

Time After Christ Returned to Heaven



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Lesson 1

People Added to the Church Christ Established

First Members

Before Jesus returned to Heaven to be with the Father, "He told them (His apostles), 'This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.'" (Luke 24:46-49) ... "Then they returned to Jerusalem from the hill called the Mount of Olives, a Sabbath day's walk from the city." (Acts 1:12)

On Pentecost, 10 days following Jesus' ascension to Heaven, a group of 120 were in the upper room as Jesus had instructed. The Holy Spirit descended on them and immediately they were able to speak in languages (tongues) they did not know or understand. A crowd gathered so Peter told them about the Messiah that they had crucified and preached "repentance and forgiveness of sins."

Pentecost Day

To the Jews' question, "Peter replied, 'Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off-for all whom the Lord our God will call'. With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, 'Save yourselves from this corrupt generation'. Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day." (Acts 2:38-41)

Samaritans and Simon

"But when they believed Philip as he preached the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. Simon himself believed and was baptized. And he followed Philip everywhere, astonished by the great signs and miracles. ... When Simon saw that the Spirit was given at the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money. ... Peter answered: 'May your money perish with you, because you thought you could buy the gift of God with money! You have no part or share in this ministry, because your heart is not right before God. Repent of this wickedness and pray to the Lord. Perhaps he will forgive you for having such a thought in your heart. For I see that you are full of bitterness and captive to sin.'" (Acts 8:12-13; 18; 20-22)

Eunuch from Ethiopia

"Then Philip ran up to the chariot and heard the man reading Isaiah the prophet. 'Do you understand what you are reading?' Philip asked. 'How can I,' he said, 'unless someone explains it to me?' So, he invited Philip to come up and sit with him. ... Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus. As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, 'Look, here is water. Why shouldn't I be baptized?' And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him." (Acts 8:30-31; 35-38)

Saul of Tarsus

"The Lord told him, 'Go to the house of Judas on Straight Street and ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for he is praying. In a vision he has seen a man named Ananias come and place his hands on him to restore his sight.' ... Then Ananias went to the house and entered it. Placing his hands on Saul, he said, 'Brother Saul, the Lord-Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here-has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit.' Immediately, something like scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he could see again. He got up and was baptized, and after taking some food, he regained his strength. Saul spent several days with the disciples in Damascus. At once he began to preach in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God." (Acts 9:11-12; 17-20)

Cornelius

"Cornelius was expecting them and had called together his relatives and close friends. ... Then Peter began to speak: "I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism but accepts men from every nation who fear him and do what is right. ... He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one whom God appointed as judge of the living and the dead. All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name. ... Then Peter said, "Can anyone keep these people from being baptized with water? They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have." So, he ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked Peter to stay with them for a few days." (Acts 10:24; 34-35; 42-43; 46b-48)

Lydia

"One of those listening was a woman named Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth from the city of Thyatira, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul's message. When she and the members of her household were baptized, she invited us to her home. 'If you consider me a believer in the Lord,' she said, 'come and stay at my house.' And she persuaded us." (Acts 16:14-15)

Jailer at Philippi

"The jailer called for lights, rushed in and fell trembling before Paul and Silas. He then brought them out and asked, 'Sirs, what must I do to be saved?' They replied, 'Believe in the Lord Jesus,

and you will be saved-you and your household.' Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all the others in his house. At that hour of the night the jailer took them and washed their wounds; then immediately he and all his family were baptized" (Acts 16:29-33)

Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue

"Then Paul left the synagogue and went next door to the house of Titius Justus, a worshiper of God. Crispus, the synagogue ruler, and his entire household believed in the Lord; and many of the Corinthians who heard him believed and were baptized." (Acts 18:7-8)

Disciples of John

"While Apollos was at Corinth, Paul took the road through the interior and arrived at Ephesus. There he found some disciples and asked them, 'Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?' They answered, 'No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.' So, Paul asked, 'Then what baptism did you receive?' 'John's baptism,' they replied. Paul said, 'John's baptism was a baptism of repentance. He told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is, in Jesus.' On hearing this, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus." (Acts 19:1-5)

Paul wrote to the Roman Christians but referred to all who obey the Gospel

"Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin because anyone who has died has been freed from sin." (Romans 6:3-6)

Questions

1. The Holy Spirit saved the 3,000 on Pentecost Day when He poured out His Spirit on them. True ___ False ___
2. On Pentecost Day Peter told the crowd they needed to repent and be baptized to:
 - A. ___ receive the ability to perform miracles
 - B. ___ cease being under the control of the Romans
 - C. ___ receive the forgiveness of sins
3. Saul of Tarsus became the apostle Paul by direct action of the Holy Spirit. True _____ False _____
4. Philip took the bowl of water he found on the road to Ethiopia and poured water over the Eunuch's head to baptism him
True ___ False ___

5. Paul stated in Romans that those who had been baptized into Christ were:

- A. ____ buried through baptism into Christ's death
- B. ____ raise from the dead like Jesus to a new life
- C. ____ united with Christ in His resurrection
- D. ____ A & B
- E. ____ A & C
- F. ____ A, B & C

Our Choice

Lesson 2

The question "What must I do?" was first asked of Peter when Christ established his church as recorded in Acts 2 which you are encouraged to read in its entirety.

"When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven (vv. 1-2a) ... When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment (vs. 6a) ... Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd (vs. 14a) ... 'Men of Israel, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. This man was handed over to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him.' (Vv. 22-24) ... 'Therefore, let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.' When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, 'Brothers, what shall we do?' Peter replied, 'Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.' (Vv. 36-39) ... Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day." (vs. 41) ... They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. (Vv. 42-43)

We all have the same choice. Will we accept Christ's message of reconciliation or reject it? Some rejected the message but about 3,000 accepted it and did the following: • They heard the Gospel message - Christ had been crucified, Resurrected, and ascended back to the Father.

- They were convicted of the sin.
- They asked, "what shall we do?"
- Those who accepted the Gospel message:
 - a. Repented
 - b. Were immersed in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins
 - c. Received gift of the Holy Spirit

- About 3000 added to their number, Jesus' disciples. • They devoted themselves to
 - a. Apostles' teaching
 - b. Fellowship
 - c. Breaking of bread
 - d. Prayer

It should be noted that **everyone who heard made a decision. They either accepted or rejected the message of reconciliation.**

There are many ways one can hear the Message of Reconciliation - someone could personally show them the message directly from the Bible, they could learn from reading the Bible or verifying from the Bible the truth of lessons on the World Wide Web, Internet.

There does not appear to be a requirement that a disciple or follower of Christ do the immersing, baptizing, as long as it is based upon a saving faith, by immersion in water in the name of Jesus and for the forgiveness of sins.

Questions

1. What is the Message of Reconciliation? A

- Christ's death
- B Christ's return to Heaven
- C Christ's burial
- D Christ's Resurrection
- E All the above
- F None of the above

2. What did everyone who heard do? A

- Accepted the message
- B Rejected the message
- C Made a decision

3. Those accepting the message

- A received the gift of the Holy Spirit.
- B repented.
- C were immersed.
- D all the above.
- E none of the above.

4. Those who accepted devoted themselves to

- A learning more about Jesus and His teachings.
- B returning to their old friends and acquaintances.

- C _____ associating with others who had accepted the message.
- D _____ breaking bread with others who had accepted.
- E _____ prayer.
- F _____ All the above.
- G _____ A, B, D & E.
- H _____ A, C, D & E.

5. Is the Gospel available to all mankind? True
 _____ False _____

A New Creation

Lesson 3

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold, the new has come" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Death - The Old Self of Sin [Flesh or Earthly Man]

- "You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires." (Ephesians 4:22)
- "Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God." (1 Corinthians 6:9-11)
- "At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another." (Titus 3:3)
- "The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God." (Galatians 5:19-21)

Burial - Of the Sinful Body

Like a seed that is planted into the earth and rises a different plant - so sinful man accepts the Word is buried into the death of Christ and rises a new spiritual man to live a different life.

- "Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as

Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.”
(Romans 6:3-4)

- “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!” (2 Corinthians 5:17)
- “Neither circumcision nor un-circumcision means anything; what counts is a new creation.”
(Galatians 6:15)

Resurrected - A New Creation [Spiritual Man]

- “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith-and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God- not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” (Ephesians 2:8-10)
- “You were taught with regard to your former way of life to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.” (Ephesians 4:22-24)
- “(We) have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.” (Colossians 3:10)
- “But I say, walk by the Spirit, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you would.” (Galatians 5:16-17)
- “And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.” (Colossians 3:17)
- “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.” (Galatians 5:22-26)

Daily Living

- “a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.” (Ephesians 4:1-3).
- “You must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts. Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, with a continual lust for more.”
(Ephesians 4:17-19)

Ephesians 4, 5, and 6 — daily living by the new creation:

- Be made new in the attitude of your minds
- Put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbor
- In your anger do not sin
- Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry
- Steal no longer, but must work
- Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths
- Get rid of all bitterness, rage, brawling and slander, and every form of malice.
- Be kind and compassionate
- Forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you

- Live a life of love
- Among you there must not be:
 - a. A hint of sexual immorality
 - b. Any kind of impurity
 - c. Greed
 - d. Obscenity
 - e. Foolish talk
 - f. Coarse joking
- No immoral, impure or greedy person has any inheritance in the kingdom of God.
- Do not get drunk on wine
- Be filled with the Spirit
- Speak to one another with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs
- Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord
- Always giving thanks to God the Father
- Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ
- Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord
- Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her
- Children, obey your parents in the Lord
- Honor your father and mother
- Fathers do not exasperate your children
- Slaves, obey your earthly masters with respect
- Masters, treat your slaves in the same way. Do not threaten them, since you know that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no favoritism with him

Titus 3:1-2

- Be subject to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready to do whatever is good, to slander no one, to be peaceable and considerate, and to show true humility toward all men •

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. **Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes**

Questions

1. A person coming into Christ becomes a new creation because: A ___
God miraculously changed one's life.
B ___ The person resolved within themselves to become a better person by changing their lifestyle.
C ___ There was a death to sin, a burial into Christ and God resurrected the person as a new creation, spiritual body
2. God's grace, Christ the perfect sacrifice for sin, is free to all but man is free to accept or reject based on his faith or lack of faith.
True _____ False _____
3. An individual can lose all sensitivity to what is right, pure and just.
True _____ False _____
4. A new Christian, new creation, can continue to live as before one's death to sin, burial with Christ and resurrection as a new creation.
True _____ False _____
5. It is impossible for people to lose their sensitivity to sensuality? True ___ False _____

Benefits of Being In Christ

Lesson 4

Previous studies have shown we must change our lifestyle from rebellion to righteousness. We must believe the Gospel message - the crucified and resurrected Christ. We must obey that message to be in Him because it is in Him and through Him, we have redemption and are reconciled to God.

"He predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding. And he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment-to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ." (Ephesians 1:5-10)

"For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again. So, from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation." (2 Corinthians 5:14-19)

"What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin because anyone who has died has been freed from sin." (Romans 6:1-7)

"See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ. For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority. In him you were also circumcised, in the putting off of the sinful nature, not with a circumcision done by the hands of men but with the circumcision done by Christ, having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead." (Colossians 2:8-12)

Perhaps the best benefit of being with Christ is when all stand before the judgment seat of God, the righteous have Jesus as their advocate!

Questions

1. When someone crucifies his old self with Christ, he is united with Him by death of his sin, having the assurance of eternal life and being united with Him in His resurrection.

True _____ False _____

2. Where is redemption found?

A _____ Only Faith in Christ

B _____ Prayer asking for redemption

C _____ The blood of Christ

3. How does one become a new creation?

A _____ When one believes Christ is their savior

B _____ When one gets into Christ by the burial of baptism

C _____ When resurrected following physical death

D _____ A & C

E _____ A & B

F _____ B & C

4. People who have died to sin, been buried in water baptism and resurrected to a new spiritual life are united with Christ.

True _____ False _____

5. Where does the fullness of Deity dwell?

A _____ Bible

B _____ Christ

C _____ Apostles

Devoured by Desires

Lesson 5

Paul in Romans states that the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation (1:16), and that faith comes from hearing or reading in such a way that the word of God is understood. (10:17) When we obey God's Word we die to sin. "... We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life." (Romans 6:2-4)

This is the seed analogy. A seed must be planted, germinate and push up through the soil before it can become a glorious plant. As the plant continues to grow it may face many trials; for example, storms, floods, drought, fire, disease, bugs, birds, animals, and man. Some plants may not be damaged at all while others may become deformed, broken down, eaten, or cease to mature and die. As with plants, unpleasant things happen to Christians and they too may become deformed, broken down, devoured, or just cease to mature and die as shown in the following scriptures.

"Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour." (1 Peter 5:8)

"Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation **if you continue in your faith, established and firm, not moved from the hope held out in the gospel.**" (Colossians 1:21-23)

"See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ." (Colossians 2:8)

"Do not let anyone who delights in false humility and the worship of angels disqualify you for the prize. Such a person goes into great detail about what he has seen, and his unspiritual mind puffs him up with idle notions. He has lost connection with the Head." (Colossians 2:18-19a)

"All over the world this gospel is bearing fruit and growing, just as it has been doing among you since the day you heard it and understood God's grace in all its truth. You learned it from Epaphras, our dear fellow servant, who is a faithful minister of Christ on our behalf." (Colossians 1:6-7)

"Holding on to faith and a good conscience. Some have rejected these and so have shipwrecked their faith. Among them are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have handed over to Satan to be taught not to blaspheme." (1 Timothy 1:19-20)

"The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron. They forbid people to marry and order them to abstain from certain foods, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and who know the truth." (1 Timothy 4:1-3)

"For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs." (1 Timothy 6:10)

"Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to your care. Turn away from godless chatter and the opposing ideas of what is falsely called knowledge, which some have professed and in so doing have wandered from the faith." (1 Timothy 6:20-21)

"Avoid godless chatter, because those who indulge in it will become more and more ungodly. Their teaching will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, who have wandered away from the truth. They say that the resurrection has already taken place." (2 Timothy 2:16-18)

"For Demas, because he loved this world, has deserted me." (2 Timothy 4:10)

"For there are many rebellious people, mere talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision group. They must be silenced, because they are ruining whole households by teaching things they ought not to teach-and that for the sake of dishonest gain." (Titus 1:10-11)

"I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel." (Galatians 1:6)

"If, while we seek to be justified in Christ, it becomes evident that we ourselves are sinners, does that mean that Christ promotes sin? Absolutely not!" (Galatians 2:17) "You are observing special days and months and seasons and years! I fear for you, that somehow I have wasted my efforts on you." (Galatians 4:10-11)

"Mark my words! I, Paul, tell you that if you let yourselves be circumcised, Christ will be of no value to you at all. Again I declare to every man who lets himself be circumcised that he is obligated to obey the whole law. You who are trying to be justified by law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace." (Gal. 5:2-4)

"You were running a good race. Who cut in on you and kept you from obeying the truth?" (Galatians 5:7)

What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him?" (James 2:14)

"In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. (James 2:17)

"Therefore, my brothers, be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, you will never fall," (2 Peter 1:10) and by implication if you do not do these things you will fall.

"But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them-bringing swift destruction on themselves." (2 Peter 2:1)

"Therefore, dear friends, since you already know this, be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of lawless men and fall from your secure position." (2 Peter 3:17)

"These men are blemishes at your love feasts, eating with you without the slightest qualmshepherds who feed only themselves. They are clouds without rain, blown along by the wind; autumn trees, without fruit and uprooted-twice dead." (Jude 12)

Jude clearly states others were devoured. "Though you already know all this, I want to remind you that the Lord delivered his people out of Egypt, but later destroyed those who did not believe. And the angels who did not keep their positions of authority but abandoned their own homethese he has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment on the great Day." (Jude 5-7)

Questions

1. When Paul stated in Colossians that Christ would present Christians holy and blameless "provided that you continue in the faith" he left no doubt that those who did not continue in the faith would not be presented holy and blameless.

True _____ False _____

2. The disciple Demas, Paul's companion, deserted Paul and returned to his former worldly life.

True _____ False _____

3. Peter warned Christians to beware lest they be carried away from their secure position.

True _____ False _____

4. Even angels were carried away leaving their place and are being held in darkness until judgment.

True _____ False _____

5. The craving for money causes some to wander away from the faith. True _____ False _____

Spiritual Clothing

Lesson 6

Those who have been buried into Christ through immersion in water upon hearing and believing Jesus is the Son of God, the perfect sacrifice for sin, have been added into His Body, that is, to the Church He established. "You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ." (Galatians 3:26-27)

It is imperative we become more like Him.

We must study to learn and understand the apostles' teaching, their letters, and epistles, which the Holy Spirit of God guided them to write. We are now the Church, the sanctified, or those called out of sin to obedience, or simply the Body. It is by the things we wear or put on (not meaning material clothes but the way of living) that the world will know we are His disciples.

The leaders of the Jews questioned Jesus "'Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?' Jesus replied: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments." (Matthew 22:36-40) Jesus also stated in John 13:34 "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another."

A life based upon love, first of God, then of man, will always seek to do good things, to serve rather than aiming for power, prestige, wealth, or fame. Paul gives us a good list in Colossians 3:12-17. "Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. And

whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him."

Also, in Galatians 5:22-26 "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other."

"You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness." (Ephesians 4:22-24)

In Galatians 5:19-21 Paul identifies some things not to do or become "The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God."

Finally, John makes it very clear in Revelation 21:8 "But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars - their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death."

Paul tells us what to remove to remove from our life and how to live the spiritual life. "Therefore, each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body. 'In your anger do not sin': Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold. He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need. Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption." (Ephesians 4:25-30)

Having been reconciled to God by obedience to His message and putting on things pleasing to Him we grow more like Him.

Questions

1. According to Jesus the two greatest commandments are to love God and to love one's fellow man.

True _____ False _____

2. What binds everything together in perfect unity?

A ___ Faith

B ___ Hope

C ___ Love

3. Christians who walk by the Spirit A ___ are not self-conceited.

B ___ do not provoke another.

C ___ do not envy.

D ___ both B and C.

E ___ all the above.

4. Christians in Galatia were warned they would not enter the Kingdom of Heaven if they participated in the works of the flesh.

True _____ False _____

5. To whom was the apostle Paul referring when he said put away falsehood, don't steal anymore, speak no evil, and do not grieve the Holy Spirit?

A ___ Christians

B ___ Non-Christian

Functions - Within the Spiritual Body

Lesson 7

All who have obeyed from the heart the message of reconciliation have put on Christ and have

1. died to sin
2. been buried or immersed in water (baptism)
3. been raised a new being
4. been added to the Body of Christ and are in Him, in Christ
- 5.

As disciples of Christ, we constitute a spiritual body and just like the human body there are many functions the body must perform if it is to grow. All activity must be functioning in unity for the body to be effective and efficient, therefore all parts of the body do not do the same thing. "For as in one body we have many members, and all the members do not have the same function so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another." (Romans 12:4-5)

Paul, while in prison, provided insight into spiritual gifts when he wrote "I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you

were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift." (Ephesians 4:1-6)

"And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry [serving (rd)], for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head — Christ — from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love." (Ephesians 4:9-16)

Perhaps the most crucial functions are never seen while others are always seen.

The spiritual body's functions listed below are from Romans 12:6-8:

- Prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith
- Service or ministry, let us use it in our serving or ministering
- He who teaches, in teaching
- He who exhorts, in exhortation
- He who gives or contributes, with liberality
- He who leads, with diligence
- Perform acts of mercy with cheerfulness

In performing these activities, we must continue to live a life pleasing to God. Romans 12 tells us how we are to live before God:

- Be genuine in Love.
- Hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good.
- Love one another with brotherly affection.
- Outdo one another in showing honor.
- Never lag in zeal, be aglow [fervent] with the Spirit, and serve the Lord.
- Rejoice in your hope, be patient in tribulation, and be constant in prayer.
- Contribute to the needs of the saints, practice hospitality [take care of needs].
- Speak well of those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them.
- Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep • Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty.
- Associate with the lowly.
- Never be conceited.
- Repay no one evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all.
- If possible, so far as it depends upon you, live peaceably with all.

- Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God.
- Do good things to your enemy for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.

From Ephesians 4:11-13 we see that in order to prepare His people for works of service to build up the body so it could mature and reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God He gave some to be:

- ° apostles
- ° prophets
- ° evangelists
- ° teaching pastors, shepherds, bishops or overseeing watchmen

Therefore, in the Body of Christ, we do not all perform the same functions but become servants, doing whatever needs to be done and give honor to everyone not just to those who have a more public function.

Questions

1. God is the one who adds those who have put on Christ to the church Christ established
True _____ False _____
2. The body of Christ has many functions to perform therefore each individual Christian must do every function.
True _____ False _____
3. Functions of apostles, prophets, evangelists, overseeing watchmen [or teaching pastors] are to
A _____ assign tasks or functions to every Christian.
B _____ prepare Christians for works of service to mature them.
4. In order to reach unity in the church we must grow in knowledge of the Word and do the works of the Body, the Church.
True _____ False _____
- 5 Christians are servants of God, therefore we can select what we want to do rather than do what our Master needs to have done.
True _____ False _____

Remaining Faithful

Lesson 8

Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, and by which you are being saved if you hold fast to the word I preached to you— unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, 1 Cor 15:14 ESV Once someone has:

A. Heard the Gospel Message that Jesus

1. was God who came to earth in the flesh
2. was crucified on the cross for our sins – the atoning sacrifice
3. was buried rising again on the third day
4. was seen by many who knew him best

B. Responds to that message by:

1. believing He is the Son of God
2. repenting of all unrighteousness
3. changing one's way of life to one of godliness
4. dying to sin, leaving the sinful body in the grave of baptism

C. Once someone hears and responds to the gospel, they are resurrected from the water of baptism, by the power of God, as a new creation. They become a child of God.

In Galatians 5:19-21 Paul identifies some things not to do or become "The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God."

Rest assured the Devil will use everything at his disposal to get you to return to your former way of life. Peter wrote "If they have escaped the corruption of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and are again entangled in it and overcome, they are worse off at the end than they were at the beginning. It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than to have known it and then to turn their backs on the sacred command that was passed on to them." (2 Peter 2:20-21)

The apostle John also provided some insight when he wrote, "Anyone who claims to be in the light but hates his brother is still in the darkness." (1 John 2:9)

"Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For everything in the world - the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does - comes not from the Father but from the world. The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever." (1 John 2:15-17)

"Anyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life in him." (1 John 3:15)

"But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars-their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death." (Revelation 21:8)

"Outside are the dogs, those who practice magic arts, the sexually immoral, the murderers, the idolaters and everyone who loves and practices falsehood." (Revelation 22:15)

When a Christian returns and remains in their former way of life, they are not better off, but worse. "They promise them freedom, while they themselves are slaves of depravity-for a man is a slave to whatever has mastered him. If they have escaped the corruption of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and are again entangled in it and overcome, they are worse off at the end than they were at the beginning. It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than to have known it and then to turn their backs on the sacred command that was passed on to them. Of them the proverbs are true: 'A dog returns to its vomit,' and, 'A sow that is washed goes back to her wallowing in the mud'." (2 Peter 2:19-22)

The Hebrew writer makes it clear that God has no pleasure in those who turn back. "So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded. You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised. For in just a very little while, 'He who is coming will come and will not delay. But my righteous one will live by faith. And if he shrinks back, I will not be pleased with him.' But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who believe and are saved." (Hebrews 10:35-39)

It is not enough to just begin in the way of righteousness. One can turn back from a life in Christ to their former way, a life of sin. Look at the message given to seven Asian churches most of which were established a few years earlier by Paul:

Ephesus "...Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken your first love. Remember the height from which you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first. If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lamp stand from its place." (Revelation 2:4-5)

Smyrna "... Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer. I tell you; the devil will put some of you in prison to test you, and you will suffer persecution for ten days. Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life." (Revelation 2:10)

Pergamum "... I know where you live-where Satan has his throne. Yet you remain true to my name. You did not renounce your faith in me, ... Nevertheless, I have a few things against you: ... Repent therefore! Otherwise, I will soon come to you and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth." (Revelation 2:13, 14, 16)

Thyatira "... Nevertheless, I have this against you: You tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess. By her teaching she misleads my servants into sexual immorality and the eating of food sacrificed to idols." (Revelation 2:20)

Sardis "... These are the words of him who holds the seven spirits of God and the seven stars. I know your deeds; you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead. Wake up! Strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have not found your deeds complete in the sight of my God." (Revelation 3:1-2)

Philadelphia "... Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also keep you from the hour of trial that is going to come upon the whole world to test those who live on the earth." (Revelation 3: 10)

Laodicea "... I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! So, because you are lukewarm- neither hot nor cold- I am about to spit you out of my mouth." (Revelation 3: 15-16)

Paul's advice is very timely: "So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!" (1 Corinthians 10:12)

Questions

1. Peter tells us a Christian can become worse off than before one knew the way of righteousness.
True _____ False _____
2. Paul warned the Galatian Christians that if they returned to the works of the flesh they would not inherit the Kingdom of Heaven.
True _____ False _____
3. John explains that a Christian can still be in darkness.
True _____ False _____
4. To whom is the wrath of God revealed?
A ___ Ungodly men
B ___ Wicked men
C ___ Men who suppress the truth
D ___ God is a God of love not a God of wrath E ___ A, B & C
5. The world and the lust for it will pass away but the will of God lives forever. True _____
False _____

Worship

Lesson 9

What Is Worship?

Misers appear to worship money and material things. But is this really worship? No, worship is expressed through trust, obedience and love in expressions and actions of honor and praise. It is not some repetitive practice, a ritual.

- The patriarchs worshiped God by offering animal sacrifices.
- The Children of Israel worshipped by sacrificing animals without blemishes and offerings of the finest grains and oil.
- God so loved the world **He gave** His only Son.
- Christ so loved that **He offered** to God His body as the only sacrifice to atone, remove or cleanse man of his sins.
- God accepted Christ's offering thus giving man the opportunity for forgiveness and reconciliation.
- This gift of forgiveness is available to all who accept by putting their trust and obedience in Him.
- Christians are to offer their bodies as "living sacrifices" after having died to sin being immersed [buried] into Christ's death. Their sacrifice must be from their inner being out of love and with thanksgiving for the removal of sin and hope of eternal life, if they remain in Christ. "And you, being in time past alienated and enemies in your mind in your evil works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and without blemish and unreprouable before him: if so be that ye continue in the faith, grounded and stedfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel" (Col 1:22-23 - ASV).

Real or genuine worship to God originates from love, the giving of one's self over to serving, praising and daily Godly living. Paul stated it this way "offer your bodies as living sacrifices, dedicated to God and pleasing to him. This kind of worship is appropriate" (Romans 12:1 GWT).

Worship is a participatory activity, not a spectator event. It is action from within one's inner being whether alone or in a group. There are benefits derived when worshipping with others; e.g., one recognizes he is not alone in his devotion to God and others encourage faithfulness.

"Worship is "the direct acknowledgement of God, of His nature, attributes, ways and claims, whether by the outgoing of the heart in praise and thanksgiving or by deeds done in such acknowledgement." (Vine, IV 236 – Instrumental Music and New Testament Worship, J. D. Bales 1973 p175)

Who Is To Be Worshipped?

Paul stated to those in Christ "I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God-this is your spiritual act of worship" (Romans 12:1a). Obviously by becoming a living sacrifice, the object of such devotion is very important.

When there is an attitude of love, peace, and gratitude within one's inner being, there comes forth a desire to express it in various ways, words, thoughts, and actions. These expressions when directed toward God will take various forms such as doing good as the opportunity arises, singing praises, praying with thanksgiving, giving because of the joy of helping others, studying scripture to obtain a better understanding of what God desires and is pleasing to Him, remembering the atoning sacrifice made by Jesus and daily living to mirror or reflect God's image in offering "your bodies as living sacrifices, dedicated to God and pleasing to him. This kind of worship is appropriate" (Romans 12:1).

God is spirit and his worshipers must worship in spirit [not physical] and in truth [genuine not ritual]. "John 4:24 declares that 'God is a Spirit.' These words contain one of the most-simple, yet most profound truths which ever fell upon mortal ear. Their truth is one of the great glories of revelation, and corrects the mistaken conclusion of human reason. They show that:

1. God is absolutely free from all limitations of space and time, and is therefore not localized in temples (Acts 7:48).
2. God is not material, as idolaters contend.
3. He is not an abstract force, as [some (rd) scientists think, but a Being. 4. He is lifted above all need of temples, sacrifices, etc., which are a benefit to man, but not to God (Acts 17:25).

[p. 149, The fourfold Gospel, J.W. McGarvey and Philip Pendleton]

When Should One Worship?

By being a living sacrifice, one will in everything give thanks, glory and praise to God while looking for ways to:

- a. Assist other children of God and others in need.
- b. Encourage others to live sacrificial lives.
- c. Spread the message - forgiveness and salvation is in Christ.
- d. Proclaim and defend the life, death, burial, resurrection, ascension, and return of Jesus, our Redeemer.

Christians will not abandon being with, edifying, or fellowshiping others in Christ, regardless of when or where they assemble. They will be faithful to their Savior, to His Message, to His people, and not be ashamed of their chosen way of life.

Therefore, worshipping God by serving, teaching, singing, admonishing, and meeting together is not limited to any specific day or place.

Where Is One To Worship?

Jesus told the Samaritan woman "Believe me, woman, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain [Mt. Gerizim] nor in Jerusalem" (John 4:21). So, going to some specific building or location to worship is not what God desires. One worship from within, from their inner-being, rather than some physical location. Assembling with others of common faith edifies by increasing the emotions of one's inner being.

How Is One To Worship?

Understanding the **what, who, when, and where** of worship should help in understanding the **how** of worshipping. The giving ourselves as a living sacrifice is a lifestyle of service motivated by a desire to be more like Christ while giving Him glory, honor, praise, and adoration.

Man is to worship in his spiritual inner being, his seat of emotion, and in genuineness not some routine done without feeling. Consequently, one incapable of performing a physical act can still worship and serve God.

Therefore, if one's thoughts and emotions are based upon a knowledge of God and he has an intimate relationship with Him, he has trained his whole being to love, adore and praise God with the genuineness of heart and desire to please him. He is now prepared to be a living sacrifice serving God in spirit and truth.

Vain Worship

Since good works that benefit man while glorifying God and inner being, spiritual, activity, in the form of songs, prayers, expressions of adoration, and praise is real and genuine worship, then any worship activity **not** from one's heart is unacceptable worship, for instance:

- Prayers offered to satisfy personal desires
- Money given for personal recognition
- Songs of praise to God sung to the listener with no thought of God.
- Lessons taught to receive the praise of man.
- Lord's Supper may be partaken of without considering Christ's atoning sacrifice and without any thanksgiving for the forgiveness, redemption, and reconciliation resulting thereof.
- Good work done for self-satisfaction

If the Kingdom of God is truly within you, then your character will be one of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, faithfulness, goodness, and self-control, and your actions will reflect this character.

Questions

1. Who is to be worshipped?
 - A. ___ Ali
 - B. ___ Buddha
 - C. ___ Jehovah God

- D. ____ Hindu shrine
2. How often should one worship?
- A. ____ Every Sunday
 - B. ____ Three times a week
 - C. ____ Daily living sacrifices
3. One must go to a church building or temple to worship? True ____ False ____
4. Worship is
- A. ____ Bowing down to an idol or shrine?
 - B. ____ Rituals performed by a priest?
 - C. ____ Inner being adoration and honor toward God?
5. Worship activity cannot be in vain as any type of worship is acceptable to God. True ____ False ____

Choosing Everlasting Life or Eternal Death

Lesson 10

God told Abraham "By myself I have sworn, declares the LORD, because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies, and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice" (Genesis 22 16-18).

Years later God said of one of Abraham's descendants "'I have found that David, the son of Jesse, is a man after my own heart, who will carry out all my wishes.' It was from this man's descendants that God, as he promised, brought to Israel a Savior, who is Jesus" (Act 13:22-3).

One will find many prophets in the Old Testament foretold that through Abraham and the Children of Israel, a savior would come. He would be a redeemer to restore mankind back into fellowship with man's creator.

"So, with us; when we were children, we were slaves to the elemental spirits of the universe. But when the time had fully come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts" (Galatians 4:3-5 - RSV).

All prophecies were fulfilled in Jesus. According to Matthew Jesus stated "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For

truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished" (Matthew 5:17, 18).

Then Jesus came to Nazareth, where he had been raised. As was his custom, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day. When he stood up to read, the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling the scroll, he found the place where it was written, 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; he has anointed me to tell the good news to the poor. He has sent me to announce release to the prisoners [those in Hades, the abode of the dead souls (rd)] and recovery of sight to the blind [those following traditions rather than "the law and prophets" (rd)], to set oppressed people free, and to announce the year of the Lord's favor.' Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. While the eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fixed on him, he began to say to them, 'Today this Scripture has been fulfilled, as you've heard it read aloud'" (Luke 4:16-21).

Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham. 10 For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost." Luke 19:9-10

Therefore, Jesus, Immanuel (God with us), not having sinned offered Himself to God as the atoning sacrifice. God accepted His offering by resurrecting Him from death and the grave. This sacrifice and resurrection became the way for forgiveness of sins.

Everyone who:

- a. puts their faith and trust in Christ
- b. dies to his sinful life
- c. calls upon God to forgive
- d. is immersed into Christ
- e. is raised by God a forgiven spiritual being.
- f. clothe themselves in the fruits of the Spirit "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23b).
- g. remaining faithful they will inherit the Kingdom of Heaven receiving everlasting life with God and all the redeemed (Colossians 1:23).

"Not everyone who keeps saying to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will get into the kingdom from heaven, (Matthew 7:21).

Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? (1 Corinthians 6:9).

Everlasting Life – Heaven

Heaven is the abode of God and all the righteous and is described in human terms as magnificent and splendor.

- a. “I saw a throne in heaven with a person seated on the throne. The person sitting there looked like Jasper and Carnelian, and there was a rainbow around the throne that looked like an emerald. Around the throne were 24 other thrones, and on these thrones sat 24 elders wearing white robes and gold victor's crowns on their heads (Revelation 4:2-4).
- b. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There won't be death anymore. There won't be any grief, crying, or pain, because the first things have disappeared"(Revelation 21:4).
- c. A voice came from the throne, saying, "Praise our God, all who serve and fear him, from the least important to the most important." Then I heard what sounded like the voice of a large crowd, like the sound of raging waters, and like the sound of powerful thunderclaps, saying, "Hallelujah! The Lord our God, the Almighty, is reigning (Revelation 19:5-6).
- d. I saw no temple in it, because the Lord God Almighty and the lamb are its temple. The city doesn't need any sun or moon to give it light, because the glory of God gave it light, and the lamb was its lamp. The nations will walk in its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it. Its gates will never be shut at the end of the day—because there will be no night there (Revelation 21:22-25).

Those who refuse the free gift of God, the forgiveness of sins, have chosen to follow the desires of the world offered by the Devil. They will not inherit the Kingdom of Heaven. They are doomed to eternal death with the Devil in Hell with all the wicked and rebellious.

Eternal Death - Hell

Hell is the abode of the Devil, his angels, and the wicked.

- a. “All the nations will be assembled in front of him, and he will cull them out, one from another like a shepherd separates sheep from goats. He will put the sheep on his right but the goats on his left.” ... “Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels” (Matthew 25:32-33 ... 41).
- b. Hell is also referred to as the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death (Revelation 21:8b) where “The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will gather out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all law-breakers, and throw them into the fiery furnace. In that place, there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth” (Matthew 13:41).

- c. For those who have chosen Eternal Death rather than Everlasting Life for all eternity Jesus said "Not everyone who keeps saying to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will get into the kingdom from heaven, but only the person who keeps doing the will of my Father in heaven. (Matthew 7:21).
- d. The Apostle Paul was very specific on the lifestyle they chose "You know that wicked people will not inherit the kingdom of God, don't you? Stop deceiving yourselves! Sexually immoral people, idolaters, adulterers, male prostitutes, homosexuals, thieves, greedy people, drunks, slanderers, and robbers will not inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Corinthians 6:9-10). "Now the actions of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity, promiscuity, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, rivalry, jealousy, outbursts of anger, quarrels, conflicts, factions, envy, murder, drunkenness, wild partying, and things like that. I am telling you now, as I have told you in the past, that people who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God" (Galatians 5:19-21).
- e. Lastly the Apostle John records "But people who are cowardly, unfaithful, detestable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars will find themselves in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur. This is the second death." (Revelation 21:8).

One's daily choice of actions will determine where one will spend eternity. What decisions will you make today? Are you going to live for the After-Life with the redeemed or the After-Death with the condemned? **Decide today – Eternity is a long time to be without the love of God!!!**

Questions

1. Did God send a savior to redeem man? Yes ____ No ____
2. Who is the Savior?
 - A. God, the Father
 - B. Jesus, the Christ
 - C. Satan, the Deceiver
 - D. A man-made object
 - E. None of the above
3. Must those in Christ remain faithful to Christ?
True ____ False ____
4. Those who put their trust in Christ message of Salvation and obey will inherit Everlasting Life with God and the righteous.
True ____ False ____
5. Those who reject God's free gift of Salvation will receive Eternal Death with the Devil and His angels.

True _____ False _____

Judgment and Eternity

Lesson 11

It is difficult for our finite minds to comprehend eternity, but before the creation of the Earth God already existed and He will continue to exist after the end of time on Earth. When Christ comes again everyone will face his Creator, the Almighty God, to give an account of his actions while on Earth.

How great it will be to have Jesus, our Advocate, beside us on that day. He will speak up on behalf of His obedient, faithful disciples because: "We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life." (Romans 6:4) Then God will welcome us into His presence. We will be so overjoyed that we will sing His praises and give thanks forever. Christ died so we could live in Heaven where there will be no fear, no sorrow, no pain, no weeping and no darkness, but only love, peace, truth and righteousness, forever and ever without end.

There is another group of people. They are those who will not have that advocate on their side. What about them? They lived in rebellion satisfying their human desires and refusing to obey or even acknowledge the presence of Almighty God. "But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed. God 'will give to each person according to what he has done'. To those who by persistence in doing good, seek glory, honor, and immortality, he will give eternal life. But for those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger. There will be trouble and distress for every human being who does evil: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile; but glory, honor, and peace for everyone who does good: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile." (Romans 2:1-10)

"But now he (Jesus) has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself. Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment, so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him." (Hebrews 9:26b-28)

What Will Happen At The End Of Time

Let the Word of God tell us in passages that deal with the Second Coming of Jesus.

1. The Lord will appear [a spectacular thing]

"For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, and the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God..." (2 Thessalonians 4:16a). Every human being living on the face of the earth, whenever that day is, will hear that trumpet and our attention will be suddenly captured on a moment's notice.

2. The dead will be raised

"The dead in Christ will be raised first." (2 Thessalonians 4:16b) That is corroborated in I Corinthians 15:52 "in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable." When Jesus comes again, the graves are going to be emptied all of those that we have known.

3. The living are going to be changed

"Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep (i.e. die), but we will all be changed - in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality." (1 Corinthians 15:51)

These first three things are all going to happen practically simultaneously:

- a) A trumpet will sound
- b) The voice of the archangel
- c) The dead will come out of the graves, and the living at that time will be caught in the air with them, all of humanity, from the beginning of time.

4. A Great Separation—Judgment

"When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep [the righteous] on his right hand and the goats [the wicked] on his left." (Matthew 25:31)

5. Inheritance for the Righteous

"Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world.'" (Matthew 25:34)

6. Sentence Pronounced on the Disobedient

"Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.'" (Matthew 25:41)

John writes (having seen that revelation), "And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and the books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books." (Revelation 20:12)

7. The destruction of the earth

"The day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens¹ will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare." (2 Peter 3:10)

Questions

1. At the Judgment Day Christians have an advocate or attorney, Christ, beside them to explain that His blood through immersion into him [baptized into His death] has washed away the stains of sin.

True _____ False _____

2. Satan, that rebellious angel, stands ready to welcome all rebellious ones who refused Christ's invitation.

True _____ False _____

3. Man created in God's image is without excuse as God's eternal power and deity are clearly perceived in things God made.

True _____ False _____

4. When Jesus returns at the end of time on earth, He will send angels to remove from his Kingdom evildoers and throw them into the furnace of fire. True _____ False _____

5. The furnace of fire or Eternal fire was prepared for the Devil and his angels. True _____
False _____

¹ [The Aerial or atmospheric heavens, as "birds of heaven" or "clouds of heaven and the Sidereal heavens, the region of the "sun," "moon," and "stars]

Time on earth has ended. It is too late to accept God's gift of salvation. Accept Him NOW as "Today is the day of salvation.

