

CARDINAL CONCEPTS OF CHRISTIANITY

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INTRODUCTION

I first met brother Roy Palmer and his family in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) in 1970 while visiting a number of countries in Africa in behalf of mission work. The Palmers had already served as missionaries in Germany as well as in Rhodesia for many years. Since that time they worked in Zimbabwe, Tanzania, and other places, returning to the States finally to make their home in Texas.

I requested that brother Palmer provide me with a series of articles to be printed in India. This collection of studies, dealing with basic concepts of Christianity, is the result. I am most pleased with the lessons, as well as the accompanying questions, and I feel that all who study them will be greatly benefitted.

After printing **Cardinal Concepts of Christianity** in India, the decision was made to publish it here in the States as well. It will be used for class studies in congregations and by World Bible School teachers as a follow-up course for their students who have already completed the initial correspondence material.

We want to sincerely thank brother Palmer for allowing us to print these Bible lessons, for the good they will do here in the States and around the world.

J.C. Choate
Church of Christ
Winona, MS 38967
U.S.A.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE AS A BIBLE CORRESPONDENCE COURSE:

Please study the material thoroughly, along with your Bible or New Testament, and then take a separate sheet of paper and answer the questions, lesson by lesson. Be sure to put at the top of the sheet that the questions being answered are for Lesson One, Lesson Two, or whichever lesson you are covering at the time.

Keep the book intact, and send only your written answers for each chapter. You may want to submit answers for four or five lessons at a time, have them graded and returned to you, and then continue on until you have completed the book.

Congratulations on taking the course, and may you be greatly benefitted by it.

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CHAPTER I

WHY I BELIEVE IN GOD?

Many people believe in God as a matter of fact. It is as obvious to them that God exists as it is that they themselves exist. The Bible says, "The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God." (Psalms 53:1) But are there compelling reasons for one to believe in God? Is it not actually as reasonable to assume that there is no God?

In the first place, what do we think of when we speak of God? The Bible says, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." (Gen. 1:1) Therefore God is our Creator. "Even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God," wrote the Psalmist. God is eternal. He always was. He always will be. And God is good. "His righteousness endureth forever." (Psalms 11:3) But He is also our Judge and Lawgiver. "The Lord is a God of knowledge, and by Him actions are weighed. The Lord shall judge the ends of the earth." (I Sam. 2:3, 10)

"The Lord is our Lawgiver, the Lord is our King, he will save us." (Isa. 33:22) "God is Spirit." (John 4:24) "God is Light." (I John 1:5) God is love. (I John 4:16)

But what are the reasons why one should believe there is a Creator, an everlasting, almighty, righteous, spiritual Being called God? The very existence of man, the world and the marvelous universe in which we live, the existence of Creation, makes necessary the existence of a Creator. It must be accepted that either something or somebody (Being) has always existed. Otherwise there was a time when nothing existed, and something (the world, man, and all that exists today) necessarily came from nothing. But neither human experience nor human reason can admit that something comes from nothing.

Therefore the existence of a First cause is essential. God is that First Cause.

A second reason for believing in God is the fact of order and system in the world and in the universe. The existence of order is undeniable. The precision of the movement of the earth, sun, moon and the myriads of bodies in the universe is astounding. No watch can compare in accuracy. It would be vastly more conceivable to imagine that the intricate parts of a fine watch had formed themselves and assembled themselves into a working unit without a maker than to think that the amazing universe, the marvelous processes of nature, and the wonderful function of the natural laws could have accidentally occurred and perpetuated themselves, without a Creator.

Another reason for believing in God is the existence of a moral sense in man. The conception of right and wrong is not found in lower animals. Though it is culture bound, and varies with enlightenment, it is a universal phenomenon. And though there may be individuals who are exceptions, there is without doubt a universal conscience in man, which mandates a moral law, and a moral law giver.

The existence of the material world requires Something or Someone powerful enough to produce it. The existence of mind requires Someone intelligent enough to create it. The existence of order and system, consciousness and conscience, require someone capable of purposing them and imposing them upon the nature of man and nature. The Bible teaches this is God. The Bible answer is infinitely more reasonable than any alternative ever conceived.

Questions

1. Give nine names, characteristics or attributes ascribed to God in the Bible _____
2. What is the first reason given in this lesson for believing

there is a creator, an everlasting, almighty, righteous, spiritual being called God? _____

3. If it be denied that something, or somebody, has always existed, what are two necessary conclusions? _____

4. What do we call this essential "first cause"? _____

5. What is the second reason proposed here for believing in God? _____

6. Give the third reason suggested here for believing in God. _____

CHAPTER II

WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST? WHOSE SON IS HE?

Jesus asked the Pharisees, "What do you think of the Christ? Whose son is He?" They said to him, "The son of David." He said to them, "How is it then that David, inspired by the Spirit, called him Lord, saying, 'The Lord said to my Lord, sit at my right hand, till I put thy enemies under thy feet?'" (Matt. 22:41-43)

The Pharisees could not answer Jesus' question. They had answered correctly saying that the Christ is David's son. But how could David call him Lord? They did not understand that it was God's purpose to send His only begotten Son into the world to reveal Himself to man. "Christ, the son of David according to the flesh, was shown to be the Son of God in power, according to the spirit of Holiness, by His resurrection from the dead." (Rom. 1:4)

Christ could be both the son of David, the son of man, and the Son of God, because, though he existed in the form of God, He emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. (Phil. 2:6, 7) This is what John is saying in the Gospel of John, chapter 1. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God; all things were made through Him, and without him was not anything made that was made." (John 1:1-3) Then in vs. 14, "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth." Christ the pre-existing Son of God is called the Word, the eternal Logos, because he came into the world to reveal God to men. John goes ahead to say in this passage, "No one has ever seen God; the only Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he has made him known." (John 1:18)

Thus the writer of Hebrews says, "In many various ways God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets; but in these last days he has spoken to us by His Son, whom He appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world." (Heb. 1:1-2) On this point Jesus says, "All things have been delivered to me by my Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father, except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal Him." (Matt. 11:27) Again He says, "My teaching is not mine, but His who sent me." (John 7:16)

"WHOSE SON IS HE?"

God said, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am pleased, hear ye him." (Matt. 17:5) The unclean spirits, or demons, said, "You are the Son of God." (Mark 3:11) Jesus' disciples said, "Truly you are the Son of God." (Matt. 14:33) Peter said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God." (Matt. 16:16) The Roman centurion who witnessed the crucifixion said, "Truly this man was the Son of God." (Mark 15:34) John the Baptist said, "I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God." (John 1:34)

Jesus spoke the words of God. But not only that, He was the embodiment of God's revelation. He said, "He who has seen me has seen the Father." (John 14:9) Again He said, as He prayed to God, "This is eternal life, that they know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou has sent." (John 17:3) Jesus was sent into the world that men might come to know God and to learn God's way through Him. "Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in His steps." (1 Peter 2:21) And Jesus came to reconcile man to God.

The Apostle Peter writes, "In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. In this His love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the

propitiation for our sins." (I John 4:9-10) "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." (John 3:16)

Questions

1. How could Christ be both Son of God and son of David?

2. What name does John call Christ in his pre-existence with God in the beginning? (John 1:1) _____
3. Why was this an appropriate name for Christ? (John 1:18) _____
4. Through whom did God speak to the fathers? To us? (Heb. 1:1) _____
5. Who can know the Father? (Matt. 11:27) _____
6. What did God call Christ? (Matt. 17:5) _____
7. What did demons call Him? (Matt. 3:11) _____
8. What did the disciples call Him? (Matt. 14:33) _____
9. What did Peter call Him? (Matt. 16:16) _____
10. What did the Roman centurion say of Him? (Mark 5:34)

11. What did John the Baptist witness of Him? (John 1:34)

12. Of what is Jesus the embodiment, or personification?

13. What does Jesus say is eternal life? (John 17:3) _____
14. Give five reasons why Christ came into the world.

CHAPTER III

GOD HATH SPOKEN

At the close of Jesus' life on earth He said to his apostles, "These thing I have spoken to you, while I am still with you. But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you." (John 14:25, 26) Jesus said further, "I have yet many things to say, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine, therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you." (John 16:12-15)

Before His ascension to heaven, after His resurrection, Jesus told the disciples, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age." (Matt. 28:18, 20) In this same context, Jesus said to them, "These are my words which I spoke to you, while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the law of Moses and the prophets and the psalms must be fulfilled." And he said, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be preached in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witness of these things. And behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you, but stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high." (Luke 24:44-48)

In the book of Acts, Luke records how Jesus charged the

Apostles not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, "You heard from me, for John baptized with water, but before many days you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit." (Acts 1:4-5)

In verse 8 Jesus said further: "You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth."

Thus it is clear that God's revelation of His will and purpose for man comes through Jesus Christ and has been delivered to men through the apostles of Christ. Jesus had said, "When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth." The apostles and prophets of the New Testament have written and God has preserved for all time this revelation. In Eph. 3:3-5, the Apostle Paul wrote: "The mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I have written briefly. When you read this you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit." Again the apostle wrote in I Cor. 2:7-13, "We impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glorification. None of the rulers of this age understood this; for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory. But, as it is written, "what no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived, what God has prepared for those who love him, God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God... now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is from God, that we might understand the gifts bestowed on us by God. And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who possess the Spirit." Of the New Testament as well as the Old, it is clear that "men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God." (II Peter 1:16-21)

Questions

1. What two things was the Holy Spirit to do for all the apostles according to Jesus' promise? (John 14:25, 26)

2. What would the Holy Spirit guide them into? (John 16:13)

3. What would the Holy Spirit declare to them? (vs. 14) _____
4. What did Jesus claim as his own? (vs. 15) _____
5. What authority did Jesus claim? (Matt. 28:18) _____
6. When men were taught and became disciples, what was done in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit? (vs. 19) _____
7. What was to be preached in Jesus' name, beginning from Jerusalem? (Luke 24:47) _____
8. With what were the apostles to be baptized before many days? (Acts 1:5) _____
9. The apostles were to receive power with the coming of the Holy Spirit, and what were they to be unto the end of the earth? (1:8) _____
10. God has revealed his will and purpose through whom? (John 16:15) _____
11. Jesus has delivered this revelation through whom? (John 14:26) _____
12. Paul wrote: "The mystery was made known to me". (Eph. 3:3) _____
13. Paul says, we impart the wisdom of God in words taught by whom? (I Cor. 2:13) _____
14. Men spoke from God who were moved by whom? (II Peter 1:21) _____

CHAPTER IV

THE BIBLE, THE WORD OF GOD

The apostle Paul wrote to the young evangelist, Timothy, "All scripture is inspired of God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work." (II Tim. 3:16-17) It is assumed by some that the apostle refers here to the Old Testament scriptures, however, by the time of the writing of these words, much of the New Testament had without doubt already been written, and accepted by Christians as holy scripture. The apostle Peter said of Paul that he wrote "according to the wisdom given him" and that these writings "the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other scriptures." (II Peter 3:15, 16) The book of II Timothy quoted above was the last of the writings we have of the apostle Paul, and his writings constitute approximately one-half of the New Testament scriptures.

Jesus said, "Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away." (Matt. 24:35) In another place He said, "He who rejects me and does not receive my sayings has a judge; the Word that I have spoken will be his judge on the last day. For I have not spoken on my own authority; the Father who sent me has himself given me commandment what to say and what to speak. And I know that his commandment is eternal life." (John 12:48-50) To the Pharisees Jesus had said, "You search the scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness to me; yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life." (John 5:39, 40)

The apostle Paul wrote, "The Gospel which was preached by me is not man's Gospel. For I did not receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ." (Gal. 1:11, 12) And to the Christians at Thessalonica,

"When you received the Word of God which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men but as what it really is, the Word of God." (I Thess. 2:13) To Christians, the apostle Peter wrote, "You have been born anew, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God..., that word is the good news which was preached to you." (I Peter 1:23, 25)

The scriptures contained in the Bible have been called "The book" (Psa. 40:7); the "Book of Prophecy" (Rev. 22:18, 19); the "Book of the Lord" (Isa. 34:16); the "Word of God" (Heb. 6:5); the "Holy Scriptures" (Rom. 1:2); the "Oracles of God" (Rom. 3:2); the "Book of Truth" (Dan. 10:21); the "Sword of the Spirit" (Eph. 6:17); the "Word of Truth" (James 1:18); and the "Seed of the Kingdom" (Luke 8:11)

The question is sometimes raised, how do we know that the Bible we now have contains the Scriptures which are indeed the inspired writings of men of God? The answer lies in two facts: Literally "ten thousand times ten thousand" hours of scholarly labor has been expended, over the centuries, to insure that the texts we now have go back to the original writings in all fidelity. And even more important is the fact that Jesus promised, "My words will not pass away."

Of the Old Testament Scriptures God said, "You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take from it; that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you." (Deut. 4:2) The same principle is valid for the New Testament Scriptures: "I warn every one who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book, and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which is described in this book." (Rev. 22:18, 19)

A woman once cried out to Jesus, "Blessed is the womb that bore you." But He said, "Blessed rather are those who hear the

Word of God and keep it." (Luke 11:27, 28) Therefore "receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls." (James 1:21)

Questions

1. Paul wrote "all Scriptures inspired of God is profitable that the man of God may be equipped unto _____"
(II Tim. 3:17)
2. Peter says some people "twist" Paul's writing even as they do the _____
(II Peter 3:16)
3. Jesus said, "my words will not _____"
(Matt. 24:35)
4. What shall judge men on the last day? (John 12:48) _____
5. God's commandment is _____
(John 12:50)
6. What did the Thessalonians receive from Paul? (I Thess. 2:13) _____
7. What is the seed by which Christians are born anew?
(I Peter 1:23) _____
8. What did Jesus say makes us sure we have His word today? (Matt. 24:35) _____
9. Jesus said, "Blessed are those who hear the Word of God and _____"
(Luke 11:28)
10. James says the implanted Word is able to _____
_____ (James 1:21)

CHAPTER V

UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE—THE TWO COVENANTS

In order to understand the Bible, the word of God revealed to men, it is necessary to recognize first of all that there are two broad general divisions, the Old Covenant, and the New Covenant, more popularly known as the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament has been referred to as the Law, the Prophets and the Psalms (Luke 24:44); or sometimes as the "Law and the Prophets." It contains not only the Law and the Prophets, but History and Poetical literature as well. The purpose of the Old Testament writings for men today is to serve as a background for the revelation of Christ in the New Testament and to give a record of God's dealings with man through history.

Paul wrote of the law as "our custodian until Christ came" (Gal. 3:24), or as the King James Version has it, "our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ." The Old Covenant, or the Law of Moses, was not given to serve as a law, or system of worship for Christians, but served God's purpose in preparing the way for Christ to be revealed through the Gospel and thus to offer all men the hope of salvation from their sin and ultimately eternal destruction of this present world.

The Law of the Old Testament was given specifically to the Jews, the Hebrew people, the Israelites. The Lord said to Moses, "In accordance with these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel. (Ex. 34:27) The King James version says, "after the tenor of these words." Then Moses "wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments" (vs. 28).

The ten commandments were therefore the basis of the Old Covenant, and were called, "the covenant." When this law was

first recorded, God said, "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt." (Ex. 20:2) And Moses said to Israel, "The Lord our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. Not with our fathers did the Lord make this covenant, but with us, who are all out of the midst of the fire." (Deut. 5:2-4) And in this passage the ten commandments are repeated again, indicating that they were the basic part of the Old Covenant, or Law of Moses given on Mt. Sinai, in Horeb.

Now in Jeremiah it is written, "Behold the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and the house of Judah, not like the covenant which I made with their fathers when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant which they broke... After those days, says the Lord, I will put my law within them, and I will write it upon their hearts, for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." (Jer. 31:31-34) In the New Testament these very words are quoted (Heb. 8:8-12), and the Scripture says that "Christ has obtained a ministry which is as much more excellent than the old as the covenant he mediates is better." (vs. 6), and the writer concludes, "In speaking of a new covenant he treats the first as obsolete." (Heb. 8:13)

Throughout the book of Hebrews the terms "law" and "covenant" are used interchangeably. In this book the contrast between the Old and the New Testament is made clear. It is written, "The law was but a shadow of the good things to come" (Heb. 10:1), and then the sacrifice for sin which Christ made on the cross is shown to be in contrast to the offerings of the Old Covenant, "which can never take away sin." (Heb. 10:11) Thus, it is concluded regarding the Covenants, "He abolished the first in order to establish the second." (Heb. 10:9)

"God made us alive together with Christ, having forgiven us all our trespasses, having cancelled the bond which stood against us with its legal demands; this he set aside, nailing it

to the cross... Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a sabbath. These are only a shadow of thing to come; but the substance belongs to Christ." (Col. 2:13-17)

Questions

1. What are the two broad divisions of the Bible? _____
2. The Old Testament contains the Law, the Prophets, History and also _____
3. The Law was "our custodian" until _____
(Gal. 3:24)
4. The Law served to prepare the way for the coming of _____
(Gal. 3:24)
5. The Law of Moses, the Old Testament, was given specifically to the _____
(Ex. 34:27)
6. The Ten Commandments were the basis of the Old Covenant and were called _____
(Ex. 34: 27, 28)
7. The New Covenant is not like the covenant God made with Israel when he brought them out of _____
(Jer. 31:32)
8. The First Covenant is _____ (Heb. 8:13)
9. He abolished the First Covenant in order to establish the _____
(Heb. 10:9)
10. The Old Testament is called a shadow of _____
(Col. 2:17)

CHAPTER VI

SAVED BY GRACE

"For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ." (John 1:17) The Christian's hope rests in the grace of God. The contrast between the law of the Old Testament and the salvation provided in the New Testament is made clear in the Scriptures, but many people have failed to grasp the difference or to understand the reason for the difference.

In Romans 3:20, the apostle Paul wrote: "For no human being will be justified in His sight by the works of the law, since through the law comes knowledge of sin." The reason men could not be justified by the law of Moses, or by any legal system (vs. 28) is made clear in Rom. 10:5. Moses writes that the man who practices the righteousness which is based on the law shall live by it. The point is that one must keep the law to be justified by law, and if one keeps the law, he shall live, or have eternal life, by virtue of having kept the law. But the impossibility of this is indicated in Gal. 3:10, "For all who rely on works of law are under a curse; for it is written, 'Cursed be every one who does not abide by all things written in the book of the law, and do them.' In vs. 11 he writes, "Now it is evident that no man is justified before God by the law." The reason is clear. One would have to keep the law perfectly to be justified by the law. His standing before God would be merited by his own works. But no one ever kept the law perfectly, apart from Christ himself, and so the law could not justify. Its purpose was to give men a knowledge of sin. (Rom. 3:20)

Since no one could be justified by law, God has provided another way. Paul wrote in Rom. 3:21-25, "But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from law, although the law and the prophets bear witness to it, the

righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction; since all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God, they are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as an expiation by his blood, to be received by faith."

Thus the Christian, in spite of his personal imperfection may have hope, a strong assurance of acceptance by God, not on the basis of his own merit but through the grace of God. Christ's blood, his life, was given to cover our sins; this is the meaning of "expiation". Thus the apostle wrote, Eph. 2:8-10, "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God—not because of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them."

In all these passages it is indicated that this salvation by God's grace is to be received by faith. Faith implies not only believing in God, and His Son, Jesus Christ, but it also involves trust in Him. (Heb. 11:1) If we trust in Him, we will accept and obey his Word, we will strive to walk in the footsteps of Jesus. (I Peter 2:21) In Titus 2:11 Paul writes: "The grace of God has appeared for the salvation of all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." And in Ch. 3:5 he says: "Not by works which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life."

When Paul here says he saved us by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, his language

concurs with Jesus' saying: "unless one be born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter the kingdom of God." (John 3:5) Jesus put it in the clearest terms when he said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." (Mark 16:16)

Questions

1. No human being will be justified in His sight by the _____
_____ (Romans 3:20)
2. The knowledge of sin comes _____ (vs. 20)
3. To be justified by law one must abide by _____
_____ (Gal. 3:10)
4. To be justified by law one would have to keep the law _____

5. The righteousness of God is now manifest apart from _____
_____ (Rom. 3:21)
6. God's righteousness is through _____
_____ (vs. 22)
7. We are justified by his grace as a _____
(vs. 24)
8. On what basis can the Christian have hope? _____
9. Faith involves not only believing in God, but also _____
_____ (Heb. 11:1)
10. The grace of God teaches us to deny _____
_____ (Titus 2:11, 12)
11. "Washing of regeneration" is explained by Jesus' language, "He that believeth and is _____
shall be saved." (Mark 16:16)

CHAPTER VII

HOW TO BECOME A CHRISTIAN

or

WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?

"If you are reproached for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or a thief, or a wrong-doer, or a mischief-maker: yet if one suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but in that name let him glorify God." (I Peter 4:14-16) In the book of Acts it is written, "The disciples were called Christians first in Antioch." (Acts 11:26) Christians are therefore disciples of Christ. Disciples are learners, or followers.

Jesus said, "For the Son of man came to seek and to save the lost." (Luke 19:10) The name Jesus means "Saviour", and the Angel who spoke to Joseph said, "You shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." (Matt. 1:21) Christ's purpose in coming into the world was to save men from sin, from the eternal consequences of sin in the human soul. "For God so loved the world that He gave his Son, that whoever believes in Him should perish but have eternal life." (John 3:16) The apostle Peter later wrote, "For the time has come for judgment to begin with the household of God; and if it begins with us, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God? And if the righteous man is scarcely saved, where will the sinner and the ungodly appear?" (I Peter 4:17-18)

It should be clear that to be a Christian means to be saved, and therefore the question, What Must I Do To Be Saved? is answered when one learns how to become a Christian. One of the most puzzling facts in the world today is the apparent lack of clarity in the teaching of many religious leaders with regard

to these questions. A great many people who believe themselves saved, who claim to be Christians, have no evidence to indicate that they are truly saved, except the feeling in their hearts and conscience that it is so.

But the Bible does not leave the answers to these questions nebulous or equivocal. In Romans 1:16 the apostle Paul wrote, "I am not ashamed of the gospel; it is the power of God unto salvation to every one who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek." Jesus said when He gave the Great Commission, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned." (Mark 16:15, 16) Then Peter told the people on Pentecost, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." (Acts 2:38) The apostle Paul wrote in Romans 10:9, 10, "If you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved."

From these passages it is clear that to be saved, or to become a Christian, one must believe the gospel, the good news that Christ died for our sins and arose from the dead, confess one's faith in Christ, repent and be baptized in obedience to the gospel. This brings one into contact with the death of Christ. In Romans 6:1-4, the apostle Paul writes: "Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life." Here the apostle says we are baptized into Christ Jesus. We are baptized into his death. We are buried by baptism, and arise to

walk in newness of life. In Christ are all spiritual blessings. (Eph. 1:3) "If anyone is in Christ he is a new creature, old things are passed away; behold all things are become new." (II Cor. 5:17)

Questions

1. In what name should we glorify God? (I Pet. 4:14-16)

2. What does the name "Jesus" mean? (Matt. 1:21)

3. To whom is the gospel the power of God unto salvation? (Rom. 1:16) _____
4. Who does Jesus say will be saved (Mark 16:15-16)

5. For what end were the people to "repent and be baptized"? (Acts 2:38) _____
6. What gift were they promised? (Acts 2:38) _____
7. What were the people to confess with their lips? _____
_____ (Rom. 10:9-10)
8. Into what were the Romans baptized? Into _____
and into _____ (Rom. 6:3)
9. We are buried with Christ by baptism and arise to walk in (Rom. 6:4)
10. If anyone is in Christ he is a _____
(II Cor. 5:17)

CHAPTER VIII

FAITH

"Jesus said, "If ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins." (John 8:24). In this chapter (vs. 12) Jesus said, "I am the light of the world." He said in vs. 42, "The Father sent me," and He said in vs. 19, "If you knew me, you would know my Father also." This is the essence of the Christian faith, that one believes that Jesus is the one sent from God, the light of the world, to give the knowledge of God by which man may be saved from sin.

But why should modern man, freed from the ignorance and superstition which kept man in bondage and fear for much of his history, believe that Jesus Christ and His claim to be the Son of God is true? The answer lies in the Bible. The apostle Paul wrote, "So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Rom. 10:17) The writers of the New Testament claimed to bear witness to the things which they had seen and heard. The apostle Peter wrote, "For we did not follow cleverly devised myths, when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For when he received honor and glory from God the Father and the voice was borne to him by the Majestic Glory, 'This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased,' we heard this voice borne from heaven, for we were with him in the holy mount. And we have the prophetic word made sure. You will do well to pay attention to this as to a lamp shining in a dark place until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts." (II Peter 1:16-19)

The apostle John wrote, "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life—the life was manifest, and we saw it, and testify to it, and proclaim to you the eternal life which

was with the Father and was made manifest to us—that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you.” (I John 1:1-3)

The apostle Paul wrote, “You have heard of the stewardship of God’s grace that was given to me for you, how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I have written briefly. When you read this you can perceive my understanding in the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit.” (Eph. 3:2-5)

These men were eminently qualified to testify as witnesses. They had every opportunity to personally experience that to which they bore witness, their character and integrity are unimpeachable, and they were willing to stand by their testimony even at the cost of their lives. For the interested student, a great body of knowledge in the field of Christian Evidences has been amassed. But for the sincere seeker of truth, the Bible, wherein is revealed the Word of God, presents the basis of our faith, which is a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul. (Heb. 6:19)

In Heb. 11:1 the writer says, “Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.” In verse six it is written, “And without faith it is impossible to please God. For whoever would draw near to God must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who seek Him.” Faith involves conviction, the belief that God is, and that His Word is true. But faith also involves assurance. The assurance of things hoped for, the knowledge of one’s acceptance by God. This means trust in God. Our assurance rests in God’s grace, in His love and forgiveness, and not in our own righteousness.

But it is important to realize that faith is not merely a passive acceptance, but an activating principle. In Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is of any avail, but faith working through love.” (Gal. 5:6)

Questions

1. Paul says "faith come by hearing the _____."
(Rom. 10:17)
2. Peter says, "We did not follow cleverly devised myths, when we made known the power and coming of our Lord Christ, but we were _____."
(II Peter 1:16)
3. John says, "We declare unto you that which we have _____."
(I John 1:3)
4. Paul says "The mystery was made known to me by _____."
(Eph. 3:3)
5. At what cost did many of the apostles give their testimony?
6. "Faith is the assurance of _____
the conviction of _____." (Heb. 11:1)
7. "Without faith it is impossible to _____."
(Heb. 11:6)
8. "God rewards those who _____."
(Heb. 11:6)
9. The Christian's assurance rests upon God's grace, not in one's _____ own _____.
10. What avails is "faith working through _____."
(Gal. 5:6)

CHAPTER IX

REPENTANCE

When Jesus came into the world, God sent John the Baptist to "prepare the way of the Lord." (Matt. 3:3) John came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." (vs. 2) He was the herald announcing the coming of the king. When Jesus began preaching he proclaimed the same message, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Matt. 4:17) Jesus told the hypocritical Pharisees, "Unless you repent you will all likewise perish." (Luke 13:3) And in Luke chapter 15 we read where Jesus said, "there is joy before the angels of God over one sinner who repents." (Luke 15:10) To the unbelieving Jews Jesus said, "The men of Nineveh will arise at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah and behold, greater than Jonah is here." (Matt. 12:41)

It is clear that the call to men to repent lay at the heart of Jesus' message and purpose. Jesus came into the world to reveal God to man, and to reconcile man to God. But the impenitent man cannot approach God. To sinful man Paul wrote, "By your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed." (Rom. 2:5) Thus Jesus, at the end of his ministry here on earth, in sending His disciples out to carry the gospel into all the world, said, "that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be preached in his name to all nations." (Luke 24:47)

In II Peter 3:9-10 the apostle wrote, "The Lord is not slow about his promise as some count slowness, but is forbearing toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud

noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and the works that are upon it will be burned up." Paul made a similar statement. (Acts 17:30-31) "The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all men by raising him from the dead."

When John the Baptist began preaching, to prepare the way for Christ, he said to the Pharisees and the Sadducees, "Bear fruit that befits repentance." (Matt. 3:8) Jesus said that the people of Nineveh repented, and in the book of Jonah 3:10 the Scripture says, "they turned from their evil way." In the parable of the two sons, Jesus said when the father told his son to go and work in his vineyard, the son answered, "I will not," but afterward he repented and went. (Matt. 21:28-29) The apostle Paul said, "I declared first to those at Damascus, then at Jerusalem and throughout all the country of Judea, and also to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God and perform deeds worthy of their repentance." (Acts 26:20)

From these passages it is clear that repentance is a change of mind, followed by a change of conduct, or manner of life. God calls upon sinful men to turn away from evil, and to walk in the way of righteousness. Thus when the people in Jerusalem heard the preaching of Peter, and realized that they had crucified the Son of God, the apostle told them to "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." (Acts 2:38)

To become Christians these people believed in Christ as the Son of God, repented and were baptized for the forgiveness of their sins. The apostle Paul wrote, "God's kingdom is meant to lead you to repentance." (Rom. 2:4) Repentance means to turn away from sin and a life of selfishness, and to commit oneself

to follow Jesus; to strive to do what He has taught in his Word. It is obvious, however, that Christians do not always fulfill perfectly the teaching of God's Word. In Acts 8 an account found of Simon the sorcerer, who believed, and was baptized (vs. 13). But Simon desired to purchase the miraculous powers of the Holy Spirit with money, and Peter told him, "Your heart is not right before God. Repent therefore of this wickedness, and pray to the Lord that the intent of your heart may be forgiven you." (vs. 21, 22) When one has become a Christian, and finds he has sinned, he must, therefore, repent of his sin, and pray for God's forgiveness. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (I John 1:19)

Questions

1. Both John the Baptist and Jesus preached, saying, "Repent for the kingdom of heaven _____."
(Matt. 4:17)
2. Jesus told the Pharisees, "Repent or _____."
(Luke 13:3)
3. The men of Nineveh repented at the preaching of _____.
_____. (Matt. 12:41)
4. Jesus came to reveal God to man and to _____ man to God.
5. Who is storing up wrath for the judgment day? (Rom. 2:5)

6. What is to be preached in Christ's name in all the world?
_____ (Luke 24:47)
7. God is not willing that everyone "should perish, but that all should come to _____." (II Peter 3:9)

8. God now "commands all men everywhere to _____."
(Acts 17:30)
9. When the people of Nineveh repented, "they turned from
their _____." (John 3:10)
10. Repentance is a change of _____ followed by
a change of _____.
11. If a Christian finds he has committed sin he should repent
and pray for God's _____.

CHAPTER X

CONFESSION

In I Timothy 6:12 the apostle Paul wrote: "Fight the good fight of faith; lay hold on eternal life to which you were called when you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses." In the New Testament when people became Christians it was not only important that they believe in Christ as the Son of God, and repent of their sins, but also that they confess their faith in Christ. In Rom. 10:9-10 the apostle wrote the righteousness which is by faith says, "If you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For man believes with his heart and so is justified, and he confesses with his lips and so is saved."

Jesus said to his disciples, "Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves; so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves. Beware of men; for they will deliver you up to councils, and flog you in their synagogues, and you will be dragged before governors and kings for my sake, to bear testimony before them and the Gentiles... so have no fear of them; for nothing is covered that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known... Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And not one of them will fall to the ground without your Father's will. But even the hairs of your head are all numbered."

"Fear not therefore, you are of more value than many sparrows. So everyone who confesses me before men, him I will also confess before my Father who is in heaven; but whoever denies me before men, him, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven." (Matt. 10:16-33)

In Matt. 16:13-16 we read, "When Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi he asked his disciples, "Who do

men say that the Son of men is?" And they said, 'some say John the Baptist, other say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.' He said to them, 'But who do you say that I am?' Simon Peter replied, 'You are the Christ, the son of the living God!'

This was the confession, the substance of the faith of the early Christians. In Acts 8:36-37 when the Evangelist Philip preached to the Ethiopian, we read, "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."

In the Gospel of John (12:42) we read that "many of the chief rulers also believed in him, but for fear of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue; for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God." In ch. 9:22 it says: "The Jews had already agreed that if any one should confess him to be Christ, he was to be put out of the synagogue."

It seems clear that in the New Testament, to become a Christian meant to make a commitment of one's life and allegiance to Christ. Those who heard and believed the Gospel confessed faith in Christ as the Son of God, and were baptized for the forgiveness of their sins. And they were expected to stand by their confession of faith in the face of every threat. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give you a crown of life." (Rev. 2:10)

Questions

1. What did Timothy make before many witnesses? (I Tim. 6:12) _____
2. What should you confess with your lips? (Rom. 10:9-10)

3. Jesus says, "who confesses me before men, I will also confess _____." (Matt. 10:32)
4. Simon Peter confessed, "You are the Christ _____"
_____." (Matt. 16:16)
5. The Pharisees did not confess Him, lest they should be put out _____. (John 12:42)
6. What will Jesus give to those who are faithful unto death?
_____. (Rev. 2:10)

CHAPTER XI

BAPTISM

We are reading from Matt. 28:18-20: "And Jesus came and said to them, All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you, and lo I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." This is the great commission given by Jesus to his apostles shortly before he ascended to heaven. We would like to note here what the New Testament teaches on the subject of baptism. Through the long period of Christian history, traditions and religious practices have so changed the form and meaning of baptism that many people have ignored the teaching of the Bible on the matter. In this great commission Jesus outlined the main work of his disciples. They were to go and make disciples, learners, or followers of all the nations, baptizing them, and teaching them to observe all that Jesus had commanded them. In Mark 16:15-16 Jesus said to his disciples, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned." In these passages those who are taught, those who believe are to be baptized.

In Acts 2:38, when Peter had preached the gospel to the people and they said, "What shall we do?" Peter said, "Repent and be baptized for the remission of your sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." Thus, those who were taught the gospel, who believed and who repented were baptized. In Acts 8:35-39, when the Ethiopian heard the gospel, he asked, "What is to prevent my being baptized?" Philip said, "If you believe you may", and he made the good confession. (Rom. 10:10)

It should be noted that both Philip and the Ethiopian went down into the water, and he baptized him. (vs. 38) This was necessary because the word "baptism" means "immersion." It is a burial. And therein lies its significance. The gospel is first of all, says the apostle Paul, "that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day." (I Cor. 15:3-4) Now Paul says in Rom. 6:1-11 that we have become dead to sin and alive to God in Christ. This is true because we were baptized into Christ, into Christ's death, we were buried with Christ by baptism into death, and raised to walk in newness of life. Baptism is therefore symbolic of Christ's death, burial and resurrection, and of the individual's death to sin and resurrection to a new life in Christ. To change the act of baptism from a burial, an immersion, into some other act destroys its meaning, and it becomes a human tradition rather than an act of obedience to God.

It should be noted that Paul says here, we were all "baptized into Christ Jesus." In Gal. 3:26-27 he writes: "for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith, For as many of you as were baptized into one body." In Eph. 1:22 the body of Christ is his church. And in vs. 3 Paul says, "every spiritual blessing" is in Christ.

Those who in true faith and penitence are baptized into Christ may be like the Ethiopian eunuch who went on his way rejoicing. Those who were saved (Mark 16:16), received forgiveness of sins, and the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38); their sins were washed away (Acts 22:16); in Christ they were sons of God (Gal. 3:27), members of the one body (I Cor. 12:13); and had access to every spiritual blessing (Eph. 1:3).

In Titus 3:4-7 Paul says: "When the goodness and loving kindness of God our Saviour appeared, he saved us, not because of deeds done by us in righteousness, but in virtue of his mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the

Holy Spirit, which he poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, so that we might be justified by his grace and become heirs in hope of eternal life."

Questions

1. Jesus commanded His apostles to make disciples of all nations, and to baptize them in the name of _____ . (Matt. 18:19)
2. Jesus said teach them to observe all that I have _____ . (vs. 20)
3. Jesus makes it clear that the ones who are to be baptized are the ones who _____ . (Mark 16:15, 16)
4. Peter preached to the people and when they believed and asked what to do he said, 'Repent and be _____ .' (Acts 2:38)
5. When the Ethiopian heard the gospel and asked, "what is to prevent my being baptized?" Philip said, "You may if you _____ ." (Acts 8:37)
6. The word baptism means _____ .
7. Being a burial in water, baptism is symbolic of Christ's _____ and _____ . (Rom. 6:3-5)
8. Paul says in Christ Jesus you are all _____ . (Gal. 3:26)
9. And he says we are baptized into _____ . (vs. 27)
10. God has saved us, says Paul, by the washing of regeneration so that we may be justified by His _____ . (Titus 3:7)

CHAPTER XII

THE NEW BIRTH

Reading from John 3:1-5: "Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. This man came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do, unless God is with him." Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus said to him: "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter the kingdom of God."

Today one hears a great deal of "born again" Christians. Unfortunately, even many of these people do not know what the Scriptures teach on the subject of "the new birth". Controversy has arisen over this matter more, certainly, from conflicting church doctrines than from a lack of clarity in the teaching of the New Testament.

Here Jesus says unless one is born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter the kingdom of God. In Matt. 18:3 he said "Except ye be converted... ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." And in Matt. 7:21 he says, "He that does the will of my Father... shall enter the kingdom of heaven."

As in a natural birth there is the begetting and the delivery, so also in Jesus' analogy of the new birth. In I John 5:1 we read, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is begotten of God." In vs. 6 John says, "It is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth." In James 1:18 it says: "Of His own will He begot us with the word of truth." In John 17:17 Jesus says God's word is truth; and in Luke 8:11 in another figure, Jesus says the seed of the kingdom is the word

of God. In John 6:63 he says, "It is the Spirit that gives life, the words that I have spoken, they are spirit and they are life."

God through the Holy Spirit has given us His truth, the word of God, and when we believe, we are begotten of God. Thus Paul wrote in I Cor. 4:15, "In Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel." And in I Peter 1:22-23 the apostle says, "You have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit... being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." From these passages it should be clear that in the new birth the Spirit works through the word of God to bring men to faith in Jesus Christ. But Jesus said one must be born of water and the Spirit. How does water come into the picture? Jesus said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." (Mark 16:16) Church historians tell us that it was not until Calvin's time that anyone ever denied that the water of the new birth refers to baptism. In Gal. 3:26-27 Paul wrote: "You are all children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." In II Cor. 5:17 he says: "If any man is in Christ, he is a new creature." One is baptized into Christ, and in Christ one is a new creature. The conclusion is unavoidable that in baptism the birth is consummated, and this is what Jesus meant in saying one must be born of water and of the Spirit. In Rom. 6:3-4 Paul says we are baptized into Jesus Christ, into his death, and raised up to walk in newness of life. A new life begins with a new birth. A beautiful summary of this teaching is found in Titus 3:5-7: "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life."

Questions

1. To enter the kingdom of heaven one must be born of _____ and _____ (John 3:5)
2. To enter the kingdom of heaven one must be _____ (Matt. 18:30)
3. One is begotten by the word of _____ (John 1:18)
4. God's Word is _____ (John 17:17)
5. The Spirit is _____ (I John 5:6)
6. The seed of the kingdom is the _____ (Luke 8:11)
7. The Words of Jesus are _____ and _____ (John 5:1)
8. We are "begotten of God" when we _____ (I John 5:1)
9. One is begotten through the _____ (I Cor. 4:15)
10. We are born again by the incorruptible seed of the _____ (I Peter 1:22-23)
11. The Spirit works through the _____ to bring about the new birth.
12. When we are baptized into Christ we put on _____ (Gal. 3:27)
13. In Christ one is a _____ (II Cor. 5:17)
14. We are baptized into Christ's death and raised to walk in of _____ (Rom. 6:34)
15. When we believe and are baptized we are born of water and the _____

CHAPTER XIII

FAITHFULNESS

Col. 3:1-4: "If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on the earth. For you have died, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory. "In these verses the apostle tells the Christians, "you have died," and he also said, "you have come to fullness of life in Him... and you were buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. You who were dead in trespasses... God made alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our trespasses (ch. 2:10-13). Now in order to be faithful to this new life which they had begun, Paul exhorts them in Ch. 3:5-15, "Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry... anger, wrath, malice, slander, and foul talk,... put on the new nature, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its Creator. Put on compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness and patience, forbearing one another... forgiving each other, as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love." This is something of what it means to walk in "newness of life." (Rom. 6:4) Jesus said, "If you continue in My word, you are truly My disciples." (John 8:31) In Heb. 6:1 the writer says, "Therefore let us leave the elementary doctrine of Christ and go on unto maturity." In the same vein Peter writes, "So put away all malice and all guile and insincerity and envy and all slander. Like newborn babes, long for the pure spiritual milk (the milk of the word), that by it you may grow up to salvation." (I Peter 2:1-2)

When Barnabas came to Antioch where the church was growing rapidly the Scripture says: "When he came and saw the grace of God, he was glad; and he exhorted them all to remain faithful to the Lord with steadfast purpose." (Acts 11:23) When Paul and Barnabas revisited the churches which they had recently established, they strengthened the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith and saying that through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God." (Acts 14:22)

Jesus had warned His disciples when He sent them out to preach, "You will be hated by all men for My name's sake. But he who endures to the end will be saved." (Matt. 10:22) And later He said, "They will deliver you up to tribulation, and put you to death... then many will fall away... and many false prophets will arise... and most men's love will grow cold. But he who endures to the end will be saved." (Matt. 24:9-13)

This is the kind of faithfulness which Jesus requires, whether in the face of persecution or of more ordinary trials or temptations. In Eph. 6:10-18 Paul writes: "Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we are not contending against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places... stand, therefore, girded with truth, put on the breastplate of righteousness, have your feet shod with the gospel of peace, take the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God... keep alert with all perseverance." In Rev. 2:10, Jesus says: "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life."

Questions

1. We were dead in trespasses and God made us alive in Christ, having forgiven our _____. (Col. 2:13)
2. Jesus says, "If you continue in My word you are truly My _____." (John 8:31)
3. We must desire the spiritual milk of God's Word to grow up to _____. (I Peter 2:2)
4. Barnabas exhorted the church to remain _____ (Acts 11:23)
5. Jesus said, He who endures to the end will be _____. (Matt. 10:22)
6. Jesus says, "Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the _____ of _____." (Rev. 2:10)

CHAPTER XIV

THE HOLY SPIRIT

Matt. 28:18-19: "And Jesus came and said to them, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.'" In II Cor. 13:14 the apostle wrote: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you." The Bible teaches that there is one God. But in the divine God-head there are three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The Son was with the Father in the beginning. (John 1:18) At the end of his life on earth Jesus ascended to the Father, and He said, if I go, I promise to send the Comforter, the Counselor, the Holy Spirit to them. (John 16:7) John the Baptist had foretold that Jesus would baptize with the Holy Spirit, and in Acts 1:5 Jesus told the apostles whom he had chosen: "Before many days you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit." Acts 2:1-4 tells us that on the day of Pentecost "suddenly a sound came from heaven like the rush of a mighty wind, and there appeared to them tongues of fire resting on each of them, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." Here the twelve apostles were overwhelmed, or baptized with the Holy Spirit. There is only one other instance in the Book of Acts where the baptism of the Holy Spirit is mentioned, and this was when Cornelius and his household were converted, the first Gentiles ever to be received into the church. (Acts 10:11)

The purpose of this overwhelming gift of the Holy Spirit is made clear by Jesus' own words to the apostles: "The Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things, and bring to your

remembrance all that I have said to you." (John 14:26) And again Jesus said to them: "When the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all truth." (John 16:13) In addition to the revelation of the Word, the Holy Spirit worked to confirm the teaching of the apostles by miraculous signs and wonders. In Heb. 2:3-4 the Scripture says, "How shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation? It was declared at first by the Lord, and it was attested to us by those who heard Him, while God also bore witness by signs and wonders and various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to His own will." In Mark 16:20 we read that when the apostles went forth and preached everywhere, "The Lord worked with them and confirmed the message by the signs that attended it."

In the New Testament there were many others who were given the gift of prophecy, of miracles, or healing and of speaking in tongues besides the apostles. (I Cor. 12:6-11) This was done through the laying on of the apostles' hands. (Acts 6:6, 8; 8:17) The purpose of those gifts was also to confirm the Word which was revealed to his Holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. (Eph. 3:5) Jesus had said, "when the Holy Spirit comes, he will convince the world of sin and righteousness and judgment." (John 16:8) This He does through the Word of God. "Faith comes by hearing the Word of God." (Rom. 10:17)

To the people on Pentecost Peter said, "Repent, and be baptized for the forgiveness of your sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." (Acts 2:38) To the Christians in Rome Paul wrote, "You are in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of Christ dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ is none of His." (Rom. 8:9) And in Gal. 4:6 he says: "Because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into your hearts."

In Apostolic times the Holy Spirit worked in miraculous ways through the baptism of the Spirit and by various spiritual gifts. Today He works through the Word of God to bring men to

Christ and to instruct and guide the Christians. He dwells in the hearts of the children of God and brings forth the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. (Gal. 5:22-23)

Questions

1. The Bible speaks of the Father, the Son and the _____.
_____ . (II Cor. 13:14)
2. Jesus promised the apostles that they would be baptized with _____.
_____ . (Acts 1:5)
3. Jesus said the Holy Spirit would guide the apostles into all _____.
_____ . (John 16:13)
4. The Holy Spirit also distributed miraculous gifts, and signs and wonders through the laying on of the hands of the _____.
_____ . (Acts 8:17)
5. The Holy Spirit convinces the world of sin, righteousness and judgment through the _____ of _____.
(Rom. 10:17)
6. When Peter promised the gift of the Holy Spirit to all those who repented and were baptized this was the indwelling of the _____.
(Rom. 8:9; Gal. 4:6)
7. Name four characteristics of the fruit of the Spirit _____.
_____. (Gal. 5:22-23)

CHAPTER XV

THE KINGDOM OF GOD

Matt. 3:1-2: "In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.'" In Mark 1:14 we read: "Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the Kingdom of God, and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent, and believe the gospel.'" In the Old Testament the nation of Israel was considered a theocracy, and they received their law from God through Moses. However, the prophets foretold a time when God would make a new covenant with Israel and with Judah. (Jer. 31:31) They prophesied the coming Messianic Kingdom. Because national Israel foreshadowed and symbolized the coming kingdom, these prophecies were intermingled with predictions concerning temporal Israel and her more immediate fortunes; and as the ultimate hope of the nation was bound up with messianic promises, these prophecies were often cast in the language of Israel's national and religious institutions. As a result the Jews at the time of Christ were expecting the Messiah to establish a glorious reign in a political kingdom and to re-establish David's throne in Jerusalem.

But the nature of the kingdom of Christ, and God's purpose in Him, can only be determined through the New Testament. Whether Old Testament prophecies should be understood literally or figuratively must be determined by the teaching of the New Testament. The preaching of John the Baptist, and of Jesus, and his disciples indicates that repentance and remission of sins is important to the kingdom, which, they said was "at hand." In Matt. 5 Jesus said, to the poor in spirit belongs the kingdom, and to those who are persecuted for righteousness sake (vs. 3, 11). In Matt. 13 Jesus likens the kingdom of heaven to a sower who went forth to sow. And the

seed is the word of God. He tells more about the nature of his kingdom in the parables of the mustard seed, the wheat and the tares, the hidden treasure, the pearl of great price, and the parable of the net. He compared the kingdom to the householder who hired laborers in his vineyard and rewarded them at the end of the day. (Matt. 20) It is clear that the kingdom of God is a spiritual kingdom. In John 18:36, Jesus says, "My kingdom is not of this world." In Luke 17:21, He says, "The kingdom of God is within you." The apostle Paul said, through many tribulations we must enter the Kingdom of God (Acts 14:22). And in Romans 14:17 he says, "the Kingdom of God is not food and drink but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit." In I Cor. 15:50 he says, "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable." The kingdom of God is imperishable, it is a spiritual kingdom.

The Father "has delivered us from the domination of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins." (Gal. 1:13)

To Peter, Jesus had said: "On this rock, I will build my church" and "I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. 16:18-19) In the New Testament all who were members of Christ's church were citizens in this spiritual kingdom, the kingdom of God.

In Acts 2 the apostle Peter quotes the prophecy of David to show that God raised Jesus from the dead to sit upon David's throne. (vs. 30) Sitting at the right hand of God, Jesus is fulfilling God's promise to David to restore David's throne, for Christ is a descendant of David. Now the prophecy also says, "The Lord said to my Lord, sit at my right hand till I make thy enemies a stool of thy feet." In I Cor. 15:25 Paul says Jesus "must reign until He has put all his enemies under His feet." The last enemy is death, at the last day, the resurrection day,

the judgment day. "The Son of man will send His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers and cast them into the furnace of fire... and the righteous will shine like the sun in the Kingdom of their Father." (Matt. 13:41-43)

Questions

1. Both John the Baptist and Jesus preached "Repent, for the kingdom of God is at _____." (Mark 1:14)
2. At the time of Christ the Jews expected the Messiah to re-establish the throne of David in _____.
3. Jesus said to the poor in spirit belongs the _____.
_____. (Matt. 5:3)
4. The parables of the sower, the mustard seed, the hidden treasure, indicate the _____ nature of the kingdom of God. (Matt. 13)
5. Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of the _____."
(John 18:36)
6. Paul says, "flesh and blood cannot inherit the _____."
_____. (I Cor. 15:50)
7. We have been transferred into "the kingdom _____"
_____. (Col. 1:13)
8. Christians, the church, are citizens in the _____." (Matt. 16:18, 19)
9. In this spiritual kingdom Christ now sits at the right hand of God and reigns "until he has put all his enemies _____"
_____. (I Cor. 15:25)
10. The kingdom of God will find its ultimate consummation when the righteous "shine like the sun in the _____"
_____. (Matt. 13:43)

CHAPTER XVI

THE DEATH OF CHRIST

John 3:16 says, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son that whosoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life." God gave His Son to die for our sins and "not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world." (1 John 2:20)

In Romans 5:8 Paul says, "God showed his love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." The question has often been asked, "Why did Christ have to die? Could God not forgive our sins without the death of his Son?"

It is clear that the gift of His Son is a measure of God's love for man. "God so loved that He gave his only begotten Son." Jesus also said, "Greater love has no man that this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." (John 15:13)

In Romans 6:23 the apostle says, "The wages of sin is death." In chapter 3:23 he has said, "all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of god." All men are sinners, all have earned the wages of sin, which is death. In vs. 29 Paul declares that no one can be justified by works of the law, and in Gal. 3:10 he makes the reason clear: "Cursed is every one who does not abide by all things written in the book of the law, to do them." To be justified by the works of the law one would have to keep the law perfectly, and no one, apart from Jesus Christ, has ever done so.

For this reason God has provided another way. In Romans 3:21 the apostle says: "But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from law." In verse 24, we are "justified by his grace as a gift." This is possible because we have an expiation for our sins in the blood of Christ. Christ died for us. He died on our behalf. And this proves that God is righteous, says Paul in vs. 26. Without the death of Christ it would

appear God is not righteous. God's law says, "the wages of sin is death."

Would God be righteous in forgiving sin and forgetting this law? It seems that God forgives our sins, and accepts the death of Christ in lieu of the penalty due us. And Paul says "this is to show God's righteousness." (Rom. 6:25) Let no one, therefore, think that sin is inconsequential; let no one fail to take sin seriously.

Sin costs the sinner fellowship with God. "Your iniquities have separated you from your God; and your sins have hid his face from you." (Isa. 59:2) Jesus says, "He who believes the Son has eternal life, he who does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God rests upon him." (John 3:36) Man forfeits his right to life through sins. But in Christ "we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace." (Eph. 1:7)

Through the death of Christ God shows us the depth of His love. Through the death of Christ we see the depths of sin. Through the death of Christ we may comprehend the cost of salvation. We have been ransomed, says the apostle Peter, "with the precious blood of Christ." (I Peter 1:19)

Questions

1. God showed His love for us in that while we were yet sinners _____. (Rom. 5:8)
2. The wages of sin is _____. (Rom. 6:23)
3. All have _____. (Rom. 3:23)
4. When God forgives our sins He can point to the death of Christ to show that he is _____. (Rom. 6:25)
5. Those who do not obey the Son shall not see _____
_____. (John 3:36)

6. In Christ we have _____ through His blood (Eph. 1:7)
7. Redemption means the forgiveness of _____ (Eph. 1:7)
8. The ransom paid for our redemption is the precious _____ . (I Peter 1:19)

CHAPTER XVII

THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST

We are reading from Matt. 12:38-40: "Then certain of the scribes and Pharisees answered him saying, Teacher, we would see a sign from thee. But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it but the sign of Jonah the prophet; for as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale; so shall the Son of man be three days in the heart of the earth." Here Jesus foretold His death and His resurrection. In Mark 10:33, Jesus said, "Behold we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests and the scribes; and they shall condemn him to death, and shall spit upon him, and shall scourge him, and shall kill him; and after three days he shall rise again." In John 2:19-21 Jesus told the Jews, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up... He spoke of the temple of his body."

After Jesus' crucifixion he was buried in Joseph's new tomb. As it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, the women came to see the sepulcher. The angel said, "I know you seek Jesus, who has been crucified, He is not here: for He is risen even as he said." (Matt. 28:1-6) In Acts 1:3, Luke says, "He showed himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, appearing to them by the space of forty days." In his sermon on Pentecost, the apostle Peter declared that God raised Him from the dead (Acts 2:24), and showed that David, being a prophet, spoke of the resurrection of Christ. (vs. 31) This Jesus, said Peter, did God raise up, where of we are all witnesses. (vs. 32)

And these are the reasons we may believe with all assurance, that Jesus was raised from the dead. The prophets

foretold it, Jesus foresaw it, the empty tomb attested it, and the apostles bore witness to it. The eyewitness testimony of credible witnesses is the strongest kind of evidence. In Acts 5:30-32, Peter declared: "The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom you slew, hanging him on a tree. Him did God exalt at his right hand to be a Prince and Saviour, to give repentance to Israel, and remission of sins... And we are witness of these things; and so is the Holy Spirit whom God hath given to them that obey him."

In Romans 1:4 the apostle says that Christ "was declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead." And in I Cor. 15:20-24, the apostle writes: "Now hath Christ been raised from the dead, the first fruits of them that are asleep. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ, the first fruits; then they that are Christ's at his coming. Then cometh the end."

In I Cor. 6:14 we read: "God both raised up the Lord, and will raise up us through His power." The resurrection of Christ from the dead is our assurance that we, too, shall be raised; that there is life after death. Paul wrote in I Cor. 15:14-17, "If Christ hath not been raised, then is our preaching vain, your faith also is vain. Yes, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raise up Christ; if Christ has not been raised, your faith also is vain; you are yet in your sins." In Romans 4:25, the apostle says: "He was delivered up for our trespasses, and was raised for our justification."

To the people of Athens Paul said: "God commandeth men that they should all everywhere repent in as much as he has appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom he has ordained; where of He

has given assurance unto all men, in that He has raised him from the dead." (Acts 17:30-31) "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," wrote Peter, "who according to His great mercy begot us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, unto an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you." (I Peter 1:3-4)

Questions

1. The sign of Jonah meant Jesus would be three days and nights in the heart _____. (Matt. 12:40)
2. Who told the women that Jesus was risen? _____ (Matt. 28:5-6)
3. Jesus appeared to the apostles over a period of _____. (Acts 1:3)
4. Reasons we believe Jesus was raised from the dead; The prophets _____; Jesus _____ the empty tomb _____, The apostles bore _____.
5. Paul says, Christ has been raised from the dead, the _____ (1 Cor. 15:20)
6. The resurrection of Christ is assurance that there is life _____. (Acts 17:31)
7. God has given us assurance that He will judge the world by _____. (Acts 17:31)
8. We have a living hope by the _____ (I Peter 1:3)

CHAPTER XVIII

THE SECOND COMING

We are reading from John 14:1-3: "Let not your heart be troubled; you 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; for I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and will receive you unto myself; that where I am, there you may be also." Here Jesus spoke of his death, his ascension, his second coming, and of heaven, the home of the soul. The Second Coming of Christ is mentioned many times in the New Testament. In Mark 13:26, 32, Jesus says: "They shall see the Son of man coming in clouds with great power and glory. Then shall he send forth the angels and shall gather together his elect... But of that day or that hour knoweth no one, not even the angels in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father."

As the disciples watched Jesus ascend into heaven, the Scripture says: "Behold two men stood by them in white apparel, who said, This Jesus, who was received up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as you beheld him going into heaven." (Acts 1:10-11) There are many passages which tell what is to happen when Jesus comes again. In Phil. 3:20-21 Paul says: "Our citizenship is in heaven, from whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body."

In Thess. 4:15-17 Paul writes: "This we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we that are alive, that are left unto the coming of the Lord, shall in no wise precede them that are fallen 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

that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord. As for the rest, Paul continues, "when they are saying 'Peace and safety,' then sudden destruction cometh upon them" (ch. 5:3). Paul gives more details of what will happen at the Second Coming in I Cor. 15:50-53: "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I tell you a mystery: We all shall not sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." This is at the last trump, when the dead in Christ shall rise.

Again Paul describes events of the Second coming in II Thess. 1:7-10: "To you that are afflicted rest with us, at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with the angels of his power in flaming fire, he will render vengeance to them that know not God, and to them that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus; who shall suffer punishment, even eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might, when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be marvelled at in all them that believed." From these passages it is clear that at the second coming there will be the resurrection of the dead, the glorification of the people of God, and the final judgment of the wicked.

Peter says in I Peter 5:4: "When the shepherd shall appear, you shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." In II Peter 3:3-4 Peter writes: "In the last days mockers will come... saying, Where is the promise of his coming? For from the day that the fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation." In vs. 10-12 Peter says: "But

the day of the Lord will come as a thief; in which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall be dissolved with fervent heat, and the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing that these things are thus all to be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy living and godliness, looking for and earnestly desiring the coming of the day of God."

Questions

1. Of the Second Coming, Jesus says, no one knows the _____ . (Mark 13:32)
2. The angels said, He shall so come _____ . (Acts 1:11)
3. Our bodies will be transformed into the likeness of His _____ . (Phil. 3:20)
4. At the resurrection, when Jesus comes, all His people will be caught up in the clouds, and ever be _____ . (I Thess. 4:17)
5. At the Second Coming the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall all be _____ . (I Cor. 15:52)
6. The mortal must put on _____ . (vs. 53)
7. At the appearing of the Lord, God will take vengeance on those who obey _____ . (II Thess. 1:8)
8. At the same time He shall be glorified, and marvelled at by all _____ . (II Thess. 1:10)
9. Peter says, "When the Chief Shepherd shall appear, you shall receive _____ . (I Peter 5:4)
10. We should earnestly desire the coming of the _____ . (II Peter 3:12).

CHAPTER XIX

THE JUDGMENT

We are reading from Matt. 25:31-46: "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory;—And before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats. And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the king say unto them on his right hand, Come, you blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and you gave me to eat. I was thirsty and you gave me drink; I was a stranger and you took me in, naked and you clothed me; I was sick and you visited me; I was in prison and you came unto me... In as much as you did it unto one of the least of these my brethren, you did it unto me... Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, depart from me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels... and these shall go away into eternal punishment; but the righteous into eternal life."

The day of judgment was a theme mentioned many times in the Old Testament: "The Lord... cometh to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth." (Psalms 96:13) Jesus spoke often of man's responsibility before God for his conduct. He said, "Not everyone that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in thy name, and in thy name cast out demons, and in thy name do many mighty works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, you that work iniquity." (Matt. 7:21-22). Again Jesus said to the

disobedient people of his time, "It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment, than for you." (Matt. 11:22) In Matt. 12:36 we read, "Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment." In the parable of the tares, Jesus says, "The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all that offend, and them that do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. So shall it be at the end of the world. (Matt. 13:41-49) In John 12:48 Jesus said: "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judges him; the words that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day."

The Apostle Paul declared, "God has appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that Man who he has ordained; whereof he has given assurance unto all men, in that He has raised Him from the dead." (Acts 17:31) In Romans 2:5-10 the Apostle wrote: "After your hardness and impenitent heart (you) treasure up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; who will render to every man according to his works: to them that by patience in well doing seek for glory and honor and incorruption, eternal life... tribulation and anguish upon every soul that worketh evil... but glory and honor and peace to every man that worketh good." It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." (Heb. 9:27) The judgment of God is universal, for all men of all ages. It will occur at the end of the world, at the second coming of Christ, on the last day. The Apostle John wrote: "I saw a great white throne, and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were

opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of the things which were written in the books, according to their works... and whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." (Rev. 20:11-15)

Questions

1. In the Judgment day, Jesus describes the righteous and says, "I as much as you did it to the least of these my brethren you did it unto _____ . (Matt. 25:40)
2. God will judge the world with righteousness and the people with _____ . (Psm. 96:13)
3. Not everyone shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he that _____ . (Matt. 7:21)
4. What shall judge man in the last day? _____
(John 12:48)
5. God has given assurance through the resurrection of Jesus that he will _____ . (Acts 17:31)
6. On the day of judgment God will render to every man according _____ . (Rom. 2:6)
7. It is appointed to men once to die, and after that the _____
_____ . (Heb. 9:27)
8. The judgment of the wicked is likened to a lake _____
_____ . (Rev. 20:15)

CHAPTER XX

THE CHURCH

We are reading from Matt. 16:16-18: "And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjonah; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father who is in heaven. And I also say unto thee, that thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it."

Upon the fact which Peter here confessed, when he said "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," Jesus proposed to found his church. Paul later wrote, "Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ." (I Cor. 3:11)

The "church" refers to the people of God, in the New Testament, or New Covenant. In Eph. 5:25-27 we read: "Christ also loved the church and gave himself up for it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word, that he might present the church to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." The word "church" comes from the Greek "ekklesia," which means "to call out." The church was therefore, the "called out" people of God. In the passages above the church refers to the universal body of people, all true disciples of Christ. The word is also used to refer to a local body or congregation, or the Christians in one area, as in I Cor. 1:2: "Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, even them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place."

To the Christians in II Thess. 2:13-14 Paul says: "God chose you from the beginning unto salvation in sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth; where unto he called you through

our Gospel." And in I Peter 2:9-10 the Apostle writes: "He called you out of darkness into his marvelous light; who in times past were no people, but now are the people of God." The people of God, the church, are those who have been called by the gospel to follow Jesus, who is the light of the world. Hosea had prophesied this and Paul quotes his language in Romans 9:25-26: "I will call them my people, who were not my people; And her beloved, who was not beloved... where it was said, 'you are not my people. There shall they be called sons of the living God.'" John uses similar language in I John 3:1: "Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called children of God." In I Cor. 1:2 we noted earlier that Paul addressed the church, who were "called to be saints," who were "sanctified in Christ Jesus." The "saints" were all those who were "called out," separated, or set apart to God's service. The "saints" in the New Testament were the Christians, who made up the church, or the people of God. The Apostle Paul addressed the church in Rome saying: "To all in Rome who were beloved of God and called to be saints." (Romans 1:7) In I Cor. 1:9 we read: "God is faithful, through whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord." And in Col. 3:15 the apostle says: "Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which you were called in one body." "God saved us," says Paul, "and called us with a holy calling." (II Tim. 1:9) And Peter wrote: "Like he who called you is holy, be you yourselves also holy in all manner of living." (I Peter 1:15) In Heb. 3:1 it is said we are "partakers of a heavenly calling."

The church, therefore, is the people of God, called out and separated from the world by a heavenly calling, called to be saints, to be children of God, called by the Gospel to walk in the light (I John 1:7). And Paul says: "I beseech you to walk worthily of the calling where with you were called." (Eph. 4:1)

And the Apostle Peter says: "Brethren... give diligence to make your calling and election sure." (II Peter 1:10)

Questions

1. Jesus said, "I will build my church, and the gates of Hades shall not _____ . (Matt. 16:18)
2. What is the foundation according to Paul? _____ . (I Cor. 3:11)
3. The word "church" means "the _____ (ekklesia).
4. Paul says the church are those who are called to be _____ . (I Cor. 1:2)
5. The people of God have been called out of darkness into His marvelous _____ . (I Peter 2:9)
6. God's people are called Sons of the living _____ . (Romans 9:26)
7. They are called _____ . (I John 3:1)
8. The church is made up of those who are called to be _____ . (Romans 1:7)
9. We are partakers of a heavenly _____ . (Heb. 3:1)
10. Paul says to "walk worthily of the _____ to which we have been called." (Eph. 4:1)

CHAPTER XXI

THE HOUSEHOLD OF GOD

THE FAMILY OF GOD

We are reading from I Tim. 3:14-15: "I hope to come to you soon, but I am writing these instructions to you so that if I am delayed, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth." Here the apostle calls the church the household of God. In the New Testament the word "house" or "household" is often used to mean "family", for example Heb. 11:7 says Noah "constructed an ark for the saving of his household." Acts 10:2 says Cornelius "feared God with all his household." The church, therefore, called the household of God, is the family of God. To the Gentile Christians Paul wrote: "You are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and members of the household of God." (Eph. 2:19)

In this spiritual family God is the Father. "I bow my knees before the Father," wrote Paul, "from whom the whole family in heaven and on earth is named." (Eph. 3:14) And in I Cor. 8:6 he says: "For us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we live." In Heb. 3:6 the writer says: "Christ was faithful over God's house as a Son. And we are his house if we hold fast our confidence and pride in our hope." Quoting a messianic Psalm, it is said in Hebrews 2:1 "He is not ashamed to call them brethren, in the midst of the congregation I will praise thee." In Matt. 12:50 Jesus said "Whosoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother, and sister, and mother." To the disciples Jesus said, "You are all brethren." (Matt. 23:8)

In the church, the family of God, all Christians are children of God. We read in Gal. 3:26-27: "In Christ Jesus you are all

sons of God, through faith. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ," and in ch. 4:6-7 it says: "Because you are sons, God has sent the spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying 'Abba, Father'. So through God you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son then an heir." Again the Apostle writes in Romans 8:14: "All who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God." From these passages we see that the church is made up of the children of God. God is our father, Christ our advocate, the Holy Spirit our guide through the word of God; and he dwells in our hearts. All Christians are brothers in Christ, and heirs of the promises of God. We can call upon God as our Father (Matt. 6:9); he cares for us (I Peter 5:7). Every good gift... comes from the Father (James 1:17); and Jesus says: "If you know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him." (Matt. 7:11)

In Heb. 12:6-11 we read: "The Lord disciplines him whom He loves, and chastises every son whom He receives... for the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant; later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it." But even in the tribulations of life, the apostle says: "Be anxious in nothing, but in everything, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." (Phil. 4:6-7)

In I Peter 1:14 the Apostle says: "As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance." And even of Christ it is written: "Although He was a Son, He learned obedience through the things which He suffered, and being made perfect, He became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him." (Heb. 5:8-9) "By this it may be seen who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil;

whoever does not do right is not of God, nor he who does not love his brother." (I John 3:10) In I Peter 1:22-23 we read: "Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere love of the brethren, love one another earnestly from the heart. You have been born anew, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God."

Questions

1. The household of God is the _____.
(I Tim. 3:15)
2. The church is the household of God and is therefore the _____.
(Eph. 3:14)
3. In the family of God, God is the _____.
(Eph. 3:14)
4. Christ is a Son over God's _____.
(Heb. 3:6-9)
5. Christians are spiritual brothers and sisters if they do the _____.
(Matt. 12:50)
6. Paul says, "All who are led by the Spirit of God are _____.
(Romans 8:14)
7. The Father in heaven gives good gifts to those who _____.
(Matt. 7:11)
8. "Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through the things which he _____.
(Heb. 5:8)
9. He is the "source of eternal salvation to all who _____.
(Heb. 5:9)
10. You "purified your souls by obedience to the truth unto a sincere love _____.
(I Peter 1:22)

CHAPTER XXII

THE BODY OF CHRIST

We are reading from Eph. 1:20-23: "He raised Him from the dead and made Him to sit at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come; and He has put all things under His feet and has made Him the head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all." In similar language, the apostle writes in Col 1:18: "He is the head of the body, the church: He is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, that in everything He might be pre-eminent."

Christ is the head of the church, and the church is his body. In Eph. 4:15-16 the apostle says: "Speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into Him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every joint with which it is supplied, when each part is working properly, makes bodily growth and upbuilds itself in love." Again in ch. 5:23 we read: "The husband is head of the wife as Christ is head of the church, His body, and is himself its Saviour."

The theme of the church as the body is found again in Romans 12:4-5 "For as in one body we have many members, and all the members do not have the same function, so we, through many, are one body in Christ, and individually member one of another." The picture of Christians as members of the body is presented again in I Cor. 12:12: "For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ." In vs. 21-23, that each member is equally important. In vs. 24-27 he shows that there should be no discord in the body, but that

the members should have the same care for one another. In verse 20 Paul said, "There are many members, but one body."

The unity of the body, and harmony among its members, was a matter of great concern to the apostle, and to the Lord. Of the Jews and the Gentiles, Paul says: Christ "is our peace, who has made us both one... and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby bringing the hostility to an end." (Eph. 2:14-16) In Eph. 4:1-6 the apostle exhorted the Christians: I therefore the prisoner of the Lord beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all lowliness and meekness, with patience, forbearing one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, on God and Father of us all, who is above all and through all and in all." It appears that history has denied Christians generally any semblance of the unity for which the apostle pled. But no matter what the world does, the responsibility of the Christian is ultimately personal and individual. We can seek to align our own understanding and conduct with the essential unities of God's Word and this, it would seem, should unite us with all those everywhere of like precious faith. "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin." (I John 1:7)

Christ is the Saviour of the body. (Eph. 5:23) We are called to peace in the one body. (Col. 3:15) We are reconciled to God in the one body. (Eph. 2:16) The church is the body, the fullness of him who fills all in all. (Eph. 1:23) "By one Spirit we were all baptized into one body." (I Cor. 12:13) As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. (Romans 8:14)

Questions

1. In the New Testament the body of Christ is the _____
_____. (Eph. 1:22-23)
2. Christ is the head of the _____
(Col. 1:18)
3. Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is Himself
its _____.
(Eph. 5:23)
4. The body is one and has many _____.
(I Cor. 12:12)
5. But there is one _____. (Eph. 4:4)
6. "If we walk in the light, we have _____
_____ one with another." (I John 1:7)
7. "We are called to peace in the _____.
(Col. 3:15)
8. "We are reconciled to God in the _____.
(Eph. 2:16)
9. "We are all baptized into _____.
(I Cor. 12:13)

CHAPTER XXIII

THE TEMPLE OF GOD

We are reading from I Cor. 3:16-17: "Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you? If any one destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and that temple you are." Again in (Eph.2:19-22): "You are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built into it for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit."

Here the church, the people of God, are called the temple of God, a spiritual temple, a dwelling place for God in the Spirit.

In the Old Testament God said to Moses, "Speak to the people of Israel... let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell in their midst. According to all that I show you concerning the pattern of the tabernacle and of all its furniture, so shall you make it" (Ex. 25:8-9). In Deut. 12:5 Moses told the people, "You shall seek the place which the Lord your God will choose out... to put His name there and make his habitation." And in ch. 16:2 he said: "You shall offer the passover sacrifice to the Lord your God... at the place which the Lord will choose, to make His name dwell there." This place where God's name dwelt among Israel was called the Tabernacle, or the tent of meeting. Later when Solomon built the temple in Jerusalem, the Lord appeared to Solomon and said to him: "I have heard your prayer, and have chosen this place for myself as a house of sacrifice... I have chosen and consecrated this house that my name may be there forever." (II Chron. 7:12, 16). But God warned the people, "If you turn aside and forsake my statutes and my commandments... then I will

pluck you up from the land which I have given you; and this house, which I have consecrated for my name, I will cast out of my sight, and make it a proverb and a byword among all peoples." (vs. 19-20)

But in the final analysis, as Stephen declared in Acts 7:48, "The Most High dwells not in temples made with hands, as saith the prophet." And Paul made the same point in his sermon on Mars hill: "God who made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands (Acts 17:24). But Jesus said; "If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him" (John 14:23). "Do you not know that your body is with him" (John 14:23). "Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God? You are not your own; you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body" (I Cor. 6:19-20).

In Acts 20:28 Paul says Christ purchased the church with His own blood. Christians, who make up the church, have been redeemed from sin to constitute a holy temple in the Lord, a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

The apostle Peter enlarges on this theme of the church as the temple of God in I Pet. 2:4-10: "Come to Him, to that living stone, rejected by man but in God's sight chosen and precious; and like living stones be yourselves built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ." For it states in the scripture; "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and he who believes in Him will not be put to shame. To you therefore who believe, He is precious, but for those who do not believe, "The very stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner, and a stone that will make men stumble, a rock that will make them fall; for they stumble because they disobey the Word, as they were destined to do.

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that you may show forth the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light."

Questions

1. In this lesson the church is called God's temple, and is the dwelling place of _____.
(I Cor. 3:16)
2. Christ is the cornerstone in the foundation of the Temple, which is the dwelling place of _____.
_____ (Eph. 2:22).
3. God told Moses to build a tabernacle, a tent of meeting, to "put His name there and make His _____."
_____ (Deut. 12:5)
4. Solomon built the temple and God chose to consecrate this house that His _____ might be there. (II Chron. 7:16)
5. In reality, God does not dwell in "temples _____."
(Acts 7:48)
6. God and Christ dwell with those who love Him and keep _____.
_____ (John 14:23)
7. The Christian's body is a temple _____.
(I Cor. 6:19)
8. Christians are living stones built into a _____.
_____ (I Peter 2:5)

CHAPTER XXIV

THE VINEYARD OF THE LORD

We are reading from Matt. 21:33-43: "Hear another parable. There was a householder who planted a vineyard, and set a hedge around it, and dug a wine press in it, and built a tower, and let it out to tenants, and went into another country. When the season of fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the tenants to get his fruit; and the tenants took his servants and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. Again he sent other servants, more than the first; and they did the same to them. Afterward he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son'. But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, 'This is the heir, come, let us kill him and have his inheritance.' And they took him and cast him out of the vineyard, and killed him. When therefore the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?" They said to him, "He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and let out the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the fruits in their seasons." Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures, 'The very stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner; this was the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes'? Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a nation producing the fruits of it."

The parable of the vineyard refers to the kingdom of God, therefore refers to the church. In the Old Testament the reign of God appeared in the form of the national kingdom, the kingdom of Israel. In the New Testament the apostle says those who "were no people... are now the people of God" (I Pet.2:10), and they are a holy nation, a people for God's own possession (vs. 9). The kingdom has been taken from national Israel and given to those of every tribe and tongue and nation, who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, all those who in every place

call on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ (I Cor. 1:2).

In another parable the kingdom is likened to a vineyard, "What do you think? A man had two sons; and he went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today.' And he answered, 'I will not'; but afterward he repented and went. And he went to the second son and said the same; and he answered, 'I will go, sir,' but he did not go. Which of the two did the will of his father? They said, 'The first.' Jesus said to them, truly, I say to you, the tax collectors and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you. For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the harlots believed him; and even when you saw it, you did not afterward repent and believe him" (Matt. 21:28-32).

The kingdom of God is the way of repentance and faith. And presented here as the vineyard, it is the place of work for the sons of the kingdom. In another parable Jesus said, "The kingdom of heaven is like a householder who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard" (Matt. 20:1-16). At the third hour he went and hired others, and again at the sixth hour, the ninth hour, and even the eleventh hour. And when evening came he told the steward, "Call the laborers and pay them their wages." Laborers were called to work in the vineyard. The apostle Paul says it was given me to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ and to make all men see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things; that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known." (Eph. 3:8-10) And in vs. 20-21 he says; "Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen."

Questions

1. The people of God in the Old Testament are called the vineyard. Because they were unfaithful, it is said the vineyard will be given to those who will bring _____
_____. (Matt. 21:41)
2. Jesus says, "the kingdom of God will be taken (from Israel) and given to a nation _____."
(Matt. 21:43).
3. The church in the New Testament is a holy nation, a people for God's _____. (I Peter 2:9)
4. Jesus says tax collectors and harlots will go into the kingdom _____ because _____ they
_____.
(Matt. 21:32)
5. The kingdom, presented here as the vineyard, is a place of _____ for sons of the kingdom.
6. The kingdom is like a householder who early in the morning hired laborers for his _____.
(Matt. 20:1)
7. The work of the church is to make known the _____
_____. (Eph. 3:10)
8. Paul says to God "be glory in _____ and in Christ Jesus." (Eph. 3:21)

CHAPTER XXV

THE WORK OF THE CHURCH

We are reading from Matt. 28:18-20: "And Jesus came and said to them, All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and teach all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world."

The task given to His disciples by Jesus, to go into all the world and preach the Gospel, to make disciples of all the nations, was by the same commission, laid upon the church of all succeeding generations, as He said to teach them to observe all that I have commanded you. The primary task of the church is twofold: to teach men to become Christians, and to teach Christians to live as Christians.

In Eph. 4:11-16: Paul says that Jesus ascended to heaven, and he gave some to "be Apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of the ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the cunning of men, by their craftiness in deceitful wiles. Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the Head, into Christ... in whom the whole body builds itself up in love."

The apostle says in I Tim. 3:14-15, the church is the pillar and ground of the truth. In Eph. 3:10 he says, the wisdom of God is made known through the church. And in ch. 4:11-12 he shows in the passage, "the whole body builds itself up in love."

In Acts 1:8 Jesus told His apostles, "You shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth." And in ch. 8:4 when the church in Jerusalem was scattered by persecution, it says: "Those who were scattered went about preaching the word."

In II Cor. 11:8-9 the apostle Paul wrote: "I robbed other churches by accepting support from them in order to serve you. And when I was with you and was in want, I did not burden anyone, for my needs were supplied by the brethren who came from Macedonia."

In I Thess. 1:6-8 Paul wrote to the church: "You became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. For not only has the word of the Lord sounded forth from you in Macedonia and Achaia, but your faith in God has gone forth everywhere."

From these passages it is seen that individual Christians wherever they went announced the good news, and went everywhere preaching the word. And wherever people were led to Christ they formed congregations, local bodies who were responsible to one another to promote spiritual growth, and to participate in the spread of the Gospel in every way possible.

When the church in Antioch became strong enough, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them" (Acts 13:2-3). And after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off. So Paul and Barnabas set out on the first missionary journey. Previously when the church in Antioch was first begun, the Jerusalem church had sent Barnabas to strengthen the brethren (Acts 11:23). And as Paul went about on his missionary journeys other churches joined in to have a part in the work of spreading the Gospel. To the church in Philippi Paul wrote: "I thank my God... for your partnership in the Gospel from the first day until now (Phil. 1:5). To the Romans

he wrote: "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. But how shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him about whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? Even as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that bring glad tidings of good things!" (Rom. 10:13-15).

Questions

1. The primary two-fold task of the church is to teach people to become _____ and to teach Christians to _____.
2. The work of the ministry is for building up the _____. (Eph. 4:12)
3. The church is the pillar and ground of _____. (I Tim. 3:15)
4. The wisdom of God is to be made known through the _____. (Eph. 3:10)
5. When the church was scattered by persecution they went everywhere _____. (Acts 8:4)
6. The word was _____ from the churches in Macedonia and Achaia. (I Thess. 1:8)
7. To the Philippian church Paul wrote: "I thank my God... for your fellowship in _____." (Phil. 1:5)

CHAPTER XXVI

BENEVOLENCE

We are reading from I John 3:17-18: "But whosoever hath the world's goods, and beholdeth his brother in need, and shutteth up his compassion from him, how doth the love of God abide in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither with the tongue; but in deed and truth."

The Scripture speaks often of the compassion of Jesus. He said the second greatest commandment is to love your neighbor as yourself. His example of love for one's neighbor was the Good Samaritan, who found the man beaten and left for dead on the road from Jerusalem to Jericho. Although the priest and the Levite passed by on the other side, the Samaritan, the foreigner, treated his wounds and paid the innkeeper for his care.

The early church showed great concern for those who were in need. In the very beginning the Christians sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all, according as any man had need (Acts 2:45). There was a daily ministration for the needy widows (Acts 6:1). Later when a famine arose, the disciples in Antioch, each according to his ability, determined to send relief to the brethren that dwelt in Judea, which also they did, sending it to the elders by the hand of Barnabas and Saul" (Acts 11:29-30). Still later Paul made collections from the Gentile churches in Galatia, Macedonia and other places to send relief to poor saints in Jerusalem. He wrote the Corinthian church, "Moreover, brethren, we make known to you the grace of God which has been given to the churches of Macedonia; how that in much affliction, the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded to the riches of their liberality. For according to their ability, I bear witness, yea and beyond their ability, they gave of their own

accord, beseeching us with entreaty to have fellowship in ministering to the saints (II Cor. 8:1-4). Exhorting the Corinthian Christians to have a part in this contribution to the poor of Judea, Paul in vs. 24 wrote: "So give proof, before the churches, of your love and of our boasting about you."

In II Cor. 9:12 the apostle says: "For the ministration of this service not only fills up the measure of the wants of the saints, but abounds also through many thanksgivings unto God."

The benevolent work of the church was the obligation of the individual Christians as well as of congregations or local churches. In Acts 9:36 we read of Dorcas, a woman full of good works and alms deeds which she did. In vs. 39, when she died, it says all the widows stood by weeping and showing the coats and garments which Dorcas made, while she was with them. In I Tim. 6:17-19 Paul writes: "Charge them that are rich in this present world, that they be not high-minded, nor have their hope set on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, that they be ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may hold on the life which is life indeed." In efforts too large for individuals or local congregations, Paul urged the co-operation of many churches. With regard to the collections made for the poor in Judea, Paul wrote: "We have sent with Titus the brother whose praise in the gospel is spread through all the churches; and not only so, but who was also appointed by the churches to travel with us in the matter of this grace, which is ministered by us to the glory of the Lord." Special collections had been made for the poor saints in Jerusalem. To the church in Corinth Paul wrote: "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I gave order to the churches of Galatia, so also do you. Upon the first day of the week let each one of you lay by him in store, as he

may prosper, that there be no collections when I come. And when I arrive, whomsoever you shall approve... they shall go with me." (I Cor. 16:2).

Thus regular weekly giving by each Christian at the assembly for worship appears to be the chief means of supporting the work of benevolence, as well as the work of spreading the Gospel, by the New Testament churches.

Questions

1. John says: "Let us not love in word... but in _____."
_____." (I John 3:18)
2. The second greatest commandment is to _____
_____. (Matt. 22:39)
3. The early church had great concern for those who were in _____
_____. (Acts 2:45)
4. Paul wrote of the Corinthian church that they gave beyond their _____
_____. (II Cor. 8:3)
5. Dorcas was a woman full of _____
(Acts 9:36)
6. Paul wrote the Corinthians: "Upon the first day of the week let each one of you lay by in store (give), as he may _____
_____." (I Cor. 16:2).
7. Regular weekly giving was the means of supporting the work of _____ as well as the work of _____.

CHAPTER XXVII

WORSHIP- THE LORD'S DAY

We are reading from Acts 20:7: "And upon the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul preached to them; intending to depart on the morrow; and prolonged his speech until midnight." Observance of the first day of the week, called the Lord's day (Rev. 1:10), as the day of worship is of New Testament origin. The weekly day of worship and rest under the Old Testament, according to the law of Moses, was the "Sabbath," the seventh day of the week. This was a part of the covenant God made with Israel. In Deut. 5:15 Moses said to Israel: "And thou shalt remember that thou was a servant in the land of Egypt, and Jehovah thy God brought thee out thence by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm: therefore Jehovah thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath day." There is no indication that the Sabbath was observed prior to the deliverance of Israel from Egypt. Nor is there any evidence that the Sabbath was ever given to any nation other than Israel (Deut. 5:1-22). In Ex. 31:13-17: "Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying, speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily ye shall keep my sabbaths; for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations... it is a sign between me and the children of Israel forever." God spoke in similar language of Solomon's temple: "I have chosen and hallowed this house, that my name may be there forever, and mine eyes and my heart shall be there perpetually" (II Chron. 7:16). But in vs. 19-20 God said, "If ye turn away and forsake my statutes and my commandments which I have set before you, and shall go and serve other gods and worship them, then will I pluck them up by the roots out of my land which I have given them, and this house, which I have hallowed for my name, will I cast out of my sight, and I will

make it a proverb and a by word among all peoples." God's promises and His Covenant were contingent upon the faithfulness of His people. So Jeremiah prophesied: "Behold the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of man, and with the seed of beast. And it shall come to pass that, like as I have watched over them to pluck up and to break down and to overthrow and to destroy and to afflict, so will I watch over them to build and to plant... Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that 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 that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt" (Jer. 31:27-32). In Heb. 8:13 it says: "In that He saith, a new covenant, He has made the first old."

Under the New Testament the Christians came together on the first day of the week for worship. The Jews observed the Sabbath, but the Christian's day of worship was on the Lord's day. The first day of week was especially significant because it was on the first day of the week that Jesus arose from the dead (Mark 16:9). Jesus appeared to his disciples on the first day of the week (John 20:1, 19, 26). The church was established on the first day of the week (Acts 2). The Holy Spirit came, and the gospel began to be preached on the first day of the week (Acts 2). This day was called the Lord's day (Rev. 1:10). The church assembled on the first day of the week for worship (Acts 20:7; I Cor. 16:1-2).

The assembly of the church for worship was an important part of the life of the Christians in the New Testament. The breaking of bread, or observance of the Lord's Supper was a vital part of their worship each Lord's day. The writer of the book of Hebrews exhorted the Christians: "Let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works; not forsaking our

own assembling together, as the custom of some is, but exhorting one another, and so much the more, as ye see the day drawing nigh. For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment" (Heb. 10:24-27).

Questions

1. For what purpose did the Christians gather together on the first day of the week? _____
(Acts 20:7)
2. What day of the week was called the "Lord's Day"? _____
(Rev. 1:10)
3. What day of the week was the Sabbath Day? _____
4. To what nation was the Sabbath given to observe? _____
(Deut. 5:15)
5. God said the Sabbath was a sign between Him and whom? _____
(Ex. 31:13)
6. Upon what are God's promises and Covenant contingent? _____
7. In speaking of a New Covenant, God made the first _____
(Heb. 8:13)
8. The first day of the week is especially significant in the New Testament because on this day Christ _____
(Mark 16:9).
9. On this day of worship Christians should not forsake _____
(Heb. 10)

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE LORD'S SUPPER

We are reading from I Cor. 11:23-29: "For I received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which he was betrayed took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, This is my body, which is for you: this do in remembrance of me. In like manner also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new covenant in my blood: This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as you eat this bread, and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till he comes. Wherefore whosoever shall eat the bread or drink the cup, in an unworthy manner shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he that eateth and drinketh, eateth and drinketh judgment unto himself, if he discern not the body."

In this passage the apostle Paul refers to the Lord's Supper as instituted by Jesus (Matt. 26). In I Cor. 11:20 Paul implies that the purpose of the church assembly was to partake of the Lord's Supper. But the Corinthians had perverted this act of worship into a common meal and lost sight of the real purpose of the Lord's Supper. Matthew says, "Jesus took bread and blessed it and broke it: and he gave to the disciples, and said, Take, eat: this is my body. And he took a cup, and gave thanks, and gave to them saying, Drink you all of it; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many unto remission of sins.... I shall not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom" (Matt. 26:26-29). This was not a meal, but a symbolic act; and as reported in Luke 22:19, Jesus said, "This do in remembrance of me."

As this occurred at the time of the Passover Feast, it is clear

that the bread of the Lord's Supper was the unleavened bread. The apostle Paul makes a point and draws an analogy from this fact in I Cor. 5:7-8 saying, "Our passover also has been sacrificed, even Christ: wherefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."

In I Cor. 10:16 the apostle says: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not a communion of the body of Christ? Seeing that there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread." From this we learn that the Lord's Supper is also called the Communion. In this act of worship, in remembrance of Christ's death for our sins, by discerning his body broken for us, we participate in His death; We have communion with His body and His blood. This is not a mystical participation of grace, but a conscious act of worship. By remembering and discerning, the Christian has communion with the death of Christ, into which he was baptized when he became a Christian. (Rom. 6:3-4). And in I Cor. 11:26 Paul said, "As often as ye eat this bread, and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till he comes."

In Acts 2:42 we read of the church in Jerusalem: "They continued steadfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and prayer." In Acts 20:7 the disciples came together on the first day of the week to break bread." From I Cor. 16:1-2 it is evident that the first day of the week was the day of regular assembly for worship. And in Heb. 10:25 the Christians are exhorted not to forsake their assembly for worship. When Jesus took the bread in his hands and said, "This is my body" it is clear that He meant this represents my body, and the fruit of the vine represents or is symbolic of His blood. Paul exhorted the Christians to examine themselves (I

Cor. 11:28) and to partake in a worthy manner by discerning the body. One discerns the body by remembering that Jesus died for our sins, and by this demonstration of our faith we proclaim the Lord's death till he comes (I Cor. 11:26).

Questions

1. Jesus said, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, as often as you drink it, do it in _____."
(I Cor. 11:24)
2. He also said, "When you eat this bread, and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till he _____."
(I Cor. 11:26)
3. The bread represents Jesus' _____.
(Matt. 26:26)
4. The fruit of the vine represents Christ's _____
_____ which was poured out for the
the remission of sins. (Matt. 26:28).
5. In the Lord's Supper we have communion, or participate in
Christ's _____."
6. This is a conscious act of _____.
7. In Acts 20:7 the disciples came together to _____
_____.
8. In Heb. 10:25 Christians are exhorted not to forsake their
_____.

CHAPTER XXIX

SINGING IN WORSHIP

We are reading from John 4:23-24: "The hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in Spirit and truth, for such the Father seeks to worship Him. God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." Jesus gives two criteria for true worship: it must be in spirit and in truth. In John 17:17 Jesus says God's word is truth. It appears that worship in truth would, therefore, be worship according to the teachings of God's word. To worship in spirit must mean to offer spiritual worship. In Rom. 12:1 Paul says, "Present your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship." Further he says, "be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may prove what is the will of God" (vs.2). Worship means primarily to "bow down" to, to honor, to reverence, to adore. Sacrifices have always been a part of worship. In Christian worship we offer spiritual sacrifices. In Heb. 13:15 we read, "Through Him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge His name."

A part of the worship of the church in the New Testament was their worship in song. At the last passover meal, we read in Matt. 26:30, "when they had sung a hymn they went out." In Acts 16:25, having been beaten and cast into prison, "About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them." In James 5:13 the Scripture says: "Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is any cheerful? Let him sing praise." Singing, as praying, was a part of the daily life of the Christians, it appears. But it was also a vital part of the public worship of the church. In Heb. 2:12 we read, "So Jesus is not ashamed to

call them brothers." He says, "I will declare your name to my brothers; in the presence of the congregation I will sing your praises." In Eph. 5:19 Paul exhorted the Christians: "Be filled with the Spirit; speaking one to another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord." In similar language to the Colossians the apostle wrote: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; in all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts unto God" (Col. 3:16). In Rom. 15:9 we read: "I will give praise unto thee among the Gentiles, And sing unto Thy name." And in I Cor. 14:15 Paul wrote: "I will pray with the spirit; I will pray with the understanding also; I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also."

From these passages we may see that the singing in the early church was to offer praise and thanksgiving, worship to God, to teach and admonish, and to encourage one another. Their worship was to be "in spirit and in truth," from "the heart," and "with the understanding," that is, a meaningful communication. Singing suitable for worship consisted of Psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Much of the music of that age, as well as of modern times, was of a sensual, not a spiritual nature, and not at all suitable as a medium of worship.

It is interesting and important to note that, although various instruments were used in the worship of the Old Testament, like animal sacrifices, burning of incense, and many other things, these are not found in Christian worship in the New Testament. Singing in worship to God, in order to follow the pattern of New Testament worship (cf. Heb 8:5) should be vocal, unaccompanied singing. We should be sure that our worship is in spirit and in truth (John 4:24); that all that we do is "in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Col. 3:17) and according to the will of God (Matt. 7:21).

Questions

1. Those who worship God "must worship in _____
_____." (John 4:24)
2. Jesus says, God's word is _____
(John 17:17)
3. To worship in spirit means to offer _____.
4. Jesus says, "In the presence of the congregation I will _____
_____." (Heb. 2:12)
5. Paul wrote, "Be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one
another in _____." (Eph. 5:19)
6. He says, "In all wisdom teaching and admonishing one
another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, sing-
ing with _____." (Col. 3:16)
7. Much music is sensual, many songs and styles of music are
not suitable as a medium of _____.
8. Instrumental music, like animal sacrifices and burning
incense are not found in _____.
9. All we do should be in the name of the _____
_____. (Col. 3:17)
10. All we do should be according to the _____
_____. (Matt. 7:21)

CHAPTER XXX

GIVING IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

We are reading from I Cor. 16:1-2: "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I gave order to the churches of Galatia, so do you also. Upon the first day of the week let each one of you lay by him in store, as he may prosper, that no collections be made when I come." Although Paul was here particularly concerned with the collection of a bounty to be taken to Jerusalem for the poor saints in Judea, it need not be assumed that he was introducing something new into the Christian worship. Giving through sacrifices and offerings and gifts had always been a part of divine worship. The occasional personal act of benevolence or special sacrifice or offering were in addition to the regular festivals, offerings, and sabbath observance. In the beginning of the church the Christians sold possessions and goods and distributed them to all, as any had need. But in Acts 2:42 it says: "They continued steadfastly in the apostles' teachings and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and prayer." In verse 47 it says they were "praising God, and having favor with all the people." In these verses the acts of worship practiced in the New Testament churches are all found: preaching the Word, fellowship in giving, breaking bread in the Lord's Supper, prayer, and praising God in song. In the passage in I Cor. 16:1-2 the apostle enjoins the church to regular, individual, systematic giving: "On the first day of the week, let each one of you lay by in store as he may prosper." This became the pattern of Christian giving in worship down through Christian history.

There are many general exhortations to liberality in giving to be found in the New Testament as well as the Old Testament. In connection with his efforts to take a bountiful contribution to the poor saints in Judea, Paul wrote the

Corinthians: "He that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he that soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Let each man do according as he has purposed in his heart: not grudgingly, or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound unto you; that you, having always all sufficiency in everything, may abound unto every good work; as it is written: He has scattered abroad, He has given to the poor; His righteousness abides forever. And he that supplies seed to the sower and bread for food, shall supply and multiply your seed for sowing, and increase the fruits of your righteousness; you being enriched in everything unto all liberality, which worketh through us thanksgiving to God" (II Cor. 9:6-11). God promises that the more the Christian gives, the more he will be enabled to give. "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, shall they give into your bosom. For with what measure you mete it shall be measured to you again" (Luke 6:38), and in Matt. 6:19-21 Jesus says: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth, where moth and rust consume, and where thieves break through and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consume, and where thieves do not break through nor steal; for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

Jesus spoke of the "deceitfulness of riches" (Matt. 13:22) and he said to his disciples, "Verily I say unto you, it is hard for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 19:23). In Mark 10:24 He said, "How hard it is for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God." In Luke 16 Jesus compares his servants to a steward. In I Cor. 4:2 Paul says, "It is required of stewards that they be found faithful." In Psm. 50:12 God says: "The world is mine and the fullness thereof." Men are but stewards of that which they possess. "So, then,"

said the apostle Paul, "each one of us shall give account of himself to God" (Rom. 14:12). He also is the one who said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

Questions

1. On what day were the Christians to make the collection, that is, to give as they were prospered? _____
_____ (I Cor. 16:1, 2)
2. Name five acts of worship which characterized Christian worship. _____
(Acts 2:42, 47)
3. Paul says he that soweth sparingly shall also reap _____
_____. (II Cor. 9:6)
4. He says not to give grudgingly, or of necessity, for God loves _____. (II Cor. 9:7)
5. Jesus said, "Give and it shall be _____."
(Luke 6:38)
6. Jesus says, "Lay up for yourselves treasures _____
_____." (Matt. 6:20)
7. It is hard for those who trust in riches to _____
_____. (Mark 10:24)
8. It is required of stewards that they be found _____
_____. (I Cor. 4:2)
9. Each one of us must give an account to _____
_____. (Rom. 14:12)
10. "It is more blessed to give than to _____
_____." (Acts 20:35)

CHAPTER XXXI

PRAYER

We are reading from Acts 2:41-42: "So those who received the Word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' teaching, in fellowship, in the breaking of bread and prayer."

Prayer was a vital part of Jesus' life. Prayer was also a part of the worship of the church, as well as the daily devotion of the Christians in the New Testament. In the upper chamber the disciples prayed for guidance in selecting one to take Judas' place (Acts 1). When Peter and John were imprisoned and threatened, as soon as they were released, they met with the church and prayed for boldness to continue to preach the word (Acts 4:29). In Acts 6 the apostles devoted themselves "to prayer and the ministry of the Word." When Peter was held in prison by Herod, prayer was made earnestly by the church to God for him (Acts 12:5). In Antioch the Holy Spirit said to the church, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." "Then after fasting and prayer they laid their hands on them and sent them off" on their first missionary journey (Acts 13).

In Rom. 12:12 Paul exhorted the church, "Be constant in prayer." In II Cor. 1:11 Paul wrote, "You also must help us by prayer, so that many will give thanks on our behalf for the blessing granted us in answer to many prayers." To the church in Ephesus Paul said, "Pray at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication for all the saints, and also for me, that utterance may be given me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the Gospel" (Eph. 6:18-19).

To the Church in Philippi the apostle wrote, "In everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests

be made known to God" (Phil. 4:6). And to the church in Colossae he wrote, "Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving" (Col. 4:2). In I Thess. 5:17, 18 we read: "Pray constantly, give thanks in everything."

In Jesus' warnings against the hypocrisy of the Pharisees he does not teach against public prayers in the church, but the basic principles which he gives are certainly valid here. Prayer is not done to be "seen of men" (Matt. 6:5). Empty phrases and vain repetition and "much speaking" are of no value. Jesus' example of prayer, "Our Father who art in heaven," is a model brevity, sincerity and relevance. It is significant that nowhere in the New Testament is this prayer used in a liturgical sense. The prayers of the church as well as individual Christians were the spontaneous, sincere, and appropriate petitions, praise and thanksgiving of the worshippers. Liturgical forms of worship, including the liturgical use of the "Lord's prayer" as it is often called, developed in the post-apostolic period.

In John 14:13 Jesus told His disciples, "Whatever you ask in my name, I will do it, that the Father may be glorified in the Son." In ch. 15:6 he said again, "Whatever you ask the Father in my name, he will give it to you." In vs. 7, he said, "If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you will, and it shall be done for you." In John 9:31 the man said, "God heareth not sinners," but Peter quoting the Psalm wrote: "The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayer" (I Pet. 3:12). "If we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us" (I John. 5:14). "Whatsoever we ask we receive of Him because we keep His commandments and do the things that are pleasing in His sight" (I John 3:22). And Jesus said, "All things, whatsoever you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive" (Matt. 21:22).

Questions

1. The Christians continued in the apostles' teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread and _____. (Acts 2:42)
2. When Peter and John were released from prison, the church prayed for _____. (Acts 4:29)
3. The apostles devoted themselves to _____. (Acts 6:4)
4. When Peter was in prison, prayer was made by _____ . (Acts 12:5)
5. After fasting and prayer the church sent Paul and Barnabas out on their _____. (Acts 13)
6. Paul wrote the church in Colossae to "continue steadfast in _____ ." (Col. 4:2)
7. Jesus says, "Whatever you ask _____ , the Father will give it to you." (I John 15:6)
8. God hears us "If we ask anything according to His _____ ." (I John 5:14)

CHAPTER XXXII

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CHURCH

Our topic is: The importance of the church. Heb. 3:4, "Jesus has been counted worthy of as much more glory than Moses as the builder of a house has more honor than the house. (For every house is built by someone, but the builder of all things is God)." In verse 6 it says: "We are his house if we hold fast our confidence and the hope of which we boast." God is the Author, the Architect, and Christ is the Builder of the church. To Peter Jesus said, "I will build my church" (Matt. 16:18). The church belongs to Christ, Christ purchased the church. In Acts 20:28 Paul exhorted the elders to care for "the church of the Lord which he purchased with His own blood." In I Pet. 1:18 the apostle says: "You were ransomed... with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot." In Eph. 5:25 Paul wrote: "Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her." The church belongs to Christ. He built it. He purchased it. He gave Himself for it. The price He paid indicates its value.

The apostle Paul considered himself a tool in the Lord's hand. He said: "According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation and another man is building upon it. Let each man take care how he builds upon it. For no other foundation can any one lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (I Cor. 3:10-11). The importance of care in building according to the pattern is also suggested in Heb. 8:1-5 David observed long before: "Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain." (Psm. 127:1).

In Eph. 1:20-23 Paul wrote: God raised Christ "from the dead and made Him to sit at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and

dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come; and He has put all things under His feet and has made Him the Head over all things for the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all."

Christ is the Head of His body, which is the church. To be joined with the head one must be member of the body, which is the church. The church is the "fullness" of Christ. To enjoy the blessings which are in Christ, therefore, one must be in the church. To be "in Christ" one must be in His body, which is the church.

In Eph. 2:13 the apostle says: "But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near in the blood of Christ." But he purchased the church with His own blood. Thus those "in Christ Jesus" were "in the church." In vs. 15 His purpose is "to reconcile us... to God in one body through the cross." Reconciliation with God accomplished through the cross, made possible by the death of Christ, is in the one body, which is the church. Thus in this same book the apostle says: Christ is the Head of the church, being Himself the Savior of the body (Eph. 5:23).

In Heb. 12:22-29: "You have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, to the church of the first born, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the judge of all men, to the spirits of righteous men made perfect, to Jesus the Mediator of a new Covenant and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.

"See to it that you do not refuse Him who speaks. If they did not escape when they refused Him who warned them on earth, how much less will we, if we turn away from him who warns from heaven. At that time His voice shook the earth, but now

he has promised, Once more I will shake not only the earth, but also the heavens. The words once more indicate the removing of what can be shaken—that is, created things—so that what cannot be shaken may remain. Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, for our God is a Consuming fire."

Questions

1. Who is the builder of the church? _____ .
(Matt. 16:18)
2. Christ purchased the church with his own _____ .
(Acts 20:28)
3. Christ loved the church and _____ for her."
(Eph. 5:25)
4. Paul wrote: "No other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is _____."
(I Cor. 3:11).
5. Christ is head over all things for the church, which is His _____ . (Eph. 1:22, 23)
6. To be "in Christ" is to be in His "body" therefore a member of His _____ . (Eph. 1:23)
7. We are reconciled to _____ in one body. (Eph. 2:16)
8. The "church of the firstborn" (Christ), whose names are written in heaven, is the kingdom which cannot be _____ . (Heb. 12:23, 28)

CHAPTER XXXIII

BLESSINGS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CHRISTIAN

From previous lessons it has been noted that a Christian is a member of the body, the church, of which Christ is the head. He is a worker in the Vineyard of the Lord. He is a living stone in the Spiritual Temple of God. He is a citizen in the Kingdom of Christ, and he is a child in the family of God.

The Christian enjoys acceptance and access into the presence of God, fellowship with the saints and the hope of an eternal inheritance. Christians have been called with a holy calling, and Paul says: "You were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the spirit of our God." (I Cor. 6:11).

Great blessings entail great responsibilities. One of the Christian's first obligations is to the church. In Acts 2:47 "The Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved." Peter says: "Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere love of the brethren, love one another earnestly from the heart." (I Pet. 1:22). Jesus said, "We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren." (I John 3:14) And in I John 1:7 the apostle says: "If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another." (I John 3:14). And in John 1:7 the apostle says: "If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another." Christians were not merely theoretically members of the universal, spiritual body of Christ, but were members of a local congregation, participating in the assembly for worship and the daily life of fellow Christians. "Owe no man anything," said Paul, "but to love one another." (Rom. 13:8)

In I Pet. 5:1-5 the apostle says: "The elders therefore among you I exhort... tend the flock of God, exercising the oversight, not of constraint but willingly; according to the will of God, nor yet for money, but of a ready mind; neither as lording it over the charge allotted to you, but making yourselves examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you shall receive the crown of glory that fades not away. Likewise, you that are younger be subject to the elders. All of you clothe yourselves with humility, to serve one another; for God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble." In this vein the Christian's responsibility is indicated in Heb. 13:17. "Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they watch in behalf of your souls, as they that shall give account; that they may do this with joy, and not with grief; for this would be of no advantage to you."

In Titus 3:1-2 the apostle Paul wrote: "Put them in mind to be in subjection to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready unto every good work, to speak evil of no man, not to be contentious, to be gentle, showing all meekness toward all men." In Gal. 6:2 Paul says: "Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." Then in vs. 4 he says "Let each man prove his own work... for each man shall bear his own burden." The Christian is always ready to help others, but at the same time he is determined to carry his own part.

In I Cor. 12:24-25 the apostle wrote: "God has so composed the body, giving the greater honor to the parts which lacked it, that there may be no discord in the body, but that the members should have the same care one for another." And he exhorted the Christians in Eph. 4:1-3, to "give diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." To Timothy Paul wrote: "Keep yourself pure" (I Tim. 5:22). And to the Philippians he said, "Let your manner of life be worthy of the Gospel of Christ" (Phil. 1:27). In John 15:8 Jesus said, "Herein

is my Father glorified, that you bear much fruit; and so shall you be my disciples." From these passages it may be seen that the Christians' responsibility involved membership in the local church, to love the brotherhood, to serve under the oversight of the elders, to obey the laws of the land, to be ready to every good work, to maintain the peace and harmony and purity of the church, and to bear spiritual fruit in the Lord.

Questions

1. Great blessings entail great _____.
2. The Lord added to the church those who were being _____
_____. (Acts 2:47)
3. Christians ought to love one another earnestly from _____
_____ (I Peter 1:22)
4. Paul says: "Owe no man anything but to _____
_____." (Romans 13:8)
5. Christians should "_____ their
leaders and submit to them." (Heb. 13:17)
6. Christians should be "in subjection to _____ and
_____." (Titus 3:1)
7. Christians should bear one another's _____
_____. (Gal. 6:2)
8. Christians should "give diligence to keep the _____
_____." (Eph. 4:3)
9. We are true disciples and the Father is glorified if we bear _____
_____. (John 15:8)

CHAPTER XXXIV

CHRISTIAN GROWTH

We are reading from I Pet. 2:1-2: "Putting away therefore all wickedness, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speaking, as new born babes, long for the spiritual milk which is without guile, that you may grow thereby unto salvation."

HOW GROW?

To become a Christian, one must be born again. This means to begin to walk in "newness of life" (Rom. 6:4). This new life is a life of growth, spiritual growth. In II Pet. 3:18 the apostle says, "But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever." In the Sermon on the mount, Jesus said, "Love your enemies that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 5:44-45). The Apostle Peter tells us we "may become partakers of the divine nature." This is to become like the Father in heaven, to grow in the likeness of Christ. "Grace to you and peace be multiplied in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord," says Peter, "Seeing that His divine power has granted unto us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that called us by His glory and virtue; whereby He has granted to us His exceeding great and precious promises; that through these you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world by lust" (II Pet. 1:2-4).

How we may become partakers of the divine nature, become more like God, the apostle suggests in the succeeding verses: "Giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge self control, and to self control patience, and to patience godliness, and godliness, brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. For if these things

are yours and abound, they make you to be not idle nor unfruitful unto the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For he that lacks these things is blind, seeing only what is near, having forgotten the cleansing from his old sins. Wherefore, brethren, give the more diligence to make your calling and election sure; for if you do these things, you shall never stumble; for thus shall be richly supplied unto you the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

Hindrances: Peter exhorted the Christians to put away all wickedness, guile, hypocrisy, envy and evil speaking. To the Hebrews the writer says: "You have become dull of hearing. For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need some one to teach you again the first principles of God's Word. You need milk, not solid food, for everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a child. But solid food is for the mature, for those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern good and evil." (Heb. 5:11-14).

Requirements: Spiritual growth requires spiritual nourishment, the milk and the meat of God's Word. It requires time, and it requires spiritual exercise. Paul says: "Exercise yourself unto godliness, for bodily exercise is profitable for a little; but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life which now is, and of that which is to come." (I Tim. 4:7-8). "Take heed, brethren," wrote the Apostle in Heb. 3:12-14). lest happily there shall be in any one of you an evil heart of unbelief, in falling away from the living God; but exhort one another day by day, so long as it is called today lest any one of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold fast the beginning of our confidence to the end." And in Heb. 10:24-25 he says; "Let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works; not forsaking our own assembling together as the custom of some

is, but exhorting one another... for if we sin wilfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remains no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment."

Questions

1. Peter says, "Grow in the grace and _____ of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." (II Peter 3:18)
2. He says we "may become partakers of the _____." (II Peter 1:4)
3. The writer of Hebrews says by reason of time "you ought to be _____." (Heb. 5:12)
4. Paul says, "Exercise yourself unto _____." (I Tim. 4:7)
5. Spiritual growth requires spiritual _____ as well as _____ and _____.
6. Christians should not "forsake their own _____ as the custom of some is." (Heb. 10:25)
7. If we sin wilfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there remains no more sacrifice for sin, but a certain fearful expectation of _____. (Heb. 10:25)

CHAPTER XXXV

THE CHRISTIAN AND THE WORLD

We are reading from II Cor.6:14-17: "Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what fellowship have righteousness and iniquity? Or what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? Or what portion hath a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement hath a temple of God with idols? For we are even as God said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people, wherefore, Come you out from among them, and be you separate, saith the Lord. And touch no unclean thing. And I will receive you, and will be to you a Father, and ye shall be to me sons and daughters, said the Lord Almighty. Having therefore these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."

The church of God are the people of God, who have been called out of the world to be separate from the world, temple of the living God devoted or dedicated to the service of God. In John 15:19 Jesus said to His disciples, "If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." In ch. 17:11 Jesus said, "I am no more in the world and these are in the world, and I come to thee." In vs.14 He says: "I have given them Thy word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." In vs. 15 He says, "I pray not that you should take them from the world, but keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world."

In Rom. 12:2 Paul says, "Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your minds." In Col. 3:2

he says, "Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on the earth." In Tit. 2:12 he says: "Denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world." And the Apostle Peter says: "I beseech you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul" (I Pet. 2:11).

In John 2:15-17 the apostle says: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any 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, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passes away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever." The love of sinful pleasure, material possessions, prestige and power are the essence of worldliness. It should be noted that not only immoral pleasure, but lust for power and wealth are of the world, and not of the Father. And James says: "Know you not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (Jas. 4:4).

Friendship, or love for the world, is to put the things of the world above God and right. In Heb. 11:24-26 we read: "Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward." In verses 9 and 10 the writer says: "Abraham sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tents, with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise. For he looked for a city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God."

Questions

1. "Come you out from among them, and be you _____, saith the Lord." (II Cor. 6:17)
2. Jesus said, "I choose you out of the world, therefore the world _____." (John 15:19)
3. Jesus says of his disciples, "They are not of the world, even as I am not _____." (John 15:15)
4. Paul says, "Be not conformed to _____." (Romans 12:2).
5. John says, "Love not the _____ neither the things of the _____." (John 2:15)
6. "Friendship with the world is _____ with God." (James 4:4)
7. Abraham looked for a city... whose builder and maker is _____ . (Heb. 11:26)

CHAPTER XXXVI

THOU SHALT LOVE THE LORD THY GOD

We are reading from Matt. 22:35-40: "One of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, to test Him. 'Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?' And He said to him, you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it, you shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the law and the prophets."

The first and great commandment is, you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul and mind. In I John 4:7-11 the apostle says: "Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God, and he who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God; for God is love. In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent His only Son into the world, so that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the expiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another."

The second great commandment is, you shall love your neighbor as yourself. But neither our love for God nor love for our fellow man originates or emanates from ourselves. "But this is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us. We love, because He first loved us." (vs. 19) "God so loved the world that He gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16). And Jesus said in John 15:13: "Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

To know God is to love Him. And to love God is to love others. He who does not love does not know God. Perhaps the

greatest incentive to love God is reciprocity. If we do not love God it is because we do not know Him. Either we have not learned of Him and His love for us, or we have closed our minds and hearts against Him. But to love our neighbor is not based upon reciprocity. We love others because God loves us. And God loves others. And we want to be like God. This is the principle involved where Jesus says: "Love your enemies" (Matt. 5:43). We cannot love our enemies because they are so loveable. They are not. Our love finds its roots in God's love. He loves us. He loves our enemies. Love is primarily a spirit of good will. The angels sang, "Peace on earth, good will to men." "God sends the rain on the just and on the unjust; He makes His sun to rise on the evil and on the good" (Matt. 5:45). We can love our enemies as an act of will. We can do so because we want to be like God; as Jesus put it, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven." "Be ye perfect, even as your heavenly Father is perfect," He said (vs. 48).

This is the essence of Christianity, that we should become more and more like God. "His divine power," wrote the apostle Peter, "has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us to His own glory and excellence, by which He has granted to us his precious and very great promises, that through these you may escape from the corruption that is in the world because of passion, and become partakers of the divine nature" (II Pet. 1:3-4).

Questions

1. "God is _____." (I John 4:8)
2. "The love of God was made manifest among us in that God sent His _____." (I John 4:9)
3. "If God so loved us, we also ought to _____"

- _____." (I John 4:11)
4. "We love because He first _____
_____." (vs. 19)
 5. The ideal, and the goal of the Christian is to be perfect as
our heavenly Father _____. (Matt. 5:48)
 6. "God has granted us all things that pertain to life and
godliness through the _____ of
Him who called us." (II Peter 1:3)
 7. God's great promises enable us to escape the corruption of
the world and become partakers of the _____
_____. (II Peter 1:4)

CHAPTER XXXVII

LOVE THE BRETHREN

We are reading from Rom. 13:8-10: "Owe no one anything except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law. The commandments, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not kill, you shall not steal, you shall not covet, and any other commandment, are summed up in this saying, you shall love your neighbor as yourself. Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law."

"Love your neighbor as yourself." Loving presupposes the capacity for love. And unless one is able to love himself, he will be incapable of loving others. Self love is often castigated, and selfishness is no doubt one of the most prevalent sins. But a healthy image, a genuine self-respect, a wholesome love for one's self is essential for mental health and for spiritual development. One who hates himself cannot love his neighbor as himself. He will probably hate his neighbor as he hates himself. And this is the tragedy of all the child abuse which is widespread today. Unloved children grow up to be parents who cannot love. And their self hate is taken out in cruelty to their own children. And the physical suffering inflicted upon the children is the lesser evil. For abused children may grow up with the sadism ingrained in their souls, which they inflict in turn upon those who come after them.

But the love of God can reverse the cycle. "Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called the children of God" (I John 3:1). "You were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your fathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ" (I Pet. 1:18-19). "Your faith," says Peter, "Is more precious than gold which though perishable is tested by fire" (I Pet. 1:7). "What shall it profit a man" said

Jesus "if he should gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" (Matt.16:26).

The value which God has placed upon one's soul is the measure by which we can evaluate a man's worth, our own worth before God. It is true, the apostle Paul said, "to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think." (Rom. 12:3) And it is easy for men to become puffed up, proud and arrogant. But true self esteem is not incompatible with humility. Our sense of worth emanates from God's evaluation and not from men. And when this is true we can also value our fellowman, even in the face of unworthiness, of disillusion and disappointment. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," said Jesus. In I John 3:11-18 we read: "This is the message which you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another, and not be like Cain who was of the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brother's righteous. Do not wonder, brethren, that the world hates you. We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love brethren. He who does not love abides in death. Anyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him. By this we know love, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But if any one has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him? Little children, let us not love in word or speech but in deed and in truth."

Questions

1. The law says, "Love your neighbor as _____."
2. Anyone who hates himself can hardly love his _____.

3. Jesus says, "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his _____?" (Matt. 16:26)
4. Our sense of our own worth should emanate from God's _____.
5. If we know God values us highly we can have a high evaluation of _____.
6. We know we have passed out of death into life, because we _____ . (I John 3:14)
7. Let us not love in word or speech, but in _____ and in _____ . (I John 3:18)

CHAPTER XXXVIII

THE MEANING OF LOVE

We are reading from I Cor. 13:1-8, "If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not love I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not love, it profits me nothing.

Love suffers long, and is kind; love envies not; love vaunts not itself, is not puffed up. Does not behave itself unseemly, seeks not her own, is not easily provoked, thinks no evil; rejoices not in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails."

"We love," wrote the apostle John, "because he first loved us. If anyone says, 'I love God,' and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen. And this commandment we have from him, that he who loves God should love his brother also." (I John 4:19-21). In ch. 5:2-5 he says further; "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome. For whoever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcomes the world but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?"

"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." For the Christian, a brother in Christ, first of all a fellow Christian, is one's neighbor. "So then, as we have opportunity," wrote Paul, "let

us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of faith" (Gal. 3:10). "Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another." (Rom. 12:10) In I Pet. 1:22 the apostle wrote, "Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth unto a sincere love of the brethren, love one another earnestly from the heart."

What love entails is indicated in the passage read from I Cor. 13, "Love is patient and kind; love is not jealous or boastful; it is not arrogant or rude. Love does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrong, but rejoices in the truth, love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things." "Love works no ill to his neighbor." (Rom. 13:10).

Love, therefore, is not permissiveness. In Rom. 15:2 Paul says, "Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to edify him." To acquiesce to every demand, regardless of the consequences, is not Christian love. In Heb. 12:5-6 we read, "My Son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor lose courage when you are punished by Him. For the Lord disciplines him whom He loves, and chastises every son whom He receives."

Longsuffering, and unquenchable good will are Christian virtues. But an unending tolerance of those who would take advantage of the goodness of others, is not the purport of Christian love. In II Thess. 2:10 Paul wrote, "We gave you this command: If any one will not work, let him not eat. For we hear that some of you are living in idleness, mere busybodies, not doing any work." Any system which encourages idleness, and perpetuates dependency, is far removed from the Christian concept of love.

Questions

1. "If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I am become as _____
_____. " (I Cor. 13:1)
2. "Love suffers long and is _____."
(I Cor. 13:4)
3. "Love seeks not _____."
(vs. 5)
4. "He who does not love his brother whom he has seen,
cannot love God whom _____."
(I John 4:20)
5. "This is the love of God, that we keep his _____
_____. " (I John 5:3)
6. "As we have opportunity, let us do good to all men,
especially to those of the _____."
(Gal. 3:10)
7. "The Lord disciplines him whom _____
_____. " (Heb. 12:6)

CHAPTER XXXIX

JOY IN THE LORD

We are reading from Luke 2:8-14, "There were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shown round about them; and they were sore afraid. And the angel said to them, Fear not; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all the people. For to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign to you; you shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in the manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

"Behold," said the angel, "I bring you good tidings of great joy." This is the theme song, and the key note of Christianity. Joy to the world, the Lord is come!

To the Christians Paul said, "The fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance." (Gal. 5:22-23). And he exhorted the Philippians saying, "Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say Rejoice. Let your forbearance be known to all men. The Lord is at hand. Be anxious in nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." (Phil. 4:4-7) To the Romans Paul wrote, "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit." (Rom. 14:17).

When John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness, he said, "I am not the Christ, I am sent before Him. He that hath the bride is the bridegroom. But the friend of the

bridegroom who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled." (John 3:29) God had a purpose for John, and his greatest joy was in fulfilling God's purpose for him. Of Jesus, John said, "He must increase, but I must decrease." And he said, "I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God. (John 1:34).

At the end of his ministry Jesus said to His disciples, "Where I am going, you cannot come." (John 13:33). Peter said, "Lord, why can I not follow you now? I will lay down my life for you." (vs. 13:37) Jesus said, "You heard how I said to you, I go away and I will come again to you. If you loved me, you would rejoice, because I said, I go to my Father; for my Father is greater than I." (John 14:28). "You shall be sorrowful," said Jesus, (ch. 16:20) "but your sorrow shall be turned into joy... (vs.22) I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy shall no one take from you." "In thy presence," wrote the Psalmist, "is fullness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures forever more." (Psm. 16:11).

In Acts 20:22-24 the apostle Paul said, "I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing what things shall befall me there; except that the Holy Spirit witnesses in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions await me. But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear to myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God." For Paul, too, God had a purpose. And Paul's greatest joy was in fulfilling God's purpose for him.

Questions

1. The angel said, "Fear not; for I bring you _____."
_____." (Luke 2:10)

2. Paul told the Philippians to "Rejoice in the Lord _____"
_____." (Phil. 4:4)
3. "The kingdom of God is... righteousness, and peace and _____
_____ in the Holy Spirit." (Rom. 14-17)
4. The Psalmist says, "In thy presence is fullness of _____"
_____." (Psalms 16:11)
5. Paul said, "I count not my life as dear unto myself, so that I
might finish my course with _____."
(Acts 20:24)
6. Paul's greatest joy was in fulfilling God's _____.

CHAPTER XL

REJOICE IN THE LORD

We are reading again from Phil. 4:4-7, "Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say, Rejoice. Let your forbearance be known to all men. The Lord is at hand. Be anxious in nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

Unfortunately, the concept of Christianity as a life of joy has not always been understood. The puritanical view of religion as harsh, strict and punitive has been far too prevalent in the world. But much of that which has been accounted as Christianity through history has been but a tragic perversion of Christianity. To understand the true nature of Christianity, we must go back to the fountain-head and drink of the living water. In the Bible we often find a picture quite different from the contemporary scene, and particularly from the convolutions of Christian history.

The angel said, "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy." In the parable of the lost sheep, Jesus told of the shepherd who left the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and went to find the one which was lost. And when he found it, he laid it on his shoulder, rejoicing. When he came home, he called together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost. "I say unto you," said Jesus, "there shall be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents, than over the ninety and nine just persons, who need no repentance." (Luke 15:4-7). Again he said, "There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents." (ch. 15:10).

Jesus said one soul is more precious than the whole world

(Matt. 16:26). It is no wonder therefore that Paul should say, "I count not my life as dear to myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God." (Acts 20:24).

This joy overflows in the language of the apostle in writing to the Philippians. "I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine of you all making request with joy." (ch. 1:3-4). In vs. 25 he says, "I shall abide and continue with you all for your furtherance and joy in the faith; that your rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ for me by my coming to you again." In ch. 2:2 he writes, "Fulfill my joy, that you be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind." In ch. 4:1 he says, "Therefore, my brethren, dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, stand fast in the Lord."

To the Thessalonians Paul wrote, "You became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy in the Holy Spirit". (I Thess. 1:6). And in ch. 2:19-20 he says, "What is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even you in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming? For you are our glory and joy."

The apostle John wrote to the Christians, "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full," (I John 1:3-4). In III John vs. 4 he says, "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth."

The apostle Peter wrote, "You are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Wherein you greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, you are in heaviness through manifold temptations.

That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, may result in praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ; whom having not seen, you love, in whom, though now you see Him not, yet believing, you rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls. (I Pet. 1:5-9).

Questions

1. When the shepherd found the lost sheep, he laid it on his shoulder, _____ . (Luke 15:5).
2. "There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who _____ ." (Luke 15:10)
3. Paul says, "Fulfill my joy, that you be _____ ." (Phil. 2:2)
4. Paul said to the Thessalonians, "You have received the word in much affliction, with joy in the _____ ." (I Thess. 1:6)
5. "You are our glory and _____ ." (I Thess. 2:20)
6. The apostle says, "These things we write to you that your _____ may be full." (I John 1:4)
7. He also wrote, "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in _____ ." (III John, vs. 4)
8. "Though now you see Him not, yet believing, you rejoice with _____ ." (I Peter 1:8)

CHAPTER XLI

PEACE

We are reading from Romans 5:1-2, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God."

The prophet Isaiah had said to the people, "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save, or his ear dull, that it cannot hear; but your iniquities have separated you and your God, and your sins have hid His face from you so that He does not hear." (Isa. 59:1-2).

In Rom. 5:8-10 Paul says, "But God commands His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us... now if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son; much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And to the Colossians he wrote; "God made peace through the blood of His cross... to reconcile all things unto himself... And you, who were sometimes alienated and enemies in your minds by wicked works, has He now reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy and unblemished and unrepugnant in His sight." (Col. 1:20-21).

To have peace with God, to be free from sin, (Rom. 6:18) to become servants of righteousness, is what it means to be a Christian.

To the Gentile Christians in Ephesus Paul wrote, "You were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world; but now, in Christ Jesus, you who once were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in

His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; to make in Himself of the two one new man, so making peace". (Eph. 2:12-15). Here the apostle speaks of the Jews and the Gentiles together finding peace in Christ.

Isaiah prophesied of the Messiah. "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace". (Isa. 9:6) At His birth the angels sang, "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good will toward men." To His disciples Jesus said, "Blessed are the peacemakers; for they shall be called the children of God" (Matt. 5:9).

Thus Paul exhorted the Romans, "Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace". (Rom. 14:19) In ch. 12:18 he said, "As much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men." In I Cor. 14:33 we read, "God is not the author of confusion, but of peace." And in II Cor. 13:11 Paul says, "Live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you." In I Thess. 5:13 he says, "Be at peace among yourselves." And to Timothy, Paul said to pray "that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty." (I Tim. 2:2). James says (ch. 3:17), "The wisdom which is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits."

"He that will love life, and see good days," wrote the apostle Peter (I Peter 3:11-12), "Let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile. Let him turn away from evil and do good; let him seek peace and pursue it. For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous and His ears are open to their prayers; but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil."

Questions

1. "Being justified by faith we have _____."
_____." (Romans 5:1)
2. Paul wrote, "God made peace through the _____"
_____." (Col. 1:20)
3. Paul says you were "made nigh by the blood of Christ. For
He is our _____."
(Eph. 2:13, 14)
4. Isaiah called the Messiah the "Prince of _____."
(Isaiah 9:6)
5. Jesus said, "Blessed are the _____ for
they shall be called the children of God." (Matt. 5:9)
6. Paul says, "as much as lieth in you, live peaceable with _____"
_____." (Romans 12-18)
7. James says, "The wisdom which is from above is first pure,
then _____." (James 3:17)
8. "He that will love life... let him refrain his tongue from
evil... turn away from evil; and do good; let him seek _____
_____ and pursue it." (I Peter 3:11)

CHAPTER XLII

HOPE

We are reading from Col. 1:3-5. To the Christians at Colossae Paul says, "We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which you have to all the saints, for the hope which is laid up for you in heaven whereof you heard before in the Word of the truth of the Gospel."

In vs. 23 we read further, "If you continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel..." Paul thanked God for the Christians at Colossae, and for the hope which was laid up in heaven for them if they continued in the faith. In ch. 1:26-27 he says, "The mystery which has been hidden for ages and generations, now is made manifest to His saints. To whom God chose to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. This is what the apostle is saying in Rom. 5:1-2, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." The apostle goes on to say, "We glory in tribulation also; knowing that tribulation works patience; and patience works experience, and experience, hope. And hope does not disappoint, because the love of God is poured out into our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given to us." (Rom. 5:3-5).

Christ in you is your hope of glory. By Him we have access through faith into this grace and may rejoice in the hope of glory. To the Romans Paul said, "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Spirit." (Rom. 15:13). In

ch. 8:24 he says, "We are saved by hope; but hope that is seen is not hope, for what a man sees, how does he yet hope for it? But if we hope for that which we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." We are saved by hope, because "rejoicing in hope" we can be "patient in tribulation" and constant in prayer (Rom. 12:12).

The Christian's hope is the "hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before the world began" (Tit. 1:2). In ch. 2:11-14 we read, "The grace of God which brings salvation has 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 Savior Jesus Christ; who gave Himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself his own people, zealous for good works." In ch. 3:5-7 the apostle writes further, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour. That being justified by His grace we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life."

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

Questions

1. "The glory of the mystery... is Christ in you the _____
_____." (Col. 1:27)

2. "Patience works experience, and experience hope. And hope does not _____." (Romans 5:5)
3. Paul says, "We are saved by _____." (Romans 8:24)
4. The Christian's hope is the "hope of _____." (Titus 1:2)
5. "We should live soberly, righteously and Godly in this present world; looking for the blessed hope and the _____ of Christ." (Titus 2:12-13)
6. "Being justified by His grace, we are made heirs according to the hope of _____." (Titus 3:7)
7. "His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope _____ of Jesus Christ." (I Peter 1:3)

CHAPTER XLIII

THOU SHALT HAVE NO OTHER GOD

We are reading from Ex. 20:1-3, "And God spoke all these words, saying, I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You shall have no other Gods before me." Although this is from the ten commandments, and is a part of the Old Testament law, the principle is reiterated by Jesus in Matt. 4:10, "You shall worship the Lord your God and Him only shall you serve." In Deut. 6:4 we read, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord." And Jesus in Mk. 12:29-30 quotes this same language, "the first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord. And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. This is the first commandment."

So the apostle Paul wrote in Eph. 4:6, There is "one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in you all." In the sermon on the Mount Jesus said: "No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon" (Matt. 6:24). In vs. 3-13 he says, "Be not anxious, saying, What shall we eat? Or, what shall we drink? or, Where withal shall we be clothed? For after all these things do the gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you have need of all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you."

The one true God (John 17:3) requires the first and complete allegiance of those who would serve Him. "Him only shalt thou serve," said Jesus. In the second of the ten commandments, God said, "You shall not make for yourself any graven image,

or any likeness of anything that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them or serve them; for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third, and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments."

In I Cor. 8:4-7 Paul wrote, "As concerning the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice to idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one. For though there be those that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, as there be gods many and lords many; but to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by Him. Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge." And apart from overt idolatry, there is a subtle, subjective kind of idolatry, which is perhaps as widespread today, as idol worship ever was in ancient times. For whatever a person puts first in his life, whatever becomes most important, whatever dominates his life, may become his idol, his god. In Mk. 10:21 Jesus said to the rich young ruler, "One thing you lack, go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow me. And he was sad at that saying, and went away sorrowful for he had great possessions." His wealth had become an idol in his heart. Whatever men exalt above God, become their God.

Questions

1. Jesus says, "You shall worship the Lord your God and Him only shall you _____." (Matt. 4:10)
2. "There is one God and _____." (Eph. 4:6)
3. "No man can serve two _____." (Matt. 6:24)

4. "An idol is nothing in the world, there is none other _____
_____." (I Cor. 8:4)
5. "Seek first the kingdom of God and all these (material)
things will be _____."
(Matt. 6:33)
6. "You shall not make for yourself any graven image... you
shall not bow down to them or _____."
(Ex. 20:4)
7. Whatever men exalt above God, become their _____
_____.

CHAPTER XLIV

STUDY TO SHOW YOURSELF APPROVED

We are reading from II Tim. 2:15, "Study to show yourself approved of God, a workman who needs not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth." Other translations tell us, "Give diligence to present yourself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, handling aright the Word of Truth" (Am. Standard Version). Paul's exhortation to handle aright the Word of Truth suggests the possibility of misusing the Word of God, and implies that some were doing so. And in fact Paul make specific charges in this regard in II Cor. 11:13-15, "For such are false apostles," he wrote, "deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is not a great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.

Later the apostle Peter wrote of the same problem, II Pet. 3:16-17 where he says, "Paul also according to the wisdom given to him has written to you as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction. You therefore, beloved seeing you know these things before, beware lest you also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness."

On the other hand, Peter exhorted Christians, "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the Word, that you may grow thereby. If so be you have tasted that the Lord is gracious". (I Pet. 2:2). To Christians who had failed to study and to grow as they should have, the writer of the book of Hebrews says:

"When by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For everyone that uses milk is unskilled in the Word of righteousness; for he is a babe. But strong meat belongs to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." (Heb. 5:12-14).

Christians study the word of God with reverence, because it is God's Word. Paul wrote in II Timothy 3:16-17, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." To the Corinthians Paul said, "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches". (I Cor. 2:12-13).

In John 8:32 Jesus said, "You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Christians study the word of God seeking to understand the truth. The prophet Jeremiah said, "I know, O Lord, that the way of man is not in himself, that it is not in man who walks to direct his own steps. (Jer. 10:23). And Paul wrote of certain people who perish "because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be condemned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. (II Thess. 2:10-12). But to faithful brethren, Paul said, "Now, I commend you to God, and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified." (Acts 20:32).

Questions

1. Paul's exhortation to handle aright or rightly divide the Word of Truth suggests the possibility of _____
_____.
2. He says, Satan himself is transformed into an _____
_____. (II Cor. 11:14)
3. Satan's ministers may also be transformed into _____
_____. (II Cor. 11:15)
4. Peter exhorts Christians to desire the sincere milk of the Word, that "you may _____."
(I Peter 2:2)
5. "All Scripture inspired of God is profitable... that the man of God may be complete, completely furnished unto _____
_____." (II Tim. 3:16-17)
6. Paul says, "We speak not with words which man's wisdom teaches, but which the _____."
(II Cor. 2:13)
7. Those who love not the truth, who believe a lie may be _____
_____. (II Thess. 2:12)

CHAPTER XLV

LET YOUR SPEECH BE WITH GRACE

We are reading from Colossians 4:6, "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer every man." Jesus said, "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart brings forth good things; and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things. But I say to you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by your words you shall be justified, and by your words you shall be condemned." (Matt. 12:34-37).

The third commandment in the Ten Commandments was, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain." (Ex. 20:7). The apostle Paul says, "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace to the hearers... Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice." (Eph. 4:29, 31).

The Christian should avoid not only taking the name of God in vain, but all evil speaking, profanity, by-words, curse words, oaths and vulgarities. The apostle says again, "Put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing you 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. (Col. 3:8-9).

In James 1:26 we read, "If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridles not his tongue, but deceive his own heart,

this man's religion is vain." In vs. 19-20 he says, "Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; for the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God."

In Jas. 4:16 we learn that Christians should refrain from boasting. And in I Thess. 2:5 Paul says, "Neither at any time used we flattering words." To the Corinthians he wrote, "Neither murmur, as some of them murmured, and were destroyed by the destroyer." (I Cor. 10:10). Peter warns against those who "speak great swelling words of vanity" (II Pet. 2:18) and Paul, against "strife, railings, evil surmisings, and perverse disputings" (I Tim. 6:4-5).

In Proverbs 11:13 we are warned against talebearing, and in ch. 16:28 against whisperers. In ch. 20:19 it says, "He who goes about gossiping reveals secrets; therefore do not associate with one who speaks foolishly. If one curses his father or his mother, his lamp will be put out in utter darkness." In ch. 29:11, "A fool gives full vent to his anger, but a wise man quietly holds it back." In ch. 21:23, "He who keeps his mouth and his tongue keeps himself out of trouble." And in ch. 15:1-4, "a soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. The tongue of the wise dispenses knowledge but the mouth of fools pour out folly. The eyes of the Lord are in every place, keeping watch on the evil and the good. A gentle tongue is a tree of life, but perverseness in it breaks the spirit."

In I Pet. 3:10-12 we read, "He who will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile. Let him turn away from evil, and do good; let him, seek peace and pursue it. For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayers; but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil."

Questions

1. Jesus says, "Out of the abundance of the heart the _____."
_____." (Matt. 12:34)
2. He also said, "Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the _____."
(Matt. 12:36)
3. "Thou shall not take the name of the Lord thy God _____"
_____." (Ex. 20:7)
4. Paul says, "Put away all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and _____."
_____." (Eph. 4:31)
5. If a man does not "bridle his tongue" his "religion is _____"
_____." (James 1:26)
6. Christians should be swift to hear, slow to _____"
_____." (James 1:19)
7. Christians should refrain from _____." (James 4:16)
8. We should not _____." (I Cor. 10:10)
9. Proverbs 11:13 warns against _____."
10. "A soft answer turns away _____."
(Prov. 15:1)
11. "He who will love life and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from _____, and his lips that they speak no _____."
(I Peter 3:10)