

# THIS WE BELIEVE

Twenty Lessons On What  
A Bible Baptist Believes

by

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### ***THIS WE BELIEVE***

*We believe in a supernatural Bible, which tells of a supernatural Christ, Who had a supernatural birth, Who spoke supernatural words, Who performed supernatural miracles, Who lived a super-natural life, Who died a supernatural death, Who rose in supernatural power, Who ascended in supernatural splendor, Who intercedes as a supernatural priest and Who will one day return in supernatural glory to establish a supernatural kingdom on the earth.*

*While we understand that the articles of this study do not by any means exhaust the content of our creed, which is the whole Word of God, we do believe that in so far as these Articles extend they are a true presentation of the sound doctrine taught in the Scriptures.*



## OF THE SCRIPTURES

We believe that the Holy Bible was written by men supernaturally inspired; that it has truth without any admixture of error for its matter; and therefore is, and shall remain to the end of the age, the only complete and final revelation of the will of God to man; the true center of Christian union and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and opinions should be tried.

By “The Holy Bible” we mean that collection of sixty-six books, from Genesis to Revelation, which, as originally written does not only contain and convey the Word of God, but IS the very Word of God.

By “inspiration” we mean that the books of the Bible were written by holy men of old, as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, in such a definite way that their writings were supernaturally and verbally inspired and free from error, as no other writings have ever been or ever will be inspired.

Psa. 19:7-11; 119:89,105,130,160; Pro. 30:5-6; Isa. 8:20; Luk. 16:31; 24:25-27,44-45; Joh. 5:39,45-47; 12:48; 17:17; Act. 1:16; 28:25; Rom. 3:4; 15:4; Eph. 6:17; 2Ti. 3:16-17; 1Pe. 1:23; 2Pe. 1:19-21; Rev. 22:19

### I. How We Got Our Bible.

#### A. Revelation – “*From God to man.*” (II Peter 1:19-21)

1. In times past, God spoke to men directly.
  - a. He spoke to Adam in the Garden. (Genesis 3:9-19)
  - b. He spoke to Moses when He gave the Law. (Exodus 20:1-17)
2. God spoke to men through angels.
  - a. Angels warned Lot to flee Sodom before its destruction. (Genesis 19:12-13)
  - b. Angels announced the birth of Christ to the shepherds. (Luke 2:8-14)
3. God spoke to men through dreams.
  - a. Jacob received confirmation of the Abrahamic Covenant in a dream. (Genesis 28:10-15)
  - b. Joseph was assured of Mary’s purity in a dream. (Matthew 1:20)
4. God spoke to men through visions.
  - a. Isaiah saw God’s holiness in a vision. (Isaiah 6:1-3)
  - b. Ananias was ordered to minister to Saul in a dream. (Acts 9:10)
5. God spoke to men through Christophanies – pre-Bethlehem appearances of Christ.
  - a. The Angel of the Lord wrestled with Jacob. (Genesis 32:24-30)
  - b. The Angel of the Lord preserved three Hebrew men. (Daniel 3:25)
6. God speaks to us through nature. (Psalm 19:1-3, Romans 1:18-20)
7. God presently speaks to us through His Son. (Hebrews 1:1-2)

#### B. Inspiration – “*From man to paper.*” (II Timothy 3:16)

1. The Greek word for “*inspiration*” literally means, “*God-breathed.*”
  - a. Revelation is that act of God by which He directly communicates truth not previously known.
  - b. Inspiration is the superintending communication of that truth.
2. Implications of Inspiration.
  - a. Inspiration deals only with the original manuscripts, not translations.
  - b. Inspiration does not permit any historical, scientific or prophetic errors.

- c. Inspiration does not allow for any false teaching, but it does, on occasion, accurately record lies.
  - d. Inspiration does not mean uniformity in all details given in describing the same event. (Compare the Gospels.)
  - e. Inspiration assures us that God included all the necessary things He wanted us to know. (II Timothy 3:15-17)
    - (1) It's profitable for doctrine – the systematic teachings regarding God.
    - (2) It's profitable for reproof – the conviction of what is wrong in our lives.
    - (3) It's profitable for correction – the route from wrong to right.
    - (4) It's profitable for instruction – the details of being fully equipped for every good work.
- C. Illumination – “*From paper to heart.*” (Psalm 119:130)
- 1. Illumination is that method used by the Holy Spirit to shed divine light upon all seeking men as they look into the Word of God.
  - 2. Why illumination?
    - a. Because of natural blindness. (I Corinthians 2:14)
    - b. Because of satanic blindness. (II Corinthians 4:3-4)
    - c. Because of carnal blindness. (I Corinthians 3:1-3, Hebrews 5:12-14)
  - 3. Results of illumination:
    - a. Sinners are saved. (Psalm 146:8)
    - b. Christians are strengthened. (Psalm 119:105)

## II. The Authority Of Our Bible.

### A. What we reject:

- 1. The Book of Mormon, supposedly translated by Joseph Smith. (cp. Rev. 22:18)
- 2. Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures, by Mary Baker Eddy. (cp. Colossians 2:8)
- 3. Studies in the Scriptures, by Charles Taze Russell. (cp. II Corinthians 11:13-15)
- 4. The Qur'an, a collection of Muhammad's oral sayings. (cp. Galatians 1:6-9)

### B. The Bible rightfully stands as the absolute and sole authority over any other source in the life of the child of God.

- 1. It stands above human reason. (Proverbs 3:5-6)
- 2. It stands above church teachings. (Matthew 16:18)
- 3. It stands above all traditions. (Colossians 2:8)
- 4. It stands above feelings and experiences. (Job 4:12-16, cp. Job 42:7)

### C. The Bible is indispensable. (Matthew 4:4)

- 1. It reproves of sin. (Hebrews 4:12)
- 2. It removes from sin. (Psalm 119:9)
- 3. It regenerates the soul. (I Peter 1:23)
- 4. It relieves the distressed. (I Thessalonians 4:18)
- 5. It reveals Jesus Christ. (John 5:39)

**Conclusion:** Since the Bible is the authoritative Word of God, we should *know* it in our heads (II Timothy 2:15), *stow* it in our hearts (Psalm 119:11), *show* it in our lives (James 1:22), and *sow* it in the world (Matthew 28:19-20).

## OF THE TRUE GOD

We believe that there is one, and only one, living and true God, an infinite, intelligent Spirit, the maker and supreme ruler of heaven and earth; inexpressibly glorious in holiness and worthy of all possible honor, confidence and love; that in the unity of the Godhead there are three persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, equal in every divine perfection, and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption.

Gen. 17:1; Exo. 20:2-3; 15:11; Psa. 83:18; 90:2; 147:5; Jer. 10:10; Mat. 28:19; Mar. 12:30; Joh. 4:24; 10:30; 15:26; 17:5; Rom. 11:23; 1Co. 2:10-11; 8:6; 12:4-6; 2Co. 13:14; Eph. 2:18; 4:6; Phi. 2:5-6; 1Ti. 1:17; 1Jo. 5:7; Rev. 4:11

### I. The Reality Of God.

#### A. Some philosophical arguments for the existence of God.

1. The universal belief in God – man has a religious nature. (Romans 1:18-19)
  - a. This belief is not by reason or argument, for many who believe in God have not given any time to reasoning and arguing the question.
  - b. This universal faith in the existence of God is inborn in man.
2. The cosmological argument – every effect must have an adequate cause. (Hebrews 3:4)
  - a. Man is an effect; he has not always existed.
  - b. That the first Cause must have been an intelligent Being is proven by the fact that we are intelligent beings ourselves.
  - c. *“God is the uncaused cause of all causation.”*
3. The anthropological argument – man has an intellectual and moral nature. (Romans 2:14-15)
  - a. Conscience says *“thou shalt,”* and *“thou shalt not.”*
  - b. These mandates imply the existence of a Moral Governor to whom we are responsible.
4. The teleological argument – the fact of design and order. (I Corinthians 14:40)
  - a. A watch proves not only a maker, but also a designer who had a purpose.
  - b. The *“ends”* in nature are not the results of *“natural selection,”* but of a superintending and originating intelligence and will with a purpose in mind.
5. The argument from congruity – if the key fits it’s the right key. (Colossians 1:17)
  - a. If we have a theory which fits all the facts in a case, we know that we have the right key.
  - b. Belief in a self-existent, personal God is in harmony with all the facts of our mental and moral nature, as well as with the phenomena of the natural world around us.
  - c. Atheism leaves man’s mental and moral nature, the impulse to ask for a first cause, man’s religious nature, and the meaning of life without an answer.

#### B. The Bible declares the reality of God.

1. Neither the Old nor the New Testament writers attempt to prove or argue the existence of God. (Hebrews 11:6)

2. The existence of God is assumed right from the opening pages of Scripture. (Genesis 1:1)
  3. No one but a fool would deny the existence of God. (Psalm 14:1)
- C. The revelation of God.
1. God reveals Himself to us through creation. (Romans 1:20)
  2. God reveals Himself to us through the Scriptures. (Hebrews 1:1)
  3. God reveals Himself to us through His Son, Jesus Christ. (Hebrews 1:2)

## II. The Nature Of God.

- A. God is Spirit – He is not subject to human limitations. (John 4:24)
- B. God is a Person – He exhibits all the elements involved in personality. (John 17:3)
- C. God is a Unity – He is not a multiplicity. (Deuteronomy 6:4)
  1. The Father is God. (Romans 1:7)
  2. The Son is God. (Hebrews 1:8)
  3. The Holy Spirit is God. (Acts 5:3-4)
- D. God is a Trinity – In the unity of the Godhead there are three eternal and co-equal Persons, the same in substance, but distinct in subsistence.
  1. The Father is all the fullness of the Godhead invisible. (John 1:18)
  2. The Son is all the fulness of the Godhead manifested. (John 1:14-18)
  3. The Spirit is all the fulness of the Godhead acting immediately upon the creature. (I Corinthians 2:9-10)

## III. Some Attributes Of God.

- A. God is eternal – Neither conditioned by, nor confined to time, God exists in the never-ending present. (Psalm 90:2)
- B. God is infinite – God has no limitations, being bound only by His own nature and will. (Jeremiah 23:24)
- C. God is omniscient – God possesses complete knowledge of all things past, present, and future. (Psalm 139:1-6)
- D. God is omnipresent – He is present everywhere with His whole being at the same time. (Psalm 139:7-12)
- E. God is omnipotent – God can do anything, if it can be done, and if it does not contradict His own nature. (Job 42:2)
- F. God is self-sufficient – God has never had a single need for which His own nature has not already provided. (Psalm 50:10-12)
- G. God is immutable – God’s nature is absolutely unchangeable; He remains the same forever. (Malachi 3:6a)
- H. God is sovereign – God is the absolute and sole ruler of the universe. (Isaiah 46:9-11)
- I. God is holy – God’s holiness is the union of all His other attributes, as pure white light is the union of all the colored rays of the spectrum. (Psalm 99:9)
- J. God is also just, true, faithful, good, righteous, merciful, gracious, and love.

**Conclusion:** Knowing God, our response to Him ought to be to “. . . love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself” (Luke 10:27).

## OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a divine person; equal with God the Father and God the Son and of the same nature; that He was active in the creation; that in His relation to the unbelieving world He restrains the evil one until God's purpose is fulfilled; that He convicts of sin, of judgment and of righteousness; that He bears witness to the Truth of the Gospel in preaching and testimony; that He is the agent in the New Birth; that He seals, endues, guides, teaches, witnesses, sanctifies and helps the believer.

Gen. 1:1-3; Mat. 3:11; 28:19; Mar. 1:8; Luk. 1:35; 3:16; 24:49; Joh. 1:33; 3:5-6; 14:16-17, 26; 15:26-27; 16:8-11, 13; Act. 5:30-32; 11:16; Rom. 8:14, 16, 26-27; Eph. 1:13-14; 2Th. 2:7, 13; Heb. 9:14; 1Pe. 1:2

### I. The Person Of The Holy Spirit.

A. The Holy Spirit of God is a Person (not a thing), just as the Father and Son are Persons, and therefore He experiences all the sinless elements involved within a Divine Personality.

1. He possesses the qualities of personality.
  - a. He has a mind. (Romans 8:27)
  - b. He has a will. (I Corinthians 12:11)
  - c. He has emotions. (Ephesians 4:30)
2. He is identified in such a way as to indicate personality.
  - a. The Baptismal formula. (Matthew 28:19)
  - b. The Apostolic benediction. (II Corinthians 13:14)
  - c. He is identified with Christians. (Acts 15:28)
3. Personal acts are ascribed to Him.
  - a. He speaks. (Acts 8:29)
  - b. He prays. (Romans 8:26)
  - c. He loves. (Romans 15:30)

B. He is a Divine Person.

1. Divine attributes are ascribed to Him. (Acts 5:1-4)
  - a. He is omnipresent. (Psalm 139:7-10)
  - b. He is omniscient. (I Corinthians 2:9-11)
  - c. He is omnipotent. (Luke 1:35, 37)
  - d. He is eternal. (Hebrews 9:14)
2. Divine works are ascribed to Him.
  - a. He was actively involved in creation. (Genesis 1:2)
  - b. He's the agent of the regeneration. (John 3:5-8)
  - c. He's the power behind resurrection. (Romans 8:11)

### II. The Work Of The Holy Spirit.

A. In relation to the universe.

1. He was involved in creation. (Genesis 1:2)
2. He bears witness of Christ. (John 15:26)
3. He restrains the "evil one" until his appointed day. (II Thessalonians 2:7)

- B. In relation to the Holy Scriptures.
  1. He's the Author of the Scriptures. (II Peter 1:21)
  2. He's the Interpreter of the Scriptures. (I Corinthians 2:9-14)
- C. In relation to the unbeliever.
  1. He convicts. (John 16:8-11)
    - a. . . . of man's sin.
    - b. . . . of Christ's righteousness.
    - c. . . . of Satan's judgment.
  2. He convinces. (John 15:26)
  3. He converts. (John 6:63, cp. Titus 3:5)
- D. In relation to the believer at salvation.
  1. He regenerates. (John 3:3-5)
  2. He indwells. (I Corinthians 6:19)
  3. He seals. (Ephesians 1:13-14)
  4. He imparts gifts. (I Corinthians 12:11)
- E. In relation to the believer after salvation.
  1. He fills. (Ephesians 5:18)
  2. He guides. (John 16:13)
  3. He teaches. (I John 2:27)
  4. He empowers. (Acts 1:8)
  5. He strengthens. (Ephesians 3:10)
  6. He assures. (Romans 8:16)
  7. He sanctifies. (I Peter 1:2)

### III. The Offenses Against The Holy Spirit.

- A. Offenses committed by unbelievers.
  1. Resisting the Holy Spirit. (Acts 7:51)
  2. Insulting the Holy Spirit. (Hebrews 10:29)
  3. Blaspheming the Holy Spirit. (Matthew 12:31-32)
- B. Offenses committed by believers.
  1. Grieving the Holy Spirit – sins of neglect. (Ephesians 4:30)
  2. Lying to the Holy Spirit – sins of pretense. (Acts 5:3-4)
  3. Quenching the Holy Spirit – sins of resistance. (I Thessalonians 5:19)

### IV. The Fruit Of The Holy Spirit. (Galatians 5:22-23)

- A. Prerequisites to fruit bearing.
  1. One must die to self. (John 12:24)
  2. One must abide in Christ. (John 15:1-5)
- B. Two kinds of fruit.
  1. Outer fruit – soul-winning. (John 4:35-36, Psalm 126:6)
  2. Inner fruit – Christlikeness. (Galatians 5:22-23)

**Conclusion:** May the words of the song writer, Andrew Reed, be ours, *“Holy Ghost, with light divine, Shine upon this heart of mine; Chase the shades of night away, turn my darkness into day.”*

## OF THE DEVIL, OR SATAN

We believe that Satan was once holy, and enjoyed heavenly honors; but through pride and ambition to be as the Almighty, fell and drew after him a host of angels; that he is now the malignant prince of the power of the air, and the unholy god of this world. We hold him to be man's great tempter, the enemy of God and His Christ, the accuser of the saints, the author of all false religions, the chief power back of the present apostasy; the lord of the antichrist, and the author of all the powers of darkness – destined however to final defeat at the hands of God's own Son, and to the judgment of an eternal justice in hell, a place prepared for him and his angels.

Isa. 14:12-15; Eze. 28:14-17; Mat. 4:1-3; 13:39; 25:41; Mar. 13:21-22; Luk. 22:3-4; Joh. 14:30; Eph. 2:2; 2Co. 11:13-15; 1Th. 3:5; 2Th. 2:8-11; 1Pe. 5:8; 2Pe. 2:4; 1Jo. 2:22; 3:8; 4:3; 2Jo. 7; Jud. 6; Rev. 12:7-10; 13:13-14; 19:11, 16, 20; 20:1-3,10

### I. The Existence Of Satan.

#### A. His existence is doubted by many.

1. If they give any thought to him at all, most of the modern world pictures the devil as a medieval and mythical two-horned, fork-tailed impish creature, dressed in red flannel underwear, busily pitching coal into the furnaces of hell.
2. Christ-denying liberals have long ago thrown out such "*outdated*" concepts as the "*old devil*" and the "*new birth*."
3. Even many "*Bible-believing pastors*" are reluctant to "*give the devil his due*."

#### B. His existence is declared by the Bible. (I John 3:8)

### II. The Original State Of Satan.

#### A. His origin. (Ezekiel 28:11-19)

1. He was created perfect by God. (28:12)
2. He was perfect in wisdom. (28:12)
3. He was perfect in beauty. (28:12-13)
4. He was perfect in conduct. (28:15)

#### B. His position.

1. As "*the anointed cherub*," Satan was originally appointed to fulfill some particular office, not unlike the Old Testament prophets, priests, and kings.
2. Being a "*cherub*," Satan was originally some kind of special, heavenly being whose purpose was to protect God's holiness.

### III. The Fall Of Satan.

#### A. God did not create evil. (Matthew 7:17-18)

1. Satan was created as a free moral agent, having the power of choice between following the will of God or following his own will.
2. The moment Satan chose to follow his own will, he fell, introducing evil into the universe. (Ezekiel 28:17)

#### B. Pride and self-ambition lay at the heart of Satan's rebellion. (Isaiah 14:12-14)

#### C. In his fall, he persuaded one-third of heaven's angels to rebel. (Revelation 12:4)

IV. The Works Of Satan.

- A. He originates and instigates sin. (Genesis 3:1-6)
- B. He sows tares among God's wheat. (Matthew 13:24-30)
- C. He instigates false doctrine. (I Timothy 4:1-3)
- D. He perverts the Word of God. (Genesis 3:1-4)
- E. He hinders the work of God's servants. (I Thessalonians 2:18)
- F. He blinds men to the truth. (II Corinthians 4:4)
- G. He accuses the brethren. (Revelation 12:9-10)
- H. He tempts. (Matthew 4:1)
- I. He afflicts. (Luke 13:16)
- J. He deceives. (Revelation 12:9)
- K. He undermines the sanctity of the home. (I Corinthians 7:3-5)

V. The Limitations Of Satan.

- A. He is not omnipresent.
- B. He is not omnipotent.
- C. He is not omniscient.
- D. *HE IS NOT GOD!!!*

VI. The Condemnation Of Satan.

- A. He is conquered enemy. (I John 3:8)
- B. He will be cast out of heaven. (Revelation 12:9)
- C. He will, ultimately, be cast alive into the lake of fire, there to be tormented forever and ever. (Revelation 20:10)

VII. Sixteen Deadly Deeds Of Satan: disappointment, discouragement, despair, doubt, disbelief, distraction, double-mindedness, dishonesty, deceit, dullness, deadness, delay, discord, defilement, defamation, and disobedience.

**Conclusion:** Consider the following article that appeared in *The Baptist Bulletin* in December, 1971:

“If I were the devil, the first thing I would do is to deny my own existence! This strange approach is, of course, the absolute opposite of that used by God Who desires, perhaps above all else, to be fully believed in! (See Heb. 11:6.) But this is not so with Satan. This disciple of doubt seems to thrive best when he is either underestimated, ignored or denied.

Suppose there is a Bible-believing church which is going through a spiritual crisis. For some months no soul has walked the aisles. The attendance and offerings are down and the members are becoming restless. Finally, in desperation, a special committee is appointed by the congregation to discover the source of this coldness and lifelessness. After considerable prayer and probing, the committee submits its report. What are its findings? I believe it may be safely assumed that the average committee would lay the blame on one or more of the following: (1) the pastor; (2) certain officials; (3) a cold congregation; or (4) a difficult neighborhood.

But what fact-finding group would return the following indictment? ‘We believe the main source of our heartaches for the past few months is Satanic! We believe the reason no souls have been saved recently is due to an all-out attack on our church by the devil! We close our report with a strong recommendation that the congregation call a special meeting, rebuke Satan, plead the blood of Christ and claim the victory.’

If I were the devil I would deny my existence in the world and downplay it in the local church, thus freeing me to go about my business unheeded, unhindered, and unchecked!”

## OF THE CREATION

We believe in the Genesis account of creation and that it is to be accepted literally, and not allegorically or figuratively; that man was created directly in God's own image and after His own likeness; that man's creation was not a matter of evolution or evolutionary change of species, or development through interminable periods of time from lower to higher forms; that all animal and vegetable life was made directly and God's established law was that they should bring forth only "*after their kind.*"

Since God created mankind into genders distinctly male and female, we believe that the only legitimate marriage is that between a man and a woman. He has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of marriage. We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery and pornography are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex.

Gen. 1:1, 11, 24, 26-27; 2:21-24; Exo. 20:11; Neh. 9:6; Jer. 10:12; Joh. 1:3; Act. 4:24; 17:23-26; Rom. 1:20-28; Gal. 5:19-21; Col. 1:16-17; Heb. 11:3; Rev. 10:6

### I. The Meaning Of Creation. (Genesis 1:1)

#### A. Creation? or Evolution?

1. Evolution – All things have been derived by gradual modification through natural processes from previously existing materials.
2. Creation – Not the reworking of existing materials, but the work of God in bringing all things into existence out of nothing.

#### B. Is the decision between Creation and Evolution a scientific decision?

1. Science is knowledge, and is limited to the study of physical phenomena and processes as they exist today.
2. By means of the scientific method an experiment performed today will yield the same results if it is repeated next year.
3. Prehistoric events cannot be subject to scientific experimentation.

#### C. After God finished the work of Creation He rested. (Genesis 2:1-3)

1. The processes He used in Creation are no longer in operation.
2. Therefore, they cannot be proved or disproved by science.
3. This truth is supported by two important scientific laws:
  - a. The First Law of Thermodynamics – Energy can be converted from one form to another, but can neither be created nor destroyed.
  - b. The Second Law of Thermodynamics – All physical systems, if left to themselves, tend toward disorderliness.
4. What do these two Laws prove?
  - a. Nothing new is currently being created. (cp. Exodus 20:11)
  - b. Everything that was originally created is running down, or, "*This clock is ticking!*" (cp. Hebrews 1:10-12)

#### D. God continues to be the sustaining force behind His Creation. (Colossians 1:16-17)

1. Man is not the result of a series of endless mutations.
2. God designed His Creation to reproduce "*after his kind.*" (Gen. 1:11-12, 24-25)

## II. The God Of Creation.

- A. The Bible does not attempt to prove the existence of God.
  - 1. The Bible begins with the assumption that God is. (cp. Hebrews 11:6)
  - 2. It is “*the fool*” who says, “*There is no God!*” (Psalm 14:1)
- B. Throughout the Scriptures the Creator is revealed to be the Triune God.
  - 1. God, the Father, was present and active in Creation. (Psalm 102:25)
  - 2. God, the Son, was present and active in Creation. (John 1:3)
  - 3. God, the Holy Spirit, was present and active in Creation. (Genesis 1:2)

## III. The Orderliness Of Creation. (Genesis 1:2-2:3)

- A. Seven literal days of Creation.
  - 1. The Hebrew word used for “*day*” (YOM), indicates six literal, twenty-four hour time periods
  - 2. Moses believed Creation was six literal days. (Exodus 20:11)
  - 3. David believed in a literal Creation account. (Psalm 33:6-9)
- B. The order of Creation – “*the earth was without form, and void.*” (Genesis 1:2)
  - 1. In the first three days, God put form to formlessness.
    - a. Day #1 – God created light. (Genesis 1:3-5)
    - b. Day #2 – God divided the firmaments. (Genesis 1:6-8)
    - c. Day #3 – God created land and vegetation. (Genesis 1:9-13)
  - 2. In the second three days, God put fulness to that which was void.
    - a. Day #4 – God created luminaries to fill the light. (Genesis 1:14-19)
    - b. Day #5 – God created fish and birds to fill the firmaments. (Gen. 1:20-23)
    - c. Day #6 – God created beasts and man to fill the land. (Genesis 1:24-31)
  - 3. On the seventh day, God rested. (Genesis 2:1-3)

## IV. The Crowning Achievement Of Creation – Man.

- A. Man is the highlight of the entire week. (Genesis 1:26-28)
  - 1. He is made in the image of God – both male and female. (Genesis 1:27)
  - 2. He possesses the highest kind of life. (Genesis 2:7)
    - a. Plant life possesses unconscious life.
    - b. Animal life possesses conscious life.
    - c. Human life possesses self-conscious life.
  - 3. He is to subdue and fill the earth. (Genesis 1:28)
- B. God gave Adam a wife – Eve. (Genesis 2:18-25)
  - 1. Marriage is not of human invention, but of divine origination.
  - 2. God’s design for marriage is one man for one woman for one lifetime. (Matthew 19:6)
  - 3. God honors faithfulness in marriage. (Hebrews 13:4)
- C. God summarized His Creation with, “*it was very good.*” (Genesis 1:31)

**Conclusion:** The most important words written in regards to creation are found in Genesis 1:1, “*In the beginning God . . .*” What a person does with that statement determines his or her whole attitude toward the rest of the Bible and the truth it reveals. If Creation is really a fact, then there is a Creator to whom we are each responsible to.

## OF THE FALL OF MAN

We believe that man was created in innocence under the law of his Maker, but by voluntary transgression fell from his sinless and happy state, in consequence of which all mankind are now sinners, not by constraint, but of choice; and therefore under just condemnation without defense or excuse.

Gen. 3:1-6, 24; Eze. 18:19-20; Rom. 1:18, 20, 28, 32; 3:10-19; 5:12, 19; Gal. 3:22; Eph. 2:1, 3

### I. The Creation Of Man. (Genesis 1:26)

A. That man was made in the “*image*” and “*likeness*” of God is fundamental to all of God’s dealings with man.

1. “*Image*” means “*the shadow of a figure.*”
2. “*Likeness*” means “*the resemblance of that shadow to the figure.*”
3. We might express the language as follows: “*Let us make man in our image to be our likeness.*”

B. Man as the image of God.

1. Part of that image cannot be lost. (James 3:8-9)
  - a. God instituted capital punishment and justifies it on the grounds that a murderer should die for taking the life of another made in the image of God. (Genesis 9:6)
  - b. The Bible, therefore, indicates that all unsaved men still display certain traces of the original image of God’s creation.
2. Part of that image has been lost. (Colossians 3:9-10)
  - a. Part of God’s image was lost after Adam’s sin and must be restored by the Holy Spirit at the moment of salvation.
  - b. The lost image seems to be the ability to know God and the desire to love Him.

### II. The Original Responsibilities Of Man. (Genesis 1:28)

A. It should be noted that God did not make man because He was lonely.

1. Long before God created angels or man, the Godhead was having blessed fellowship with Himself/Themselves. (John 17:5)
2. Man was created to demonstrate the glory of God and to fellowship with the God of glory. (Revelation 4:11)

B. Upon his creation man was given the following duties and responsibilities:

1. Man was to assume the headship over all nature. (Genesis 1:26)
2. Man was to reproduce himself and populate the earth. (Genesis 1:28)
3. Man was to give care to the beautiful garden of paradise – Eden. (Genesis 2:15)
4. Man was to provide names for every living creature. (Genesis 2:19-20)
5. Man was to love his wife. (Genesis 2:24)
6. Man was to enjoy all the fruits of the garden, save one. (Genesis 2:16)
7. Man was clearly forbidden to eat of “*the tree of knowledge of good and evil.*” (Genesis 2:17)

- III. The Scriptural Account Of The Fall Of Man. (Genesis 3:1-21)
  - A. The Genesis narrative tells us how sin came into the human race.
    - 1. If the fall were not recorded, we would be left to theorize some explanation for the present condition of man.
    - 2. The reasonableness of the narrative is seen in view of the condition of sinful man as compared to his original creation. (Compare Genesis 6:5 with 1:31)
  - B. The interpretation of the narrative is literal, not allegorical or mythical.
    - 1. The fall is recorded as part of a historical book – Genesis.
    - 2. Jesus regarded the event as historical. (Matthew 19:4)
    - 3. Paul considered the event as literal. (II Corinthians 11:3)
  
- IV. The Nature Of The Fall Of Man. (I Timothy 2:14)
  - A. The temptation that led to the fall.
    - 1. Satan cast doubt about God’s Word. (Genesis 3:1)
    - 2. Satan soon denied God’s Word. (Genesis 3:4)
    - 3. Satan then added to God’s Word. (Genesis 3:5)
  - B. The transgression that caused the fall. (Genesis 3:6)
  - C. The essence of the first sin, and every act of sin thereafter, lay in the voluntary denial of the Divine Will of God. (Genesis 3:6, cp. 2:17)
  
- V. The Results Of The Fall Upon Man.
  - A. Shame. (Genesis 3:7)
  - B. Fear. (Genesis 3:8-10)
  - C. Discord. (Genesis 3:12-13)
  - D. Suffering. (Genesis 3:16)
  - E. Weariness. (Genesis 3:17-19)
  - F. Separation. (Genesis 3:22-24)
  - G. Death.
    - 1. Physical death. (Genesis 5:5)
    - 2. Spiritual death. (Revelation 21:8)
  
- VI. The Universal Condition Of Man.
  - A. Because of the unity of the human race, man’s sin is imputed to all. (Romans 5:19)
  - B. All men, without respect of condition or class, are sinners. (Galatians 3:22)
  - C. The whole world is guilty and rests under just condemnation. (Ezekiel 18:19-20)
  - D. The entire nature of man is affected by sin.
    - 1. The understanding is darkened. (Ephesians 4:18)
    - 2. The heart is deceived. (Jeremiah 17:9-10)
    - 3. The mind is defiled. (Titus 1:15)
    - 4. The will is weakened. (Romans 7:18)
    - 5. The flesh is utterly destitute of any God-like qualities which meet the requirements of God’s holiness. (Romans 7:18)

**Conclusion:** Though man fell, God immediately made provision to redeem him (Genesis 3:15, Galatians 4:4). It’s up to each of us to respond to that provision.

## OF THE VIRGIN BIRTH

We believe that Jesus Christ was begotten of the Holy Ghost in a miraculous manner; born of Mary, a virgin, as no other man was ever born or can ever be born of woman, and that He is both the Son of God, and God, the Son.

Gen. 3:15; Psa. 2:7; Isa. 7:14; Mat. 1:18-25; Mar. 1:1; Luk. 1:35; Joh. 1:14; Gal. 4:4; 1Co. 15:47; 1Jo. 5:20

### I. The Pre-Existence Of Jesus Christ.

#### A. The fact of His divine pre-existence.

1. As taught by John the Baptist. (John 1:15)
2. As taught by the Apostle Peter. (I Peter 1:20)
3. As taught by Christ Himself. (John 17:5, cp. Isaiah 42:8)

#### B. The activities of the divine pre-existent Christ.

1. He created the universe. (John 1:3)
2. He was controlling the created universe. (Colossians 1:17)
3. He was communing with the Father. (John 17:24)

### II. The Incarnation Of Jesus Christ.

#### A. False views concerning the incarnation.

1. Ebionites – denied the reality of Jesus’ divine nature.
2. Gnostics – denied the reality of Jesus’ human nature.
3. Arians – affirmed Jesus’ pre-existence, but denied His deity. (Jehovah Witnesses)
4. Nestorians – believed that two persons actually indwelt the single body of Christ, the human person and the divine person.
5. Eutychians – believed that the human and divine natures mingled to make up a third and totally different nature from the original two natures.

#### B. The true view of the incarnation.

1. A. H. Strong – *“In the one person, Jesus Christ, there are two natures, a human nature and a divine nature, each in its completeness and integrity, and these two natures are organically and indissolubly united, yet so that no third nature is formed thereby.”*
2. Charles Hodge – *“He always says, I, me, mine. He is always addressed as thou, thee, thine. He is always spoken of as He, His, Him. It was the same person to whom it was said, ‘Thou Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the works of thine hands.’”*
3. H. L. Willmington – *“Thus, in the Old Testament, we have man made in the image of God and in the New Testament we see God made in the image of man.”*

#### C. The miracles involved in the incarnation.

1. God the Son took upon Himself the full nature of man and yet retained the full nature of God. (Luke 1:35)
2. A human body was conceived within a mother’s womb without an earthly father. (Isaiah 7:14, Matthew 1:23-25)
3. The miracle of the virgin birth was not the actual birth, but the conception.

- D. The reasons for the incarnation.
1. To reveal the invisible God. (John 14:9)
  2. To fulfill prophecy. (Genesis 3:15)
  3. To guarantee the Davidic Covenant – *“Thy house and thy kingdom . . . [and] thine throne shall be established for ever.”* (II Samuel 7:8-17)
  4. To make a sacrifice for sins. (I John 3:5)
  5. To reconcile man to God. (II Corinthians 5:19)
  6. To provide an example for believers. (I Peter 2:21)
  7. To provide the believer with a high priest. (Hebrews 2:17)
  8. To destroy the devil and his works. (Hebrews 2:14)
  9. To escape the historical curse. (Romans 5:19)
  10. To heal the broken-hearted. (Luke 4:18)
  11. To give life. (John 10:10)
  12. To glorify the Father. (John 17:4)

III. The Kenosis (Divine-Emptying) Of Jesus Christ. (Philippians 2:5-11)

- A. He left heaven’s glory. (II Corinthians 8:9)
- B. He made Himself of *“no reputation”* – KENOŌ. (Philippians 2:7)
1. Negatively – He did not lay aside, in any sense of the word, His deity. (Colossians 2:9)
  2. Positively – Even though He retained every single attribute of deity while on earth, He did, nevertheless, surrender the independent exercise of those divine characteristics.
    - a. He abstained from His omnipresence for a period. (John 11:14-15)
    - b. He abstained from His omniscience for a period. (Luke 8:45-46)
    - c. He abstained from His omnipotence for a period. (John 5:19-20)
- C. He was made in the likeness of man. (Galatians 4:4)
- D. He humbled Himself. (I Peter 2:21-24)
- E. He became obedient unto death. (Matthew 26:39)
- F. He died on a cross. (Galatians 3:13)
- G. He has been highly exalted by the Father. (Acts 2:33)
- H. He has been given a name (position and place of authority) above all other names. (Ephesians 1:20-21)
- I. He will be universally acknowledged as Lord of all. (Revelation 5:13)
1. To confess Him in this life as *“Lord”* means salvation, but to wait until the next life will result in damnation. (John 3:36)
  2. Thus, the supreme question is not *“when”* a human being will do this, but rather *“where.”* (II Corinthians 6:2)

**Conclusion:** The Bible declares that Jesus Christ was as much God as if He had never been man, and as much man as if He had never been God. That God was able to work this seeming impossibility in the matter of the virgin birth of Jesus Christ is symbolic of His ability to accomplish the seemingly impossible task of granting a new birth to sinners. In response to the astonishment of His disciples, Jesus once said, *“With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible”* (Matthew 19:26).

## OF THE ATONEMENT FOR SIN

We believe that the salvation of sinners is wholly of grace; through the mediatorial offices of the Son of God, Who by appointment of the Father, freely took upon Himself our nature, yet without sin, honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and by His death made a full and vicarious atonement for our sins; that His atonement consisted not in setting us an example by His death as a martyr, but was the voluntary substitution of Himself in the sinner's place, the Just dying for the unjust, Christ, the Lord, bearing our sins in His own body on the tree; that, having risen from the dead, He is now enthroned in heaven and uniting in His wonderful person the tenderest sympathies with divine perfection, He is in every way qualified to be a suitable, a compassionate and an all sufficient Savior.

Isa. 53:4-7, 11-12; Mat. 18:11; Joh. 3:16; 10:18; Act. 15:11; Rom. 3:24-25; 1Co. 15:3, 20; 2Co. 5:21; Gal. 1:4; Eph. 2:8; Phi. 2:7-8; Heb. 2:14; 7:25; 9:12-15; 12:2; 1Pe. 2:24; 3:18; 1Jo. 2:2; 4:10

### I. The Meaning Of Salvation.

- A. Definition: Salvation means to effect successfully the full delivery of someone or something from impending danger.
- B. A two-fold implication:
  - 1. Someone or something needs to be saved.
    - a. Only a sick person needs a doctor. (Matthew 9:12)
    - b. Only an accused person needs a lawyer. (Romans 3:10-19)
    - c. Only a drowning person needs a lifeguard. (Psalm 69:1-2)
  - 2. Someone must be able and willing to save.
    - a. It is possible for a person to have the desire, but not the ability to save another individual. (Hebrews 7:25)
    - b. It is possible for a person to have the ability, but not the desire to save another individual. (I Timothy 2:3-4)

### II. The Need Of Salvation.

- A. Men are lost because of their rejection of nature's revelation. (Psalm 19:1)
- B. Men are lost because of disobedience to their own conscience. (Romans 2:14-16)
- C. Men are lost because of their relationship to the world. (Ephesians 2:2)
- D. Men are lost because of their relationship to Satan. (Acts 26:18)
- E. Men are lost because of their relationship to sin. (Romans 7:14)
- F. Men are lost because of their lack of relationship to God. (Ephesians 2:12)

### III. The Method Of Salvation.

- A. Salvation is always by blood. (Hebrews 9:22)
- B. Salvation is always through a Person. (Acts 4:12)
- C. Salvation is always by grace. (Ephesians 2:8-9)
  - 1. This grace is preceded by the sinner's faith. (Hebrews 11:6)
  - 2. This grace is followed by the Savior's peace. (Galatians 1:3, cp. Romans 5:1)

#### IV. The Origination Of Salvation.

- A. Why are some people saved and some people lost?
  1. H. L. Willmington – *“The Bible clearly presents in the strongest language both the sovereignty of God and the responsibility of man. Furthermore, these two simply cannot be totally reconciled in the mind of man.”*
  2. Henry C. Thiessen – *“The Scriptures definitely base God’s election on His foreknowledge . . . Although we are nowhere told what it is in the foreknowledge of God that determines His choice, the repeated teaching of Scripture that man is responsible for accepting or rejecting salvation necessitates our postulating that it is man’s reaction to the revelation God has made of Himself that is the basis of His election.”*
- B. Key Scriptural principles:
  1. Christ died for all men. (Romans 8:32)
  2. Christ bore all our iniquities. (Isaiah 53:6)
  3. The command is for all to repent. (Acts 17:30)
  4. The universal invitation is to *“whosoever.”* (Romans 10:13)
- C. Summary statement: Christ’s atonement is *“sufficient”* for all, but is only *“efficient”* for those who believe in Christ.
  1. He is the Savior of all men *“potentially.”* (I Timothy 1:15)
  2. He is the Savior of only believers *“effectively.”* (I Timothy 4:10)
  3. The atonement is limited only by men’s unbelief.

#### V. The Means Of Salvation – The Death Of Christ.

- A. Jesus died a voluntary death.
  1. The death of Jesus was not by compulsion. (John 10:17-18)
  2. Jesus laid down His life of His own free will. (Matthew 26:51-57)
- B. Jesus died a vicarious (substitutionary) death. (I Corinthians 15:3)
  1. A ransom – by His death on the cross Jesus released sinners from the captivity of sin and death. (Matthew 20:28)
  2. A propitiation – by His death on the cross Jesus renders us favorable before God. (Romans 3:24-25)
  3. A reconciliation – by His death on the cross Jesus removed the enmity between God and man. (Ephesians 2:14-16)
  4. A substitution – by His death on the cross Jesus took the place of sinners and died, suffering the penalty of sin which they deserved. (Isaiah 53:6)
- C. Jesus died a victorious death.
  1. Over sin. (Romans 3:25-26)
  2. Over Satan. (Hebrews 2:14)
  3. Over afflictions. (Romans 8:35, 38-39)
  4. Over the world. (I John 5:4)
  5. Over death. (Philippians 1:21)

**Conclusion:** Since *“Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God . . .”* (I Peter 3:18), we ought to give earnest heed to avail ourselves of the salvation so richly provided and give warning to those who have yet to respond.

## OF THE GRACE IN THE NEW CREATION

We believe that in order to be saved, sinners must be born again; that the new birth is a new creation in Christ Jesus; that it is instantaneous and not a process; that in the new birth the one dead in trespasses and in sins is made a partaker of the divine nature and receives eternal life, the free gift of God; that the new creation is brought about in a manner above our comprehension, not by culture, not by character, nor by the will of man, but wholly and solely by the power of the Holy Spirit in connection with divine truth, so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the Gospel; that its proper evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance and faith and newness of life.

Luk. 5:27; Joh. 1:12-13; 3:3, 6-7; Act. 2:41; Rom. 6:23; 2Co. 5:17, 19; Gal. 5:22; Eph. 2:1; 5:9; Col. 2:13; 2Pe. 1:4; 1Jo. 5:1

### I. The Nature Of The New Creation.

#### A. Negatively considered. (John 1:12-13)

1. Not of natural relationship – *“not of blood.”*
2. Not of reformation – *“nor of the will of the flesh.”*
  - a. Not education. (Jeremiah 9:23-24)
    - (1) G. B. Vick – *“You educate a fool and you make him a sillier fool.”*
    - (2) Proverbs 9:10 – *“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding.”*
  - b. Not good works. (Ephesians 2:8-9)
3. Not of religious acts – *“nor of the will of man.”* (cp. Titus 3:5)
  - a. Not by keeping the Law. (Galatians 2:16)
  - b. Not by baptism. (I Peter 3:21)
  - c. Not by confirmation. (Isaiah 64:6)
  - d. Not by church membership. (Acts 2:41)
4. Unknown – *“The only difference between a moral man who rejects the Savior and an immoral reprobate who rejects him is that the one will go to hell moral and the other immoral.”*

#### B. Positively considered.

1. A spiritual birth – *“but of God.”* (John 1:13b)
  - a. The new birth is not the old nature altered, reformed or re-invigorated.
  - b. The new birth is not a process.
  - c. The new birth is the imputation of new life – the life of God. (John 5:24)
  - d. In the new birth, the one who was dead in trespasses and sins is made a partaker of the divine nature and receives eternal life. (I Peter 1:3)
2. A spiritual quickening. (Ephesians 2:1, 5-6)
3. A spiritual creation. (Ephesians 2:10, II Corinthians 5:17)

### II. The Necessity Of The New Creation.

#### A. The absolute necessity is clearly stated by our Lord. (John 3:3-7)

1. Not to be born again is to be lost. (John 3:18)
2. There is no substitute for the new birth. (Galatians 6:15)

- B. The sinful condition of man demands it. (Romans 3:23)
  - 1. No good thing dwells in the flesh. (Romans 7:18)
  - 2. The flesh cannot please God. (Romans 8:8)
- C. The holiness of God demands it. (Hebrews 12:14)
  - 1. Holiness is not attained by natural development or self-effort. (I Peter 2:9)
  - 2. The change that enables us to be holy takes place at the new birth. (II Peter 1:4-5)

### III. The Means Of The New Creation.

- A. The divine side of the new birth. (John 1:13)
  - 1. It was of God's own will to birth us. (James 1:18)
  - 2. Practically speaking, we have no more to do with our second birth than we had to do with our first birth.
  - 3. The Holy Spirit is the divine agent in our regeneration. (John 3:5, 8)
- B. The human side of the new birth.
  - 1. Man is regenerated by means of the acceptance of the message of the gospel. (I Peter 1:23)
  - 2. Man is regenerated by the personal acceptance of Jesus Christ. (John 1:12-13, Galatians 3:26)
- C. Three factors are vital to experiencing the new birth:
  - 1. The Word of God. (I Peter 1:23)
  - 2. The man of God. (Romans 10:13-15)
  - 3. The Spirit of God. (Ephesians 2:1, Colossians 2:13)
  - 4. H. L. Willmington – *“These three factors should not be lightly passed over. They teach that no sinner has ever been saved since Adam apart from them. Some may deny the necessity of the second factor, however (the man of God), pointing out that people often came to Christ while alone, after reading a gospel tract. But just how was that tract written, printed, and distributed in the first place? Obviously saved human beings were involved. If the above is true, then it is not unreasonable to conclude that as the Holy Spirit looks for a human instruments (mothers) to bring living souls into this world, he likewise seeks out human instruments (soul-winners) to usher sinners into the kingdom of God.”*

### IV. The Completeness Of The New Creation.

- A. In regard to the human body. (I Corinthians 15:44)
- B. In regard to the human soul. (I Peter 1:9)
- C. In regard to the human spirit. (Romans 8:16)

### V. The Blessings Of The New Creation. (II Corinthians 5:17)

- A. Changed life. (I Corinthians 6:9-11)
- B. Children of God. (John 1:12)
- C. Indwelling of the Holy Spirit. (I Corinthians 6:19-20)
- D. The fruit of the Spirit. (Galatians 5:22-23)
- E. Victory over the world. (I John 5:4)

**Conclusion:** *“Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again!”* (John 3:7)

## OF THE FREENESS OF SALVATION

We believe in God's electing grace; that the blessings of salvation are made free to all by the Gospel; that it is the immediate duty of all to accept them by a cordial, penitent and obedient faith; and nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth but his own inherent depravity and voluntary rejection of the Gospel; which rejection involves him in an aggravated condemnation.

Isa. 55:1, 6-7; Mat. 11:28; Joh. 3:15-16, 18, 36; 5:40; 6:37; Act. 2:38; Rom. 8:29-30; 10:13; 1Co. 15:10; Eph. 2:4-5; Col. 3:12; 1Th. 1:4; 1Ti. 1:15; Tit. 1:1; 1Pe. 1:2; Rev. 22:17

### I. The Definition Of Grace.

- A. Henry C. Thiessen – *“The goodness of God manifested toward the ill-deserving.”*
- B. Kenneth Wuest – *[Grace] is used in the New Testament of that spontaneous act of God that came from the infinite love in His heart, in which He stepped down from His judgment throne to take upon Himself the guilt and penalty of human sin, thus satisfying His justice, maintaining His government, and making possible the bestowal of salvation upon the sinner who receives it by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ who became a Sin-offering for him on the Cross (Romans 3:24).”*
- C. Neither of these definitions do justice to the richness of the Biblical use of the term.
  1. Grace is the favor God is able to show to men because Christ died for them. (Ephesians 2:8)
  2. Because of His holy character, God could not save men simply because of His mercy and love.
    - a. The claims of divine righteousness had to be satisfied before He could save sinful men.
    - b. Therefore, Christ died in the place of the ungodly. (Romans 5:6)

### II. The Dictionary Of Grace. (Romans 8:29-30)

- A. Election (*EKLEKTOS*) – *“to select for an appointed task.”* (Ephesians 1:4)
- B. Called (*KLESIS*) – *“to officially summons.”* (II Peter 1:10)
- C. Foreknowledge (*PROGINOSKO*) – *“to know beforehand.”* (I Peter 1:2)
- D. Predestination (*PROORIZO*) – *“to mark out beforehand.”* (Romans 8:29)
- E. Henry C. Thiessen – *“By election we mean that sovereign act of God in grace, whereby from all eternity He chose in Christ Jesus for Himself and for salvation, all those whom He foreknew would respond positively to . . . grace.”*

### III. The Distinctives Of Grace.

- A. Its distinguishing contrasts:
  1. Distinguished from the Law. (John 1:17)
  2. Distinguished from works. (Romans 11:6)
  3. Distinguished from debt. (Romans 4:4)
- B. Its distinguishing benefits:
  1. Men are justified by grace. (Romans 3:24)
  2. Believers are to continue in grace. (Acts 13:43)

#### IV. The Demand For Grace.

- A. The lost soul is born with a fallen, sinful nature. (Psalm 51:5)
- B. The lost soul is under the decree of God, concluding that all are “*under sin.*” (Galatians 3:22)
- C. The lost soul is under the power of Satan. (II Corinthians 4:3-4)
- D. The lost soul has attained none of the eternal realities that make a Christian what he is. (Ephesians 2:12)
- E. The lost soul is destined to a just condemnation. (John 5:24)

#### V. The Demonstration Of Grace.

- A. By Grace God sought out Adam after the Fall. (Genesis 3:9)
  - 1. The Bible is a record of God’s search for fallen man.
  - 2. In Adam, God took the first step in reconciling man back to Himself. (Luke 19:10)
- B. By Grace God promised a Savior. (Genesis 3:15)
  - 1. “*Between thy seed*” = The spiritual descendants of Satan. (John 8:44)
  - 2. “*Her seed*” = Jesus Christ. (Galatians 4:4)
- C. By Grace God clothed them. (Genesis 3:21)
  - 1. Although we are not specifically told so, it would seem probable that some innocent animal had to die so that Adam and his wife might be clothed.
  - 2. Here we have the first example of the great Bible doctrine of Substitution – the innocent dying for the guilty. (I Peter 3:18)
- D. By Grace God removed them from the Garden. (Genesis 3:24)
  - 1. God did this to prevent mankind from partaking of the tree of life and living forever in a sinful condition. (Genesis 3:22)
  - 2. It is God’s grace that keeps sinful men from living eternally as sinful men. (I Corinthians 15:50)

#### VI. The Disciplines Of Grace.

- A. Grace to be Saved by. (Ephesians 2:8-9)
  - 1. The source of Grace is God’s love. (John 3:16)
  - 2. The channel of Grace is Christ. (John 3:17)
  - 3. The instrument of Grace is Faith. (Ephesians 2:8)
  - 4. The right response to Grace is Salvation. (Isaiah 55:1, 6-7)
- B. Grace to Live by. (I Corinthians 15:9-10)
  - 1. By Grace we can say, “*Jesus is LORD.*” (I Corinthians 12:3b)
  - 2. By Grace we can glory in our weaknesses. (II Corinthians 12:9)
  - 3. By Grace we have help in times of need. (Hebrews 4:14-16)
  - 4. Grace is multiplied as we increase in the knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ. (II Peter 3:18)
  - 5. Grace is a means to give by. (II Corinthians 8:1-5, 9:6-15)

**Conclusion:** Shortly before his death, John Newton, the author of “*Amazing Grace,*” was quoted as proclaiming with a loud voice during a message, “*My memory is nearly gone, but I remember two things: that I am a great sinner and that Christ is a great Savior!*”

## OF JUSTIFICATION

We believe that the great gospel blessing which Christ secures to such as believe in Him is Justification; that justification includes the pardon of sin, and the gift of eternal life on principles of righteousness; that it is bestowed not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done; but solely through faith in the Redeemer's blood, His righteousness is imputed unto us.

Isa. 53:11; Hab. 2:4; Zec. 13:1; Act. 13:39; Rom. 1:17; 4:1-8; 5:1, 9; 8:1; Gal. 3:11; Tit. 3:5-7; Heb. 10:38

### I. The Meaning Of Justification.

- A. Justification is that judicial act of God whereby He declares righteous those who believe on Christ.
- B. Justification is that legal act whereby man's status before God is changed for the good.
- C. Simple definition: "*Just as if I had never sinned.*"

### II. The Need For Justification.

- A. In his epistle to the Romans, the Apostle Paul presents sinful man in a courtroom on trial for his very life.
  1. The charge is high treason against the King of the universe. (Romans 3:23)
  2. The presiding Judge is God Himself. (Psalm 50:6)
  3. The jury is made up of the deeds of man and the Law of God. (Romans 2:6, 12)
  4. After proper deliberation, the just and fair verdict of "*guilty*" is returned. (Romans 3:9-20)
  5. The terrifying sentence is then imposed – spiritual death, meaning to be forever separated from God to suffer through all eternity in the lake of fire. (Romans 6:23; compare Revelation 20:11-15)
- B. In light of all this it can be readily seen that a desperate need for justification exists.

### III. The Definition Of Justification.

- A. Negative considerations:
  1. It does not mean to be acquitted, that is, to have successfully defended oneself against all charges. (Romans 3:19)
  2. It does not mean to be pardoned, that is, to be found guilty and then given a second chance.
  3. It does not mean to be paroled, that is, to be found guilty and set free with certain restrictions.
- B. Positive considerations:
  1. Justification involves the forgiveness of sin and the removal of its guilt and punishment.
    - a. The penalty for sin is death. (Romans 6:23)
      - (1) By going to the Cross, Jesus Christ bore the punishment for sin in His own body on the tree. (Isaiah 53:5-6)
      - (2) Since Jesus Christ bore the penalty for sin, God now declares "*just,*" those who come to Him by faith in Jesus Christ. (Romans 4:5)

- b. Justification is not a declaration of innocence.
  - (1) That would be contrary to truth.
  - (2) Justification declares that the demands of the Law have been satisfied with regard to them, and that the believer is now free from it's condemnation.
- 2. Justification involves the restoration of the sinner to Divine favor.
  - a. The sinner has not merely incurred a penalty, but has also lost God's favor. (Romans 1:18)
  - b. The remission of the penalty is one thing; restoration to favor is another. (Romans 8:33-34)
- 3. Justification involves the imputation of Christ's righteousness.
  - a. Since justification sets one right before the Law, we must note that the Law requires not merely freedom from offense negatively, but all manner of obedience and likeness to God positively.
  - b. Justification declares that not only is the sinner pardoned from sin, but also supplied with positive righteousness by which he can have fellowship with God. (Philippians 3:8-9)
  - c. God restores the believer to favor by imputing to him Christ's righteousness. (II Corinthians 5:21)

#### IV. The Method Of Justification.

- A. Job raised the question, "*How then can man be justified with God? or how can he be clean that is born of a woman?*" (Job 25:4)
- B. Paul answers the question.
  - 1. It is not by the works of the Law. (Romans 3:20)
  - 2. It is by the grace of God. (Romans 3:24)
  - 3. It is by faith. (Romans 3:28)
  - 4. It is by the blood of Christ. (Romans 5:9)
- C. Men are justified:
  - 1. Judicially by God. (Romans 8:33)
  - 2. Meritoriously by Christ. (Isaiah 53:11)
  - 3. Mediately by faith. (Romans 5:1)
  - 4. Evidentially by works. (James 2:14-18)

#### V. The Results Of Justification.

- A. Freedom from condemnation. (Romans 8:1, 33-34)
- B. Imputation of righteousness. (Romans 4:5)
- C. Peace with God. (Romans 5:1)
- D. A promised inheritance. (Titus 3:7)
- E. An expressive life. (James 2:22-24)

**Conclusion:** In man's court system, he justifies only the innocent. In God's court system, He justifies the guilty. Man justifies on the basis of self-merit. God justifies on the basis of the Savior's merit. "*Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ*" (Romans 5:1).

## OF REPENTANCE AND FAITH

We believe that Repentance and Faith are solemn obligations, and also inseparable graces, wrought in our souls by the quickening Spirit of God; thereby, being deeply convicted of our guilt, danger and helplessness, and of the way of salvation by Christ, we turn to God with unfeigned contrition, confession and supplication for mercy; at the same time heartily receiving the Lord Jesus Christ and openly confessing Him as our only and all-sufficient Savior.

Psa. 51:1-4, 7; Isa. 55:6-7; Mar. 1:15; Luk. 12:8; 18:13; Act. 2:37-38; 20:21; Rom. 10:9-11, 13

### I. The Relationship Between Repentance And Faith.

#### A. Three important words:

1. Conversion – a general term, meaning the voluntary change in the mind of the sinner in which he turns from sin to Christ. (Psalm 19:7)
2. Repentance – the negative side of conversion, meaning the voluntary change in the mind of the sinner in which he turns from sin. (Luke 13:5)
3. Faith – the positive side of conversion, meaning the voluntary change in the mind of the sinner in which he turns to Christ. (Romans 5:1)

B. Sir Robert Anderson – *“Faith and Repentance are not successive stages on the road to life; they are not independent guides to direct the pilgrim’s path; they are not separate acts to be successively accomplished by the sinner as a condition of his salvation. But, in different phases of it, they represent the same Godward attitude of soul, which the truth of God, believed, produces.”*

### II. Turning From Sin – Repentance.

#### A. The importance of Repentance.

1. John preached it. (Matthew 3:1-2)
2. Jesus preached it. (Matthew 4:17)
3. The disciples preached it. (Mark 6:12)
4. Shouldn’t we preach it? (Luke 24:47)

#### B. Four aspects of Biblical Repentance:

1. As touching the intellect, repentance involves change.
  - a. When Paul told the Athenians to *“repent”* he was telling them to change from their idolatry. (Acts 17:30)
  - b. One son changed his mind in regard to his father’s command. (Matthew 21:29-30)
2. As touching the emotions, repentance involves sorrow.
  - a. There is a sorrow for sin and a desire for pardon. (Psalm 51:1-2)
  - b. Sorrow alone is not repentance. (Matthew 27:3-5)
  - c. II Corinthians 7:9-10 shows the part that feelings place in true repentance.
3. As touching the will, repentance involves confession.
  - a. When the prodigal son *“came to himself . . . he arose.”* (Luke 15:17-21)
  - b. Repentance is not only a heart broken *“for”* sin, but *“from”* sin as well. (Psalm 38:18)

4. As touching consciousness, repentance involves forsaking.
  - a. You may change your mind about sin, sorrow for it, and confess it, but ultimately, you must forsake it.
  - b. This is the inward turning away from sin. (Isaiah 55:7)

### III. Turning To God – Faith.

- A. The relationship between Belief and Faith. (Hebrews 11)
  1. Belief is mental – Faith adds the volitional.
  2. Belief is a realm of thought – Faith is a sphere of action.
  3. Belief lives in the study – Faith goes out into the streets.
  4. Faith gives substance, life, reality, and activity to Belief.
  5. Faith is acting upon Belief.
- B. The proper Object of Faith.
  1. The Word of God.
    - a. Faith must never be faith in a nebulous thing called “*faith*.”
    - b. Faith must be based on the Word of God. (Romans 10:17)
    - c. Faith accepts the statements of the Bible as the revealed Word of God, true and genuine. (II Timothy 3:16-17)
  2. The Person of Jesus Christ.
    - a. Faith, in itself, is not a meritorious thing, but the medium by which a person receives Jesus Christ as personal Savior and Lord. (I Timothy 2:5)
    - b. Faith must be placed in the Person and Work of Christ. (Romans 10:9-10)
- C. Four aspects of Biblical Faith.
  1. As touching the intellect, faith involves belief.
    - a. Faith is not believing a thing without evidence, but resting on the best evidence, namely, the Word of God. (Romans 10:17)
    - b. A man may believe with his head without believing with his heart; but he cannot believe with his heart without first believing with his head.
  2. As touching the emotions, faith involves assenting.
    - a. This is the awakening of the soul to its personal needs and application of the Word of God.
    - b. It’s saying, “*That’s for me!*”
    - c. This faith, when erroneously presented, is found frequently in revivals that lay undue stress on the emotions. (Mark 4:16-17, cp. I Thessalonians 2:13)
  3. As touching the will, faith involves surrender.
    - a. The thought of surrender is implied in the invitation of Jesus Christ. (Matthew 11:28-29)
    - b. To believe in Him as Lord is to recognize Him as Lord; and we cannot recognize Him as Lord until we abdicate our own throne. (Matthew 16:24)
  4. As touching consciousness, faith involves appropriation.
    - a. The appropriation of faith is found in the word “*receive*.” (John 1:12)
    - b. The sick man must surrender himself to his physician, but he must also appropriate the remedy for his disease.

**Conclusion:** Repentance and Faith are fundamental to Christian creed and conduct.

## OF THE CHURCH

We believe that a Baptist church is a congregation of baptized believers associated by a covenant of faith and fellowship of the Gospel, said church being understood to be the citadel and propagator of the divine and eternal grace; observing the ordinances of Christ; governed by His laws; exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word; that its officers of ordination are pastors or elders whose qualifications, claims, and duties are clearly defined in the scriptures.

We believe that men and women are spiritually equal in position before God but that God has ordained distinct and separate spiritual functions of men and women in the home and in the church. The husband is to be the leader of the home and men are to hold the leadership positions (pastors and deacons) in the church. Accordingly, only men are eligible of licenser and ordination for pastor by the church.

We believe the true mission of the church is found in the Great Commission: first, to make individual disciples; second, to build up the church; third, to teach and instruct as He has commanded. We do not believe in the reversal of this order; we hold that the local church has the absolute right of self government, free from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations; and that the one and only superintendent is Christ through the Holy Spirit; that it is scriptural for true churches to cooperate with each other in contending for the faith and for the furtherance of the Gospel; that every church is the sole and only judge of the measure and method of its cooperation; on all matters of membership, of policy, of government, of discipline, of benevolence, the will of the local church is final.

Mat. 28:19-20; Act. 2:41-42; 6:5-6; 14:23; 15:22-23; 20:17-28; Rom. 3:22; 1Co. 5:11-13; 6:1-3; 11:2; 12:4, 8-11; 16:1-3; 2Co. 8:23-24; Eph. 1:22-23; 4:11; 5:23-24, 33; Col. 1:18; 1Ti. 2:9-14; 3:1-13; Heb. 13:7; 1Pe. 5:1-4; Jud. 3-4

### I. The Meaning Of The Church.

A. The English word "*Church*" comes from the Greek word "*EKKLESIA*."

1. "*EK*" means "*out of*."

2. "*KLESIS*" means "*a calling*."

B. *EKKLESIA* was used among the Greeks of a body of citizens gathered to discuss the affairs of State. (cp. Acts 19:39)

C. In the Septuagint, the Greek version of the Jewish Scriptures, it was used to designate the gathering of Israel for any definite purpose. (cp. Leviticus 4:13)

D. *EKKLESIA* has two applications to companies of believers:

1. The church general – the whole company of those who, in this age, have been born of the Spirit of God and have by that same Spirit been baptized into the body of Christ. (Matthew 16:18, Ephesians 5:23, Hebrews 12:23)

2. The church local – the local assembly of professing believers in any one locality. (Matthew 18:17, Acts 20:28, I Corinthians 1:2, Galatians 1:2, Revelation 2-3)

### II. The Marks Of A Biblical Church – Acronym For BAPTISTS.

**B** Biblical Authority in all things. (II Timothy 3:16-17)

1. No word of man or council can ever supersede the authority of the Word of God.

- 2. See Article I of these studies. (cp. Acts 17:11)
- A** Autonomy of the local church. (Matthew 18:15-18)
  - 1. The local church is an independent body accountable to no one but the Lord.
  - 2. Its government is democratic and congregational. (Acts 1:15-26)
- P** Priesthood of all believers. (I Peter 2:5-9)
  - 1. Every believer today is a priest, and may enter the presence of God directly through our Great High Priest, Jesus Christ. (Hebrews 4:14-16)
  - 2. There is no need for any human mediator. (I Timothy 2:5)
- T** Two ordinances.
  - 1. Baptism. (Acts 2:41)
  - 2. Communion. (I Corinthians 11:23-32)
- I** Individual soul liberty. (Romans 14:5-12)
  - 1. Every individual has the liberty to believe as his own conscience or soul dictates.
  - 2. A person should not be forced to believe anything against his will.
- S** Saved, baptized church membership. (Acts 2:41-47)
  - 1. Every person who is saved should be baptized and join a local church.
  - 2. Only saved and baptized individuals should be allowed to become members of a local church.
- T** Two officers in the church. (I Timothy 3:1-13)
  - 1. The Bible teaches that there are only two officers in the church – pastor and deacons.
  - 2. There is no Scriptural support for any form of hierarchy practiced in many church denominations today.
  - 3. Although women are important to the function of the church, only men are permitted to hold leadership positions. (I Timothy 2:11-14, 3:2, 11-12)
- S** Separation of Church and State. (Matthew 22:15-22)
  - 1. The Church and State are two separate entities.
  - 2. The one should never control the other.

### III. The Mission Of The Church.

- A. To constitute a dwelling place for God. (Ephesians 2:20-22)
- B. To bear witness to the truth. (I Timothy 3:14-15)
- C. To make known the unsearchable riches of Christ. (Ephesians 3:8-11)
- D. To bring eternal glory to God. (Ephesians 3:20-21)
- E. To edify its members. (Ephesians 4:11-13)
- F. To discipline its members. (Matthew 18:15-17)
- G. TO EVANGELIZE THE WORLD. (Matthew 28:18-20)

**Conclusion:** *“The purpose for which a church exists is missions. Take out of a church the missionary idea and you have a life without an objective, a barren tree that cumbers the ground, and an empty house over whose door is written ‘Ichabod.’ Limit the gospel in its scope or power and you cut its heart out. Christ lived and died for all men. The business of the church is to make him known to all. Our Christian religion revolves around two foci: ‘Come’ and ‘Go.’ Everyone who accepts the invitation ‘Come’ must hear immediately the imperative command ‘Go.’”* – as quoted by Emery Bancroft.

## OF BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER

We believe that Christian baptism is the immersion in water of a believer, in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, with the authority of the local church, to show forth in a solemn and beautiful emblem our faith in the crucified, buried and risen Savior, with its effect in our death to sin and resurrection to a new life; that it is a prerequisite to the privileges of a church relation and to the Lord's Supper, in which the members of the church, by the sacred use of bread and the fruit of the vine are to commemorate together the dying love of Christ; preceded always by solemn self-examination.

Mat. 3:6; 3:16; 28:19-20; Joh. 3:23; Act. 2:41-42; 8:36-39; Rom. 6:3-5; 1Co. 11:23-28; Col. 2:12

### I. Baptism.

#### A. The meaning of baptism.

1. Baptism is an act of obedience that testifies of one's faith in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. (Romans 6:3-5)
2. Baptism symbolizes the death of the believer to sin and the believer's newness of life in Christ. (Romans 6:6-12)
3. The only prerequisite to baptism is faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. (Acts 8:36-38)

#### B. The method of baptism.

1. The Greek word for baptism (BAPTISMA) means "*to dip or immerse.*"
  - a. The Greeks used the word to signify the dying of a garment.
  - b. BAPTIZŌ, the verb form of baptize, was used of the drawing of water by dipping a vessel into another.
2. Baptism, only by immersion, was practiced in the New Testament.
  - a. Matthew 3:5-6 records that John was baptizing people "*in,*" not "*with,*" the Jordan River.
  - b. Philip took the Ethiopian "*down into the water*" to baptize him. (Acts 8:36-39a)
3. Leading denominational scholars admit that baptism means immersion.
  - a. Luther – "*The term baptism is a Greek word. It may be rendered a dipping, when we dip something in water, that it may be entirely covered with water.*"
  - b. Calvin – "*The word baptize signifies to immerse; and the rite of immersion was observed by the ancient church.*"
  - c. Brenner (Catholic) – "*For 1300 years was baptism generally and regularly an immersion of the person under water, and only in extraordinary cases, a sprinkling or pouring of water. The latter was moreover disputed as a mode of baptism, nay even forbidden.*" (Underlined for emphasis!)

#### C. The importance of baptism.

1. Jesus, in His final commission to the church, told them to make disciples of all men – part of that process was to baptize new believers. (Matthew 28:19)
2. Jesus Himself left us an example by being baptized. (Matthew 3:13-17)
3. Throughout the Book of Acts, believers were immediately baptized after salvation. (Acts 8:26-40, 9:18, 10:48, 16:14-15, 16:30-33)

4. While baptism does not secure salvation, it is essential for total obedience to God. (I Peter 3:21)
  5. F. F. Bruce – *“The idea of an unbaptized Christian is simply not entertained in the New Testament.”*
- D. The authority for baptism.
1. Jesus walked 60 miles to be baptized of John because He recognized that John’s authority to baptize was from heaven. (Matthew 3:13, cp. Matthew 21:25-26)
    - a. Christ gave this same authority to His church at the time of His ascension to heaven. (Matthew 28:18-20)
    - b. Scriptural authority for baptism is invested in a Scriptural church. (See Article XIII of these lessons.)
  2. Baptism is to be done, *“in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”* (Matthew 28:19)

## II. The Lord’s Supper.

- A. The purpose of the Lord’s Supper.
1. Historically, we are to look backward. (I Corinthians 11:26)
  2. Prophetically, we are to look forward. (I Corinthians 11:26)
  3. Personally, we are to look inward. (I Corinthians 11:28)
- B. The partakers of the Lord’s Supper.
1. The Lord’s Supper is only for believers – *“as often as YE.”* (I Corinthians 11:26)
  2. Believers are not just allowed to participate in this service, they are commanded to participate. (I Corinthians 11:24)
  3. The Lord’s Supper must be preceded by self-examination. (I Corinthians 11:27-30)
  4. Some are forbidden to partake of the Lord’s Supper:
    - a. For the unsaved, John offers John 3:16.
    - b. For the *“backslidden,”* John offers I John 1:9.
- C. The particulars of the Lord’s Supper.
1. The bread. (I Corinthians 11:23-24)
    - a. The bread is not, nor does it ever become, the literal body of Jesus; but only symbolizes the body of Jesus.
    - b. Bread was a fitting symbol for the body of Christ, for as that bread was broken and handed to the disciples, so Christ’s body was broken for them, as well as for us.
  2. The fruit of the vine. (I Corinthians 11:25-26)
    - a. The fruit of the vine in the cup symbolized the blood of Christ, which would secure the new covenant (testament) for the people.
    - b. A covenant is an arrangement, or agreement, that God makes with man.
    - c. Animal blood was used to secure the old covenants, but Christ’s blood would validate this new covenant. (Hebrews 9:13-14)
  3. Each church, being independent, must decide how often to celebrate the Lord’s Supper – *“as often as ye.”* (I Corinthians 11:26)

**Conclusion:** Both baptism and the Lord’s Supper have been called voluntary, but not optional.

## OF THE PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS

We believe that such only are real believers as endure unto the end; that their persevering attachment to Christ is the grand mark which distinguishes them from superficial professors; that a special Providence watches over their welfare; and that they are kept by the power of God through faith unto eternal salvation.

Psa. 121:3; Mat. 13:19-21; Joh. 8:31-32; 10:28-29; 16:8; Rom. 8:28, 35-39; Phi. 1:6; Col. 1:21-23; Heb. 1:14; 1Pe. 1:5; 1Jo. 2:19

### I. The Meaning Of Perseverance.

A. Henry C. Thiessen – *“The Scriptures teach that all who are by faith united to Christ, who have been justified by God’s grace and regenerated by His Spirit, will never totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace, but certainly persevere therein to the end. This does not mean that every one who professes to be saved is eternally saved. Nor even does it mean that every one who manifests certain gifts in Christian service is necessarily eternally saved. The doctrine of eternal security is applicable only to those who have had a vital experience of salvation. . . . This is not equivalent to saying that they shall never backslide, never fall into sin, and never fail to show forth the praises of Him Who has called them out of darkness into His marvelous light. It merely means that they will never totally fall away from the state of grace into which they have been brought, nor fail to return from their backsliding in the end.”*

B. Salvation goes beyond a simple profession.

1. Three times in I John 1, the Apostle warns of mere profession:

a. I John 1:6 – *“If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth.”*

b. I John 1:8 – *“If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.”*

c. I John 1:10 – *“If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.”*

2. Jesus warned of an empty profession when He said, *“Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven”* (Matthew 7:21).

### II. The Proof Of Perseverance.

A. The purpose of God. (Isaiah 14:24)

1. God has purposed to save those whom He has justified. (Romans 8:35, 38-39)

2. In the councils of God, there is an unfailling sequence with regard to everyone whom He foreknows. (Romans 8:29-30)

a. Foreknowledge leads to the predestination of the believer. (Ephesians 1:11)

b. Predestination leads to the Holy Spirit’s calling to salvation. (John 6:44)

c. Calling leads to the believer’s justification of salvation. (Romans 5:1)

d. Justification leads to the glorification of the believer in God’s presence for eternity. (Colossians 3:3-4)

3. Jesus gave utterance to this same purpose. (John 10:27-29)
- B. The work of Christ.
  1. We are saved by the blood of Christ, and our Lord's resurrection testifies to the fact that His sacrifice was accepted by the Father. (Romans 1:4, 4:25)
  2. Jesus' present work is what keeps us saved – "*much more.*" (Romans 5:8-10)
- C. The ability of God.
  1. It is one thing to be willing to keep us, but another to be able to keep us.
  2. God is represented in the Scriptures as qualified for both:
    - a. God is willing to keep us. (Philippians 1:6)
    - b. God is able to keep us. (I Peter 1:5)
- D. The change of the believer.
  1. In regeneration, the believer becomes a new creature and receives new life. (II Corinthians 5:17)
  2. Having believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, God looks upon the believer as if he had been crucified and raised together with Christ. (Romans 6:5-6)
  3. The believer has not only received new life, but eternal life. (John 10:10, 28)
  4. The nature of the change which occurs in regeneration is sufficient guarantee that the life imparted shall be permanent. (John 3:36)

### III. The Lessons On Perseverance.

- A. False professors of faith.
  1. Judas, though an Apostle, was never a child of God. (John 6:70-71, 17:12)
  2. Simon professed, but hoped for material gain. (Acts 8:9-13, 18-23)
  3. Many others went out. (I John 2:19)
- B. True possessors of faith.
  1. A true possessor brings forth good fruit. (Matthew 13:3-9, 18-23)
  2. Though detoured, Mark was faithful in the end. (Acts 13:13, II Timothy 4:11)
  3. Paul persevered to the end. (II Timothy 4:6-7)

### IV. The Question Of Perseverance. (I John 5:13)

- A. Do I enjoy spiritual fellowship with God, Christ, and fellow believers? (I John 1:3)
- B. Do I have a sensitivity to sin? (I John 1:5-7)
- C. Do I basically obey the commands of Scripture? (I John 2:3-5)
- D. Do I value the things of this world? (I John 2:15)
- E. Do I love Jesus and look forward to His return? (I John 3:2-3)
- F. Do I practice sin less now than before I professed faith in Christ? (I John 3:5-6)
- G. Do I love other believers? (I John 3:14)
- H. Do I experience answered prayer? (I John 3:22)
- I. Do I have the ability to discern between spiritual truth and error? (I John 4:1-6)
- J. Do I have the inner witness of the Holy Spirit? (I John 4:13, cp. Romans 8:16)
- K. Do I believe the basic doctrines of the faith? (I John 5:1)

**Conclusion:** Paul warned the Corinthians, "*Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?*" (II Corinthians 13:6) The admonition is, "*Examine [yourself].*"

## OF THE RIGHTEOUS AND THE WICKED

We believe that there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked; that such only as through faith are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and sanctified by the Spirit of our God, are truly righteous in His esteem; while all such as continue in impenitence and unbelief are in His sight wicked, and under the curse, and this distinction holds among men both in and after death, in the everlasting felicity of the saved and the everlasting conscious suffering of the lost.

Gen. 18:23; Pro. 11:31; 14:32; Mal. 3:18; Mat. 7:13-14; 25:34, 41; Luk. 9:26; 16:25; Joh. 8:21; 12:25; Act. 10:34-35; Rom. 1:17; 6:16-18, 23; 7:6; 1Co. 15:22; Gal. 3:10; 1Pe. 4:18; 1Jo. 2:29; 5:19

### I. False Views Concerning Man's Destiny.

- A. Nirvana – The oriental Hindu belief which teaches that at death a man ceases all personal existence and is absorbed by some great life-giving principle in the universe. (cp. I Corinthians 15:12-20)
- B. Restorationism – The belief that in a future life all men will be given a second chance to make the choice for God that they did not make during this life. (cp. John 3:16-18)
- C. Materialism (also defined as the worldly art of knowing the price of everything, but the value of nothing) – The belief that man, upon death, forever ceases to be and quietly rots into nothingness. (cp. I Corinthians 15:50-57)
- D. Annihilationism – The belief, espoused primarily by the Jehovah's Witnesses, that teaches that all the ungodly will someday literally be "*uncreated*," or annihilated by God. (cp. Matthew 25:46)
- E. Soul Sleep – The belief that the soul sleeps between death and the resurrection. (cp. II Corinthians 5:6-9)
- F. Purgatory – The belief of Roman Catholics that all those who die in peace with the church, but are not perfect, must undergo penal and purifying sufferings. (cp. Hebrews 10:12)
- G. Limbo – The belief that teaches that all unbaptized children, and the mentally incompetent, upon death, proceed to a permanent place of "*natural happiness*," but not heaven. (cp. Matthew 18:1-6, 10)
- H. Reincarnation – The belief in the transmigration, or rebirth, of the soul, so that as one sows in the present life so one reaps either good or bad in the next life. (Hebrews 9:27)

### II. The Destiny Of The Lost – Hell.

- A. Of all the doctrines of the Bible, undoubtedly the very first that the unbeliever will deny, and the weak believer will question, is the doctrine of hell.
  - 1. Rationalism – "*There is no God, and therefore there can be no hell.*"
  - 2. Ridicule – "*There may be a God, but it is silly to speculate about multitudes of disembodied spirits frying in some literal lake of fire somewhere.*"
  - 3. Religion – "*There is a God, but He is a God of Love, and therefore would not, and could not, send anyone to hell.*"
- B. Regardless of the doubts and denials of men, the Bible dogmatically declares the existence and reality of hell.

1. Hell is a place of frustration and anger. (Matthew 13:42)
  2. Hell is a place originally prepared from Satan and his hosts. (Matthew 25:41)
  3. Hell is a place of unquenchable fire. (Luke 3:17)
  4. Hell is a place of memory and remorse. (Luke 16:19-31)
  5. Hell is a place of unquenchable thirst. (Luke 16:24)
  6. Hell is a place of undiluted divine wrath. (Revelation 14:10)
  7. Hell is a place of misery and pain. (Revelation 14:10-11)
  8. Hell is a place of separation. (Revelation 20:15)
  9. Hell is a place created for eternity. (Matthew 25:46, II Thessalonians 1:9)
- C. The occupants of hell.
1. The devil and his angels. (Matthew 25:41)
  2. The beast and the false prophet. (Revelation 20:10)
  3. The wicked and unbelieving. (Revelation 21:8)
  4. All those who died without Christ. (Revelation 20:11-15)

### III. The Destiny Of The Saved – Heaven.

- A. The revelation of heaven. (II Corinthians 12:2)
1. The testimony of Jesus. (John 14:1-3)
  2. The testimony of Paul. (II Corinthians 12:1-4)
  3. The testimony of John. (Revelation 4:1ff)
- B. The inhabitants of heaven.
1. God, the Father. (Revelation 4:2-3)
  2. God, the Son. (Revelation 5:6)
  3. God, the Holy Spirit. (Revelation 14:13)
  4. The holy and elect angels. (Hebrews 12:22)
  5. “Righteous” Israel. (Hebrews 11:16, cp. 11:7)
  6. The “Church of the Firstborn.” (Hebrews 12:22-23)
  7. Unknown – “Heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people.” (cp. John 14:2)
- C. The essential features of heaven.
1. Heaven is a place of perfect knowledge. (I Corinthians 13:8-12)
  2. Heaven is a place of perfect embodiment. (I Corinthians 15:51-53)
  3. Heaven is a place of perfect rest. (Revelation 14:13)
  4. Heaven is a place of perfect worship. (Revelation 19:1)
  5. Heaven is a place of perfect holiness. (Revelation 21:27)
  6. Heaven is a place of perfect satisfaction. (Revelation 22:1-2)
  7. Heaven is a place of perfect service. (Revelation 22:3)
- D. The way to heaven. (John 14:6)
1. Jesus said, “I am the way” – without the Way there is no going.
  2. Jesus said, “I am the truth” – without the Truth there is no knowing.
  3. Jesus said, “I am the life” – without the Life there is no living.

**Conclusion:** Life has been described as “*The dressing room for eternity.*” If that be true, then every person needs to give heed to the invitation of Revelation 22:17, “*And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.*”

## OF CIVIL GOVERNMENT

We believe that civil government is of Divine appointment, for the interests and good order of human society; that magistrates are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored and obeyed; except only in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ; who is the only Lord of the conscience, and the coming Prince of the kings of the earth.

Exo. 18:21-22; 2Sa. 23:3; Psa. 72:11; Dan. 3:17-18; Mat. 10:28; 22:21; 23:10; Act. 4:19-20; 23:5; Rom. 13:7; Phi. 2:10-11; Tit. 3:1; 1Pe. 2:13-14, 17

- I. God Established Certain Authorities. (Exodus 18:21-22)
  - A. Purposes for authority.
    1. To grow in wisdom and character. (Luke 2:49, 52)
    2. To gain protection from destructive temptations. (I Samuel 15:23)
    3. To receive clear direction for life decisions. (Proverbs 6:20-22)
  - B. Structures of authority.
    1. Family.
      - a. Father. (Ephesians 6:4)
      - b. Mother. (Proverbs 1:8)
      - c. Children (Ephesians 6:1-3)
    2. Business.
      - a. Employer. (I Timothy 6:2)
      - b. Employee. (I Timothy 6:1)
    3. Church.
      - a. Church leaders. (I Peter 5:1-3)
      - b. Church members. (Hebrews 13:17)
    4. Government.
      - a. National leaders. (I Peter 2:13-14)
      - b. Local officials. (Romans 13:1, 3-4)
      - c. Citizens. (Romans 13:5)
- II. Civil Government Is Authorized By God.
  - A. The "*Creation Mandate*." (Genesis 1:26)
    1. On the sixth day of creation, when God created man, He gave him authority over all the world. (Genesis 1:28)
    2. As responsible citizens, our involvement in the community provides certain things which individualized living cannot provide. (Genesis 4:17)
  - B. Civil government was first instituted by God. (Genesis 9)
    1. God reaffirmed the "*Creation Mandate*" of dominion. (9:1)
    2. God gave man the authority to execute justice and protect human life. (9:5-6)
    3. The duration of this covenant is unending. (9:12)
    4. This covenant was established between God and all men. (9:16-17)
  - C. God's tenets of civil government.
    1. Government has its origin in God's sovereignty. (Proverbs 21:1)

2. Government is for the protection, conservation, and improvement of human life. (I Peter 2:13-17)
  3. Government has a moral basis – every man is brother to every other man.
    - a. The negative requirement forbids the killing of man by any individual. (Exodus 20:13)
    - b. The positive side is that man owes a debt of life to his neighbor. (Romans 13:8-9)
  4. Government has a moral justification – the sacredness of human life. (Genesis 9:6)
- D. The Biblical response to civil government.
1. Obey the laws of the land. (Romans 13:1, 7)
  2. Do good. (Romans 13:3-4)
  3. Be obedient. (Romans 13:5)
  4. Pay taxes. (Romans 13:6)
  5. Give due honor and respect to rulers. (Romans 13:7)
  6. Pray for those in areas of leadership. (I Timothy 2:1-2)

### III. Civil Government Is Limited By God. (Matthew 22:21)

- A. God demands honest government. (Deuteronomy 1:16-18, II Samuel 23:3)
- B. God's limitations are based on man's sinful nature.
  1. Paul never excluded rulers from being sinners. (Romans 3:10, 23)
  2. There is danger when sinners exercise power. (Proverbs 11:14)
  3. Loyalty to Christ and the Bible supersede civil obedience. (Acts 5:29)
- C. Jesus said that some things do not belong to Caesar, but to God alone.
  1. Caesar has no right to demand that all citizens worship him.
  2. If a Caesar does make such a demand, he is to be resisted, even unto death. (Exodus 1:17-21, Daniel 6:4-10, Acts 4:18-21)
- D. The State is not to interfere with the legitimate affairs of the Church and the Church is not to interfere with the legitimate affairs of the State.

**Conclusion:** One author writes, *“Believers are to be subject to civil authorities. It does not matter how the civil authorities were appointed or by whom. It may have been by a senate, an army, or the people. The authority, whether just or unjust, whether legitimate or illegitimate, is to be obeyed.*

*However, the sphere of authority is to be noted. The government has authority only within the civil realm. The authority of the government does not extend beyond its position. For example, when Paul commands wives to obey their husbands, they are required to obey them as husbands, not as masters or as kings. Children are to obey their parents as parents, not as sovereigns. So it is in the case of government leaders.*

*When the laws of civil government conflict with the explicit commandments of God, then Christians must say, ‘we ought to obey God rather than men’ (Acts 5:29). When a ruler claims divine rights, Christian believers must answer, ‘no,’ for the ruler is going beyond the civil authority delegated to him by God. The ruler is trespassing on territory which is not his . . . . But the Christian believer is to say ‘yes’ to all civil matters not conflicting with the commandments of God.”*

## OF THE RESURRECTION AND RETURN OF CHRIST

We believe in and accept the sacred Scriptures upon these subjects at their face and full value. Of the Resurrection, we believe that Christ rose bodily “*the third day according to the Scriptures*”; that He ascended “*to the right hand of the throne of God*”; that He alone is our “*merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God*”; “*that this same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven,*” bodily, personally, and visibly; that the “*dead in Christ shall rise first*”; that the living saints “*shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump*”; “*that the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David*”; and that “*Christ shall reign a thousand years in righteousness until He hath put all enemies under His feet.*”

Psa. 72:8; Isa. 11:4-5; Mat. 24:27, 42; Mat. 28:6-7; Mar. 16:6, 19; Luk. 1:32; Luk. 24:2-7, 39, 51; Joh. 14:3; Joh. 20:27; Act. 1:9, 11; 1Co. 15:4, 25, 42-44, 51-53; Phi. 4:20-21; 1Th. 4:16-17; 1Ti. 2:5; Heb. 2:17; 5:9-10; 8:1, 6; 9:28; 12:2; 1Jo. 2:5; Rev. 3:21; 20:1-4, 6

### I. The Resurrection Of Jesus Christ.

#### A. Predictions of Christ’s resurrection.

1. David predicted it. (Psalm 16:10)
2. Isaiah predicted it. (Isaiah 53:9-12)
3. Jesus predicted it. (Matthew 20:18-19)

#### B. The importance of Christ’s resurrection.

1. Christianity is the only “*religion*” that bases its claim to acceptance upon the resurrection of its Founder.
2. Jesus’ honor was staked on the fact of His resurrection. (Matthew 12:39-40)
3. Belief in the resurrection was part of the faith of the early church. (Acts 4:33)
4. Remove the resurrection from the Gospel and the message is lost. (I Corinthians 15:14-17)

#### C. Proofs of Christ’s resurrection.

1. The fact of the empty tomb must be accounted for. (Mark 16:6)
2. The tremendous change in the lives of the disciples must be accounted for. (Luke 22:54-62, cp. Acts 2:14)
3. The existence of the Christian church must be accounted for. (Acts 5:33-38)
4. The change of worship from Saturday to Sunday must be accounted for. (Acts 20:7)
5. The witness of so many must be accounted for. (I Corinthians 15:3-8)

#### D. The nature of Christ’s resurrection.

1. His new body has flesh and bone. (Luke 24:39)
2. His new body still bore the marks of His crucifixion. (Luke 24:40)
3. He ate food with His new body. (Luke 24:41-43, John 21:12-13)
4. His new body was not subject to material laws. (Luke 24:31, 36)

### II. The Present Ministry Of Jesus Christ.

#### A. The fact of Jesus’ ascension. (Mark 16:19)

- B. The purposes of Jesus' ascension.
  - 1. To prepare a place for His followers. (John 14:2)
  - 2. To give spiritual gifts to His followers. (Ephesians 4:10-14)
  - 3. To offer encouragement to His followers.
    - a. As "*a great high priest.*" (Hebrews 4:14-16)
    - b. As "*the author and finisher of our faith.*" (Hebrews 12:1-3)
  - 4. To pray for His followers.
    - a. As our Intercessor – due to our weaknesses and frailties. (Hebrews 7:25)
    - b. As our Advocate – due to our sins. (I John 2:1)
  - 5. To wait for His enemies to become His footstool. (Hebrews 10:12-13)

### III. The Return Of Jesus Christ.

- A. The certainty of His coming.
  - 1. Paul preached it. (Philippians 3:20-21)
  - 2. James preached it. (James 5:7-8)
  - 3. Jesus preached it. (Revelation 22:20)
- B. Signs of His coming.
  - 1. Wars, famines, pestilences or plagues, earthquakes. (Matthew 24:1-14)
  - 2. Increased knowledge. (Daniel 12:4)
  - 3. Perilous times. (II Timothy 3:1-7)
  - 4. Return of Israel to the Promised Land. (Luke 21:24)
- C. The character of His coming.
  - 1. Personally, bodily, and visibly. (Acts 1:11)
  - 2. Pre-millennially. (I Thessalonians 4:13-18)
  - 3. Powerfully. (Luke 21:27)
- D. The course of His coming.
  - 1. The Rapture of the Church. (I Thessalonians 4:16-17, cp. Revelation 4:1)
  - 2. The Marriage of the Lamb – in heaven.
    - a. The Judgment Seat of Christ. (I Corinthians 3:11-15)
    - b. The Marriage Supper. (Revelation 19:7-9)
  - 3. The Tribulation Period – on earth.
    - a. The church escapes the Tribulation Period. (II Peter 2:9, Revelation 3:10)
    - b. A period of unequalled tribulation on the earth. (Matthew 24:21)
    - c. The anti-Christ will be revealed. (II Thessalonians 2:1-12)
    - d. God's wrath will be poured out. (Revelation 6:15-17)
  - 4. The Revelation of Jesus Christ. (Matthew 24:29-30)
  - 5. The Battle of Armageddon. (Revelation 16:13-16)
  - 6. The Millennium. (Isaiah 9:6-7)
  - 7. The Great White Throne Judgment. (Revelation 20:11-15)
  - 8. New Heaven and New Earth. (Revelation 21:1-4)

**Conclusion:** Every believer ought to live in light of I John 3:3, "*And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.*" Every unbeliever ought to heed the admonition of Romans 10:9, "*That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.*"

## OF MISSIONS

We believe the command to give the Gospel to the world is clear and unmistakable and that this Commission was given to the churches; and that the true mission of the church is not a program of mere social reform, but rather a program of proclaiming the Gospel to every creature, of baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, and of organizing them into a local church where they can be taught to observe all things that Christ has commanded.

Mat. 28:18-20; Mar. 16:15; Joh. 20:21; Act. 1:8; Rom. 10:13-15

### I. The Meaning Of Missions.

- A. *"The Great Commission."* (Matthew 28:18-20)
- B. *"The Go Commission."* (Mark 16:15)
- C. *"The Gospel Commission."* (Luke 24:47)
- D. *"The God-Breathed Commission."* (John 20:21)
- E. *"The Global Commission."* (Acts 1:8)

### II. Some Myths Regarding Missions.

- A. The myth of *"Foreign Missions."*
  - 1. This myth has artificially divided the field into two parts: home and foreign.
  - 2. Fact: Jesus told us that the field is the world. (Matthew 13:38a)
- B. The myth of the *"Spiritual Missionary."*
  - 1. This myth places the missionary on a pedestal.
  - 2. Fact: The average missionary is a man of like passions as ourselves. (James 5:17)
- C. The myth of the *"Specialized Missionary."*
  - 1. This myth says that only doctors, nurses, teachers, etc., need apply.
  - 2. Fact: Versatility is the single greatest human virtue any missionary can possess.
- D. The myth of the *"Primitive Life."*
  - 1. This myth says that missionaries still hack their ways through snake-infested jungles and live in thatched houses with furniture made from packing crates.
  - 2. Fact: The great majority of present-day missionaries enjoy a standard of living much higher than they ever considered.
- E. The myth of the *"Hungry Heart."*
  - 1. This myth says that the *"heathen,"* in their moral and spiritual bankruptcy, are expectantly waiting for the arrival of a missionary.
  - 2. Fact: Non-Christians are not ready and eager to accept Christ. (Romans 3:11-12)
- F. The myth of the *"Finished Task."*
  - 1. This myth says that once the national churches are able to stand on their own feet, the missionaries are no longer needed.
  - 2. The fact is, the fulfillment of the original *"Missionary Mandate"* is far from being accomplished.

### III. The Mandate For Missions.

- A. The character of God.

1. God is love. (I John 4:16)
    - a. God loves the world. (John 3:16)
      - (1) God's not willing that any should perish. (II Peter 3:9)
      - (2) God would have all men saved. (I Timothy 2:3-4)
    - b. The meaning and miracle of the Book of Jonah is not found in the story of the "*great fish*," but in the "*Great God*," who through His mercy spared the wicked city of Nineveh when its king and people repented.
  2. God is light. (I John 1:5)
    - a. Light is symbolically used in the Scriptures.
      - (1) Physically, it stands for splendor or glory. (II Corinthians 4:6)
      - (2) Intellectually, it stands for truth. (Psalm 43:3)
      - (3) Morally, it stands for holiness. (Romans 13:11-14)
    - b. Associated with God's holiness is His justice. (Romans 1:18)
  3. If God were only love and not light, there would be no need of Christian missions.
    - a. God's holiness makes it inevitable that the unrepentant sinner will perish. (Nahum 1:2-3)
    - b. God's love makes it possible for the repentant sinner to be saved. (Romans 3:21-22)
- B. The command of Christ.
1. "Come unto me all ye that labor . . ." (Matthew 11:28)
  2. "Take up [your] cross and follow me . . ." (Matthew 16:24-25)
  3. Go forth as "*laborers into his harvest*." (Matthew 9:37-38)
- C. The condition of mankind.
1. Man's greatest need is to be saved. (Mark 8:36-37)
  2. The missionary's first concern is preaching of the Gospel. (Romans 10:13-15a)
- IV. The Method Of Missions. (Romans 10:13-15, Matthew 28:19-20)
- A. Sent ones are to make disciples. (Acts 5:42)
1. The command is to evangelize.
  2. The Word of God, empowered by the Spirit of God, will bring the lost to God.
- B. Sent ones are to baptize disciples. (Acts 2:41)
1. Our responsibility does not end with the conversion of the unsaved.
  2. Baptism identifies new believers with Christ and His local church.
  3. Baptism, likewise, implies effective church planting in new regions.
- C. Sent ones are to instruct disciples. (II Timothy 3:16-17)
1. The traditional term for this process is called "*discipleship*."
  2. Discipleship always involves both knowing and doing. (Colossians 1:10)
- V. The Magnitude Of Missions. (Acts 1:8)
- A. Citywide – "*Jerusalem*."
  - B. Statewide – "*Judea*"
  - C. Countrywide – "*Samaria*"
  - D. Worldwide – "*uttermost parts of the earth*."

**Conclusion:** To be God's people is to be a missionary people. (Psalm 96:3)

## OF THE GRACE OF GIVING

We believe that giving is one of the fundamentals of the faith; that we are commanded to bring our tithes and offerings into the storehouse (common treasury of the church) upon the first day of the week; that as good stewards we recognize God's ownership over all; that the first essential is the giving of one's self to the Lord; that the area of God's ownership includes our time, talents and treasures; that though stewardship is not restricted to just giving of money, our giving ought not to be by coercion, compulsion, nor manipulation, but willingly, cheerfully and sacrificially.

Lev. 27:30; Mal. 3:10; Psa. 31:15; Mat. 23:23; 25:14-30; Act. 4:34-35; 1Co. 12:27; 16:2; 2Co. 8:3, 5, 7, 11-12, 19; 9:6-8

- I. The Grace Of Our Giving. (II Corinthians 8:7)
  - A. God owns all things. (Matthew 25:14-15)
    1. Our life. (Job 1:21)
    2. Our possessions. (Psalm 24:1)
    3. Our families. (Genesis 22:2)
    4. God is the owner of all things because He is the Creator of all things. (Genesis 1:1)
  - B. Believers are to act on God's behalf as stewards. (Matthew 25:16-19)
    1. The New Testament word "*steward*" (OIKONOMUS) means, "*the manager of a household or estate.*" (Luke 16:1-2, cp. Genesis 39:4-6)
    2. God expects two things from His stewards:
      - a. Accountability. (Luke 16:1-2, I Corinthians 4:1)
      - b. Faithfulness. (I Corinthians 4:2)
        - (1) A faithful steward is trustworthy. (Matthew 24:45-47)
        - (2) A faithful steward is honest. (II Corinthians 8:21)
        - (3) A faithful steward is loyal. (Luke 16:13)
  - C. God expects us to give of our time, talents, and treasures.
    1. God knows that the only way we can actually be blessed is to entrust us with so much that we become a funnel to disperse His blessings to others. (Luke 6:38)
    2. God does not want us to give to Him just to bless Him, but He wants us to give to Him so that He can bless us. (Psalm 50:7-15)
    3. God gives to us so that we might give, so He can give us more and we might be blessed more. (Acts 20:35)
- II. The Purposes Of Our Giving.
  - A. To grow us spiritually by growing our faith. (Luke 6:38)
  - B. To finance His earthly ministry through us. (Malachi 3:10)
  - C. To unite Christians that have needs with those that have surplus. (II Corinthians 8:14-15)
  - D. To reveal God's infinite power. (Deuteronomy 8:18)
  - E. To give direction to our lives. (Proverbs 3:5-6)
  - F. To fulfill God's promise to supply our needs. (Philippians 4:19)

### III. The Resources Of Our Giving.

#### A. Our time.

1. It is difficult to define time, but we are confronted with it often in the Bible, along with its reality and the necessity of using it properly.
  - a. God is the Author of time and we are responsible for what we do with it. (Psalm 31:15)
  - b. Moses prayed, “*So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.*” (Psalm 90:12)
2. When we use time, we are choosing one activity over another. (Luke 10:38-42)
  - a. Martha chose an activity which would provide nourishment for the body.
  - b. Mary chose an activity which would provide nourishment for the spirit.

#### B. Our talents.

1. Our talents and abilities come from God. (Matthew 25:15)
2. Each Christian has at least one talent. (I Corinthians 12:4, 7)
3. The purpose behind these talents is that all might profit by their proper exercise. (I Corinthians 12:7)
4. These gifts are given by the Holy Spirit. (I Corinthians 12:11)

#### C. Our treasures.

1. God has placed His treasures into our hands. (Deuteronomy 8:18)
2. Concerning the present day collection. (I Corinthians 16:1-2)
  - a. The purpose – for the ministry of the saints. (16:1)
  - b. The time – on the first day of the week. (16:2)
  - c. The place – the local church. (16:2, cp. Malachi 3:10)
  - d. The participants – everyone. (16:2)
  - e. The amount – proportional. (16:2)

### IV. The Attitude Of Our Giving.

- A. Willingly. (II Corinthians 8:12)
- B. Eagerly. (II Corinthians 8:11, 19)
- C. Cheerfully. (II Corinthians 9:7)
- D. Sacrificially. (II Corinthians 8:3)

### V. The Biblical History Of Giving Tithes And Offerings.

- A. Abraham started it. (Genesis 14:20)
- B. Jacob continued it. (Genesis 28:22)
- C. Moses incorporated it. (Leviticus 27:30)
- D. Nehemiah restored it. (Nehemiah 10:37-38)
- E. Malachi commanded it. (Malachi 3:10)
- F. Jesus commended it. (Matthew 23:23)
- G. Paul explained it. (I Corinthians 16:2)

**Conclusion:** The most important truth concerning the grace of giving is that giving begins with the giving of one’s self. Paul wrote that the Macedonians “. . . *first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God*” (II Corinthians 8:5). As the Macedonians followed the example of the Lord Jesus Christ (II Corinthians 8:9), may we follow theirs.

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