

## The Gospel

The good news of the person and work of Jesus Christ Who He is and what He did in His work. How sins are atoned for and forgiven and how we are made right with God. The coming of the kingdom of God. **Matthew 4:17** “**From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand**”

**Warning:** Reject the gospel and go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of gospel truth then what you should expect is a terrifying judgement. **Hebrews 10:25-25** “**For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.**”

**Matthew 11:15** “**He who has ears to hear, let him hear.**” This is a call to listen. This is a call to be alert.

## Who He Is

He was born according to the scriptures **Isaiah 7:14** “**Therefore the Lord Himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel**” (means **God** with us). Jesus is a saviour **Luke 2:11** “**For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.**” Jesus is the incarnation (The act of being made flesh) of God promised by the prophets. **Romans 1:2** “**Which He had promised afore by His prophets in the holy Scriptures**”, **John 1:14** “**And the Word (Jesus) was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the**

**Father,) full of grace and truth.”** Jesus is the Son of Man and will return as He left **Matthew 26:64** “**Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.**” He lived a sinless life **1 John 3:5** “**And ye know that He was manifested to take away our sins; and in Him is no sin**” Who has come truly God - truly man, one person with two natures human and divine **Galatians 4:4** “**But when the fullness of the time came, God sent His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law**”, **John 1:18** “**No one has seen God at any time; God the only Son, Who is in the arms of the Father, He has explained Him.**” He is a mediator between God and mankind like an attorney for a client to the judge for all the human race bringing us to God and at His fathers throne and interceding for all believers His church reigning over His kingdom forever **1 Timothy 2:5** “**For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.**”, **Hebrews 1:8** **But unto the Son He saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Jesus is a high priest Hebrews 4:14** “**Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.**” He was a descendant of David King of Israel, David's son and David's Lord **Romans 1:3** “**Concerning His Son, Who was born of a descendant of David according to the flesh.**” Jesus is the Christ (Anointed One) the foretold Messiah of Israel **Acts 2:36** “**Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ—this Jesus Whom you crucified.**” Jesus is a healer **Matthew 15:30-31** “**And great multitudes came unto Him, having with them those that were lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and cast them down at Jesus' feet; and He healed them: Insomuch that the multitude wondered, when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see: and**

**they glorified the God of Israel.” Jesus is a prophet Matthew 21:11**  
**“Jesus And the multitude said, This is Jesus the prophet of**  
**Nazareth of Galilee”** Jesus is the sovereign creator and life giver  
sustainer of our universe **John 1:3 “All things were made by Him;**  
**and without Him was not any thing made that was made.”** Jesus  
Christ is the eternal Son, one in nature with the eternal Father and  
the eternal Spirit the triune God. The Trinity (Triune Unity) is one God  
existing in three Persons. Understand that this is not in any way  
suggesting three Gods. **Romans 1:4 “Who was declared the Son of**  
**God with power according to the Spirit of holiness by the**  
**resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord.”** Jesus Christ is  
the ascended Lord (Deity) the one true God **Luke 24:50-51”And He**  
**led them out as far as to Bethany, and He lifted up His hands, and**  
**blessed them. And it came to pass, while He blessed them, He**  
**was parted from them, and carried up into heaven.”**, **John 13:13**  
**“Ye call Me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am”** , Jesus  
Christ is a King **Matthew 27:37 “And set up over His head His**  
**accusation written, This Is Jesus The King Of The Jews.”**

### **The Bad News**

Most people have this vague notion that God will let them into  
heaven because their good deeds outweigh their bad deeds,  
basically a good person. God does not compare goodness to other  
people like we do, but to Himself and none of us are perfect  
(good) like God. All of us have broken God's moral laws and if we  
say we have no sin then we are a liar **1 John 1:8 “If we say that**  
**we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.”**  
Nearly all of us have stolen something **Exodus 20:15 “Thou shalt**  
**not steal”** We are thieves. All of us have told lies **Exodus 20:16**  
**“Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour”** We are  
liars. We have taken God's name in vain **Exodus 20:7 “Thou shalt**

**not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain**" We have insulted God. We have looked upon others with physical lust **Matthew 5:28 "But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart"** We are adulterers. We are all sinners **Romans 3:23 "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."** We are rebels **Isaiah 1:28 "And the destruction of the transgressors and of the sinners shall be together, and they that forsake the Lord shall be consumed."** Left in our sins we are alienated from God **Colossians 1:21 "And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled."** We are His enemies **Romans 5:10 "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life."** and the unforgivable sin is the sin of unbelief. There is no pardon for a person who dies in his rejection of Christ. The Holy Spirit is at work in the world, convicting the unsaved **"of sin, righteousness, and judgment" (John 16:8)**. If a person resists that conviction and remains unrepentant, then he is choosing hell over heaven. When we break the laws on earth, there is a penalty to be paid. When we break the laws of God there is also a penalty to be paid. When we break earthly laws, the penalty is temporary. When we break God's laws, however, the penalty is eternal because God is eternal. We are lost helpless, hopeless in sin with Jesus the only way to escape judgement and hell "But God is a good loving God!" you might say. "A good loving God would never send anyone to Hell," they surmise. The goodness and love of God is not the assurance of the sinner's rescue, but rather the guarantee that justice will be done. God is good and God is love. **1 John 4:8 "He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love."** In fact, He is the only One who is intrinsically good by His character and nature **Mark 10:18 "And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou Me good?"**

**there is none good but one, that is, God"** and a good God must punish sin. If He did not punish sin, then He would not be good, He would not be loving. Lets say a man commits murder and his crime is caught on camera and multiple witnesses saw him. He is arrested and the murder weapon is found with his fingerprints. The suspect goes to court and is found guilty in an open and shut case. The judge says you have been found guilty of murder. What do you have to say before I pass a sentence? Well your honor I think you are a good judge and should let me go. Ive only committed one murder the rest of the days I have been good. The judge says you are right. I am a good judge, I'm going to let you go. You're free to leave have a nice day. So the judge lets a convicted murderer go would that be a good judge? No, that would be a wicked judge for not punishing the crime. God is a perfect judge and will punish sin. **Ecclesiastes 12:14 "For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil."** People who God sends to hell for their crimes are there because of a lifetime of sin and rebellion against Him. God's love is not a coddling love it is a holy and just love. God's love is fully demonstrated to us in not giving us what we deserve. **Romans 5:8 "But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."** Even though we are sinners in rebellion against God and deserve nothing but wrath. He sent His Son to die anyway in our place, the ultimate love expression. The one who dies in his sin will rightly and justly go to a real place called hell. I have heard preachers say that if you die in your sin you will be eternally separated from God. But that's not entirely true, the most terrifying thing about hell is...God because He is there. He is there in His divine wrath tormenting the condemned justly according to scripture. **Revelation 14:10 "The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in**

**the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb.”** People in hell are separated from God relationally this we see in **2 Thessalonians 1:8-9** **“In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power.”** There is no relationship, no fellowship, there is no love, just judicial punishment in the presence of God for all eternity. His wrath is poured out on us this is what we deserve **Mark 9:48** **“Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.”** This is what we have earned by our willful sin **Romans 6:23** **“For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”** No amount of good works can satisfy the righteous wrath of God that burns against our sins. The Bible says our works are as filthy rags **Isaiah 64:6** **“But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses (Works) are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.”** Before a God Who is thrice holy **Revelation 4:8** **“And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.”** Our good works (Being Good, Going to Church, Helping People, the Lord’s Supper, Confirmation, Infant Baptism, the Sacraments, Mary, Penance, Confession, Rosary, following the Ordinances/Laws, anything of that sort) or your feelings, your prayers or fears or faith. Do not even trust your faith to save you but Christ it will profit us nothing on the day of judgement if you trust anything other than Christ we are accursed **Galatians 3:10** **“For all who rely on the works of the law are under a curse, as it is written: “Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law.”** Trust in anything besides Christ and you are lost forever rely/trust on Jesus only. Your thought should be “Nothing in my hand do I bring

simply to the cross I cling” Hymn Rock of Ages. The question then is: How can a holy God pardon sinners without works and compromising His holy justice?

## **The Good News Atonement/Death**

Here the Word of God: He has commanded us to **Mark 1:15** “and saying, **“The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.”** This is good news Christ loves us and died for sinful humanity according to scripture **John 3:16** **“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten (Unique) Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”** God, solely by His grace has made a way - indeed the only way to escape His wrath, a way for us His enemies to be reconciled to Himself. **Romans 5:10** **“For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.”** God sent His Son, Jesus Christ to the earth He lived a perfect life of sinless obedience to the Father. He then willingly laid down His life on the cross. His life was not taken He gave it **John 10:18** **“No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of My Father.”** On the cross the full undiluted fury of God’s wrath that the sins of His people and the world have earned was poured out on His Son Jesus. Jesus took every drop of that punishment He became what the Bible calls a propitiation for our sins. **1 John 2:2** **“And He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.”** To propitiate is “to appease” or “to satisfy” God's divine justice and Jesus satisfied the wrath of God by offering Himself as the ultimate and only sacrifice for sin. On the cross, our sins were imputed or ~counted~ to Christ. The

Bible says in **2 Corinthians 5:21** "For He hath made Him to be sin for us, Who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." Jesus did not literally turn into sin, but He was made an offering for our sin. **Romans 8:3** "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." The punishment you and I deserve God directed toward His Son. God punished Jesus on our behalf. **Isaiah 53:10** "Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him; He hath put Him to grief: when thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand." Because sin demands death Jesus had to die for our sins as a sacrifice **Isaiah 53:12** "Therefore will I divide Him a portion with the great, and He shall divide the spoil with the strong; because He hath poured out His soul unto death: and He was numbered with the transgressors; and He bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors" and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins. **Hebrews 9:22** "And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission." This is illustrated in the Old Testament sacrifices **Leviticus 17:11** "For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul" So animal sacrifices graphically illustrated several vital truths: the exceeding sinfulness of sin, the inflexibility of judgment under the law, the high cost of atonement, and both the justice and the mercy of God. But it was clear that animal blood had no real or lasting atoning value. **Hebrews 10:4** "For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins" So sacrifices were offered daily, work in the temple was never finished. There are no chairs among the furniture in the temple so the priests were standing up day and night. **Hebrews 10:11** "And

**every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins.**” It was clear that all the sacrifices and ceremony did not provide a full and complete atonement for sin. They were symbolic. How, after all, could mere animal blood placate the divine justice that demands the death of a sinner? There was a reason animals needed to be slaughtered repeatedly, daily—endlessly. It underscored the truth that the blood of a common animal is no real substitute for a guilty human life. So Old Testament saints were left with a perplexing mystery: If animal sacrifices provided no true and final atonement, what else could possibly make God propitious to sinners? After all, God Himself said, “I will not acquit the guilty,” and anyone who does justify the wicked is an abomination to Him. **Exodus 23:7 “Keep thee far from a false matter; and the innocent and righteous slay thou not: for I will not justify the wicked”** So how could God ever justify the ungodly without compromising His own righteousness? The answer is that Christ willingly died in place of those whom He saves. He is their Substitute—and unlike all those animal sacrifices, He is the perfect propitiation. Finally, there was a sufficient sacrifice. The disciple Peter said **1 Peter 3:18 “For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit.”** The disciple Paul agreed **2 Corinthian 5:21 “For He hath made Him to be sin for us, Who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him”**

## **Burial**

Christ was truly dead, the cross was no pretense. Jesus was not still alive and quietly spirited off to some secret location and nursed back to health. The story of Christ’s crucifixion is not a

cunningly devised fable or a mere story with an instructive moral. Christ really died, and all who witnessed His death (friends and foes alike) affirmed that fact. No eyewitness to the crucifixion ever suggested that He survived the ordeal. The soldiers who nailed Jesus to the cross were under the direct command of (Roman Governor) Pontius Pilate. They had legal possession of Christ's body as long as He hung on the cross. These were professional executioners. They had every skill necessary to determine with ruthless accuracy whether their victims were absolutely dead. They would not have allowed the body to be removed from the cross or handed over for burial if there had been any question whatsoever about whether they had finished the job they were assigned to do. Mark the disciple said **Mark 15:34-37** "And at the ninth hour (3:00 in the afternoon) Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? And some of them that stood by, when they heard it, said, Behold, He calleth Elias. And one ran and filled a sponge full of vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave Him to drink, saying, Let alone; let us see whether Elias will come to take Him down. And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost", John the disciple said **John 19:30** "When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, He said, It is finished: and He bowed His head, and gave up the ghost" Matthew gives the most complete description of Jesus' burial: **Matthew 27:59-66** "And Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock; and he rolled a large stone against the entrance of the tomb and went away. . . . Now on the next day, the day after the preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered together with Pilate, and said, "Sir, we remember that when He was still alive that deceiver said, 'After three days I am to rise again.' Therefore, give orders for the grave to be made secure until the third day, otherwise His

**disciples may come and steal Him away and say to the people, 'He has risen from the dead,' and the last deception will be worse than the first." Pilate said to them, "You have a guard; go, make it as secure as you know how." And they went and made the grave secure, and along with the guard they set a seal on the stone."**

The "seal" would have been an official marker with Pilate's own emblem, similar to the wax seal used to close and identify a formal legal document. Such a seal was not to be broken except by the authority of the ruler or administrative body who ordered the seal. The "guard" was a detachment of Roman soldiers answerable to Pilate. These were elite special forces, not army rejects. They were not the type to shirk their duty or sleep on the job. That could cost them their lives. But they were susceptible to bribery, if the price was right. And when the tomb was found empty on the morning of the resurrection, the guards and Jewish officials were all desperate to cover up what had happened:

**Matthew 28:12–15 "When they had assembled with the elders and consulted together, they gave a large sum of money to the soldiers, and said, "You are to say, 'His disciples came by night and stole Him away while we were asleep.' And if this should come to the governor's ears, we will win him over and keep you out of trouble." And they took the money and did as they had been instructed."**

If there had been the remotest possibility that they might convince the public that Jesus never really died, the priests and soldiers certainly would have used that story instead of telling one that put their own livelihood in jeopardy. So the burial of Jesus is a vital part of the gospel narrative, mainly because it serves as another reminder that the gospel is rooted in history, not mythology, the human imagination, or allegory. The good news is not a legend subject to interpretation. It's not an elastic worldview that can be reconciled with Corinthian philosophy, academic skepticism, or postmodern preferences. The sacrifice Christ rendered for sins was a real event, seen by

countless eyewitnesses, verified by Roman officials, and sealed by Pilate himself with the burial of our Lord's body.

## Resurrection

The glorious truth that makes the gospel of Jesus Christ such good news is **1 Corinthians 15:4** "And that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the scriptures." In the words of the angel at the empty tomb: **Matthew 28:6** "He is not here: for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay." Of all the truths Christians affirm, none is more essential to our faith than a belief in literal, bodily resurrection. That starts, of course, with the literal resurrection of Christ's physical body, and (as Paul argues meticulously in this long chapter 1 Corinthians 15) it extends to the literal resurrection of our own bodies. **1 Corinthians 15:17-19** "And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." What follows immediately is a triumphant confession: **1 Corinthians 15:20** "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept" The resurrection is God's seal of approval on the atoning work of Christ. On the cross, just before He bowed His head and yielded up His spirit, Jesus said, "It is finished!" In the resurrection, God the Father added His amen. In , **Romans 1:4** Paul wrote that Christ was "And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" Paul likewise told the intellectuals of Athens, **Acts 17:31** "Because He hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man Whom He hath ordained; whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead." In other

words, the resurrection of Christ is the ultimate proof of the truth of the gospel. **Job 19:25-27** “For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me.” It is the living guarantee of every divine promise from the beginning to the end of Scripture. All four gospels bear witness that Christ had repeatedly foretold His own resurrection. **Matthew 20:19** “And shall deliver Him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify Him: and the third day He shall rise again” , **Mark 8:31** “And He began to teach them, that the Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.” The disciples were not predisposed to believe it. They were clearly surprised—even inclined to skepticism—when they found the empty grave. Thomas was emphatic: **John 20:25** “The other disciples therefore said unto Him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe.” But after His multiple appearances, often in the presence of multiple eyewitnesses, they were so firmly convinced of the truth of the resurrection that no argument, no threat, no form of torture could silence them. All of them ultimately gave their lives rather than deny the resurrection. After all, they had seen Him, touched Him, eaten with Him, and fellowshiped with Him after the resurrection. That explains the amazing boldness and determination with which they carried the gospel to the nations . **Acts 4:20** “For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard”

### **Resurrection Eyewitnesses**

There were literally hundreds of eyewitnesses to the resurrection **1 Corinthians 15:6 “After that, He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep.”** Paul invited scrutiny, So certain was he of the truth that he urged people to investigate the evidence. And to make the point, he stressed the abundance of eyewitnesses and their willingness to testify. Consider the resurrection from Peter’s point of view. It must have seemed amazing (and no doubt somewhat embarrassing) to Peter that Christ appeared to him first of all. When Jesus’ life was on the line, Peter had denied Him angrily, with an oath. Peter was totally broken. He might have seemed the least likely of all the apostles to assert himself as a preacher of the resurrection because he was so ashamed. He was a coward, and a sniveling one at that. He was weeping bitterly the last time he saw Jesus. Peter was not about to invent a phony story about Christ’s resurrection, nor would he be prepared to give his life for a lie he had fabricated. **Scriptures for paragraph above >> Christ appeared Peter first 1 Corinthians 15:5 “And that He was seen of Cephas (Peter), then of the twelve.”** Peter denied Jesus **Luke 22:59-60 “And about the space of one hour after another confidently affirmed, saying, Of a truth this fellow also was with Him: for he is a Galilaean. And Peter said, Man, I know not what thou sayest. And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew.”** Peter saw Jesus last weeping **Luke 22:62 “And Peter went out, and wept bitterly”**

**“Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures . . . He was buried . . . He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and . . . He appeared.”** That is the whole gospel. The rest is explanation. So Jesus proved Himself to be Who He said He was God in human flesh.

**Predestination~Election**

**Ephesians 1:5** “He predestined us to adoption as sons *and daughters* through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,” According to this verse, the basis of our being predestined is not something that we do or will do, but is based solely on the will of God for His own pleasure. As **Romans 9:15-16** says, “For He says to Moses, “I will have mercy on whomever I have mercy, and I will show compassion to whomever I show compassion.” So then, *it does not depend on the person who wants it nor the one who runs, but on God Who has mercy.*” Similarly, **Romans 9:11** “for though *the twins* were not yet born and had not done anything good or bad, so that God’s purpose according to *His* choice would stand, not because of works but because of Him Who calls,” Then again in **Ephesians 1:11** “In Him we also have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of Him Who works all things in accordance with the plan of His will,” we see that people are “chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of Him Who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of His will.” From these and many other passages, we see that Scripture consistently teaches that predestination or election is not based upon something that we do or will do. God predestined people based on His Own sovereign will to redeem for Himself people from every tribe, tongue, and nation. God predetermined or predestined this from before the foundation of the world (**Ephesians 1:4**) “just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love” based solely on His sovereign will and not because of anything that He knew the people would do. But what about **Romans 8:29** “For those Whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brothers *and sisters*;” where it says that those “He foreknew, He also predestined”? Doesn’t that seem to say that predestination is

based upon the foreknowledge of God? Of course, the answer is yes, it does teach that predestination is based on the foreknowledge of God. But what does the word foreknowledge mean? Does it mean “based upon God’s knowledge of the future,” meaning God simply looks down through the future and sees Who will believe the gospel message and then predestines or elects them? If that were the case, it would contradict the verses above from Romans and Ephesians that make it very clear election is not based on anything man does or will do. Fortunately, God does not leave us to wonder about this issue. In **John 10:26**, Jesus said, **“But you do not believe, because you are not of My sheep.”** The reason some people believe is that they belong to God. They were chosen for salvation, not based on the fact that they would one day believe, but because God chose them for “adoption as sons in Christ Jesus” before they ever existed. The reason one person believes and another person does not is that one person has been adopted by God and the other has not. The truth is that the word foreknew in **Romans 8:29** is not speaking of God’s knowing the future. The word foreknowledge is never used in terms of knowing about future events, times or actions (God’s omniscience). What it does describe is a predetermined relationship in the knowledge of God whereby God brings the salvation relationship into existence by decreeing it into existence ahead of time. The word know is sometimes used in the Bible to describe an intimate or personal relationship between a man and a woman. In a similar sense, before God ever created the heavens and earth, and a long time before we were ever born, God knew His elect in a personal way and chose them to be His sheep, not because they would someday follow Him but in order to guarantee that they would follow Him. His knowing them and choosing them is the reason they follow Him, not the other way around. The issue really is not whether or not God knows who will believe, but why some believe

and others do not. The answer to that is God chooses to have mercy on some and others He leaves in their sinful rebellion.

## **Justification~Regeneration**

Justification is a legal term with a meaning like "acquittal"; in religion it points to the process whereby a person is declared to be right before God. Justification points to the acquittal of one who is tried before God. The legal force of the terminology is clear when Job exclaims, "Now that I have prepared my case, I know I will be vindicated" Job 13:18 . Justification by faith was the great truth that dawned on Luther and dramatically altered the church. Because Christians are justified by faith alone, their standing before God is not in any way related to personal merit. Good works and practical holiness do not provide the grounds for acceptance with God. God receives as righteous those who believe, not because of any good thing He sees in them—not even because of His own sanctifying work in their lives—but solely on the basis of *Christ's* righteousness, which is reckoned to their account. **"To the one who does not work, but believes in Him Who justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned as righteousness"** (Romans 4:5). That is justification. Another point is we have no righteousness of our own because we are dead in trespasses and sin **Ephesians 2:1-3 "And you hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others"** and have become worthless **Romans 3:10-12 "As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none**

**that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.”** We must have the righteousness of someone else. We must have the righteousness of Jesus Christ. Just as our sins were imputed to Him. We must have His righteousness imputed to us, and His righteousness cannot be purchased with the filthy rags of our works. **Isaiah 64:6 “But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away”** Question: If perfect righteousness is required for eternal life, how do we, as guilty sinners, obtain it? Answer: In the grace of regeneration(Rebirth), God grants faith to believe and counts faith as righteousness. **Titus 3:5-6 “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; That being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.”** Another word for *regeneration* is *rebirth*, related to the biblical phrase “born again.” **John 3:3 “Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God”** Our rebirth is distinguished from our first birth, when we were conceived physically and inherited our sin nature. The new birth is a spiritual, holy, and heavenly birth that results in our being made alive spiritually. Man in his natural state is “**dead in trespasses and sins**” until he is “made alive” (regenerated). **Ephesians 2:1 “And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins.”** Originally Adam and Eve sinned by not doing what God said and we inherited a sin nature and spiritually died. So we have to be made alive spiritually again so that is why we need to be regenerated (Born Again). The sin nature is that aspect in man that makes him rebellious against God. When we speak of the sin nature, we refer to the fact that we have a natural inclination to sin; given the choice to do God’s will or our own,

we will naturally choose to do our own thing. Regeneration is a radical change. Just as our physical birth resulted in a new individual entering the earthly realm, our spiritual birth results in a new person entering the heavenly realm **Ephesians 2:6 "And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus."** After regeneration, we begin to see and hear and seek after divine things; we begin to live a life of faith and holiness. Regeneration is part of what God does for us at the moment of salvation, along with sealing (**Ephesians 1:14**) **"Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory,"** adoption (**Galatians 4:5**) **"To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons,"** reconciliation (**2 Corinthians 5:18–20**) **"And all things are of God, Who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."**, etc. Regeneration is God's making a person spiritually alive, as a result of faith in Jesus Christ. Prior to salvation we were not God's children (**John 1:12–13**) **"But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."**; rather, we were children of wrath (**Ephesians 2:3**) **"Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others."**, **Romans 5:18–20**) **"Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's**

**disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:”**.Before salvation, we were degenerate; after salvation we are regenerated. The result of regeneration is peace with God (**Romans 5:1**)**”Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:”**, new life (**Titus 3:5**;**”Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost”**, **2 Corinthians 5:17**)**”Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”**, and eternal sonship (**John 1:12–13**;**”But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God”**, **Galatians 3:26**) **”For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.”** Regeneration begins the process of sanctification wherein we become the people God intends us to be (**Romans 8:28–30**) **”And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose. For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He did predestinate, them He also called: and whom He called, them He also justified: and whom He justified, them He also glorified.”**

### The Gracious Gifts

When the Lord produces saving faith, He graciously produces repentance, submission (Lordship) and a willingness to obey.

## Saving Faith and Lordship of Christ

It is faith that brings us to God and what God uses to appropriate His righteousness. There are three points to make

1. Mental: The mind understands the gospel and the truth about Christ **Romans 10:17 "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God."**
2. Emotional: One embraces the truthfulness of these facts with sorrow over sin **Romans 6:17-18 "But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness."** and joy over God's mercy and grace **Romans 15:13 "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost."**
3. Volitional: The sinner submits his will to Christ and trusts in Him alone as the only hope of salvation. This is not a simple acknowledgement that He is God and Lord of the universe even demons believe that **James 2:19 "Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble."** This is a deep personal conviction without reservation that Jesus is master. It's repenting of sin, trusting in Jesus for salvation and submitting to Him as Lord. **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."** Genuine faith will produce the three elements below. This needs to be your attitude of someone coming to salvation **Luke 9:23 "And He said to them all, If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me"** We have the same kind of cheap evangelism going on today. Now it's even gotten worse. You don't even need to believe in Jesus and you're going to go to heaven if you just think there's a God up there Who made things, let alone confess Jesus as Lord. The

dominant idea in many of the parts of evangelicalism in America, being espoused by very prominent seminary and many Bible colleges and therefore many pulpits, was that all you needed to do to be saved is believe in Jesus and then you're saved, and somewhere down the road you need to make Him Lord of your life and get serious about obedience. But that's certainly not connected to salvation. You want to be genuine here's what I ask. **"Let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me."** This isn't about you having your needs met. This isn't about you getting what you want. This is about you saying "no" to all of your needs, desires, hopes, ambitions, dreams, schemes, plans. This is about you embracing Mine. This is not about satisfaction. This is about sacrifice. True salvation, the really good soil, occurs when somebody understands that when I ask the Lord Jesus to save me from hell and forgive my sin and give me eternal life, I am at the same time submitting everything to His Lordship. The call to salvation, then, is a call to full commitment, nothing knowingly held back, nothing knowingly held back. The simple message is this: Salvation and discipleship are the same thing, and that every time Jesus said, "If you want to follow Me, you have to count the cost, you have to take up the cross, you have to deny yourself, you have to obey Me, follow Me, keep My Word," He was not calling people who were already Christians to a higher level, He was calling people who are not Christians to become saved. The gospel that Jesus proclaimed was a call to follow Him as Lord. It was a call to follow Him in submissive obedience. It was far more than fire insurance, it was far more than a plea for a prayer, or a plea for somebody to raise their hand, or walk an aisle, or sign a card, a plea for somebody to do some sort of ceremonial thing in order to be off the hook in terms of God's eternal wrath. And while the gospel of Jesus was and is the offer of forgiveness for all sin, and the promise of eternal life, it is at the same time a call to self denial, bearing a cross, and following Christ, and nothing less is a

true invitation. So that when the true gospel is presented, it has inherently in it a rebuke to superficiality, a rebuke to shallowness, a rebuke to outward hypocritical response. The heart and soul of it is God is offering forgiveness of sin and eternal life to those whose faith is not superficial, it is deep as evidenced by self denial, cross bearing, and submission. These are three elements of this complex of saving faith. It assumes that Jesus is Lord, and Christ, and God, and Savior. So you want to follow Him, do you? You want to come after Him? You believe, you say, "Yes He's Lord. Yes, He died. Yes, He rose." So you want to follow Me, do you? First, it requires self denial, *arnsasth*, strong expression, literally "to disown something." You need to disown yourself, to disown yourself. It's used to describe refusing association with someone. You need to refuse to associate with yourself. Pretty extreme. It's used of rejecting companionship of someone where you literally do not want their company. So that you come to Christ, and here's the first thing. You come saying, "I can no longer stand to be associated with myself. I've had it with me. I don't want anything more of my own life." That's the depth of that understanding. It's not, "I like my life, and I like my world, and I like the direction I'm going, but, Jesus, could You move me up a little faster and a little higher?" It's not about that. It's about, "I've had it with everything that I am. I'm sick of my natural, depraved, impotent, sinful self." It's disowning yourself. It's desiring to never be associated with yourself the way you are anymore. I've had it with me. I'm sick of myself. I don't want any more of myself. I've tried everything I know to make something out of my life and I can't do it. I'm overwhelmed with my failure. I'm overwhelmed with my disappointment. I'm overwhelmed with my emptiness. I'm overwhelmed with my sinfulness. This is the stuff of true conversion. The heart sees in itself only sin, only impotence, only failure, only unworthiness, and seeks to be rescued. And it really doesn't set any terms. Look, I am in such a

desperate situation, You just tell me what I need to do. Self is cast away totally. You give up all dependence on yourself, all trust in yourself, all confidence in what you are by nature. You give up everything and anything. That's when they really get saved, when they come to this very, very clear understanding of their spiritual desperation. In fact, I'll give you an illustration of it in Philippians chapter 3. But here's what was going on on the inside of Paul. This is the work that God had done in his life, and this is a very good illustration of coming to the end of yourself. He says in verse 4, **"If anyone has a mind - "** the second half of the verse **" - if anybody has a mind to put confidence in the flesh, I far more."** If you want to talk about achievements, if you want to talk about accomplishments, look, I'll go to the head of the class. I've accomplished more than anybody else. He was in his thirties at this time, lived his whole life with amassing these accomplishments. **"Circumcised the eighth day - "** according to the prescription of the Old Testament, he was **" - of the nation Israel."** He had gone through the right ritual, belonged to the right race of people. He was "of the tribe of Benjamin." He belonged to a tribe of great privilege, a very exalted tribe. He was "a Hebrew of Hebrews," which simply means he was kosher. He kept all the traditions to the very letter. As far as the law was concerned, his passion and devotion to the law was as extreme as existed in Israel. He was **"a Pharisee."** They were the legalists. They were the extremists. And he went as far as you could go. **"As to his zeal,"** zeal for his religion, he was so zealous for the purity and protection of Judaism that he was **"a persecutor of the church,"** which he saw as an attack on the truth, as an attack on God, as an attack on the Old Testament. And his passions ran so high that he literally got, remember, papers so that he could go places and destroy Christians and throw them in prison. **"As to the righteousness which is in the law - "** he was externally **" - blameless."** This is a man who has amassed all of these personal

achievements. This has been his - this has been done over the whole of his life. He's been spending his life trying to reach this highpoint of religious zeal, morality. And he comes to Christ. What is this approach going to be? I'm a good man. I'm as good as men get? I'm devoted to the truth of Scripture as a man can be? I'm as fastidious about the study of Scripture as a man can be? I'm as passionate about the protection of the truth as a man can be? I've done it all? I've toed the line? I've crossed every *t* and I've dotted every *i*? And now he's met Christ on the Damascus Road. He understands the gospel. And immediately in verse 7 he says, **"Whatever things were gained to me - "** that all went in the asset column. That all went as gain, all his life achieving that. It all was gain, "whatever things were gain to me, those things immediately I have counted as loss." They went from the asset column to the liability column. They weren't neutral. They weren't limited. They were loss. In fact, you understand the level of their loss - the next verse, **"I count all things to be loss."** Now there's self denial. I don't care what it is, it doesn't help. It doesn't contribute. It doesn't add anything. You just have to look at your whole life no matter how religious, how zealous, no matter how you kept the tradition of your fathers, no matter how fastidious you were, you look at it all and you say, "It is loss. All of it, everything that is in me is loss." Why? **Romans 7:18, "In my flesh dwells no - "** what? **" - good thing."** And to even go further, he says, **"It's all loss."** And down at the end of verse 8 he says, **"I count it all - "** and the Greek word is *skubalon*, **"excrement,"** the grossest word he could find. That's what it is. Now there's a man who understands self denial. And at this point in his list he hasn't even denied the fact that he loved sin, and he loved iniquity and all of that. He's not just doing that. He's turning from the worst sin in his life, which was self righteousness. Even that to him was filth, garbage. When I saw Christ I gave up everything that was Paul - everything. And that's the only way you ever come. And it may

not be religion and self righteousness for you, it may be wretched immorality, cheating, whatever other things, lying, stealing, whatever other forms of corruption. It may be just that you're consumed with your own promises and pledges to achieve certain things in your own mind in order to reach a certain level of self esteem and whatever it is. You come and the first thing that has to be realized is that this is the death of you, your hopes, your dreams, your ambitions, your desires. It's not about meeting all the little things that you want, having Jesus jump out of the bottle and give you your three wishes. It's about the death of you. This is the foundation virtue of the heart that's going to come to Christ for salvation: Bankruptcy, spiritual bankruptcy, destitution, desperation, wretchedness. So that you're not saying, "Well, I might like Jesus as my Savior. I don't know if I want to have Him as my Lord. I'd like to carry out some deals of my own." You're past that. You've come to spiritual bankruptcy. You've been humbled by the wretchedness of yourself. You're like that publican in Luke 18 beating on his breast saying, "**God, be merciful to me, a sinner.**" You come poor in spirit. You come meek. You come mourning over your sin, the Beatitudes say. You come hungering and thirsting after righteousness. You're not offering terms and conditions. You come knowing how desperate you are and how doomed you are. And then you understand how precious His forgiveness is and how magnanimous His gift of eternal life is. And you're not about to set terms. Out of that carcass comes the honey. Out of that death comes the life. We come in the attitude of **Psalm 34:18. "The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit."** It's when you've literally been crushed in your own spirit you're at the end of yourself. All right, a second in the three that make up the complex of this essential attitude of following Jesus is cross bearing. Cross bearing. Jesus not only says that you must deny yourself but He adds, "**And take up his cross daily.**" Anyone who

would be following after Me must take up his cross daily. Chapter 14 and verse 27 records - and this is something Jesus said often, but there's another similar statement in chapter 14. **"Whoever doesn't carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple,"** as well as in the other gospels where it's recorded also. When Jesus said "Take up a cross," they only thought of one thing: Horrible suffering, pain and death. Jesus is saying, "This is how extreme your devotion has to be. This is willingness to endure persecution. This is willingness to endure hatred, hostility, rejection, reproach, shame, suffering, even death." They knew exactly what He was talking about. And be ready to do it every day. Every day. That's what He asks, to literally slay yourself, all your dreams, hopes, desires, ambitions, plans; and then to say, "Here's my life, and if it means life, okay. If it means death, okay. I don't really care. I'm so desperate. I want Your forgiveness. I want eternal life. Whatever the price, I will give all." What He's talking about is not a happy experience. It's not "Jesus loves you, or God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life." It's about carrying a cross, the cross in which you yourself may be executed. So they're not talking about somehow identifying in some spiritual sense with the death of Jesus. The message is you're going to have to suffer possibly for following Me. I mean, Jesus said that, you know, "If the world hates you, don't be surprised. They hated Me. If the world kills you, don't be surprised. They're going to do it to Me. You don't expect that you're going to be treated any different than your teacher, do you?" So, this whole matter of following Jesus is sort of saying "no " to self and "no" to safety. I'm willing to bear the reproach of Christ. I'm willing to suffer the consequence of what it is to be a Christian in the environment that I'm in. A public profession of Christ as Lord and Savior may cost, but it's also a proof of my genuineness. It may cost me my family. A sword may go between the members of my family, but Jesus said He came to bring a sword. I don't have any self

interest that overrules my need for Christ. Do you understand that? I don't have any self interest. I don't have any ambition that overrules my desperate need for Christ. And if I have to die every day, then that's fine. That's a small price to pay because the suffering of this world is not worthy to be compared with the glory which awaits me in Christ. Paul said in **1 Corinthians 15:31**, "**I die daily.**" Every day he woke up he knew it could be the end of his life. Somewhere there was a plot hatching, if already not in motion, to take his life. He said, "Every day with me is a day on the brink of death." All suffering is not a cross. It's suffering the reproach of Christ that's the cross. It's the suffering for the gospel that's the cross. Are you willing to suffer for the gospel? Is it that important to you? Because that goes with the territory. So if you're coming to Christ and you're not saying to yourself, "Eternal life, the life to come, the forgiveness of sin, and what God has prepared for me in heaven is so precious to me, and so valuable to me, and I am so sick of what I am that I am willing to give up everything I have, none of it has any value anyway, and I am willing, if necessary, to bear the full reproach of Jesus Christ no matter what it costs, even if it costs my life." That's what Jesus said. So, it's a serious call here. Serious call. The cross then marks - the willingness to accept the cross marks the true disciple. You take up the cross, and you take it up as a way of life, daily. It's a way of life. Thirdly, in Luke 9, he adds the matter of obedience. Deny yourself, take up your cross and follow Me. Literally, "Let him be following Me." It's a continual pattern of obedience. Your will is out. His is in. You go where I go. You say what I say. You do what I tell you. You do what I do. You know, in Matthew 7, this whole matter of obedience is at the heart of the sermon on the mount. **Matthew 7:21**, "**Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father Who is in heaven.**" It's the doers, not the sayers. It's the people who obey. And, of course, the gospel

of John is just loaded with this kind of emphasis, where Jesus talks about how true faith, true saving faith, is made manifest in obedience. In just - I can't take you through all of them, but **John 14:21** is one. **"He who has My commandments and keeps them - " or obeys them " - he it is who loves Me; and he who loves Me shall be loved by My Father, and I'll love him and disclose Myself to him."** It's all about obedience. It's always about obedience, always about following. Lordship isn't an option. Obedience isn't something you do after you're 35. **John 15:10**, **"If you keep My commandments you'll abide in My love;"** If you don't, you won't. That's simple. Chapter 15 verse 14, **"You are My friends if you do what I command you."** So, you're coming, you're saying, "I'm at the end of myself. I give You my life, whatever the price. Show me what You want me to do, and I do it." That's where Paul was on the Damascus Road. He says, "What do You want me to do? What do You want me to do?" And that is the right attitude at the point of conversion. What do I do now? You've - I'm done. I'm willing to die for You and live for You. I want to follow You, so what do I do? Now that puts you in a position, then, to submit yourself to this, right? It's all about submission. It's a life pattern of self denial, cross-bearing, bearing the reproach of Christ, and loyal obedience. They're not chronological. They're simply a blend. They are the logical components of saving faith that believes in Jesus as Lord and Christ, believes in Jesus as crucified and risen Savior, and bears this attitude within that faith. They go together. They are a complex that goes together. The second thing I want you to understand is not only are they not something chronological, but they're not something you muster up. You can't do it in your own power. On your own power you love yourself, you protect yourself, and you do what you want. That's how fallen people function. So something has to happen dramatic in you. There has to be a shattering of all of your sense of self. There has to be a devastation of what you are normally.

And it can't come from you. It's got to come from outside of you, and this is the mighty work of the Spirit of God who moves into the life of a person, convicts that person of sin, shatters that person's self confidence, makes that person who was dead in trespasses and sin come alive, come awake, begin to see, begin to hear, begin to understand. This is the mighty work of God. Not apart from your faith, and not apart from your will, but the work of God through your will expressed in your faith, a mighty work of God. So you want to be a follower of Jesus, do you? Well say farewell to yourself, pick up your cross, and proceed to do everything He asks you to do. Those are the terms. And aren't you glad we live in those terms under grace? Because we fail. But the very desire to do those things is the evidence of a transformed soul.

## Repentance

We must abandon our good works and place our full faith and trust in the work of Jesus Christ that He wrought for us on the cross. We must trust in Jesus alone and repent of sin. Repent and believe. But what does it mean to repent? Most people believe that repentance is just willing oneself to turn from certain sins. But this is not biblical repentance. The Greek term for repentance is metanoia (me-ta-noy-a) and it literally means to change one's mind. Many teach that in order to repent one must simply change his mind about sin. In other words, acknowledge your sin as being sinful and that constitutes repentance. But that is only a partial truth and partial truths simply will not do when it comes to matters of eternity. Genuine repentance comes when God grants repentance **Acts 5:30-31 "The God of our ancestors raised Jesus from the dead—whom you killed by hanging Him on a cross. God exalted Him to His own right hand as Prince and Savior that He might bring Israel to repentance and forgive their sins."** , Acts 11:18

**“When they heard this, they had no further objections and praised God, saying, “ So then, even to Gentiles God has granted repentance that leads to life.”** and when this repentance is granted, our minds are indeed changed. Our desires have changed. Our affections have changed. We begin to love what God loves and hate what God hates. And genuine repentance always results in real, tangible fruit. **Matthew 3:8 “Produce fruit in keeping with repentance” , Acts 26:20 “First to those in Damascus, then to those in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and then to the Gentiles, I preached that they should repent and turn to God and demonstrate their repentance by their deeds.”** If there has been no repentance, there has been no conversion **Luke 13:3 “I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish.”** There has been no salvation. If you are unsure whether or not you have truly repented, then follow the Apostle Paul’s instruction in **2 Corinthians 13:5 “Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you—unless, of course, you fail the test?”** Look at your life and ask yourself these questions:

Am I trusting in Christ alone for my salvation? Has there been a change in my life? Do I love what God loves? Do I hate what God hates? Do I have a hunger for His word? Do I have a love for the brethren? Do I stand up for Christ in the face of persecution? Is there an increasing pattern of holiness in my life? Do I grieve over my sin? Do I hate my sin? Do I feel ashamed of that sin?

I think it is important to expand upon that last question a bit. One of the hallmarks of a genuine Christian is that he grieves over his sin. The Bible speaks of two kinds of sorrow over sin: Worldly sorrow and godly sorrow. **2 Corinthians 7:9-10 “Yet now I am happy, not because you were made sorry, but because your sorrow led you to repentance. For you became sorrowful as God intended and so were not harmed in any way by us. Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but**

**worldly sorrow brings death.”** Worldly sorrow leads to death. What is worldly sorrow? Worldly sorrow is that sorrow that is horizontally oriented. In other words, it is a sorrow that is centered around ourselves. Worldly sorrow is the kind of sorrow that says, ‘What would happen to me if my sin were to be exposed? What would be the consequences to me?’ A worldly sorrow seeks to cover up our sin because we do not want the consequences of our sin. One who has a worldly sorrow over sin would go right back to that sin if he could get away with it and no one would know about it. This sorrow leads to death. Eternal death. But there is another kind of sorrow over sin, and that is godly sorrow. A godly sorrow results in a **“repentance without regret leading to salvation”** (vs. 10). Godly sorrow over sin is that sorrow that is vertically oriented. In other words, godly sorrow is directed not toward ourselves, but toward God. Godly sorrow is when we grieve over our sin because we understand that our sin grieves God. **Ephesians 4:30-32 “And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.”** and we do not want to grieve Him. There must be a real abandonment of sin and you must turn to righteousness in all areas of your life. Question: Must you give up all your sins and not keep a few? No you must give up them all. You must hate all sins you can't keep even a few. It has to be a total repentance or you will not get to heaven. Don't wait for a death bed repentance God says repent immediately sincerely in true godly sorrow, turn your whole soul from its vices. **Hebrews 3:15 “While it is said, To day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation.”** A vice is an immoral or wicked behavior. Some synonyms for *vice* are *wrongdoing, wickedness, evil, iniquity, villainy, corruption, misconduct,*

*misdeeds*, and *sin*. *Vice crime*, as a legal term, is used to denote immoral activities involving prostitution, pornography, drugs, or gambling. Although vices, by definition, are quite bad, people often refer to their “vices” as lesser evils. Bad habits, such as drinking too much coffee or watching too much TV, are sometimes called “vices.” In common usage, a vice is often nothing more than a flaw or imperfection, something to be shrugged off as no big deal. God hates all sin equally, even those sins we refer to as vices. **1 Corinthians 5:8** “**Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.**” We must be serious about our sin if you don’t repent you will be punished in the agony of hell **Matthew 10:28** “**And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.**” We must go to God and ask Him for repentance; we cannot do it ourselves. Admit your sins, your vile sins and tell God how right He would be to punish you in hell. God has been so good, so kind, so generous and so merciful toward us. We have caused Jesus to be nailed to the cross for our sins and His blood was shed. Jesus’ brutal physical suffering was augmented by His having to bear the guilt of our sins and die to pay our penalty. Jesus suffered severely throughout His trials, torture, and crucifixion. There were many who were appalled at Him—His appearance was so disfigured beyond that of any man and His form marred beyond human likeness **Isaiah 52:14** “**Just as many were appalled at you, My people, So His appearance was marred beyond that of a man, And His form beyond the sons of mankind.**” The suffering of Christ was God’s plan for the salvation of the world. **Psalm 22:14-18** “**I am poured out like water, And all my bones are out of joint; My heart is like wax; It is melted within Me. My strength is dried up like a piece of pottery, And My tongue clings to My jaws; And You lay Me in the dust of death. For dogs have surrounded**

**Me; A band of evildoers has encompassed Me; They pierced My hands and My feet. I can count all My bones. They look, they stare at Me; They divide My garments among them, And they**

**cast lots for My clothing.”** Jesus’ suffering on the cross showed the devastating nature of sin, the wrath of God, the cruelty of humanity, and the hatred of satan. satan may have thought he had won a great victory, but it was through the cross that the Son of God triumphed over satan, sin, and death. **“Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out” (John 12:31.**

But we have sinned and seen how vile our sin is and how filthy our hearts are against Him. **Mark 7:21-23 For from within, out of the hearts of people, come the evil thoughts, acts of sexual immorality, thefts, murders, acts of adultery, deeds of greed, wickedness, deceit, indecent behavior, envy, slander, pride, and foolishness. All these evil things come from within and defile the person.”** We have despised His good gifts to us. We have presumed upon His kindness and patience. We have acted altogether selfishly. We have mocked His holiness. And yet...

**Romans 5:8 “God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”** – That, dear one, is an utterly amazing statement. God gave His only begotten Son (John 3:16) Who had done no wrong (Sinless) and Whom He loves with an infinite love to us to be sacrificed for us. Only in the cross of Christ can we see how much God hates sin and how much He loves us. When we sin, it grieves God - Please do not misunderstand me. I am not saying that Christians cannot sin. Christians can and do sin. A Christian stumbles into sin, but he does not swim in sin. A genuine Christian does not enjoy sin. He does not look for opportunities to sin. When a Christian sins, it grieves Him and that should grieve us. And just as much as we should want a Savior from Hell, we should want a Savior from sin. The man who wants a Savior from Hell but does not want a Savior from sin has a Savior from neither. If you are not certain where you would spend eternity if you

were to die today, then I beg of you, dear one, to get really honest before God. Confess your sins to Him. Confess your utter need for His mercy and forgiveness. Ask Him to save you. Repent of sin and place your trust in Jesus Christ. If you will come to Him in godly sorrow over your sin and if you genuinely desire to follow Him in obedience for the rest of your life, He will save you. You will pass from death to life **John 5:24 "Very truly I tell you, whoever hears My word and believes Him Who sent Me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life."** The wrath of God will be removed. Your sins will be forgiven and they will be put away as far as the east is from the west **Psalm 103:11-12 "For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is His love for those who fear Him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us and God will remember them no more"**, **Hebrews 8:12 "For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more"**, **John 6:37 "All that the Father gives to Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out."** – Isn't that a wondrous promise? If you will come to Christ empty-handed, seeking forgiveness of your sins, He will not cast you out. He will save you. The evidence of your conversion and new life in Christ will be a lifetime of obedience and bearing good fruit to His glory. **Matthew 11:28-29 "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls"** He is divinely sovereign you can't save yourself you have no claim on your salvation you can't do anything to earn it it is a gift of divine grace and work of the Holy Spirit He does it were not in charge of when that happens **John 3:8 "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit."** **John 3:27 "John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven"**

## The Coming Reign

Who will return suddenly from heaven to rapture His church  
unleash judgement on the wicked. Bring promised salvation to the  
Jews and the nations and establish His millennial reign on earth.  
Who will after that earthly reign destroy the universe finally judge  
all sinners and send them to hell. Then create the new heavens,  
the new earth where He will dwell forever with His saints in glory,  
love and joy this is the Christ we preach. Scriptures for above  
paragraph: The rapture His church **1 Corinthians 15:51-52**  
**Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall  
all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the  
last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be  
raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. ,** The millennial  
reign on earth **Revelation 20:2-5** **And he laid hold on the dragon,  
that old serpent, which is the devil, and satan, and bound him a  
thousand years, And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut  
him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the  
nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and  
after that he must be loosed a little season. And I saw thrones,  
and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and  
I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of  
Jesus, and for the Word of God, and which had not worshipped  
the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon  
their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with  
Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again  
until the thousand years were finished. This is the first  
resurrection. The universe destroyed and new heavens and earth  
**2 Peter 3:10-13** **But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the  
night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great  
noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth  
also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing  
then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of****

persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Judge all sinners and sent to hell **Matthew 25:31-46** When the Son of Man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory: And before Him shall be gathered all nations: and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth His sheep from the goats: And He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on His right hand, Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungred, and ye gave Me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took Me in: Naked, and ye clothed Me: I was sick, and ye visited Me: I was in prison, and ye came unto Me. Then shall the righteous answer Him, saying, Lord, when saw we Thee an hungred, and fed Thee? or thirsty, and gave Thee drink? When saw we Thee a stranger, and took Thee in? or naked, and clothed Thee? Or when saw we Thee sick, or in prison, and came unto Thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me. Then shall He say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: For I was an hungred, and ye gave Me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took Me not in: naked, and ye clothed Me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited Me not. Then shall they also answer Him, saying, Lord, when saw we Thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto Thee? Then shall He answer them, saying, Verily I

**say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to Me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal. Dwell forever with His saints Revelation 21:2-5 And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And He said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.**

**This is only an example saying this does not guarantee anything go before God in your own words.**

Cry Out to God, beg, plead with Him to mercifully save you to give you life and faith in Christ. Repent confess your sins and acknowledge your sins "Your self will" , "Your self effort" , "Your self righteousness" and that you have no hope apart from what He provides through Christ put your whole confidence in the work , person and merit of Jesus Christ by faith alone **Luke 18:13 "And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be**

**merciful to me a sinner.” His promises are John 6:37 “All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me; and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.”**

"God bears testimony to His Son, that whosoever trusts in His Son is saved. Will you make Him a liar now, or will you believe His word?" said C.H. Spurgeon. **Acts 16:31 “And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.”**

### **If You Have Truly Been Saved and Trusted Christ. WHAT NOW?**

**John 3:18 “He that believeth on Him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.”** One thing to be careful of is a false profession or prayer of faith **Matthew 15:8 “This people draweth nigh unto Me with their mouth, and honoureth Me with their lips; but their heart is far from Me.”** If there is no change or transformation there is no salvation. The transformation is the only evidence in obedience. Many people put their trust in their prayer and look back to their prayer to save them as they go through their life. Many churches pronounce people saved after they pray a prayer. It can give a false sense of security. Genuine repentance and those who have faith in Christ is to continue on in life and grow in sanctification. If you have truly been saved and trusted Jesus Christ as both Savior and Lord of your life, you are a son of God, **YOU ARE SAVED** and have become one with Him **Romans 8:1 “Therefore there is now no condemnation at all for those who are in Christ Jesus.”**, **Galatians 4:6-7 “And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.”** You have a future full inheritance with God. Who is alive, having been raised from the dead by the Father validating

His work of atonement and providing resurrection for the sanctification and glorification of the elect to bring them safely into His heavenly presence. You **Cannot Lose Your Salvation** being protected by God through the Holy Spirit in your hearts that is now in you if you are a true son of God. **1 Peter 1:4-5** "To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" , **Ezekiel 36:26** "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh." You are born again now regenerated given new life adopted into the family of God and become a new creation **2 Corinthians 5:17** "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." You now have eternal life so you might say How do we know that we have the Holy Spirit? That's the next question. It's fine to say that. But how do I know that I have the Spirit of His Son in me? I get it. **Romans 8:11**, "His Spirit dwells in you." **Romans 8:14**, "All who are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God." **First John 3:24**, "We know by this that He abides in us, by the Spirit Whom He has given us." Or **Romans 5:5**, "The love of God had been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit Who was given to us." So we are told the Holy Spirit is given to us. He is in us, in our hearts inside of us. How do we know that? How do we know that? Jesus said in **John 14** to the disciples, "The Spirit has been with you; He will be in you." How do I know the Spirit is in me? How do I know that **Ephesians 3:16** is my experience? "According to the riches of His glory. You are strengthened in the inner man by the power of the Holy Spirit." How do I know that? Well, there are a number of ministries the Holy Spirit conducts. He teaches us. **First Corinthians chapter 2**

says this about the Holy Spirit's ministry. **"We have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit Who's from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God."** The Holy Spirit shows us all the blessings that God has given us. **First John 2:27, "The Holy Spirit is the anointing that teaches us all things."** So we don't need human teachers. So we've all experienced the instructing work of the Holy Spirit. That's why you're in this church, by the way, if you're here regularly. That's why you're not sitting in a dark room with strobe lights and rock and roll music, because you're far more interested in having your heart ignited by the instructing of the Spirit of God through the Word of God than you are in an emotional experience. That's why you're here. In fact, that's alien to you. That's not interesting to you. You don't care about that; you don't want that. You have tasted of the instructing of the Holy Spirit. You have had a Luke 24 experience: **"Did not our heart burn within us while He spoke with us from the Word."** Your hearts have burned under the glory of the Word of God, His own inherent glory. So you have had the ministry of the Holy Spirit in instructing you. Secondly, the Holy Spirit leads us. You've been led by the Holy Spirit. You don't know it when it's happening, you can't feel anything, but you certainly know it in retrospect, don't you. You look back and you see providence, after providence, after providence, after providence of the Lord directing every single step all the way; and you look back and say, "I had been led. There is no explanation for this except from the Holy Spirit." You have also experienced the comfort from the sovereign companion. John 14, Jesus said, "I'm going to send the Comforter. I'm going to send the Helper, the *Paraclete* [???], the one Who comes alongside and helps you." You've gone through the trials of life, the difficulties of life, and you have found peace and comfort. It's a peace that passes understanding, and people don't know how you can be so calm and so joyful in the middle of all that's going on. You've experienced the comforting work of the Holy Spirit in

your heart. You've been filled with the Holy Spirit. Ephesians 5 says that we are filled with the Holy Spirit. What does that mean? When you're filled with the Holy Spirit you speak to yourself in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs; you sing, make melody in your heart to the Lord. You come to worship and your heart is lifted up, and you love the music; and that is the work of the Spirit in you. But there's another thing here, a specific, very specific thing that Paul is going to say to you. Yes, we've experienced His instruction, His leading, His comfort, and His feeling. We've even experienced His conviction. Convicts the world of sin and righteousness and judgment. But Paul wants you to look at this, and I doubt whether you've really thought this one through. How do you know when you're saved? Because you have the Spirit of God in your heart. How do you know He's in your heart? "Because He's in your heart crying, 'Abba! Father!'" That's not some generic idea, that is a very specific statement: "Abba! Father!" The Holy Spirit in you is crying. The verb here means a loud, urgent cry from someone in profound suffering, someone in fear, someone terrified, someone in pain, someone in loss, someone who is deeply needy; that's the word. And what the Word of God is telling us here is that, "You know you're saved when you get to the point of suffering, and your instant response is to cry out, "Abba," which means that you are saying, "Papa." That's the Aramaic diminutive. You're saying, "Daddy." This is the evidence that you are a true son of God; you rush to your Father's arms. You know He loves you, you know He's your Father, you know He has all the resources. Unbelievers don't do that. An unbeliever might say, "Oh, God," but not, "Abba." An unbeliever might get mad at whatever god he thinks exists. But in the deepest and darkest experiences of believers, they cry out to God. This is all of our lives, isn't it? This is what we do. This is what we do. And here when you do that, notice in verse 6, it is the Spirit of His Son crying, "Abba, Father," in you." He has linked with your faith, and He's crying in you. The

Holy Spirit literally in you sends you rushing into the presence of God. This is how we live our lives. I think back; there's some dramatic things in my life. My son Mark was told – I was told he had a brain tumor, it could be fatal. I didn't question God. I didn't get angry with God, I just ran to God. I just ran to Him in my heart and in my prayers, prayer and fasting for days and days. The next point you now need to do is find a good, doctrinally sound church and get baptized. **Acts 8:12** "But when they believed Philip as he proclaimed the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women." If you need help finding a good church, recommend Baptist churches are usually sound churches. I may be able to help you find one. This is so vitally important. You need to be in a good church where you will hear the Word of God preached rightly by men who are biblically qualified to preach. You need to be fed, you need to be encouraged, you need to be shepherded, you need accountability, you need a place to serve and you need fellowship with like-minded brothers and sisters in Christ. Many people think that becoming a Christian will make their lives better. It will do that, but not necessarily in the sense in which most people think of "better." Your life in Christ will be "better" in that it will be filled with the joy and grace that can come only by living a life of obedience to Christ. But your life in Christ will not be "better" in the sense that it will become easier. Contrary to what many preachers and "Christian" movies would have you believe, God does not promise you a fat wallet or a healthy body. He does not promise you will get a new vehicle, a nicer home, or a promotion at work. Your life in Christ is not about to get easier. It is about to get much, much harder. The Bible says that **2 Timothy 3:12** "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." There are no exception clauses to this verse. If you truly desire to live godly in Christ Jesus, you will be persecuted. Get ready for it. It's coming. And it may even come from members of your own family **Matthew 10:35-36** "For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the

daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household.” But you are equipped to handle it with grace and in such a way that brings honor to your King **Philippians 1:29** “**For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake.**” You are now indwelt by the Holy Spirit of God if you have truly trusted Christ. He will create in you a desire to read, understand and obey God’s word. In this, you will “**But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To Him be glory both now and forever. Amen.**” **2 Peter 3:18.** You have the fellowship of the saints **Acts 2:42** “**And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers**”, **Hebrews 10:25** “**Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching**”, **Colossians 3:16** “**Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.**” your brothers and sisters in Christ who are now your family all over the world” “**While He yet talked to the people, behold, His mother and His brethren stood without, desiring to speak with Him. Then one said unto Him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with Thee. But He answered and said unto him that told Him, Who is My mother? and who are My brethren? And He stretched forth His hand toward His disciples, and said, Behold My mother and My brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is My brother, and sister, and mother.**” **Matthew 12:46-50.** Jesus says we are even His friends **John 15:13** “**Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.**” You are anything but alone. Get a good study Bible I recommend the teaching of the Christian “**Puritans.**” Other teachers stay away from, **there can be**

**biblical errors with anybody.** There are many false teachers out there. I recommend to people to grow in your new faith in Christ to read and study scripture. They will help you build a solid theological foundation upon which to build your life. **“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen.” 2 Corinthians 13:14.**

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