved and go to heaven without believing that Christ is the Son of God, but does that make it so? Certainly not. As a matter of fact, there are all kinds of beliefs, and those who believe them are honest and sincere about it, but still, they are mistaken.

Seventh, Can one be saved by faith alone? According

to the Scripture, one cannot. It is true that there are many verses of scripture that speak of faith without including other things. Some would conclude from that faith only saves. But people who would come to such a conclusion are not good Bible students or else they are already convinced of faith only and that is all that they want to see. But if you'll take a close look at that verse then you will see that the faith mentioned is the kind of faith that leads one to obey God. Also, look at all of the other things that God requires of one to be saved. What about repentance, confessing faith in Christ, baptism for the remission of sins, worship, etc? If you really believe in God you will do whatever he asks you to do. The Hebrew writer said, "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him". (Hebrews 11:6). James said, "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works. Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled

which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way? For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also." (James 1:14-26). All of this means then that faith prompts one to obey God. If one doesn't have enough faith to do what the Lord asks him to do then his faith is dead.

Eighth, But what does faith lead one to do? It leads one not only to believe in God's existence, but also that Christ is the Son of God. (John 14:1). Faith leads one to repent of his sins because Christ says that we must repent or perish. (Luke 13:3). Faith leads one to confess Christ as being the Son of God. (Matthew 10:32). And then faith leads one to be baptized. Christ said that "he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." (Mark 16:16). He went on to say that "he that believeth not shall be damned." What is the Lord saying here? He is saying that if you want to be saved that you must believe enough to obey him. On the other hand, he says that if you want to be lost then it is not even necessary to believe. Now, do you believe or not?

As a result of our faith in the Lord, and being obedient to him, then he saves us and adds us to his church. As children of God then we must continue to believe and to be obedient. Christ said that if we would be faithful unto death that we would receive a crown of life. (Revelation 2:10).

My friends, do you believe in God? Do you believe that Christ is the Son of God? Do you believe enough

to obey the Lord? I pray that you have that kind of faith.

Thank you for taking the time to study these matters with me. If we can help you in any way, please let us know.

I'll say goodbye now until the next broadcast.

Lesson 9

BAPTISM

Thank you, and greetings to you in the name of Christ.

We are presently devoting some time to that of answering Bible questions on different themes. We would hope that in doing this that we are able to answer the questions that you might have concerning these matters. For sure, we desire to teach the truth only and we trust that the information given will be beneficial to you. I might add that if you have some specific questions that you would like to ask, just send them to us and we'll get to them as soon as we can.

Our lesson at this time will have to do with the subject of baptism. We thought it would be appropriate to give some time to this since in a previous lesson we talked about the gospel, and in that study the subject of baptism was brought up. To be sure that we understand as well as possible what baptism is all about, then we are going to answer a number of questions that will help to bring the truth out on this great Bible theme.

First, What is baptism? It is only natural that we would want to begin with this question in that if we know the meaning of baptism then this will go a long way in helping us to understand the purpose of baptism. The word baptism in the Greek language is "baptizo", actually

an anglicized word, which means immersion, to dip, to plunge, to completely overwhelm. It also means a burial. But let's go to the Scriptures to see what is said. The Apostle Paul said, "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead." (Colossians 2:12).

Second, Can baptism ever mean sprinkling or pouring or something besides a burial? Not if we stay with the Greek language and its meaning, and if we confine ourselves to the teaching of the Bible. Now man has decided that sprinkling or pouring can be substituted for baptism but this cannot be done with the Lord's approval. Those that have had some water sprinkled on them or who have had water poured on their head, or some similar gesture as a substitute for baptism, have never been scripturally baptized. If we are going to obey God then we must understand that we must do what God has said and not what man teaches.

Third, In what must one be buried if he is to be scripturally baptized? When we turn to Acts 8 we have the story of Philip preaching Christ to a man from Ethiopia. The record says, "And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, and the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing." (Acts

8:36-39). So from what we read here then we would have to conclude beyond a shadow of doubt that baptism is a burial in water. Please notice that it specifically says after Philip explained that he would baptize him if he believed that Christ was the Son of God, and after the eunuch said that he believed in Christ, then they both went down into the water. Why did they do that? So that Philip might baptize the man that wanted to be baptized; and since baptism is a burial, in order that Philip might bury him in water. Then notice that after he baptized him that they both came up out of the water. But was the water here really water? If language means anything then we would have to say that it was water. Certainly it doesn't say that it was milk, oil or something else, Therefore, water there was simply water, something they could go down into, and once the baptism, or burial in water, had taken place, then it was something that they could come up out of and leave behind. But someone might want to know, "If baptism is a burial in water, then what would happen if one was out in a desert somewhere and wanted to obey the Lord, and there was no water available?" Well, here in Acts 8 you have a good example of a man in that very setting, except for the fact that there was water there and he was able to be baptized. Moreover, I dare say that wherever an individual found himself, that if he really wanted to obey the Lord, that there would be an opportunity afforded him to do that, and even though he may be out in some desert, because believe it or not, water can be found in desert places, he would still be able to obey God. My friends, we should be looking for ways to obey God instead of trying to come up with some way to get around our obedience to him. It is God

who has commanded, and it is up to us to comply with his wishes. If we do not, then we must answer to him for that, and it will be up to him as to how he deals with that, and not according to what we think he should do.

Fourth, But how many baptisms are there in the Scriptures? Well, we read of John's baptism, and it was a burial in water too (Mathew 3:13; John 3:23) but we read in Acts 19 of those who had been baptized according to John's baptism and Paul took them and baptized them in the name of Christ. We also read of other baptisms like the baptism of suffering (Matthew 20:22), having reference to Christ being immersed in suffering on the cross, the baptism in the cloud and the sea (1 Corinthians 10:2), referring back to the time that God's people were delivered from the land of bondage, passing through the sea with the cloud overhead and thus being immersed in the protection of God. Going on, there was the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the baptism of fire that Christ spoke of in Matthew 3:11. The baptism of the Holy Spirit had to do with the promise made to the Apostles that they would be immersed in the Spirit and therefore the Spirit would guide them, enable them to perform miracles, etc., to prove to the people that they had been sent of God to preach his word. The baptism of fire has to do with the wicked one day being cast into the lake of fire and eternal punishment. That leaves us then with one final baptis'm the one that we have already identified as being a burial, and a burial in water. All other baptisms had come and gone, except for water baptism, according to Paul, and of course the fire baptism that Christ spoke of which doesn't have to do with our time but will come in the next world. But when Paul wrote around A.D. 64, he

said at that time that there was but one baptism binding on man (Ephesians 4:5), and that baptism continues to be binding up to this time, and will go on being required of man until the end of time.

Fifth, What is the purpose of this baptism? Christ says that one must believe and be baptized in order to be saved. (Mark 16:16). Peter taught that believers in Christ should repent and be baptized for the remission of sins. (Acts 2:38). Again, he said that baptism saves. (1 Peter 3:21). Saul was told to arise and be baptized to wash away his sins. (Acts 22:16).

Sixth, But how could baptism save anyone? Baptism alone cannot save, of course. For it to save than one must first believe in the Lord, repent of his sins, confess Christ as being the Son of God, and then he must be baptized for the remission of his sins. (Acts 2 and 8). Baptism just happens to be the final act of obedience and when one complies with it, as the Lord has instructed, then he is forgiven, his sins are remitted and he is saved.

Seventh, What else does the Bible say about baptism? When one obeys the Lord, and as seen, the final act of obedience is baptism, then in doing that one pictures the Lord's death, burial, and resurrection. (Romans 6:3, 4). That is, one dies to his sins, he is buried in the waters of baptism to wash away his sins by the blood of Christ, and he is then resurrected from that watery grave to walk in newness of life. This is said to be the new birth that Christ spoke of in John 3:3, 5. Paul also tells us that through baptism we enter Christ (Galatians 3:26, 27) and the Lord's church. (1 Corinthians 12:13).

Now, have you obeyed the Lord? Have you been scripturally baptized? If not, we want to encourage you

to do it. God commands and we must obey. It is only then that we can be saved.

Thank you for joining me for this study and if we can be of assistance to you, and especially to help you obey the Lord, please let us hear from you.

God be with you till we meet again. Goodbye till then.

Lesson 10

THE CHURCH

Thank you, and in the name of Christ we greet you with another broadcast of The Voice of Truth.

Our study for this occasion will have to do with the church. We are going to be asking and answering some questions that have to do with this subject and you are invited to think seriously about the things that shall be said.

If you have Bible questions or comments pertaining to any of our programmes, we would be happy to hear from you. Now, for our study.

First, What is the church? Is it a building, a club, or what? Very few people really know what the church is. They talk about going to church when referring to that of going to a meeting house. The word church comes from the Greek word "Ekklesia" which means, "the called out." (Roman 1:1-7) Actually, it means a called-out group of people. This describes God's people exactly since they have been called out of the world into a saved state; they have been called out of sin into a state of holiness; they have been called out of darkness into light; they have been called out of the kingdom of Satan into the kingdom of God or Christ. While praying to his Father, Christ said concerning his disciples, "I have given them thy word; and the world

hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." (John 17:14-16). Christ uses the world here in two senses. One was in the sense that the world represented that which is bad and wrong. The other was in the sense of being the earth. Therefore he said that his people had been called away from that which was bad and wrong even though they still lived in the world, that is, on the earth. Paul said concerning the Lord's church, "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son." (Colossians 1:13).

Second, Is the church always spoken of in the local sense or is it also worldwide? It is said to exist in two senses. First, it is spoken of in a universal sense. Christ said, "I will build my church." (Matthew 16:18). Now when Christ said that, he wasn't thinking of the church necessarily on a local level, but wherever it might be found in the world. Second, it is spoken of on a local level. Paul spoke of the church at Corinth (1 Corinthians 1:1, 2), the church at Thessalonica (1 Thessalonians 1:1), and so on. When one obeys God in a particular place then he becomes a member of a local congregation of the church, and worships and works with that congregation, but wherever he goes in the world and finds the Lord's people, locally, then he may worship and work with them since he is a member of the church wherever it exists in the world.

Third, What are some of the other ways in which the church may be described? Well, it is said to be made up of those who have been saved by Christ. On the day

of Pentecost, when Peter and the Apostles preached the gospel to a large group of people, some three thousand of them obeyed God and were saved. (Acts 2:38-41). Then we read, "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." (Acts 2:47). Then the church is said to be the body of Christ or the spiritual body of Christ. In 1 Corinthians 12 Paul compares the spiritual body with the physical body, and then he says concerning the church, "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular." (1 Corinthians 12:27). Next the church is spoken of as being the house of God (1 Timothy 3:15) which would be the family of God. It is also said to be the kingdom of God or the kingdom of Christ. (John 3:3; Ephesians 5:5).

Fourth, What are some marks of identification of the church? First, it was built by Christ. Jesus said, "... I will build my church." (Matthew 16:18). Second, Christ built only one church. Notice again what the Lord said in Matthew 16:18. He said, "... I will build my church." How many churches? Just one. (Ephesians 4:4). Third, the church had its beginning in Jerusalem. It was prophesied that it would begin in Jerusalem. (Isaiah 2:1-3; Joel 2:28, 29). When we turn to Acts 1:8 Christ told the Apostles that they would be his witnesses beginning at Jerusalem. In Acts 2, with the Apostles preaching the gospel in Jerusalem for the first time, some three thousand obeyed the Lord and so the church had its beginning. Fourth, it had its beginning in A.D. 33. Going back to Acts 2, we have the Apostles preaching the gospel in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost, some fifty days after the Lord's death, burial, and resurrection, and so it is said that the church had its beginning in approximately A.D. 33. Fifth, Christ is said to be the foundation of the

church. After Peter had confessed Christ to be the Son of God, the Lord said that upon that rock, or upon that confession that he was the Son of God, that he would build his church. (Matthew 16:16-18). Paul declared, "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." (1 Corinthians 3:11). Therefore the church rests upon the fact that Christ is the Son of God. That is true even to this day. If it could be proven that Christ was an impostor then the church would immediately fall, never to rise again." Furthermore, any religious group that is founded on man, and the teachers of man, cannot be the church of our Lord, but is doomed to fail. Sixth, the church wears the name of Christ. We read in Romans 16:16 of the churches of Christ, speaking of the different congregations of the church in that area. In 1 Corinthians 12:27 Paul talked about the body of Christ, which is the church of Christ. (Colossians 1:18; Ephesians 1:22, 23). Even the individual members of the church wore the name of Christ since they were called Christians. (Acts 11:26; 1 Peter 4:16). The Scriptures tell us that salvation is in the name of Christ. (Acts 4:12). We are also told that we should do all in his name. (Colossians 3:17). How could a church or a follower of Christ claim to belong to the Lord if they did not even respect the Lord enough to wear his name? Seventh, Christ is said to be the head of the church. Paul says, "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the Saviour of the body." (Ephesians 5:23). This is also stated in Colossians 1:18 and Ephesians 1:22, 23. Eighth, Christ is the saviour of the body or church. As we noticed in Ephesians 5:23, it says that Christ is saviour of the body, the church. In Acts 2:47 it says that Christ added the saved to the

church. Who saved them? Christ. If they are saved, where are they? In the church. What if they are not in the church? Then they are not saved because if they were saved then Christ would add them to the church, his church.

Continuing, and ninth, Christ died for the church or shed his blood to purchase it. In Ephesians 5:25 Paul says that Christ gave himself for the church. On another occasion, he said to the elders of the church at Ephesus, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." (Acts 20:28). The church therefore is important, and one must be a member of it in order to be saved and go to heaven. The church is not the saviour but Christ is and when he saves one then he adds him to his church, and therefore the church is made up of the saved. Tenth, to be a member of the church then one must believe in the Lord, repent of his sins, confess Christ to be the Son of God, and then be baptized for the remission of sins. When one does that, according to Acts 2, then the Lord saves that person and adds him to his church. There is no other way to enter. Eleventh, and finally, those who are members of the church and faithfully worship the Lord, live Godly lives, and serve him all the days of their lives, then on the Lord's return for his church, he will take them to heaven. (John 14:1-3; John 14:6; I Corinthians 15:58; Ephesians 5:23-27).

Now in conclusion, let me ask just one more question. Fifth, What about all of the denominational churches? The Lord did not establish them and therefore they do not belong to him. Christ said that every plant that his

heavenly Father had not planted would be rooted up. (Matthew 15:13). Christ prayed that we might be one and not divided. (John 17; 1 Corinthians 1:10; Romans 16:17, 18).

My friend, what about you? Are you a member of Christ's church, the one that we can read about in the Bible? If not, then you are either not a member of any church or you are a member of the wrong church. We want to encourage you to become acquainted with the Lord's church. Think about the things we have said. Study the Scriptures concerning these matters. And finally, we pray that you will obey God and let him add you to the church that belongs to Christ. If we can be of help, please let us know.

I look forward to our next study together. Until then, I bid you goodbye for now.

Lesson 11

THE ORGANIZATION OF THE CHURCH

Thank you, and I bring you greetings in the name of Christ.

Please give me a few minutes of your time so we can study together from the word of God.

For our lesson, we are going to make a study of the organization of the church. We'll ask a number of questions and then go to the Scriptures for the answers.

First, What do you mean by organization? I am talking about the way a thing is put together, its members, and how they relate to each other and to their head, and the kind of work they are able to do. Of course in this case we are especially concerned about the scriptural organization of the Lord's church.

Every company, business, school, government, or what have you, has to be properly organized if it is to accomplish very much. Such is likewise true with the church.

Second, How was the church organized in the beginning? Christ himself promised and built the church, his church. (Matthew 16:18; Ephesians 4:4). The church is made up of people, of those who have obeyed the Lord, and as a result of their being saved, Christ has added them to his church. (Acts 2). Another way of putting it, the church is the spiritual body of Christ on earth. (Ephesians 5:23-27). Next, Christ is head of the body or church.

Paul said, "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body." (Ephesian 5:23). To the same Ephesian Christians, he wrote, "And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." (Ephesians 1:22, 23). Then to the Colossian Christians, he said, in speaking of Christ, "And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence." (Colossians 1:18). Therefore the Scriptures are very clear on who built the church, how many churches were built, what the church is, and the fact that Christ is the head of it.

Third, What part does man play in the organization of the church? First, we should point out that the church is universal or international, that is, it is to be found all over the world. But the church is made up of thousands of local congregations in cities, villages and in the countryside, just like each local congregation is made up of a group of individual members or Christians. While Christ is head of the church in both a universal and local sense, when it comes to the members, they operate entirely on a local level. You do not have members of the church occupying universal, international, or national posts in the church. Neither does the church of our Lord have a human head or earthly headquarters. The head of the church is Christ and he is in heaven. He does not share this position with any man. But when it comes to the local congregation of the church, then it is made up of a multitude of members, men, women, and young people. They may represent different ages. Each congregation is autonomous, that is, each congregation is independent

and self-sufficient. One congregation cannot control another congregation, but they may cooperate and work together in various good works. The local congregation may have preachers and teachers. Then to give leadership to it, the Lord has said that each congregation is to have its own elders and deacons, provided there are men within the congregation that can meet the qualifications that have been laid down in the Scriptures. All of the members are to be subject to the elders as they direct the work according to the Lord's will, and they are to be subject to Christ in all that they do.

Fourth, What are the qualifications for being an elder in a local congregation? Before we answer that, we should explain that the Lord so planned it so that each congregation would have two or more elders. If only one man is qualified to be appointed to be an elder, then he cannot be appointed until there is at least one other brother that can serve as an elder. The Lord specified that it should be this way so that the local church would not end up with a dictatorship. But Paul said concerning the qualifications of being an elder of the local church, "This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop (or elder), he desireth a good work. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without: lest he fall into reproach and

the snare of the devil." (1 Timothy 3:1-7). Please note that the term bishop in the Scriptures also refers to an elder. A bishop or an elder is also referred to as a presbyter and shepherd. So there are several terms that refer to the same office.

Continuing, Paul writes to Titus concerning the elder's or bishop's qualifications, "For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers." (Titus 1:7-9). As you can see, to qualify to be an elder or bishop, then one had to desire to serve, and he had to possess qualities that would help him to lead the church. He had to be a good moral man, and one who was the head of his family. Of course every Christian should be able to have most of those qualities in his or her life, but not every Christian could be an elder. The Scriptures certainly do not suggest that a woman could be an elder.

Fifth, What about a deacon and his qualifications? A deacon would be working under the elders of a local congregation. There would also be two or more in each congregation, and they would assist the elders with their work. Concerning the deacons, Paul said, "Likewise must the deacons be grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless. Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. Let

the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus." (1 Timothy 3:8-13).

Again, I think you can see from Paul's statement concerning the deacons qualifications, that a man would have to possess good morals, have a good Christian home, not be out for money, would be in control of himself, and would have to be able to serve with others and under the elders, in order to be chosen for such an office.

Sixth, What is the highest office in the church? It would be that of being one of the elders in a local congregation. Next to that would be that of being one of the deacons in a local congregation. Preachers, teachers, and all other members then would follow. The Lord so arranged the organization of the church so that one could not rise to a high position in the church, being over a city, a part of a country, a country, or a number of countries. In this way man cannot bribe his way to such positions or be filled with pride as a result of occupying such a position. And as members of the local congregation we must be subject to the elders as they are subject to Christ.

Much more could be said about all of these things, but perhaps this gives you a glimpse of what the organization of the Lord's church is like.

We again would hope that you are a Christian and a member of the Lord's church, but if you are not, the Lord invites you to come to him in faith, to repent of your sins, to confess him as being the Son of God, and to be baptized to wash away your sins. On doing that then he

will save you and add you to his church. (Acts 2). If we can study further with you, send you some literature, or help you to obey the Lord, please let us know.

Thank you again for being with us, and we hope to be with you again on the next regular broadcast. Goodbye till then.

Lesson 12

THE NAME

Thank you, and greetings to you in the name Christ.

We come to you with another Bible lesson. We hope you will take the time to think about the things that will be said.

We want you to know that we are interested in you and that is why we put forth this effort to study with you. We would also appreciate a card or letter from you to let us know that you are listening. If you have questions or some problem that you would like to call to our attention, by all means let us hear from you.

The theme for our study at this time will have to do with the importance of the name we wear as followers of Christ.

First, What's in a name? The majority of the religious world says that there is nothing in a name. They say that the name is not important, that one name is as good as another.

Before getting on with the religious side of it, let me show you how important even our own personal names are. To begin with, each one of us has a name, don't we? What about that name? Is it important to you? Suppose someone says something bad about you? You don't like it, do you? Why? Because they are degrading your name, they are giving you a bad name. It is therefore

very important that we keep a good name, that we are honest, that we always tell the truth, that we are good workers, that we pay our debts, that we provide for our families, etc. If we do those things then we have a good name. When they think of us in relation to those good things, then they think of our name or they speak our name when they talk to others about our good deeds. But if we are dishonest, won't pay our debts, mean to our families, and such like, then that gives us a bad name. People talk about us, call us by name, and point out to their friends that we are bad. That is why Solomon talked about the importance of a good name. He said, "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold." (Proverbs 22:1). Again, he said, "A good name is better than precious ointment." (Ecclesiastes 7:1). On the other hand, Solomon said, "The memory of the just is blessed: but the name of the wicked shall rot." (Proverbs 10:7). One's good name and good conduct are synonymous—to think of the one is to think of the other. The same is also true with reference to a bad name and a bad character. When one loses his good name, that is, because of some bad deed, and one's friends lose respect for him, then he has lost everything in this world. He can have lots of money but if he doesn't have a good name, if his friends do not respect him, if they look on him as a crook, then what does he have? Yes, the name is very important. One should do everything that he can to keep a good name.

But if that be true with our physical or earthly or family names, then how much the more is this true when it comes to the spiritual side of things? Speaking of the name of Christ, Peter said, "Neither is there salvation in any other name under heaven given among men, whereby

we must be saved." Salvation therefore is in the name of Christ.

Second, Why would salvation be in the name of Christ? Well, let's see why his name is so important. Paul said, "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, the glory of God the Father." (Philippians 2:9-11). Again, he said, "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named." (Ephesians 3:14, 15).

There are many other scriptures that also emphasize the importance of the Lord's name. Paul wrote the Colossian Christians, "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him." (Colossians 3:17). The Hebrew writer said concerning Christ, "Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they." (Hebrews 1:4). Paul wrote Timothy about naming the name of Christ. (2 Timothy 2:19). Christ said that if we would confess him before men that he would confess us before the Father in heaven. (Matthew 10:32). The man from Ethiopia confessed his faith in Christ in order to obey the Lord. (Acts 8:37). James warned that we should not blaspheme that worthy name by which we are called. (James 2:7). John said that one's sins are forgiven for his name's sake, that is, for the sake of the Lord's name. (1 John 2:12).

Now, what does all of this tell us? It tells us how

great the Lord's name is, that salvation is in that name, that we must confess that name to obey God, and then all that we do is to be done in the Lord's name so that he will receive the praise and honor for it.

Third, How do we wear the Lord's name? Through our belief in God; and his Son, Jesus Christ, and by confessing our faith in Christ, by repenting of our sins, and by being baptized for the remission of our sins, then the Lord saves us and adds us to his church. (Mark 16:15, 16; Matthew 10:32; Acts 2:38, 47). Christ and the church are compared to a husband and a wife. Christ is the groom and the church is the bride. Now when a man takes a wife then the wife takes her husband's name. Likewise, the bride of Christ, the church, takes the name of Christ, the bridegroom. That means then that as members of the church that we take the name of Christ, and also as individual followers of Christ, we wear his name. (Ephesians 5:23-27; Romans 7:1-4; Revelation 19:7; Revelation 21, Revelation 22:17).

Fourth, What is the name of the church? Since Christ promised it, built it, died for it, and saved it, then it is his church, and therefore it wears his name. That means then that it is called church of Christ, body of Christ, and kingdom of Christ. All of these expressions speak of the Lord's church, his people, and how they belong to Christ. The church is also referred to as the house of God, the kingdom of God, and the church of God. That which belongs to Christ also belongs to his Father.

When we turn to Romans 16:16 we have Paul referring to the congregations of the area sending greetings to the brethren in Rome. Therefore, he says, "The churches of Christ salute you". (Romans 16:16). If the church does not belong to the Lord, then whose would it be?

If we are not going to wear the Lord's name, then whose name would we wear? What better name could we wear than the name of Christ? How could any man's name, or any name that man might think up be equal to the name of Christ?

You and I know that when we marry we want our wife to wear our name. That means that she belongs to me. That also means that she honors me by wearing my name. There are some places where this practice is not followed but most people do honor this procedure in their marriage relationships. Certainly if we buy a house, car, or whatever, we want it to be in our name to show ownership. If we have a bank account, or write a check on it, again our name must be there. So it is with Christ and his name. When we wear his name we are saying that we belong to Christ, that we respect him and honour him by putting his name above our name or any man's name.

Fifth, What name are we to wear as individual followers of Christ? When we turn to the scriptures we find that the disciples were first called Christians at Antioch. (Acts 11:26). When Paul preached to King Agrippa, he responded by saying, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." (Acts 26:28). Then Peter said, "Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf." (1 Peter 4:16). But what kind of a Christian?, you might ask. No particular kind of Christian. Just a Christian, a Christian only. That's all the Lord wants us to be. It is only as we wear the Lord's name, and we are Christ-like in our living, that we can please and honor the Lord.

What name are you wearing? Are you a Christian?

Are you a member of Christ's church? If not, you need to be. To be anything else is contrary to God's will.

If we can study further with you, send you some literature, or assist you in your obedience to the Lord, please let us know.

It was a pleasure to be with you, and I hope to be with you again at the next appointed time. Goodbye till then.

Lesson 13

UNITY

Thank you, and greetings to all of our radio friends in the name of Christ.

We are going to continue our question and answer series of studies by thinking about unity and all of its implications in following Christ.

First, What does the word unity mean? Simply defined, it means oneness, completeness, and wholeness. It is the very opposite of division and confusion.

Second, In what sense does the Bible teach unity? To begin with, God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19, 20) are said to be one. There are three distinct persons in the Godhead, but still they are one. That is, they agree in one. When Christ was praying to his Father concerning his disciples, he said, "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, are in me, and I in thee". (John 17:21). Then the Bible teaches, as we have just seen in John 17:21, that the Lord's people are to be one, or that there is to be unity in the Lord's family, the church. In dealing with both the Godhead and the church, Paul said, "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." (Ephesians 4:1-6).

Third, What else does the Bible say about unity when it comes to the church? Oh, there is so much. We could never cover all of it in our present study, but we will consider some of the major points. To begin with, Christ promised to build his church, mind you, just one church. We read, after Peter and the Apostles had confessed Christ to be the Son of God, "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." (Matthew 16:18). Of course he was saying that upon the confession that he was the Son of God, Christ being the rock (1 Corinthians 3:11), that he would build his church. But notice that he said that he would build his church, not churches. Therefore, he was going to build only one and he built only one. No where in the scriptures can you find where Christ built two or more churches. The church was to be found in many places, or congregations of the church were to be found everywhere, but Christ built but one church, and all of these congregations or churches in different cities and in different parts of the world, made up that one church. There were times when a local congregation became divided, as with the church at Corinth in 1 Corinthians 1, but this was never with the Lord's approval.

There were many other things that indicated the oneness of the church. The scriptures tell us that there was one foundation, that being Christ himself (1 Corinthians 3:11), Christ was the one head (Colossians 1:18), Christ was the one saviour (Ephesians 5:23), there was salvation

only in the name of Christ (Acts 4:12), there was but one way to enter the church, that is, through baptism (Romans 6:3, 4; Galatians 3:26, 27), and that Christ is the one way to heaven. (John 14:6).

Fourth, Can you give some other ways that unity is illustrated? Yes, we can. For example, the scriptures tell us that Christ is the Vine and the Branches, that there is but one vine but many branches. Jesus said, "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine and ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples." (John 15:1-8). What is all of this talking about? The vine here is Christ and the branches are individual Christians. How many vines are there? Just one. And notice that the branches must remain in the vine and bear fruit to live. So must Christians abide in Christ doing the Lord's work, to be eternally saved.

A second example of the unity of the church is found in John 10. Here Christ discusses the Sheepfold, the one door into the Sheepfold, the good shepherd and

the sheep themselves. The Sheepfold represents the church, the one door is indicative of the fact that there is one way to enter the church, that is through Christ and obeying his teaching. The sheep would be individual Christians or followers of Christ.

A third example is found in 1 Corinthians 12 where Paul compares the church with the physical body. Paul says, "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not the body; is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are they many members, yet but one body. And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary: And those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness. For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked: That, there should be no schism in the body; but that the members

should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular." (1 Corinthians 12:12-27). Now what is he saying here? He shows how that in a human body there are many members but they do not oppose each other, rather, they all work together in perfect unity, being directed by the head. So Christ has a spiritual body, the church, and it is made up of many members and all are directed by one head. He shows that all of the members should work together as one, that they might do God's work.

A fourth example would be Christ's prayer for unity. Praying to the Father concerning his disciples, he said, "I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them. And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are . . . Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." (John 17:9-11, 20, 21). Now who is Christ praying for? His people, his church. He wants even them to be united, to be one, even as he and the Father are one.

Fifth, But what about all of the religious division that is in the world? Paul said, in speaking to the brethren at Corinth where there was some division, "Now I beseech you, brethren by the name of our Lord Jesus

Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.” (1 Corinthians 1:10). Paul said to the Romans that they should mark those who caused divisions among them because he said that such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ. (Romans 6:17, 18).

Sixth, Yes, but there are all of the denominational groups and don't they teach that everyone has a right to his own belief and don't they thank God for all of the churches? That is true, but that means that all of these people speak for themselves and not according to the word of the Lord. Christ prayed that we might be one, not divided.

But that's all the time we have for today. Sorry we can't continue, but we'll do that next time. If we can send you some literature or help you in any way in your search for God's will, then please let us know.

Until next time, I'll say goodbye for now.

Lesson 14

THE WAY TO HEAVEN

Thank you, and I come to you in the name of Jesus Christ with this period of Bible Study.

I hope you will join me as we ask some questions about some Bible subject and then go to the scriptures for the answer. I think you will find this a very profitable way to study.

Our lesson for now will have to do with the way to heaven. Many people seem to be interested in this subject and of course our aim will be to see what the truth is on this matter.

First, What does the world say about the way to heaven? We'll answer this question to show you the contrast in what man says and in what the Bible teaches. The religious world, and man in general, thinks in terms of there being many ways to heaven. They say that the different religions, for example, are traveling different roads but all are trying to go to the same place. Members of denominational churches say the same thing except for the fact that we are all trying to go through Jesus Christ. To all of these people, the destination is the important thing. All of this is to say that just about anything goes in the religious world. Regardless of what is done, in the end if one is trying to go to heaven, then everything is going to be all right.

Second, Now, what does the Bible say about this? Let's look at the words of Christ to begin with. He said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." (John 14:6). Please notice that he said that he was the way. How many ways was he talking about? Just one. How many Christs do we have? Just one. And he said that way to heaven was through him. How could we misunderstand such clear, plain language?

Third, But could he have been saying that even though one might go in one direction, and another in still a different direction, all were still passing through him? I ask how could that be when the scriptures tell us, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." (Psalm 133:1)? Then this question was asked, "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" (Amos 3:3). Going on, we are told that God hates division (Proverbs 6:16-18), that Christ prayed that we might all be one (John 17:20-23), and Paul said, "Now I beseech you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." (1 Corinthians 1:10). Now can we see in any of these verses any room for division, or any room for the teaching that there are more ways to heaven than one? Surely not.

Fourth, what did Paul say about God, Christ, etc., in Ephesians 4:1-6? Listen to what he says: "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in

the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." Please notice now that he speaks of one God, one Lord, one Spirit, one faith, one baptism, one body or church, and one hope. Now in all of these, do you see in them two or more? If one means one then you know that there is but one of each, not two or more. My friends, there are just as many ways to heavens as there are Gods, Lords, Spirits, Faiths, Baptisms, Churches, and Hopes. But how many are there of each of these? Just one. Therefore there is but one way to heaven. The Bible also says that there is but one death, one judgment, one heaven, one hell, and so on.

Fifth, why would the Lord provide several ways to heaven? That is the point. The Bible says that God gave his only begotten Son to die for the sins of the whole world. (John 3:16). Christ was willing to die that man might be saved—he shed his blood for that purpose. (Romans 5:8; Ephesians 1:7). Why would God give his Son to die for the whole world and then turn around and save some one way and others in yet another way, and send some on their way to heaven in one direction and send others to heaven in a different direction? And why would Christ die for the sins of all mankind and then make it possible for man to choose the way he wants to go to heaven? This would be ridiculous.

Sixth, in what ways has Christ stressed there is but one way to heaven? As we just said, he died for the sins of the world. Now in doing that it was certainly within his right to expect that man meet certain conditions to be saved. But wouldn't that mean that salvation

is by works and not by grace? My friends, we could never do enough, no matter what the Lord asks us to do, to earn our salvation. But Christ has asked every accountable being to do the same thing to be saved. Christ said that one must believe and be baptized to be saved. (Mark 16:16). He also says that we must repent of our sins and that we must confess Christ as being the Son of God. (Luke 13:3; Matthew 10:32). He makes no exception to this. He therefore saves all alike, since all obey the same commands. Now when he saves one or many, he adds them to his church. (Acts 2:47). No, he does not add some to one church and some to another church. Christ has but one body or church, and he built it and died for it, and therefore he adds all the saved to that one church. (Matthew 16:18; Ephesians 5:25; Acts 20:28). Then he requires that all wear his name (Acts 4:12; Acts 11:26), that all worship the same way (John 4:24), and that all travel that same narrow way that leads to heaven. (Matthew 7:13, 14). My friends, there is just one way. There is simply no other way.

Seventh, What does Christ say about those who try to climb up another way? Christ pictures the church as a sheepfold, that he is the shepherd, that the members are the sheep, that he has but one sheepfold, that there is but one door, etc. Concerning these matters, Christ said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber." (John 10:1). That means then that those who try to go to heaven in some other way than what the Lord has said, then such people are but thieves and robbers. Now what does the scripture say will happen to those kind of people? We know that the scriptures condemns this kind of thing.

Paul said, "Let him that stole steal no more." (Ephesians 4:28).

Eighth, Now why would anyone advocate that there are many ways to heaven? He would do that if he knows that he is not doing all that Christ would have him to do or that he is not all that the Lord would have him to be. For example, he would reason like that if he knows that he is not a member of the Lord's church or if he is not wearing the Lord's name. But again, he would reason like that if he wants to do what he wants to do or if he is trying to justify himself in following the teachings of men. In either case, one would be on shaky ground. He would not be able to prove his case from the scriptures. Human reasoning is fine in some areas but it will not stand the test when it is placed beside the teaching of the Bible.

My friends, we are either on that one way to heaven or we are not on it. There is but one way to heaven. You can call us narrow minded or whatever you like, but still Christ tells us that he is the one and only way to heaven and besides him there is no other way.

Are you following that one way? If not, let me urge you to learn about it, become a believer in the Lord, obey his will, and he will save you and add you to his church. In so doing you will be following Christ, who is the one way to heaven.

If we can be of help to you, please let us hear from you. Until next time, I bid you goodbye.

Lesson 15

WORSHIP

Thank you, and in the name of Jesus Christ I greet you with this period of Bible Study.

In this present series of studies we are asking some questions and then we are going to the Bible for the answers. Our questions for this occasion will have to do with worship.

First, What is worship? Simply put, it is praise, honor, and service rendered to a higher being.

Second, Who is to be worshipped? Certainly man is not to worship man, as you have in some cases even in our day. Neither is nature to be worshipped, or idols of men. In the long ago, God said, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God . . ." (Exodus 20:3-5). Paul found the people of Athens bowing down to man-made objects and of course he pointed out that their worship was in ignorance. (Acts 17:23).

Christ said concerning worship, "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." (John 4:24). Please notice that he says that God

is the one that is to be worshipped. He further says that he must be worshipped in spirit and in truth if it is to be accepted. That just means that it must be in all sincerity and according to the Lord's teaching.

Third, Who is to worship God? God would have all people to worship him, but of course all do not choose to do so. Neither can all worship the Lord because all do not belong to him. As we turn through the scriptures we observe that only those who obeyed the Lord, that is, those who became Christians and members of the church, were in position to worship the Lord in an acceptable way. These are the true worshippers that God was seeking according to Christ's statement in John 4:23, 24.

Fourth, Does the Bible teach different types of worship? Well, in Old Testament times God's people worshipped him by offering animal sacrifices, keeping the Sabbath holy, etc. There was a time when God required that a tabernacle be built and that they carry out a type of worship, with the High Priest and priests directing the people in worship. Even God would meet them at this place. Later, there was the temple form of worship, basically the same as the tabernacle form of worship, but the temple was built in Jerusalem and it was a permanent place of worship. But these types of worship passed away with the coming of Christ and the giving of a new and better way. Under the law of Christ, God does not dwell in temples or buildings made with hands. Paul explained, "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things . . ." (Acts 17:24, 25). God's people now are

able to worship him wherever they happen to be and the Lord has promised to meet with them. (John 4:24; Matthew 18:20).

Fifth, What are some of the ways that man worships God? As mentioned earlier, there are those who worship man-made objects, nature, etc. This is said to be worship that is done in ignorance. (Acts 17:23). That type of worship then is unacceptable. Then another type of worship is spoken of by the Lord himself as being vain worship. In Matthew 15:9 Christ said, "But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Being vain worship, then that means that it was void, a waste of time. It was counted to be vain because it was done according to the doctrines and commandments of men, or according to the teachings that originated with man. The Lord has not authorized any human being to decide how to worship God.

Sixth, What does God require of his people today when they worship him? God does ask that we do certain things in worship. It is only as we do these things in a sincere way, and according to his will, that he will accept the things that we do as being worship to him. We will now note these acts of worship. First, when we meet for worship, God wants us to read and study his word. He speaks through his word and therefore he wants us to know his will. Christ says that we should search the scriptures. (John 5:39). Paul said, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." (2 Timothy 2:15). Second, when we assemble for worship, the Lord wants us to pray. In Acts 2:42 we read of those early Christians, "And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of

bread, and prayers." Paul exhorted, "Pray without ceasing." (1 Thessalonians 5:17). Again, he said, "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God". (Philippians 4:6). Also John wrote, "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us." (1 John 5:14).

Continuing, and third, as we assemble for worship, we are to sing praises unto the Lord. We know that in the world there are two types of music, vocal and mechanical. Most religious groups use both types of music in their worship to God. But the Lord says in his word that he wants us to sing praises to him, or he wants us to praise him through vocal music. But what about mechanical music? He has not authorized his people to use this type of music in worship to him. He wants his people to praise him with the fruits of their lips (Hebrews 13:15), not through some mechanical or man-made form of music. Paul declared, "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord." (Ephesians 5:19). Notice, that the melody was to be made in the heart, not on some mechanical instrument. Again, Paul said, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." (Colossians 3:16).

Fourth, When we assemble as the Lord's people for worship then we are to partake of the Lord's Supper, that is, we are to partake of the bread in remembrance of the body of Christ and the cup or fruit of the vine in memory of the blood of Christ, (1 Corinthians 11:23-29).

When Paul met with a group of Christians at Troas, the record says, "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight." (Acts 20:7).

Fifth and finally, the Lord wants us to give of our means when we come together to worship. Paul wrote the Christians at Corinth, "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come." (1 Corinthians 16:2).

Now, these are simple acts of worship. Yet, the Lord wants us to engage in them exactly as he has specified in his word. To add to this, or to take away from it, then that means that we cannot worship God acceptably.

Seventh, When are we to worship the Lord? We are told by example and command that this is to be done on the first day of the week or on Sunday. (Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:2). We can meet to study the word of God, to pray, to sing praises unto God any day of the week, but in addition to doing these things on the first day of the week, we are also to partake of the Lord's Supper and give as we have been prospered.

Eighth, Where are we to assemble for worship? The Lord has not told us. We can worship in a home, in an auditorium, in a hall, under a tree, in a church building, or wherever there are two or more people gathered. Christ promised to be with us in this case. (Matthew 18:20). Some think that the only place they can worship is in a large elaborate church building. They think that God confines himself to such places. This is not true. God has asked us to worship but it is up to us as to where we worship. He has specified the day and what

he wants us to do in worship and those are the things that we should be concerned about.

Are you a worshipper of God, a true worshipper, one who is a Christian, a member of the Lord's church, and you meet with other Christians to worship as the Lord as specified? If not, we pray that you'll want to know more about God's will so that you may obey him and worship him in spirit and in truth.

But my time is up. I hope to continue my study with you on the next broadcast. Until then, I bid you goodbye.

Lesson 16

THE DAY OF WORSHIP

Thank you, and greetings to you in the name of Christ.

I am happy to be with you again for a study of God's word. We continue our question and answer series on various Bible subjects. We invite you to study with us and to let us know if you have your own questions you would like to ask.

Our question at this time will have to do with the day of worship.

First, Why is it important to worship the Lord on some particular day? Why wouldn't any day do? True, we may praise and honor God on any and every day of the week. Paul said, "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him." (Colossians 3:17). As a matter of fact, we have meetings on many different days of the week in which we pray, study God's word, and sometimes we are even given an opportunity to give to some special need. But still, God has specified in his word that there is a day that has been set aside for us to assemble on for the specific purpose of worshipping God. There are different reasons for this, as we will see, as we continue, but perhaps if there was no particular day for worship, then worship would be so

common place that we would eventually completely get away from it. Also, had God not set aside a day then man would have probably done that anyway, and some would have set one day and some another, and there would have been a lot of confusion over that, so God saved man a lot of trouble by setting aside the day for worship himself. That means then that if we respect God's wishes then we accept that day as being the day of worship and that settles the matter.

Second, What is the day that the Lord has set aside for worship? We have an example of Christians meeting on the first day of the week for worship. The record says, "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight." (Acts 20:7). The Apostle Paul wrote the Christians at Corinth, "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come." (1 Corinthians 17:1,2). You will note that in both scripture readings that the first day of the week was specifically mentioned. Now, some other day of the week could have been set aside for these things, but that wasn't the case. Evidently then the Lord wanted his people to meet on the first day of the week to worship him.

Third, But what is the first day of the week? As we all know, there are seven days in each week. But if Christians are to meet on the first day of the week, then what day of the week would that be? Would it be Saturday, Sunday, Monday, or what? We know that in

the secular world that Monday is often listed as the first day. But in Old Testament times God's people were to worship on the Sabbath Day and that day is said to be the seventh day of the week or Saturday. That means then that Sunday is the first day of the week and most Bible Scholars agree with this.

Fourth, But what is the Sabbath Day? Is it also a day of worship, or is it no longer binding? There are a small percentage of people who try to hold on to the Sabbath Day and they insist that it is still the day of worship. The Seventh Day Adventists would be the best known group who advocate this. Then there are small groups among the Baptists and the Pentecostals who practices this. Of course to try to justify this they must go back to the Old Testament, and especially to the ten commandment law to prove it. When pressed about all of the law, including the ceremonial law, they try to make a distinction in the ceremonial law and the ten commandment law. They say that the ceremonial laws, such as the offering of animal sacrifices, were discontinued, but that the ten commandment law continues to be binding up to this time. That means that they are actually holding on to what they want and rejecting the other. But if they accept part of it then they must accept all of it. Or if part of it has ceased then all of it has been removed as a law. And of course the scriptures clearly show that all of the old law was removed and it was replaced with a new and better law, and that law is the law of Christ or the New Testament portion of the scriptures. If that be not the case, then why did Christ come?

Fifth, Where does it say that the Old Testament law, covenant, or testament was taken away and replaced with a new one? Please turn with me to the book of Hebrews,

and to Hebrews 10:9, 10. Now listen to what he says: "Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." In Hebrews 9:15-17, he says that Christ is the mediator of the new testament and that it was through his death that it was brought into force. Again, he reminds us that God speaks to man today through his Son, Jesus Christ. (Hebrews 1:1, 2). God spoke from heaven and said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." (Matthew 17:5). Now what day of the week does the New Testament teach that we should assemble on for worship? The first day of the week. That should settle the matter then.

Sixth, What is the significance of the first day of the week? To begin with, Christ arose from the grave on this day. After the death and burial of Christ, we read, "In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre. And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow: And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men. And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay." (Matthew 28:1-6). In Mark 16:9 we read, "Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils."

Later, on the same day, the first day of the week, Jesus met with the disciples. (John 20:19). Then we read, "And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you." (John 20:26). Now if Jesus appeared to the disciples on the first day of the week, and appeared to them again eight days later, what day would that be? That would also be the first day of the week, wouldn't it. Isn't it strange, if the first day of the week is not important, how this day keeps popping up. Finally, we read in Acts 2, on the day of Pentecost in the city of Jerusalem, that the Holy Spirit was poured out on the Apostles, some three thousand obeyed the gospel and were saved, and then we are told that the Lord added the saved to the church. But what day did Pentecost come on? It always came 50 days after the Passover, and therefore Pentecost always came on the first day of the week. That means then that the Lord established his church, along with all of the other things that accompanied it, on the first day of the week. Surely that was not by accident.

Seventh, Finally, what has to be done on the first day of the week? The Lord's people were directed to meet on this day, each first day of the week (Hebrews 10:25), to study God's word, for prayers, to sing praises to the Lord, to partake of the Lord's Supper, and to give as they had been prospered. (2 Timothy 2:15; Acts 2:42; Ephesians 5:19; Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:2). Please note too that Christians are to remember the body and blood of Christ on the day that he arose from the grave and made it possible for man to be saved and to have hope in the world to come.

Now, on what day of the week do you worship? Do you worship as the Lord has instructed? Are you a Christian and a member of the Lord's church? My friend, all of this ties together.

If you are not a Christian and a member of the Lord's family, the church, we would like to encourage you to do so. If you will believe in the Lord, repent of your sins, confess your faith in Christ, and be baptized for the remission of your sins then the Lord will save you and add you to his church. Then you will also be in position to worship God on each first day of the week. Please consider all of these things in light of what the Bible says. If we can help you with any of these things, please let us know.

God be with you till we meet again, and goodbye for now.

Lesson 17

MUSIC IN WORSHIP

Thank you, and we come to you again in the name of Christ.

We appreciate the opportunity to greet you with this period of Bible study. We are glad that you can join us and we hope you will stay with us for the next few minutes.

For some time now we have been devoting our time to questions and answers that have to do with some important Bible theme. As we discuss these matters you may think of questions that have to do with this subject or some other subject. If you will send them to us then we'll try to get to them as early as we can. By all means, let us hear from you.

Our questions at this time will have to do with the type of music God wants us to use in the worship that we direct to him.

First, Why does God want us to use music in worship? God desires that his people worship him. Christ said that God seeks true worshippers and that he "is a Spirit and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." (John 4:24). One of the avenues through which we may do this is through music. As we continue our study, I think it will become even clearer why he wants us to praise him through music.

Second, What is music? To begin with, let us note that there are two types of music. One is that which is made with human voices. The other is that which is made on mechanical instruments. One comes from the heart of man and the other comes from the hands of men. One is alive and the other is imitation or mechanical.

Third, What kind of music does God want us to use in worship? From studying the scriptures, we find that God wants vocal music to praise him. Paul said, in speaking to the Christians at Ephesus, "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord." (Ephesians 5:19). To the Colossians, he said, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." (Colossians 3:16). Continuing, he said to the Corinthian Christians, "For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful. What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also." (1 Corinthians 14:14, 15). James said, "Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms." (James 5:13). The Hebrew writer said, "By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name." (Hebrews 13:15). And on it goes with the other verses in the New Testament concerning the type of music that God wants his people to use as they worship him. There are not very many statements made, but all of them indicate that God has specified that vocal music be used.

Fourth, But what about mechanical music? Can't it be used? What would be wrong with it? Can't a person who has talents and abilities to play instruments of music use his abilities to play those instruments to the glory of God? But the question is, what has God said in his word? If he says that we can praise him both with vocal music and mechanical music then that would be fine. But if he says that we must use mechanical music only then that means that we cannot use vocal music. On the other hand, if he says that we are to use only vocal music in worship then that means that we cannot use mechanical music. You see, we must understand that it is God that is to be praised and it is God that has decided how we can do that. He has not left that up to you and me.

Fifth, But what is the difference? I think we have already pointed out the difference when we said that vocal music comes from man, God's creation, but mechanical music comes from man, man's creation. One can be offered from the heart, but the other has no heart. One can be done in spirit but instruments of music have no spirit. As a matter of fact, the only reason that mechanical instruments makes sound is because man plays on them, beats on them, plucks the strings, etc. My friends, God has not authorized you and me to detour our worship through mechanical instruments like that in praise to him. But what if we have the ability to do that? We may have the ability to do a lot of things, or to use all kinds of instruments, musical and otherwise, but that does not mean that God would want us to use our abilities to play or to use those instruments for the purpose of praising him. We have a Lord and Master to please and we must find out what pleases him and then we must proceed to do what he wants us to do. Remember that the Hebrew

writer said that God wants us to praise him with the fruits of our lips, that is, with our singing. There is no prettier music in the world than the blending of human voices. Then Paul said that God wants us to make the melody in our heart, not on some mechanical instrument of music. There is a tremendous difference.

Sixth, What kind of music did the early Christians use? All we have to go on, as far as the scriptures are concerned, are the statements made by Paul and others. Surely if they were using mechanical music then there would have been something said about it. But nothing was said. Bible scholars and historians will tell you that in the early days of the church no mechanical instruments were used. There was vocal music only. Do you suppose that this was the case because mechanical instruments were not available or the Christians were so poor that they could not afford them. Neither one. They did not use them because the Lord did not authorize them.

Seventh, Then when did mechanical instruments begin to be used? It was at least several hundred years later before they began to be used. The Catholic church came into existence in the 600's as a result of a major falling away or apostasy of the Lord's people. Then eventually there was a split within the Catholic church. Several things brought about the split but one of them had to do with the kind of music that God wanted his people to use. The group that became known as the Roman Catholic church chose to use mechanical instruments in their worship. The group known as the Greek Orthodox Catholic Church said that they would have vocal music only and they continue to sing only in their worship to this day. Then of course the Protestant groups or denominations began to come out of the Roman church

after the 1500's and they also brought their mechanical instruments with them.

Eighth, But what happened to Christ's church? After the falling away, the Lord's people, although in the minority now, and this is the way it has continued since that time, have carried on in different parts of the world. Of course today the Church of Christ can be found all over the world. What about the kind of music it uses in its worship to God? It uses vocal music or singing only. This is one of its distinctive marks.

Ninth, Didn't they have mechanical music in Old Testament worship? Possibly so, but we are not living in Old Testament times. We are living under the law of Christ, and as such, we are to have the kind of music that the Lord has specified in the pages of the New Testament.

Tenth, What's wrong with having mechanical music in the home? Who said there was anything wrong with that. But we have a lot of things in our home that we cannot bring into worship.

Eleventh, Won't there be music in heaven? I am sure there will be but it certainly won't be mechanical music. Nothing earthly will be there. God's people will be singing praises to him forever more. Remember too that there will be things in heaven that we do not have on earth.

But to sum it all up, it doesn't matter what man does, what we like, and a thousand other things, when it comes to our worship to God. When it comes to music in our worship to God, or anything else that we direct to the Lord, it must be on the basis that the Lord has commanded it or endorsed it. He is the one to be pleased. If he is pleased then we should be happy about it.

If you are a believer in God, I pray that you are following his teaching in all that you say and do, that you are a Christian only and a member of the Lord's church. If you are not believer in the Lord, I pray that you will become one. If we can study with you by post, send you some literature, answer your questions, or assist you in your obedience to the Lord, then please let us hear from you.

I'll go for now, but I hope to be with you again on the next regular broadcast. Goodbye till then.

Lesson 18

PRAYER

Thank you, and I come to you again in the name of Christ.

I count it an honor to be able to study the Bible with you.

If you like this type of study, let us know. We can also furnish you with literature, answer your questions, send you a Bible correspondence course, etc., on receiving your request.

For our consideration today we are going to answer some questions about prayer.

First, What is prayer is simply talking to God, making requests of him, thanking him for his blessings, and such like. God speaks to us through his word, the holy scriptures, but we speak to him through prayer. Paul wrote, "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God." (Philippians 4:6).

Second, To whom do we pray? Should our prayers be to God, to Christ, to saints, or to others? As we just noticed in Philippians 4:6, he says that our requests should be made known to God. Likewise, throughout the scriptures we are pointed to God, who is our Father, as being the one that will hear and answer our prayers. Christ is the Son, not the Father, therefore we do not

pray to him. As for saints, that is, Christians, or whoever, they have no power to answer our prayers. They are but human beings as we are. They also need God's help even as we do.

Third, Are we to pray directly to the Father? The scriptures tell us that Jesus is our advocate and our mediator and therefore we are to pray through him. John wrote, "My little children, these things I write unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for our's only, but also for the sins of the whole world". (1 John 2:1, 2). Paul said, "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." (1 Timothy 2:5). Christ himself said "And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it." (John 14:13, 14). Going on, he says, "And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you." (John 16:23). In other words, Christ had been with them, and they could personally ask his help. But now he was going to go away, that is, he was about to return to the Father in heaven. He therefore told his disciples that they should then make their requests known to the Father and that they should do that through his name. It was as though Christ knew them, and they knew Christ, and therefore in speaking to the Father through the name of Christ it was like having Christ to recommend that he answer their requests.

Fourth, Who can pray? Anyone can pray, but the Father has promised to hear only his children, and the faithful ones at that. We read in Acts 2:42 how the

early Christians continued in prayer. The blind man, who had been healed by Jesus, said, "Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth", (John 9:31). The scriptures talk about praying to the Father. Who would do that? His children, of course. What about those who are not his children? Then they could not pray to God as being their Father because he is not their Father. Neither can they expect one who is not their Father to answer their prayer. That is not done in the physical world. How could we expect it to be done spiritually? If it were, then what advantage would the child of God have over the one that does not belong to the Lord? Even God's children must remain pure and godly and faithful to be heard of their Father. Peter said, "For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil." (1 Peter 3:12). It is certainly possible to get to the point of being cut off by God, as Isaiah said, "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear." (Isaiah 59:1, 2).

Fifth, When can we pray? We can pray anytime that we so desire. Of course Christians meet on the Lord's Day to worship and one of the things they do in worship is to pray to their Father. But we can pray also at home, out on the road, at work, at night, during the day, and so on. Take a look at Jesus' prayer life and you will see that he prayed on all kinds of occasions, any time and anywhere he happened to be. That is one of the blessings of the child of God. He knows that God is always there

to hear him anytime he wants to speak to him. Paul says we should pray without ceasing, that is, we should always have the attitude of prayer. (I Thessalonians 5:17).

Sixth, What should one's attitude be in prayer? Jesus spoke of those in Matthew 6 who loved to be seen and heard of men in their prayers. He condemned that attitude and also that of praying long prayers as though God would more likely hear that type of prayer. Surely one should be humble, forgiving, obedient, and sincere as they approach the Father in prayer.

Seventh, For whom should we pray? We should pray for ourselves, for the church, for our family, for our loved ones, for the lost, for those who are sick, for all. Paul said to Timothy, "I exhort therefore, that first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." (1 Timothy 2:1-4).

Eighth, For what should we pray? As God's people of course the Lord has said that we may ask of him whatever we will. (Matthew 18:19) That is conditioned, however, on the basis that it is according to his will. John said, "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him." (1 John 5:14, 15). God answers our prayers then according to what is best for us. A father will grant every request to his children that he can, if it is for their good, but if they request something of him that will harm them,

then naturally he will not give it to them. The same is true with our Father. Many times we ask those things that are not in our interest. Therefore, he withholds those things from us. Someone says that God answers every prayer but to some he says yes and to others he says no. But we may ask the Lord to forgive us of our sins, to help the sick to get well, for food and other necessities of life, to help us with our work, etc., and so on. It is so wonderful that we have a Father that we can turn to and ask for his help in time of need.

Ninth, In what position must we be in to pray? Some think that we must always kneel. But really, the Bible speaks of a number of positions. It does speak of kneeling, but it also talks about standing while praying. (Acts 21:5; Mark 11:25). Actually, one may pray in any position he happens to be in, depending on the circumstances that one may find himself in at the time.

Well, seemingly we could go on and on asking and answering questions about prayer. Perhaps the ones that we have covered has helped to answer your own questions about prayer.

We want to invite you to obey the Lord by believing in him, by repenting of your sins, by confessing Christ as the Son of God, and by being baptized for the remission of your sins. Once you do this then the Lord will save you, make you a member of his family, the church, and as such you will be a child of God and therefore with the privilege of praying to your Father in heaven through Jesus his Son. Acts 2 tells us that this was what the people did in those days when the gospel was preached for the first time. The Lord requires the same today.

Thank you for taking time out to study this lesson with me. I hope we can do this again at the next appointed time. Goodbye till then.

Lesson 19

THE LORD'S SUPPER

Thank you, and I greet you in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Do you have one or more questions that you would like to ask about God, Christ, the Bible, or some Bible subject? If you do, please send them to us and we'll try to answer them as soon as we can.

In the mean time, we are dealing with a series of Bible questions on this program. For each study, we are taking a particular theme, asking question about it, and then we are attempting to give you the answers from the Bible itself. We hope that you will find this to be helpful.

Our questions and answers at this time will have to do with The Lord's Supper.

First, we'll begin by asking the question, What is the Lord's Supper? I am sure that these things will become much clearer as we go along, but basically, the Lord's Supper involves that of partaking of the bread in remembrance of the body of Christ and the cup or the fruit of the vine or grape juice in remembrance of the blood of Christ. Paul said, "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and

said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me." (1 Corinthians 11:23-25). Although the Lord's Supper requires that the participants partake of bread and the fruit of the vine, but still it is a spiritual feast. It is not engaged in to satisfy one's hunger or to quench the thirst, but as a means to remember Jesus and what he did to enable man to be saved.

Second, Who instituted or who began this Supper? Jesus himself did. During the feast of the Passover, and annual feast according to the Law, Christ gathered his Apostles together to celebrate this last supper before his death on the cross. It was on this occasion that he introduced the idea of the Lord's Supper, a supper that would be partaken of by his followers for the express reason of remembering his suffering and the shedding of his blood. But let's read some of the setting and the part that deals with the institution of the Lord's Supper so we can get the full picture. We read: "Now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover? And he said, Go into the city to such a man, and say unto him, The Master saith, My time is at hand; I will keep the passover at thy house with my disciples. And the disciples did as Jesus had appointed them; and they made ready the passover. Now when the even was come, he sat down with the twelve. And as they did eat he said, Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray, me. And they were exceeding sorrowful, and began every

one of them to say unto him, Lord, is it I? And he answered and said, He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me. The Son of man goeth as it is written of him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born. Then Judas, which betrayed him, answered and said, Master, is it I? He said unto him, Thou hast said. And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many (for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom. And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives." (Matthew 26:17-30)." So this was the supper that the Lord's people would be partaking of after his departure from them. Yet he would continue to be with them in Spirit and have fellowship with them as they partook of this supper. (Matthew 18:20).

Third, What was the bread made from in this case? As with the feast of the Passover, the bread would be unleavened bread, that is without any yeast or leavening in it. (Exodus 12:17; Matthew 26:17).

Fourth, What was the cup? This was the fruit of the vine or grape juice. It was something that was most plentiful at that time and it continues to be that way up to this time. Even in those places where grapes are not grown, they are still available on the market.

Fifth, Was the bread the literal body of Jesus Christ? There are those who teach that the instant that one

partakes of the bread that it automatically turns into the physical, literal body of Christ. Of course this is not true. Surely the Lord would not want us to be cannibalistic. The idea for this probably developed on the grounds that Jesus said, "Take eat, this is my body." (Matthew 26:26). But Paul said in 1 Corinthians 11:24 that the bread should be partaken of in the remembrance of the body of Christ. The Lord was merely giving the disciples something that would help them to remember the body of Christ, the suffering of his body, all that he went through to make it possible for man to be saved.

Sixth, Was the cup or the fruit of the vine the literal blood of Jesus Christ? No, it was not. Christ said that the cup was his blood in the sense that it represented his blood. (Matthew 26:26, 28). But again, Paul said that we should partake of it in remembrance of the blood of Christ. (1 Corinthians 11:25). The fruit of the vine then would be something that would help the disciples to remember how Christ had shed his blood that man might be saved. That is the true significance of it. The Scriptures forbid the eating or drinking of any kind of blood. (Acts 15:29).

Seventh, Where was the Lord's Supper to be partaken of back then, and even today? In the Lord's kingdom, the church. (Matthew 26:29).

Eighth, On what day of the week should the Lord's people partake of it? We read in Acts 20:7 where Paul and the brethren met on the first day of the week to worship and a part of that was the partaking of the Lord's Supper. We read: "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight." The breakin g

of bread here has reference to the Lord's Supper.

Ninth, Wouldn't some other day of the week do just as well? No, since the Lord has specified that the first day of the week is to be the day of worship, then we must confine our worship to that day.

Tenth, How often are Christians to partake of the Lord's Supper? Well, there is a first day of the week in each week, and Christians are to meet each first day of the week. (Acts 2:42; 1 Corinthians 16:2). Therefore we are to partake of the Lord's Supper each first day of the week.

Eleventh, How should we approach the Lord's Supper? Paul spoke of the Lord's instituting this Supper, and then he said, "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilt of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body." (Acts 11:26-29).

Twelfth, What then is the real purpose of the Lord's Supper? The Lord's Supper was intended to be a memorial feast, a means of helping one to remember the Lord's body and all the suffering that he experienced so that man might be saved, and the means of helping one to remember the blood of Christ and how that it was shed that man might have the remission of his sins. The bread then reminds of the body of Christ and the cup reminds us of the blood of Christ.

Thirteenth, Who is to Partake of the Lord's Supper? Christians, that is, faithful members of the Lord's

Church.

Fourteenth, Who is to be honored and benefitted by partaking of the Lord's Supper? Christ is the one to be honored and remembered. Each Christian that partakes of it is strengthened. It helps us not to forget the price that was paid for our salvation. In partaking of it, we look back to the cross of Christ; we look forward to the Lord's return; and we point the world to Christ and the salvation that he offers.

My friend, if you are not a Christian and a member of the Lord's church, we would like to invite you to become obedient to the Lord that you might be saved, that you might be added to the church, and that you might partake of the Lord's Supper each first day of the week in remembrance of the Lord's Suffering and the shedding of his blood that you might be saved. If we can help you with this, please let us know.

Thank you for listening, and goodbye for now.

Lesson 20

GIVING

Thank you, and in the name of Christ I welcome you to this Bible program.

I am back with another set of questions that have to do with a major Bible subject. I invite you to study with me at this time.

We are going to be asking and answering some questions about Bible giving or what the Bible teaches about scriptural giving.

First, What do you mean by giving? Why should we have to give anything? Doesn't the Bible teach that it is God that gives? Contrary to what some think, the Bible does teach the importance of giving or contributing to the Lord's cause. It is also true that God has given the greatest gift of all—His Son. (John 3:16, 17). For sure, we cannot out give God, but still he expects us to give a portion of what we have to him and his cause. Paul said, "Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive." (Acts 20:35).

Second, Who is to give? Giving is required of God's people. It is up to those of us who belong to the Lord to give of our means to enable the church to do its work. In 1 Corinthians 16:1, 2 Paul refers to both the churches in Galatia and in Corinth as having the responsibility of giving.

Third, What are some of the rules or guidelines for giving? Paul mentions several of these, but before we list them, let's read the actual statements. For example, he said, "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come." (1 Corinthians 16:1, 2). He continues, "But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver." (2 Corinthians 9:6, 7). Now from these passages of scripture, let us notice some specific points that are made.

1. The giving was to be done on the first day of the week. This is the day of the week that God's people are to come together to worship. Giving is a part of worship in the sense that it is to be done when the church is assembled, and that which is given represents hours or time that has been spent to earn that money and then that is given so it can be used in help to promote the Lord's work.

2. Every Christian is to participate, that is, if they have earned and are able to give.

3. Each one is to lay by in store, that is, according to what he has. If he has money, then he is to give according to the way he has earned. If he lives out in a village and doesn't have money then he may want to give some rice, some eggs, or whatever he can give.

4. Each one is to give as he has prospered. If he hasn't earned anything during the past week then he is

not expected to give because he doesn't have anything to give. If he has earned then he is to give as he has prospered. In Old Testament times the people were expected to give one tenth of their earnings. We are living under the law of Christ, which is so much better. Although the Bible doesn't teach that we are to give a tenth today, but that we give as we have been prospered, it would be assumed that we should give more than a tenth. But each one knows what he has earned and the Lord leaves it up to each one to decide for himself what he will give.

5. We are to give as we have purposed. That means that we should think about what we have earned during the past week, and that even before it is time to give that we should decide what we are going to give. When an individual reaches into his pocket or purse at the last minute and pulls out a few coins or a few small paper notes and puts that into the collection plate or basket then it means that in all probability that he has not given as he should. Certainly he didn't plan his giving. Remember that one should give as he has been prospered.

6. We are not to give grudgingly or of necessity. In other words, we should not feel that we are being forced to give. No one is making us give. Not even God would force us to give. Giving is something that God wants us to do, but it is a free will offering. If we are giving grudgingly or of necessity, then it is for the wrong motive and therefore the Lord will not be pleased with our giving.

7. We are to give cheerfully. God loves cheerful givers, those who happily give.

Please note that Paul laid down a principle of sowing and reaping in 2 Corinthians 9:6. He says that if one

sows sparingly then his harvest will be small. But if he sows bountifully that his harvest will be bountiful. He applies this to our giving. If we give little then we will receive less. If we give more then we will receive more. Even then one should not say, "I am going to give more so that I will receive more." When one has this attitude then it means that his motives are not what they should be.

Fourth, What does the Bible teach about tithing? Tithing was practiced under the Law of Moses. It ceased to be binding when the law was removed by the death of Christ. Under the new law we are to give as we have been prospered. That might mean giving more than one tenth of our earnings, but the Bible does not mention any figure.

Fifth, What does the Bible say about the Corinthians giving themselves first to the Lord? Paul spoke of the churches in Macedonia being poor, materially, but they still wanted to give and did give because they had first given themselves to the Lord. (2 Corinthians 8:1-5).

Sixth, How did the early Christians look on giving or fellowship? We read concerning those who obeyed the Lord on the day of Pentecost in the city of Jerusalem, "And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." (Acts 2:42). Fellowship here is said to be giving. There is no greater way of having fellowship than through that of sharing in giving.

Seventh, What are some other ways of giving? The Apostles talked about giving up their lands, houses, and families to follow Christ. We read, "Then answered Peter and said unto him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore? And Jesus

said unto them, Verily I say unto you., that ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve throne, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life. But many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first." (Matthew 19:27-30.)

Now, what have we learned from all of this:

1. God has given more to man than man can ever give to him. He has given his Son, Jesus Christ, to save the lost and dying world, and he has blessed man in every way imaginable, and above all, has promised to give the obedient and the faithful eternal life.

2. Still God requires that his people give a portion of their earnings to him so that his cause might be advanced. The church then is expected to give and then the church is to take that money and use it to preach the gospel, to help the needy, etc.

3. The giving of the church is to be done on the first day of the week.

4. All of God's people are to give, as they have been prospered, as they have purposed in their heart, and they are to do it cheerfully.

5. God will bless those who give according to his will.

My friend, there is nothing greater than being a Christian. We have been talking about what we owe God or our responsibility of giving to God's cause, but he has given us far more than we can ever give to him. Our giving is done out of a heart of love and thanksgiving.

If you are not a Christian, we want to encourage you

to get acquainted with Christianity. Learn of God and his Son, Jesus Christ. Become a believer. Obey him by repenting of your sins, confessing your faith in Christ and by being baptized for the remission of your sins. Then the Lord will save you and add you to his church according to Acts 2.

Should you need some literature, have questions, need assistance in your obedience to the Lord, or whatever, just let us know.

God be with you and bless you, and goodbye till next time.

Lesson 21

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

Thank you, and I am happy to be able to greet you again in the name of Christ.

I am back with another lesson in a series of lessons where we are asking questions and giving Bible answers on some important Bible theme. Please join me as we study together.

For our consideration at this time we are going to think about the Christian life.

First, What do you mean by the Christian life? We are talking about those who have obeyed the gospel by believing in Christ, repenting of their sins, confessing Christ to be the Son of God, and have been baptized for the remission of sins, and thus they have been added to the Lord's church and now they are Christians, and as such they are living for Christ. Now that is the Christian life that we are talking about.

Second, What else does the Christian life suggest? In becoming a Christian then one is born again according to John 3:3-5 and as such he is a new creature or person in Christ. Paul said, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." (2 Corinthians 5:17).

To be a Christian, then one is a follower of Christ. Christ said, "If any man will come after me, let him deny

himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." (Luke 9:23). Here Christ is saying that if we are going to follow him then we must repent, quit putting our trust in ourselves, and give up any and every thing that would keep us from giving our all to him, that we should take up his work daily, and follow him or live only for him.

To be a Christian we must wear the Lord's name. We are told that the disciples were first called Christians at Antioch. (Acts 11:26). After Paul had preached to King Agrippa, he responded by saying, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." (Acts 26:28). Peter said, "But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters. Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed but let him glorify God on this behalf." (1 Peter 4:15, 16). We are told that salvation is in the name of Christ (Acts 4:12), and Paul said, "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him." (Colossians 3:17). How can we claim to be a Christian if we do not even wear the Lord's name? And how can we honour the Lord if we give all the credit to someone else? Such things would be impossible.

To live the Christian life we must live pure and godly lives. The Apostle Paul wrote Titus, "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. These things

speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee." (Titus 2:11-15). To Timothy, Paul exhorted, "Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure." (1 Timothy 5:22). Peter declared to the Christians of his day, "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; As obedient, children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy. And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear: Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God. Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. (1 Peter 1:13-23).

To live the Christian life we must grow and become strong in the power of his might. Being born again spiritually, then we begin as new creatures or as new born babes. Peter reminds us, "As new born babes, desire

the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby." (1 Peter 2:2). As we feed upon God's word, then we begin to add those things that helps us to grow. Peter continues, by saying, "And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge: And to knowledge temperance: and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ." (2 Peter 1:5-11).

To live the Christian life we must be workers and bear precious fruit for the Lord. Paul wrote, "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." (1 Corinthians 15:58). When Christ compared the Church and Christians to a vine and branches, then he showed the importance of the branches abiding in the vine and bearing fruit. Hear him, as he says, "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am

the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples". (John 15:1-8). Christ says that we are to be the salt of the earth and lights of the world. (Matthew 5:13-15). He continued, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." (Matthew 5:16).

To have eternal life with the Lord, the Christian must be faithful unto death. Christ said, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." (Revelation 2:10). Continuing, "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." (Revelation 22:14).

Third, But isn't the Christian life too hard? Isn't it a sad dull life? Not at all. God doesn't ask more of us than we can do. Furthermore, as Christians we are free from so many things that would hurt us and that would finally destroy us. Paul declared, "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Romans 6:23). Again, Paul wrote the Philippian Christians, "Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice." (Philippians 4:4).

My friends, don't feel sorry for the Christian. Rather, the Christian feels sorry for those who are not Christians.

Please think about the Christian life, the blessings that

it brings to one, and the hope that it gives. We would pray that you might want to become a Christian. If we can be of help, please let us know.

Thank you for your time, and we hope to be back on the next regular broadcast. Until then, I bid you goodbye.

Lesson 22

MARRIAGE

Thank you, and I greet you in the name of Jesus Christ.

We are ready now to resume our question and answer series of Bible studies.

Our subject for this time will have to do with marriage.

First, How would you define marriage? Marriage involves a "ceremony, act, or contract by which a man and woman become husband and wife." This is the legal side of it, or complying with the rules and regulations required by the law of the country. Most do not consider that marriage is complete until the husband and wife have come together in sexual contact or until the marriage has been consummated. Spiritually, God recognizes any couple is being married, whether they or followers of Christ or not, as long as they have a right to marriage, and they meet the requirements of the law.

Many countries recognize what they call common law marriage. This is where a couple begin to live with each other, and after a set period of time, the law says that they are legally married. Most people frown on this type of practice because they do not go through the normal procedure prescribed by law.

Second, What was the first marriage that we have on

record? That was the marriage of Adam and Eve, the first man and woman. God created Adam and then he took a rib from Adam's side and made an help meet for him. We read, "And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." (Genesis 2:21-24). Thus, marriage is the oldest living institution in the world today, dating all the way back to the very beginning.

Third, What about marriage under the Law of Moses? In Matthew 19 we have Jesus discussing this matter. We read, "And it came to pass that when Jesus had finished these sayings, he departed from Galilee, and came into the coasts of Judaea beyond Jordan; And great multitudes followed him; and he healed them there. The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause? And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let no man put asunder. They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away? He saith unto them,

Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so." (Matthew 19:1-8). Now what is the Lord saying here? He points out that under law of Moses the people were allowed to give a writing of divorcement because of the hardness of their hearts, but that from the beginning it was not so. Such is to say that it has always been God's will that there should be one man and one woman in marriage, and that they should continue to live as husband and wife until one or the other died.

Fourth, What did Christ have to say about divorce and remarriage? Continuing in Matthew 19, he said, "And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery." (Matthew 19:9). Now please note that Jesus makes this statement after acknowledging that Moses had allowed the people of their day to give a writing of divorcement because of the hardness of their hearts. But he says that now, and that would come on up to our time, that if a couple are married and that there is no cause for divorce, that neither one have been unfaithful to the other, that there has been no sexual immorality, then if they divorced and both remarried then both would be committing adultery and the ones that married them would be guilty of adultery. Or if just one should marry again, then he or she would be committing adultery and the one that married that person would be committing adultery. The one that was divorced and did not remarry then of course that person would not be guilty of committing adultery. At the same time, if the divorce

had come about without any scriptural reason, then even that person could not remarry without committing adultery.

Continuing, Jesus says that there was but one reason for divorce and remarriage and that was for the cause of fornication, or sexual immorality. In that case, the innocent party could put away or divorce the guilty party, and the innocent party would be able to remarry, provided the marriage was with someone who had not been married before or who had a scriptural right to remarry. What about the person who was guilty of fornication? Although divorced by the innocent party, the guilty party could not remarry. If the guilty party should remarry then he or she would be committing adultery. Furthermore, the one that marries the guilty party would be entering into a state of adultery.

Fifth, What is divorce? It is a legal dissolution of a marriage. It is a separation. Let it be understood though that while the law may recognize a divorce, the Lord may not. In the eyes of the Lord, the only way there can be a divorce or the breaking up of a marriage is where one of the marriage partners has been unfaithful to the other or has committed fornication.

Sixth, What is adultery? That is where a man and a woman live together in an unlawful or unscriptural state even though the law of the land may recognize it.

Seventh, What can adulterers do? They can repent of their sin, or quit living in their adultery. Once one has committed adultery then even though he gives up his adultery, he can never be scripturally married again. That means that he must then live alone for the rest of his life. But wouldn't that be difficult to do? Yes, and many will not pay this price. But when one sins, then sometimes

the penalty for it is great.

Eighth, What will happen to those adulterers who will not repent? Not only will they be lost, but they may cause others to be lost. Adultery is something that one cannot do by himself. It always involves at least one other, and the side effects would be that others could follow the example set and that would also cause them to be lost. In Galatians 5:19-21 Paul lists adultery as being one of the works of the flesh and he says that those who do such cannot inherit the kingdom of God. He says that these kind of people cannot even enter the church, but if they can't enter the church because of such a sin, what if they commit adultery after they become Christians? Then that means that they have sinned and unless they repent of it, and quit living in adultery, then they cannot go to heaven.

Ninth, What if one's companion dies? Then the one living is free to remarry, provided he or she marries someone that is free to marry. Paul wrote, "For the woman which hath an husband is bound to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from the law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man." (Romans 7:2, 3). Paul goes on to show that the same is true spiritually with the Lord's people. He states that since the law has died, then God's people have been free to marry again, and in that case, they were free to marry Christ. All Christians today are spiritually married to Christ, or as the church, we are the spiritual bride of Christ. (Romans 7:4; Ephesians 5:23-33). Should we

leave the Lord and his church, and join ourselves to some religious group or denominational church, then we would be committing spiritual adultery.

Tenth, What does God want then? He wants us to be scripturally married—one husband and one wife—and that they should be faithful to each other until death separates them. Spiritually, he wants us to obey him so that we can be members of the church, Christ's bride, and he wants us to be faithful unto death.

So, marriage is a very important institution, physically and spiritually. Are you married? Do you have scriptural marriage? Are you married to Christ, that is, are you a Christian and a member of his church? if not, I pray that you'll want to. If we can answer any question or help in any way, please let us know.

I'll close for this time. Bye for now.

Lesson 23

FALLING AWAY

Thank you, and I come to you again in the name of Jesus Christ. Greetings to each one of you, and I hope you will take the next few minutes to study with me from the word of God.

We will be asking some questions today about the erring child of God or that of falling from God's grace. We will not only ask questions but we will be seeking answers for those questions, and to do that we'll turn to God's word itself.

First, Does the Bible teach that once one has been born again, or saved, that he can so sin as to fall away and finally be lost? To begin with, let it be understood that once one enters Christ that he will always be in Christ, that once he becomes a member of the Lord's family or church, that he will always be a member. But there are two ways that one can be in Christ and the church or a child of God. One can be faithful member or an unfaithful member. For example, when one is born into a family then he will always be a member of that family. He cannot be unborn. His father and mother, because of his conduct or his rejection of them, may disown him or disinherit him. But still, he is a member of that family. Likewise, once born into the Lord's spiritual family then we will always be a member

of that family. We may so live as to cause our selves to be disowned or disinherited, but still we are members of the Lord's family or church. If we are unfaithful members then we cannot be eternally saved, but we are still members.

Second, Where does the Bible teach this? Well, let's just give some examples of what we are talking about. For instance, Ananias and Sapphira were members of the church but when they lied about the amount of money they had received for their property, then the record says that both were struck dead. (Acts 5:1-11). Now would you say that they will be eternally saved in spite of their lying? Surely not. Then in Acts 8:9-25 we have the story of Simon the sorcerer, and how he obeyed the gospel, along with many of the Samaritans. Then when Peter and John came to lay their hands on some of the people that they might have the power of the Holy Spirit, Simon tried to buy the power of the Holy Spirit with money. The record says, "But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee. For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity. Then answered Simon, and said, Pray ye to the Lord for me, that none of these things which ye have spoken come upon me." Now who was Simon? He was a child of God? What crime did he commit? He tried to buy the power of God with money. What did Peter say? He told Simon that he should repent. And by the way, this shows that he was a member of the Lord's family.

Peter did not encourage him to obey God to become a child of God, but he simply told this child of God that he make things right with his Father. What did Simon do? He asked for prayer. Evidently then, he repented and was restored. But what if he had not repented? Could he have been saved anyway? Surely not.

Paul said that Demas had forsaken him because of his love for the present world. (2 Timothy 4:10). Paul said on another occasion to Timothy, "This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare; Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck: Of whom is Hymenaens and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme." (1 Timothy 1:18-20). Now did Paul know what he was talking about? He said that these brothers had made shipwreck of their faith and that he was delivering them to Satan. But you might say, "They probably were not real Christians." Surely Paul would have known. He was being guided by the Holy Spirit and surely the Holy Spirit would have revealed to him that these men were imposters if indeed they were. But he didn't, and Paul looked upon them as being God's children. In spite of that, they made shipwreck of their faith. Even if they had corrected their lives later, what if they had died while they were in a lost condition? And from all indications, they never returned to the Lord.

Third, Why would a child of God go back into sin? There are many reasons for this. He may be tempted to go back into the world. He may be deceived by false teachers. He may love the praises of men more than the praises of God. There are many reasons, of course, but

the fact is, one cannot fall away from the grace of God and finally be lost. Peter said, "For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire." (2 Peter 2:20-22). Now how in this world could one conclude after reading this scripture that one cannot fall away?

Fourth, What will happen to those who fall away? I think that has already been made very clear. Surely if one is a child of God, and then goes back into the world, he will be lost, and if he remains in that state until he dies, then he will be eternally lost. In picturing the time of the Lord's return, we read, "The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear." (Matthew 13:41-43). Now that doesn't sound as though those people are going to heaven, does it? Where were they? In the Lord's kingdom or church. But still they were lost and therefore the Lord sent his angels to gather them out so they could be cast into the fire. What about the righteous of the kingdom? They would go to be with the Lord.

Fifth, But how can anyone pluck a child of God out of the Lord's hand? No one can. Christ said, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." (John 10:27-29). Again, no man can pluck God's children out of his hand, but what if they choose to leave. God cannot keep them if they don't want to remain. He would not force them to be saved if they didn't want to be saved.

Paul said, "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 8:38-39). Yes, that is true, but we can do what others cannot do. We can simply walk off and leave God. Hopefully, we won't, but the point is, we can.

Sixth, Now let me ask this question: What about all of the many conditions stated in the scriptures? What are those for if it doesn't matter any way, if we can't be lost? But what does the scripture say? We are told to take heed lest we fall. (1 Corinthians 10:12). Christ says that we must remain faithful unto death to receive the crown of life. (Revelation 2:10). And there are hundreds of other conditions given in the scriptures. Why are those there if it doesn't matter whether you comply with them or not?

My friends, God has done his part in making it possible for us to be saved. And as long as we will comply with God's wishes, and we'll remain faithful, then there is no way for us to be lost or for anyone to snatch u

away from God. But we are free moral agents. We can choose to obey God or to deny him. And if we are children of God, we may choose to be faithful or unfaithful. Then God will save us or not save us on the basis of how we respond to his will.

Are you a Christian? Are you a faithful Christian? I pray you are, but if you are not, I pray again that you may. Obey the Lord by believing in him, by repenting of your sins, by confessing Christ to be God's Son, and by being baptized for the remission of your sins. (Acts 2). Then as a Christian and as a member of the Lord's family, the church, be determined that you are going to remain faithful so that heaven may be yours.

If we can help you with any of these matters, please let us know.

But my time is up. More next time. Until then, I bid you goodbye.

Lesson 24

FALSE TEACHING

Thank you, and greetings to our listeners in the name of Christ.

Welcome back to another broadcast of the Voice of Truth. It is a pleasure to be able to visit with you again for the purpose of studying the word of God. I trust that you will join me for the next few minutes as we consider some very important matters.

We will continue now with our series of lessons that have to do with Bible question and answers. Our subject has to do with false teaching.

First, What do you mean by false teaching? I am referring to any teaching that is contrary to the teaching of Christ and the scriptures. That also means that behind every false teaching there is a false teacher. In other words they teach things that are not true. Christ warned, "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. (Matthew 7:15).

Second, Why would anyone teach things that are false? Most of them don't do it purposely or intentionally. Such is to say that they are deceived themselves and then they sincerely pass it on to others. Christ said, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my

Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." (Matthew 7:21-23). Now who were these people? Religious people, evidently. And surely they were honestly and sincerely mistaken. The Lord said then that he would have to disown them on the day of judgment because they did not belong to him. But before that time think of the many they would deceive and then those deceived would deceive others, and so on.

Third, What are some false teachings of our day? There are so many, but we'll consider a few of the most popular ones. For example, it is said that one can be saved without being baptized. True, baptism only will not save, but the scriptures definitely teach that one must be baptized. Christ said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." (Mark 16:16). Peter told a crowd of believers in Jerusalem that they should repent and be baptized for the remission of their sins. (Acts 2:38). Furthermore, the scriptures teach that one must be baptized to enter Christ and his church. (Galatians 3:26, 27; 1 Corinthians 12:13). Now does that sound like one can be saved without being baptized? But another false teaching is that the church is not important or that one church is as good as another. That may be true with denominational churches, but the Bible teaches that Christ is saviour of the body, the church. (Ephesians 5:23). We read that there is but one body or church (Ephesians 4:4), that Christ died for it (Ephesians 5:25), and that he shed his blood that he might purchase it. (Acts 20:28). Now

would all of that be true if the church was not important? Still another false teaching is that there are many ways to heaven. They say that we just go different ways but that we are all trying to go to the same place. But I read that Christ is the way to heaven (John 14:6), that it is a narrow way (Matthew 7:13, 14), and that if one tries to climb up another way then he is considered a thief and a robber. (John 10:1). Still another false teaching is that Christ will come back one day and reign over the righteous in the city of Jerusalem for one thousand years. This is not true. There is no verse of scripture in the Bible that says that Christ will ever set foot on this earth again. Why should he come back to the earth when he was rejected and crucified when he was here before? When Christ comes, he will come as a thief or at a time that the majority will not be expecting him, and then he shall appear in the clouds, the righteous will be caught up to meet him, the heavens and the earth shall be destroyed, the judgment will take place, and the wicked shall be cast into eternal punishment, and the righteous will go to be with God forevermore. We may read all of this in John 14:1-3; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 2 Peter 3:10-13; Matthew 25:46).

Fourth, What are some other warnings concerning false teachers and the things they teach? Paul said, "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." (1 Corinthians 1:10). In writing to the Romans, Paul said, "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such

serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple". (Romans 16:17, 18).

Fifth, How may we be able to tell whether one is telling the truth or not? John said, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." (1 John 4:1). Now John says that when a preacher comes along preaching something then we should test them or try them. How can we do that? By taking what they say and comparing it with the teaching of God's word. Now if it contradicts with the scripture, then guess who is in error? It is certainly not the Lord's word. Paul said that he had preached the true gospel to the Galatians. He also said that should he or an angel come from heaven and preach another gospel, a gospel different to the one he had already preached, then the curse of the Lord would be upon that person. (Galatians 1:6-9). My friends, there are many preachers that are preaching a different gospel to the one that Paul preached. Who are we going to listen to? Man or the Lord? But what difference does it make? It makes the difference between being saved and being lost. You cannot follow the teaching of man and expect to go to heaven.

Continuing, John wrote, "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of evil deeds." (2 John 9-11). We read in Revelation 22:18, 19 these words, "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this.

book, if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." (Revelation 22:18, 19). So if one comes teaching something contrary to the doctrine of Christ, or if one adds to the word or subtracts from it, then he is a false teacher that is teaching those things that will damn and destroy.

So if you don't want to be deceived in religious matters, I would urge you to get a Bible or New Testament and begin to read it and to study it. Then with a knowledge of what the Lord wants, and someone comes along teaching something else, then you will be able to see that. Therefore, you can reject false teaching.

Remember that God's word is the truth (John 17:17), and only it can save you and take you to heaven. (John 8:32; John 14:6).

Are you a Christian? Are you a member of the church that we can read about in the scriptures? If not, we urge you to become one. Remember that man-made churches, man-made names, etc., cannot save you and take you to heaven. Only by knowing the truth and obeying that truth can the Lord save you and add you to his church. (Acts 2).

If we can study with you, answer your questions, or assist you in your obedience, please let us hear from you.

Thank you for listening and I hope to see you again real soon. May God be with you till we meet again. Goodbye for now.

Lesson 25

WORLDLINESS

Thank you, and greetings in the name of Christ to my friends of the radio audience. I have no way of knowing how many of you are listening but I am confident that many are listening at this time and I am encouraged by that.

I certainly want to welcome you to this period of Bible study and hope you will find it profitable.

We will continue our studies along the line of asking questions on some subject and then we'll go to the Bible for the answers.

For the lesson at this time we are going to be thinking about worldliness.

First, you would naturally want to know, What is worldliness? Worldliness is a term that describes the things of this world, actually to be more exact, the bad things of this world. In other words, one is worldly when he engages in the wicked things of this world.

Second, Was Christ worldly by coming into this world? Jesus came into the world, and lived in the world for some time, but he was not of the world, or did he do the sinful things of the world. In speaking to the people of his day, he said, "Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world. (John 8:23). In John 17:14 Christ said again, "I am not

of the world." After Jesus had been taken into custody to be put on trial for his life on a false charge, he said to his captors, "My kingdom is not of this world; if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence." (John 18:36).

Third, Were the Lord's disciples of the world? Concerning the disciples, Jesus said, "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." (John 15:19). In speaking to his Father concerning his followers, Christ prayed, "I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world."

Forth, What about Christians today? The same is true of them that was true with Lord's disciples of his day and that was true of Christ himself. We are in the world, that is, we live on the earth with the people of the world, but we are not of the world in the sense that we do not do those things that are counted to be of the world, that is, the sinful acts of the world. Again, we eat and drink water, sleep, have our families, go to our jobs, and do many other things that all other people do but we do not do the works of the flesh or the sinful and bad things of the world. For example, as Christians do not kill, steal, curse, drink strong drink, gamble, engage in immoral activities, and so on, with many other such things. But you might point to one or more who claim to be Christians that engage in some of those things, and your question would be, "What about them." It just simply means that they are human beings and they were tempted to do those things, and instead of refusing

to do them, then they went on and did them. They sinned in doing such things. They have brought shame on themselves and on the Lord's name. They must repent and return to God to be forgiven. John wrote, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world, If a man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." (1 John 2:15-17). John here was talking about the sinful things of the world, the lust of flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, which covers the whole spectrum of sinful activities. He says that all of these things will perish but the one that does the will of God will live for ever. Now which group had you rather be with at the end of the world?

Fifth, But how can we separate ourselves from those things that are worldly? It is true that we live in a world of sin, and that those who do bad and wrong things live all around us. With this thought in mind, Paul said, "I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators: Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world, But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat." (1 Corinthians 5:9-11). Paul says here that we live in a world of fornicators, the covetous, extortioners, and all other kinds of wicked people, and to escape that we would have to leave this

present world, but he says when it comes to a brother in Christ who has engaged in such sinful practices that we should not continue to fellowship him. The point that he is making is that by not eating with him or having anything to do with him, we will not become spotted with his sin, and then without our fellowship he may be brought to the point of repenting of his sin and returning to God.

Sixth, How can we overcome the things of this world? Paul said, to the Galatians, "Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father: To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen." (Galatians 1:3-5). We cannot overcome the world by ourselves, but with the help of the Lord, who died to save us from the world, and by obeying his will, we can. Again Paul said, "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." (Galatians 6:14). Here Paul says that he cannot take credit for his salvation, or anything that he had done, but that it was only through Christ that he had been able to separate himself from the world.

Seventh, Can you be more specific about what is involved in becoming a follower of Christ and living the Christian life? Of course Christ died on the cross that man might be saved from his sins. If one is to take advantage of this then he must believe in the Lord, repent of his sins, or quit doing those things that are bad and wrong, and then he must confess Christ before men as being the Son of God, and finally he must be baptized to wash away his sins. This is taught in Mark 16:16 and

Acts 2 and many other passages of scripture. Now with forgiveness, then the Lord adds one to the church. (Acts 2:47). He is now a new creature in Christ Jesus. (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Paul writes to the Colossian Christians about their new life in Christ, and he says, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience: In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them. But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all." (Colossians 3:1-11). And on and on we could go, but surely enough has been said to show you the difference in worldliness and godliness. James reminds us, "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." (James 4:4).

My friend, you cannot be a friend of the world and a friend of God at the same time. You cannot engage in

those things that are bad and wrong and still please God. If we are going to belong to the Lord then we must turn our back upon the world, quit doing those things that are sinful, and obey the Lord and follow him, remaining faithful to him. We pray that you will want to do that.

If we can encourage you and help you to obey the Lord, please let us know.

Thank you for listening and I'll be back at the regular time. Until then, I'll say goodbye.

Lesson 26

THE HEREAFTER

Thank you, and in the name of Jesus Christ I greet you.

We are coming to you with another period of Bible Study. Perhaps you have been studying with us on a regular basis, and I hope so, but if this is the first time for you to hear this broadcast, then we want to warmly welcome you into our family of radio Bible students.

Our series of studies at this time have to do with Bible questions and answers. Our lesson for this occasion will centre around The Hereafter or The Future. It will deal with such things as death, the return of Christ, the judgment, and heaven and hell.

First, What are some things that the future holds for each one of us according to the teaching of the Bible? To begin with, all will eventually have to die or will be changed if we happen to be living when Christ returns. The Hebrew writer says, "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." The human is a dual being. He has a physical body but he also has a spiritual body. A spirit or soul lives in each human being. God created man's physical body, and then he put a spirit in him. (Genesis 2:7; Genesis 1:26, 27). Because man has a soul then that means that he is above every other living thing. Furthermore, the soul that lives

within each of us is more important, and worth more, than the whole world. (Matthew 16:26). But because the physical part of us is subject to death, then that means that the time will come when we will leave this world. What then will happen to the soul? It will enter into the spirit world to await the judgment. That's what the Hebrew writer said In Hebrew 9:27. Death will come and then that will be followed by the judgment. James said, "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also." (James 2:26). Can we escape death? No. All must physically die or be changed if we are alive when the Lord returns, but even then when the spirit departs from the body then it dies.

Second, Can we know when we are going to die? Not generally. Of course there are some who are so foolish as to take their own lives or to commit suicide. The scriptures tell us that we are not to kill our fellow-man. Neither should we sin against ourselves by taking our own life. God gave us life and we should not be such an ingrate that we would put an end to it. If we do and we are conscious of what we are doing then we will have to answer to God for having done so. Then there are some who have a disease, or who may be near death, and they may be aware of the fact that their death may come within minutes. But the average person has no way of knowing how long he will live and when he will die. He could live for many years or he might die in his youth. The Bible then teaches that we should prepare ourselves to meet God. We are assured that the Lord has prepared a place for us. Christ said, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to

prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." (John 14:1-3). In regard to our preparation, Paul says, "(For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation)." (2 Corinthians 6:2).

Third, What does the Bible say about the return of Christ or the second coming of Christ? As we just noticed from John 14:1-3; Christ himself promised that he would come again. Paul said, "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day." (2 Thessalonians 1:7-10). Continuing, Paul says, "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together

with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18). Peter says, "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." (2 Peter 3:10). Now, what does all of this mean? It means that Christ said that he would come again, and he will do just that. We are also told that he will come as a thief in the night, and of course that just means that he will come at some unannounced time. He will come at a time that he is not expected. That is why we must always be prepared. Then when he comes, he will come in the clouds, every eye shall see him, and the righteous will be caught up to meet him.

Fourth, But doesn't the Bible teach that Christ will return to Jerusalem and reign there for one thousand years and during this time the righteous will reign with him and there will be peace upon the earth? No, the scriptures no where teach this. Rather it says that when he comes again that we'll be caught up to meet the Lord, that the earth will be burned up, and then the judgment will take place.

Fifth, What does the Bible say about the judgment? As we noted earlier from Hebrews 9:27, that death will come and then judgment will follow. Paul said, "Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." (Acts 17:31). Here Paul speaks of God appointing Jesus to judge the world in righteousness. Again, in speaking to the Christians

at Corinth, Paul says, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." (2 Corinthians 5:10). Then Christ said, "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." (John 12:48). So, there will be a judgment. It will take place after the Lord's second coming, after the heavens and earth have been destroyed. All will be there. And finally, we'll be judged by the word of the Lord according to the deeds done in the body, whether they be good or bad.

Sixth, What will happen after the judgment? Speaking of the judgment, the Lord said that the wicked would go away to everlasting punishment and that the righteous would be given eternal life. (Matthew 25:46).

Seventh, What will hell be like? It will be a place for the wicked. It is described as being a lake of fire and torment. We are also told that the devil will be there. (Revelation 20:10). Finally, it will be for all eternity. (2 Thessalonians 1:9). Also, read Revelation 21:8.

Eighth, What will heaven be like? It will be a place prepared for God's people, for those who have been faithful to the Lord unto death. Christ said, "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." (Revelation 22:14). Again, he said, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." (Revelation 2:10). Describing what it will be like, we read, "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any

more pain: for the former things are passed away." (Revelation 21:4).

So, what do we have in all of this? Death will come, the Lord will come again, all will be resurrected from their graves, the judgment will take place, and the wicked, or those who have not obeyed God, will be cast into hell for all eternity, and the righteous and faithful of God will go away to be with the Lord forever more.

Now, are you prepared for the future? The first thing you need to do is to believe in God, obey his teachings, and remain faithful to him. We are trying to study those things on this broadcast that will help you to do that. We also have literature that we can send to you on receiving your request.

But that's all for this time. I hope to be with you again on the next regular broadcast. Goodbye till then.