

# *Christian Life Digest*

## *Featuring:*

*Life's Most Important Questions; Who Is God? The Trinity;  
The Sin Scenario; How To Be Born Again; The Whosoever  
Generation; The Lordship of Christ; Christian Baptisms;  
Foundation Principles And Joint Heirs With Christ*

*Bible Teaching  
For Today's Walk of Faith*

we walk by faith, not by sight

*Volume  
#1*

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Ocala Florida (November 2019)

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## Preface

This Book is Volume One of Five Volumes. Each volume focuses on different Biblical Teachings that are educational in nature.

The goal of each volume is to edify, and educate the Christian in the deeper things of God. This first volume addresses such concepts as Who Is God? The Trinity, The Lordship of Christ, Sin, Salvation, Baptisms, Foundation Principles and Life's Most Important Questions.

The KJV of the bible is used most often as examples and referred to many times. It is considered by the author to be the most reliable source of knowledge and revelation in matters of Christian Living.

## Introduction

Today's Christian Life has been split into pieces and reduced to a more secular perspective. God is blamed for things that go wrong. Man is a god unto himself. Life is centered in the, "ME" revelation instead of the Divine revelation. Miracles and Faith have been reduced to the rule of Fate. There is a great falling away from the faith among churchgoers. Christianity is on a down spiral in the USA. Bible reading is just about a thing of the past, buried in work, play and self-absorption.

Volume #1 of Christian Life Digest is an attempt to turn the hearts of God's people back to Him and to set the course for the greatest adventure in walking by faith ever known. The right perspective is the sustaining force in living the Christian Life victoriously.

Most of us live our lives based upon assumptions that may or may not be true. Some folks don't even question the thought process that society says is the basis for living. There is no "**Real Truth**" anymore. It seems to be your truth or my truth but never

Absolute Truth. I guess that is why so many folks are confused and have difficulty trying to figure out their existence. The truth seems to elude them.

I believe that “**Absolute Truth**” comes from God and is revealed in the Bible. In order to know God’s truth concerning our existence, we must ask ourselves three basic questions and look to the scriptures for the answers. Our conclusions will literally determine the way we live our lives here on earth and what our eternal destiny will be. They are also the basis for our everyday perspectives.

We start our quest for knowledge and revelation with life’s most important questions.

**Life’s Most Important Questions:**

1. Where did I come from?
2. Why am I here?
3. What happens to me when I die?



We answer these questions based upon what truth we subscribe to. Our lives are built on what we believe. Our actions are determined by how we think.

**There is a Bible verse that illustrates my point.  
Hear what Jesus said.**

<sup>24</sup> “Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. <sup>25</sup> And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock.

<sup>26</sup> And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. <sup>27</sup> And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it.”

**Matt. 7:24-27**

Knowing what God says is true and applying it will always keep us in times of trouble. So it is in this life. We must know the answers to life’s most important questions and apply them in order to be fulfilled as a person. To do otherwise is a self-deception that will steal our destiny and condemn us to a life of Hell.

**The 1<sup>st</sup> question is  
Where Did We Come From?**

Over the past 60 years, we have been deceived into thinking that we came into existence as a result of evolution. (God’s “Absolute Truth” was replaced by an ungodly theory.)

Evolution says there is no God and all that exist is a result of random selection. Some *“Think-tanks”* will acknowledge the existence of a god but will not ascribe any personality to it or active interaction with creation.

It is true that various chemicals exist, however, that doesn't mean they can evolve, on their own, into any kind of life. That's like saying if I put the parts of a car in a garage and let them simmer for a million or billion years, they will evolve, on their own, into a fully operational vehicle.

Life is more than a mixture of chemicals. Random Selection cannot produce anything more than gobbledygook.

## **Man Is & Always Will Be A Special Creation**

The Bible tells us that God created man. **That's where we came from.** Life does not make any sense unless we are God's special creation.

He chose to form man out of the dust of the ground and He breathed into him the breath of life, **which was His own life force**, His own Spirit. God's life caused man to become alive, a living soul.

Here's the supporting text. *“And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.”* **Genesis 2:7**

The very definition of life, from a Biblical perspective, is being joined spiritually with our creator. We must have His life in us to be a living soul. Those who do not have His “breath of life” in them are no more than the walking dead.

## **The Living Soul**

The human soul is a combination of Mind, Will and Emotion. This is where we reason, make decisions and feel. The wonder of it all is seen in the fact that man can operate within his soul separate from God. He can exist and control his own destiny. The problem with that is...God never wanted man to exist separate from Him. His plan was that they walk together in perfect harmony.

He indwelled man and empowered him to live on a Godly plane of existence where he could be blessed and loved. True life is when man is indwelled with God's Spirit. This connects God with man and man with God. Man does not really live without God. He may exist but not as a living soul.

## Being A Special Creation

If we are honest with each other, we can admit that there are many times that we do not feel special and wonder why it is that God created us. What's so special that we should marvel at our existence?

*The difference between man and the rest of creation is that man was made in the image of God.*

If we study the account of man's creation and his sin against his creator, we immediately realize that Adam lost the image and likeness of God when he sinned. Instead, he took on the very nature of evil. Let me show you from the scriptures.

### Romans 5:12, 18 & 19 kjv

“Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned—**Romans 5:12** (This is a reference to Adam's Original Sin)

<sup>18</sup> Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men.

<sup>19</sup> For as by the one man's disobedience, the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience, the many will be made righteous.

*Sometimes the King James Version is hard to understand so just in case you are having trouble, here the New Living Translation of the same text.*

<sup>12</sup> **When Adam sinned, sin entered the world. Adam's sin brought death, so death spread to everyone, for everyone sinned.**

<sup>18</sup> **Yes, Adam's one sin brings condemnation for everyone, but Christ's one act of righteousness brings a right relationship with God and new life for everyone.**

<sup>19</sup> **Because one person disobeyed God, many became sinners. But because one other person obeyed God, many will be made righteous.**

The above scriptures tell us that sin entered the world by and through the transgression of Adam, the first man. They also tell us that Adam's descendants took on the nature of sin. The, “breath of life” given by God was taken from Adam. He spiritually died or was cut off from God.

## Adam's Transgression

When we transgress we go beyond the limits imposed upon us by law, command or other statute. Speeding is going beyond the legal limit imposed by law. So it was with Adam. He went beyond the command of God. The Bible calls it disobedience.

Adam decided to ignore God's command and do his own thing. His rebellion led him into a realm void of God's love and grace. He became the lord over his own life and crowned himself as his own god.

This attitude became the basis of the "*Sin Nature*" that passed on to his descendants and is what rules our world today. It is a, "**Do Your Own Thing**" philosophy.

God never wanted Adam to know evil. His plan for mankind was only good. We were created by God so we could do His thing, not our own.

## **God's Thing**

All the good, the blessings, the joys of life and our eternal destiny are wrapped up in "***God's Thing.***"

In **Genesis 2:17** God tells Adam regarding the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, "in the day that you eat from it you shall surely die."

The saying that Adam would die was a Spiritual death that occurred at the moment he ate from the tree? Adam physically died 930 years later.

This proves out as seen in future Biblical accounts where Adam no longer walked continually in God's Spirit. He instead encountered another nature in himself that was contrary to the will of God.

We can understand the sudden appearance of a new destructive nature in Adam by considering a pregnant girl that is a drug addict who has a baby while on drugs and discovers that her baby is also an addict. The drugs passed on to the child.

So it is with the sin nature. It was passed on from Adam to his descendants down through the ages. Thus, all are infected. All have sinned.

God's special creation was cut off from its creator and God's desire to fellowship on His level with man was lost. God lost the image of Himself in the earth and man lost his Spiritual bond with God.

***But the story doesn't end here. There is more. It's called, "The Gospel" or " Good News"***

Jesus came to earth to seek and to save that, which was lost. "For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost." **Luke 19:10** The loss was the image and likeness of God that was placed into Adam.

So we, as the descendants of Adam, are a fallen race that is in need of redemption. However, God did not cast us off. He restored His image and likeness in man through the cross of Jesus Christ.

He paid the penalty for our sins and lived the life we should have lived before God. That's why He is our savior. That's why He is the only way to God. No other man could qualify because they are all of a fallen nature and in need of a savior.

Some folks reject the sacrificial death of Christ for the sins of mankind saying that He was also a descendant of Adam and therefore equally guilty of sin. However, they forget that **Jesus was born of a virgin.** He escaped the sin nature that passed on to humanity through Adam. His unique birth qualified Him to become the spotless Lamb of God.

We are forgiven because Jesus died in our stead and we are accepted because Jesus never sinned. His righteousness is imputed into us and His blood cleanses us from all unrighteousness. It's as though we had never sinned. Listen to what Jesus said as recorded by the apostle John.

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life” **John 3:16**

The Apostle John tells us, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” **1 John 1:9**

Once the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin and we are saved by His life, we can rest assured that indeed, we are a Special Creation of God.

## **Redeemed By The Blood of Jesus Christ**

**Here's what the Apostle Paul said.**

“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.”

“<sup>10</sup>For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.” **(Romans 10:9-10)**

Knowing this gives us self-worth, no matter who accuses us or tells us different.

We are His creation and His beloved. “For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” **Ephesians 2:10**

**It is God's Love for us that compels us to repent  
and be filled with His, “Breath of Life” to become a  
new Creature. No more “Walking Dead”.**

## The 2<sup>nd</sup> Question Is

### Why Are We Here?

*Some folks actually killed themselves because they could not figure out What Life Was All About.*

*Suicide... says that there is, “No Point To Life”, “That we have no value as an individual”, “That life has no meaning” Why Are We Here?*

*Here are some Suicide statistics from the*

**American Foundation  
For Suicide Prevention**

While this data is the most accurate we have, we estimate the numbers to be higher. Stigma surrounding suicide leads to under-reporting, and data collection methods critical to suicide prevention need to be improved.

**Suicide is the 10<sup>th</sup>  
leading cause of death in the US  
Each year 42,773  
Americans die by suicide**

### **Additional Facts About Suicide in the US**

- The annual age-adjusted suicide rate is **12.93 per 100,000** individuals.
- Men die by suicide **3.5x** more often than women.
- On average, there are **117** suicides per day.
- White males accounted for **7 of 10** suicides in 2014.
- Firearms account for **almost 50%** of all suicides.
- The rate of suicide is **highest in middle age** — white men in particular.
- Over 20 veterans kill themselves every day.
- On average, 1 person commits suicide every 16- minutes.
- Untreated Depression is the number 1 cause of suicide.
- There are 2 times as many deaths due to suicide than AIDS.

**For every suicide there are  
25 attempted Suicides at a  
costs of \$ 44 Billion annually**

Most adults are still searching for an identity, even into their senior years. They go through life holding on to titles as a way of explaining who they are. (why they exist.)

## **The Used-To-Be Scenario**

We live about 30 minutes north of The Villages, a huge retirement community. I know a lot of folks from that area. I hear some of them saying, “I used to be” or “I was” but rarely do I hear, “I AM”. Some folks seem to have lost their identity and in the process, themselves. More than 7,500 seniors took their own lives in 2014.

We were created in the image and likeness of God. **Genesis 1:27** records the event, “**And God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.**”

Here’s what Jesus said about why He came to earth.

*“The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.” **John 10:10***

We can live an abundant life. This is a life that is full of blessings, love and forgiveness. It is what Jesus wanted for us and made available to all who trust in Him.

***(For We Walk By Faith, Not by Sight:)***

## **A Purpose Driven Life**

God had a purpose for us in His creation. We were not just a random selection without a reason to exist. It was and still is...to bear His image and likeness in the earth.

God, being a Spirit, as the Bible tells us, says that the image and likeness of God is not a physical resemblance but rather Spiritual. He wanted us to be the embodiment of His character, which is ...

***“Love, Peace, Joy, Longsuffering, Meekness, Gentleness, Self-Control, Goodness and Faith.” Galatians 5:22-23***

Unfortunately, we see more anger, hate, murder, jealousy, and evil flowing from the hearts of our fellowman. When Abortion is deemed a health issue instead of murder, we know that the image of God has been lost.

Over **50 million** babies have been killed in the womb since the Rowe vs. Wade decision. This is not what God intended. We were not created to kill our unborn in the name of good health.

We were created by God to show forth His glory and to have fellowship with Him. He is the only true and living God. What we do in life should not exclude God. We are, after

**God is for us!  
He is not against us!**

all, His image and likeness. We can reflect God's glory as workers, retirees, housewives, children or whatever we choose to do or be... as long as our light is shining bright with the Love of God. *This is why we were placed upon this earth at this moment in time. This is the abundant life.*

## **The 3rd Question Is Where Are We Going When We Die?**

Do you remember the story when Jesus was telling His disciples that He was going away? (Referring to His death on the cross) Here's the account.

Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, where goest thou? Jesus answered him, where I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards. Peter said unto him, Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake. **John 13:36-37** Later He would tell Phillip,

*"I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."*  
**John 14:6**

**All roads do not lead to Rome, nor do all religions lead us to eternal life.**

... Paul said,

*"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."* Acts 4:2

Do not think that you can get into heaven through a church, a religious leader, a set of rules and regulations, or a doctrine that is contrary to what the apostles taught. Hear what the apostle Paul said to the Corinthian church. I have amplified it to clarify its meaning. This is my version based upon many other accepted versions.

"For if anyone comes to you preaching another Jesus, whom we, (The Apostles), have not preached, or if you receive another spirit, which is not the Holy Spirit that you have already received, or another gospel, which is different from what we taught you and you have already accepted, you will be deceived and accept that person who is really a false teacher." **II Corinthians 11:4**

**Note: The inference is that they should immediately reject such a person as a liar and false teacher. Those that follow such teachers will also suffer the judgment ascribed to them by God.**

## **Our Future Home**

"In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, *there* ye may be also." **John 14:2-3**

Jesus is the only way to God, the Father and He is even now engaged in the preparation of an eternal dwelling place for those who believe in him.

## **The Promise of God To The “Whosoever” In This World**

**“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” John 3:16**

I decided long ago that I was one of those, “Whosoever” and I did what Jesus said in **John 3:16**, ...

- I believed in Jesus as the only begotten Son of God.
- I believed that Jesus was indeed the only way to God the Father, who created me.
- I believed that Jesus came to earth to die for my sins so I could have victory over death, hell and the grave.
- I believed that Jesus rose from the dead on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day as the scriptures declare.
- I believed that He is preparing a place for me with Him in heaven.

I am spending my senior years looking for my Savior to return and take me to my new home.

## **Closing Remarks**

I am doing just fine, **but... what about you?** I want to invite you, “**All of You**” that read this booklet, to come into a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. If you are not filled with the image and likeness of God, your creator, you need to be. He will recreate you if you ask Him.

You can know the joy of being saved, of walking with God in this life and being assured of life after death when your time comes.

**Hebrews 9:27** says, “And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment”

Please join me in being the “**Whosoever**” of **John 3:16** and discovering the joy of being saved. He will never let you down.

## **Where Are You Going When You Die?**

There is only one true answer that brings abundant life here on earth and happiness in eternity. That answer is...**we will be with Jesus.** See it for yourself in the scriptures.

## 2-Corinthians 5:1-8

“For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. <sup>2</sup>For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house, which is from heaven:

<sup>3</sup> If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. <sup>4</sup>For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.

<sup>5</sup> Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit. <sup>6</sup> Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: (For we walk by faith, not by sight:)

<sup>8</sup> We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.”

## The Lighthouse

A lighthouse is a blessing,  
To the ships that toss in the sea,  
For it shows them the way,  
Until they can clearly see.

The rage of an angry storm  
Cannot hide its brilliant light.  
Nor can its awesome fury,  
Rule as an endless night.

Jesus is the lighthouse,  
For those who have gone astray.  
The light of His love,  
Offers a new and living way.

Jesus is the lighthouse,  
When fear and sickness rage.  
The light of His love,  
Gives hope in difficult days.

So trust in the Lord,  
And look for His light.  
He alone is “The Lighthouse”,  
That guides you through the night.

**John 14:6 ...*Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.***

# Who Is God?

## Preface

I am writing this eBook as a study guide for home bible studies and individual study. I do not claim to know all or have any exclusive on doctrine, ideas or concepts relative to the study of God.

I will be looking at three concepts of God and discussing the God of the Bible.

This is a study that is meant to inform, expand and refine one's knowledge of who God is.

Source materials will be the "The Internet", "Quotes From Noteworthy People", "The Bible" and my "Personal Knowledge".

## Introduction

It is man's perception of God that keeps him in confusion and causes him to reject the true God. Theology is defined by Webster as, "the study of the nature of God and religious belief"

The world does not agree as to the nature and concept of God. Is "He" really a "She"? Or is God just an "It" that cannot be known? Is the "Force" with us like in Star Wars? Is God a sinister force out there that causes bad things to enter into our lives? Or is God benevolent?

We will look at who to blame for good and bad experiences, why they happen and how it relates to our destiny.

We will look at religion and its different concepts of God. We will also look at what the bible says about God and discover why we should adjust our thinking to its revelation.

Our analytical study will focus primarily on the nature of God because it is the only true measurement to determine the character of a person or being. We will, however, also look at concepts and origins that established religious beliefs because it is important to discover error as well as truth.

## ***Lesson #1***

### ***??? Does God Really Exist ???***

Can anyone prove that there is a God? Wouldn't you love for someone to simply show you the evidence for God's existence? If you are looking, there are signs everywhere. As I mentioned in my introduction, theology is the study of the nature of God. This is where we see the signs and draw our conclusions.

The Atheists, those who say that there is no God, believe that when you die, you cease to exist. The Humanists tell us that man evolved and has no need for God. The New-Age folks take evolution to the ultimate, saying that they can become their own gods. All do not believe in a Supreme Being. However, the Agnostic believes in a Supreme Being but says that Being cannot be known, thus impersonal. Who is correct?

*We may not be able to look upon the face of God but we can see His handiwork. It reeks of "Intelligent Design." The complexity of our planet points to a deliberate Designer who not only created our universe, but also sustains it. The universe operates by **uniform laws of nature** that could not just have happened. Someone had to establish them.*

There is also the "**Theory of Motion**" that says, in effect, that if a thing is in motion it had to be started by someone or thing that is not in motion. The universe is in constant motion, started by God who is not in motion. He is above it all. Even the Big Bang Theory, if true, begs the question, who caused it to happen? Logic dictates that it could not just have happened on its own.

Does God exist? I would say, from all the evidence, YES, there really is a God. However, the real proof is seen when you and I seek Him. He loves to reveal Himself to inquiring minds and is always willing to accept the repentant soul.

With all the evidence available, some folks still say that there is no God. I see it this way...we make up our minds as to the existence of God or not and interpret the evidence through that pre-determined filter. If we don't want to know God, then we adhere to the notion that there is no God. If, on the other hand, we want to know Him, we seek Him and He reveals Himself to us in a whole lot of ways.

**Proof That God Exists... Offered by Marilyn Adamson.** Read her complete article, "Is There A God?" at [www.everystudent.com](http://www.everystudent.com).

1. The DNA code informs and programs a cell's behavior. This could never have developed on its own.

2. We know God exists because He pursues us. He is constantly initiating and seeking for us to come to Him. This feeling of being perused by God is universal.
3. Unlike any other revelation of God, Jesus Christ is the clearest, most specific picture of God perusing mankind. (**John 3:16**)

Read what others say about the existence of God...

- “To look into a microscope is to see another universe so small that only the electronic microscope can even find it. For instance, it is revealed that one single snowflake in a snowstorm with millions of other snowflakes is the equivalent of twenty billion electrons. Scientists are learning that the miniature world of a single living cell is as astonishing as man himself. God says that we can learn a great deal about Him just by observing nature. Because He has spoken through His universe, all men are without excuse for not believing in Him.” This is why the Psalmist said, “The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God” (Psalm 14:1).  
**Dr. Billy Graham**
- “It was necessary for man's salvation that there should be a knowledge revealed by God besides philosophical science built up by human reason ... because man is directed to God as to an end that surpasses the grasp of his reason: "The eye has not seen, O God...what things Thou hast prepared for them that wait for Thee" (Is 66:4). But the end must first be known by men who are to direct their actions to the end. Hence it was necessary for the salvation of man that certain truths about God, which exceed human reason, should be made known to him by divine revelation. **Thomas Aquinas**
- “This sense of wonder leads most scientists to a Superior Being – der Alte, the Old One, as Einstein affectionately called the Deity – a Superior Intelligence, the Lord of all Creation and Natural Law.”—**Abdus Salam**, winner of the 1979 Nobel Prize in Physics for his work in electroweak theory. He is here quoted in his article entitled *Science and Religion*.
- “The more I study science, the more I believe in God.”—**Albert Einstein** (*The Wall Street Journal*, Dec 24, 1997, article by Jim Holt, “Science Resurrects God.”)
- “God [is] the author of the universe, and the free establisher of the laws of motion.”—Physicist and chemist **Robert Boyle**, who is considered to be the founder of modern chemistry.
- “God created everything by number, weight and measure.” “In the absence of any other proof, the thumb alone would convince me of God’s existence.” “I have a fundamental belief in the Bible as the Word of God, written by those who were inspired. I study the Bible daily.” —**Sir Isaac Newton, who is widely regarded to have been the greatest scientist the world, has ever known.**

All of the above reasons are worthy of consideration. However, here are a few more thoughts to add to this discussion.

The existence of God cannot be proved without using faith. The Bible says that we must accept by faith the fact that God exists: “And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to Him must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him” (Hebrews 11:6). If God so desired, He could simply appear and prove to the whole world that He exists. But if He did that, there would be no need for faith. “Then Jesus told him, ‘because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed’” (John 20:29).

That does not mean, however, that there is no evidence of God’s existence. The Bible states, “The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of His hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge. There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard. Their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world” (Psalm 19:1-4). Looking at the stars, understanding the vastness of the universe, observing the wonders of nature, and seeing the beauty of a sunset—all of these things point to a Creator God. If these were not enough, there is also evidence of God in our own hearts. Ecclesiastes 3:11 tells us, “He has also set eternity in the hearts of men.”

Deep within us is the recognition that there is something beyond this life and someone beyond this world. We can deny this knowledge intellectually. However, God’s presence all around us is still obvious. Despite this, the Bible warns that some will still deny God’s existence: “The fool says in his heart, ‘There is no God’” (Psalm 14:1). Since the vast majority of people throughout history, in all cultures, in all civilizations, and on all continents believe in the existence of some kind of God, there must be something (or someone) causing this belief.

In addition to the biblical arguments for God’s existence, there are logical arguments. First, there is the **Ontological Argument**. The most popular form of the ontological argument uses the concept of God to prove God’s existence. It begins with the definition of God as “a being than which no greater can be conceived.” It is then argued that to exist is greater than to not exist, and therefore the greatest conceivable being must exist. If God did not exist, then God would not be the greatest conceivable being, and that would contradict the very definition of God.

A second argument is the **Teleological Argument**. The teleological argument states that since the universe displays such an amazing design, there must have been a Divine Designer. For example, if the earth were significantly closer or farther away from the sun, it would not be capable of supporting much of the life it currently does. If the elements in our atmosphere were even a few percentage points different, nearly every living thing on earth would die. The odds of a single protein molecule forming by chance are 1 in  $10^{243}$  (that is a 1 followed by 243 zeros). A single cell is comprised of millions of protein molecules.

A third logical argument for God’s existence is called the **Cosmological Argument**. Every effect must have a cause. This universe and everything in it is an effect. There

must be something that caused everything to come into existence. Ultimately, there must be something “un-caused” in order to cause everything else to come into existence. That “un-caused” cause is God.

A fourth argument is known as the **Moral Argument**. Every culture throughout history has had some form of law. Everyone has a sense of right and wrong. Murder, lying, stealing, and immorality are almost universally rejected. Where did this sense of right and wrong come from if not from a Holy God?

It’s been said that religion is; man seeking God and Christianity is; God seeking man. A study of world religions seems to confirm this premise. Man can really know this invisible God? He seeks us to this end.

I see it this way, some folks know a lot about a famous personality but in reality have never met that person. Being a fan or a follower is o.k. But I’d rather be one that not only knows a lot about God but also walks with Him and talks with Him and gains counsel, wisdom and peace from each encounter.

Yes there is a God, that is, if you want Him to exist. There is a God, even if you do not want Him to exist. He is an eternal being, invisible but ever so close. He now waits in the heavens for that one day when we all will stand before Him, face to face.

## **Lesson #1**

### **Related Discussion Questions**

1. Ok, God exists. What does that mean to me?
2. Why did God create the earth and place man in it?
3. If there was a beginning, what is the end?
4. Why am I here, on the earth, at this moment in time?
5. Why does God want me in His kingdom?
6. Why should I trust God with my life and destiny?
7. Do I really have a specific destiny? How can I know what that is?

## **Lesson #2**

### ***Major Theological Concepts***

We can reduce all the theological concepts of God that various religions teach into three basis categories. They are **Monotheism, Pantheism, and Polytheism**. These three views encompass the majority of all world religions.

**Monotheism**

**Monotheism** is the belief or doctrine that there is only one God. The Jewish Christian and Islamic faiths fall into this category. However, Judaism & Christianity follow the revelation of God as described in the bible. Islam does not.

**Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God  
is one LORD ...Deut. 6:4**

## *Judaism*

**Judaism** is one of the oldest religions in the world that still exists today. Jewish history, beliefs, and traditions were recorded in the Hebrew Bible beginning as early as the 8th century B.C. However, It all started with Abraham, Isaac & Jacob.

Although it never achieved dominant numbers, the faith of the Hebrews—just one of many ancient Middle Eastern tribes—continues to exert a profound influence in the modern western world.

Jewish beliefs center on the conviction that there is only one God. This was a minority view in its time, but monotheism is now dominant in the western world—thanks to the influence of Judaism on the powerful religions of Christianity and Islam.

Today, approximately 14 million people identify themselves as Jews. There are three main branches of Judaism, each with different approaches to religious life: Orthodox; Conservative; and Reform. Jewish life is rich in traditions, rituals and holidays, which commemorate the past, celebrate the present, and express hope for the future.

## *Christianity*

Christianity finds its roots in Judaism. Although it is considered a religion, it is more a relationship with the true and living God, as revealed in the bible...that can only be attained through Jesus Christ. His origins come from God before the foundation of the world. His birth, birthplace, life, ministry and sacrificial death were prophesized by the Old Testament Hebrew Prophets. His claim to be the Son of God and the Jewish Messiah was documented by miracles during His earthly ministry. His resurrection from the dead proved He was who He said he was.

Jesus is the Jewish Messiah. The Jews were told through prophetic word of a “coming one” as early as in Genesis and by other Old Testament prophecies scattered throughout the centuries in multiple O.T. books. Jesus identified Himself as “The Son of Man,” “The Son of God” and the “Savior/King” of the world, fulfilling every prophecy.

Although most Jews did not embrace their Messiah, Jesus became a light to the Gentiles and has followers around the globe. The [Center for the Study of Global Christianity](#) at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary estimated 34,000 denominations in the year 2000, rising to an estimated 43,000 in 2012. These numbers have exploded from 1,600 in the year 1900.

The number of Christians around the world has nearly quadrupled in the last 100 years, from about 600 million in 1910 to more than 2 billion in 2010. But the world’s overall population also has risen rapidly, from an estimated 1.8 billion in 1910 to 6.9 billion in 2010. As a result, Christians *make up about the same portion of the world’s population today (32%), as they did a century ago (35%)*.

The Christian religion includes the Catholic, Protestant, and Eastern Orthodox churches. There are over 300 Protestant denominations in the world today.

## *Islam*

“The source of the word, (Allah), who is the Islamic god, goes back to pre-Muslim times. Islam calls Allah god, which is not the God of the bible. Allah has about 1.6 billion followers worldwide. In 2010, Muslims made up 23.2% of the global population.

According to the Encyclopedia of Religion, Allah corresponded to the Babylonian god Baal, and Arabs knew of him long before Mohammed worshipped him as the supreme god. Before Islam, the Arabs recognized many gods and goddesses; each tribe had their own deity. There were also nature deities. Allah was the god of the local Quarish tribe, which was Mohammed's tribe before he invented Islam to lead his people out of their polytheism. Allah was then known as the Moon god, who had three daughters who were viewed as intercessors for the people.

## *Polytheism*

**Polytheism** is the worship or belief in more than one god. All other religions, excluding the Judaism, Christian and Islam faiths hold to this polytheistic view. This doctrine usually promotes one god that reigns supreme over all the rest.

Polytheism was the typical form of religion during the Bronze Age and Iron Age. It is well documented in historical religions of Classical antiquity, especially ancient Greek religion and ancient Roman religion, and after the decline of Greco-Roman polytheism in tribal religions such as Germanic paganism or [Slavic paganism](#). Important polytheistic

religions practiced today include Chinese traditional religion, Hinduism, Japanese Shinto, and the neopagan context.

In most religions which accept polytheism, the different gods and goddesses are representations of forces of nature or ancestral principles. Historical Polytheism is best seen in the ancient Greek world. However Buddhism is also a realistic portrait of multiple gods.

## ***Pantheism***

**Pantheism** is the belief that the Universe (or nature as the totality of everything) is identical with divinity, or that everything composes an all-encompassing, immanent god. Pantheists thus do not believe in a distinct personal or anthropomorphic god.

Pantheism is the doctrine that God is the transcendent reality of which the material universe and human beings are only manifestations: it involves a denial of God's personality and expresses a tendency to identify God as nature.

Pantheism is the view that God is everything and everyone and that everyone and everything is God. Pantheism is similar to polytheism (the belief in many gods), but goes beyond polytheism to teach that everything is God. A tree is God, a rock is God, an animal is God, the sky is God, the sun is God, you are God, etc.

Pantheism is the supposition behind many cults and false religions (e.g., Hinduism and Buddhism to an extent, the various unity and unification cults, and “mother nature” worshippers. See <http://biblestudyguide.org/articles/pantheism/pantheism-nature-is-god.htm> for more detail on this false religion.

### **Pantheism and Homosexuality**

#### **Romans 1:18-32**

Pantheism and homosexuality seem to flow together. Here's what the Apostle Paul said to the church at Rome in the 1<sup>st</sup> century. His teaching was a direct attack against Pantheism, which was very prevalent in his day even as it is in our generation.

**Here are the scriptures so you can read it for yourself.**

18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;

<sup>19</sup> Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them.

<sup>20</sup> For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:

<sup>21</sup> Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

<sup>22</sup> Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,

<sup>23</sup> And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things.

<sup>24</sup> Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonor their own bodies between themselves:

<sup>25</sup> Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

<sup>26</sup> For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature:

<sup>27</sup> And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet.

<sup>28</sup> And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things, which are not convenient;

<sup>29</sup> Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers,

<sup>30</sup> Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,

<sup>31</sup> Without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful:

<sup>32</sup> Who knowing the judgment of God, that they, which commit such things, are worthy of death, not only do the same, but also have pleasure in them that do them. **Romans 1:18-32**

- Verse 20 tells us that man is without excuse because God has revealed Himself to them.
- Verse 21 says God darkened their foolish hearts because they would not acknowledge Him.

- Verses 24 & 25 speak to the fact that God gave them up and because of their worship of Pantheism...the creature more than the Creator.
- Finally, see verse 28 where God gave them over to a reprobate mind, which is to condemn strongly as unworthy, unacceptable, or evil.

*I am going to eliminate Pantheism and Polytheism from further discussion, as they are clearly not a true representation of who God is. I included them originally so we can understand other religious beliefs as we look into the God of the bible.*

## **Lesson #2**

### **Related Discussion Questions**

1. Why are there so many world religions?
2. Why did the Jewish community reject Jesus as their Messiah?
3. Why do people follow after false gods?
4. How can Islam be a true religion when it calls for death and destruction of those who will not convert?
5. Is Allah the same as Jehovah, the Hebrew God?
6. How can God be everything and everything be God?
7. If there are many gods, who's in charge?
8. Why do people deny God to do evil things?
9. Why does God reject Homosexuals?

## **Lesson #3**

### **The God of The Bible**

The Bible is the written revelation of the Hebrew God. It tells us that God is not a "She" but takes the male gender and is referred to as a Father. It also tells us that God is not an "It" but actually has a personality. God is personal, close at hand and compassionate.

The word God, from its most ancient source, means "Invoked One." It refers to the one (Meaning the deity) that you invoke or call upon. They believed in many gods back then and folks had to invoke the one they wanted for the occasion at hand. Over the centuries the term, "God," came to mean, "Supreme Being", "Supernatural Life-force."

It was the Hebrews that looked upon God as the only true and living Deity, perfect, unchangeable, morally righteous, and eternal. This viewpoint came as a direct result of God seeking them out and revealing Himself to them. That's why God is known as the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Abraham was the tenth generation from Noah through Shem and was born 352 years after the Deluge, (Flood), in 2018 B.C. Although listed first among the three sons of Terah, at Genesis 11:26, Abraham was not the firstborn. The Scriptures show that Terah was 70

years old when his first son was born, and that Abraham was born 60 years later when his father Terah was 130 years old. (Gen. 11:32; 12:4) Evidently Abraham is listed first among his father's sons because of his outstanding faithfulness and prominence in the Scriptures, a practice that is followed in the case of several other outstanding men of faith such as Shem and Isaac.

### ***Different Hebrew Names To Describe God***

God chooses to reveal Himself to man by using many different and specific names. Each name represents an aspect of God's nature and character. Here is a list:

**EL, ELOAH:** God "mighty, strong, prominent" (Nehemiah 9:17; Psalm 139:19) – etymologically, El appears to mean “power,” as in “I have the power to harm you” (Genesis 31:29). El is associated with other qualities, such as integrity (Numbers 23:19), jealousy (Deuteronomy 5:9), and compassion (Nehemiah 9:31), but the root idea of “might” remains.

**ELOHIM:** God “Creator, Mighty and Strong” (Genesis 17:7; Jeremiah 31:33) – the plural form of Eloah, which accommodates the doctrine of the Trinity. From the Bible's first sentence, the superlative nature of God's power is evident as God (Elohim) speaks the world into existence (Genesis 1:1).

**EL SHADDAI:** “God Almighty,” “The Mighty One of Jacob” (Genesis 49:24; Psalm 132:2,5) – speaks to God's ultimate power over all.

**ADONAI:** “Lord” (Genesis 15:2; Judges 6:15) – used in place of YHWH, which was thought by the Jews to be too sacred to be uttered by sinful men. In the Old Testament, YHWH is more often used in God's dealings with His people, while Adonai is used more when He deals with the Gentiles.

**YHWH / YAHWEH / JEHOVAH:** “LORD” (Deuteronomy 6:4; Daniel 9:14) – strictly speaking, the only proper name for God. Translated in English Bibles “LORD” (all capitals) to distinguish it from Adonai, “Lord.” The revelation of the name is first given to Moses “I Am who I Am” (Exodus 3:14). This name specifies an immediacy, a presence. Yahweh is present, accessible, near to those who call on Him for deliverance (Psalm 107:13), forgiveness (Psalm 25:11) and guidance (Psalm 31:3).

**YAHWEH-JIREH:** "The Lord Will Provide" (Genesis 22:14) – the name memorialized by Abraham when God provided the ram to be sacrificed in place of Isaac.

**YAHWEH-RAPHA:** "The Lord Who Heals" (Exodus 15:26) – “I am Jehovah who heals you” both in body and soul. In body, by preserving from and curing diseases, and in soul, by pardoning iniquities.

**YAHWEH-NISSI:** "The Lord Our Banner" (Exodus 17:15), where banner is understood

to be a rallying place. This name commemorates the desert victory over the Amalekites in Exodus 17.

**YAHWEH-M'KADDESH:** "The Lord Who Sanctifies, Makes Holy" (Leviticus 20:8; Ezekiel 37:28) – God makes it clear that He alone, not the law, can cleanse His people and make them holy.

**YAHWEH-SHALOM:** "The Lord Our Peace" (Judges 6:24) – the name given by Gideon to the altar he built after the Angel of the Lord assured him he would not die as he thought he would after seeing Him.

**YAHWEH-ELOHIM:** "LORD God" (Genesis 2:4; Psalm 59:5) – a combination of God's unique name YHWH and the generic "Lord," signifying that He is the Lord of Lords.

**YAHWEH-TSIDKENU:** "The Lord Our Righteousness" (Jeremiah 33:16) – As with YHWH-M' Kaddesh, it is God alone who provides righteousness to man, ultimately in the person of His Son, Jesus Christ, who became sin for us "that we might become the Righteousness of God in Him" (2 Corinthians 5:21).

**YAHWEH-ROHI:** "The Lord Our Shepherd" (Psalm 23:1) – After David pondered his relationship as a shepherd to his sheep, he realized that was exactly the relationship God had with him, and so he declares, "Yahweh-Rohi is my Shepherd. I shall not want" (Psalm 23:1).

**YAHWEH-SHAMMAH:** "The Lord Is There" (Ezekiel 48:35) – the name ascribed to Jerusalem and the Temple there, indicating that the once-departed glory of the Lord (Ezekiel 8—11) had returned (Ezekiel 44:1-4).

**YAHWEH-SABAOTH:** "The Lord of Hosts" (Isaiah 1:24; Psalm 46:7) – Hosts means "hordes," both of angels and of men. He is Lord of the host of heaven and of the inhabitants of the earth, of Jews and Gentiles, of rich and poor, master and slave. The name is expressive of the majesty, power, and authority of God and shows that He is able to accomplish what He determines to do.

**EL ELYON:** "Most High" (Deuteronomy 26:19) – derived from the Hebrew root for "go up" or "ascend," so the implication is of that which is the very highest. El Elyon denotes exaltation and speaks of an absolute right to be Lord with all the honor of lordship.

**EL ROI:** "God of Seeing" (Genesis 16:13) – the name ascribed to God by Hagar, alone and desperate in the wilderness after being driven out by Sarah (Genesis 16:1-14). When Hagar met the Angel of the Lord, she realized she had seen God Himself in a theophany. She also realized that El Roi saw her in her distress and testified that He is a God who lives and sees all.

**EL-OLAM:** "Everlasting God" (Psalm 90:1-3) – God’s nature is without beginning or end, free from all constraints of time, and He contains within Himself the very cause of time itself. “From everlasting to everlasting, You are God.”

**EL-GIBHOR:** “Mighty God” (Isaiah 9:6) – the name describing the Messiah, Christ Jesus, in this prophetic portion of Isaiah. As a powerful and mighty warrior, the Messiah, the Mighty God, will accomplish the destruction of God’s enemies and rule with a rod of iron (Revelation 19:15).

**Recommended Resources:** The Names of God by Ken Hemphill and Logos Bible Soft. God is constantly showing us His majesty and is continually revealing His nature to the world. **Romans 1:20** says, “For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse.”

## **Lesson #3**

### **Related Discussion Questions**

1. Why does God have so many names?
2. Why did it take so long for the Bible to reveal the nature of God?
3. How did God get to be perfect?
4. If God is a Spirit, what does He look like?
5. Doesn’t God get tired of a continual revelation of himself to man?

## **Lesson #4**

### **Attributes of God**

The Bible tells us what God is like and what He is not like. Without the authority of the Bible, any attempt to explain God would be nothing more than a misguided opinion.

Only what God has chosen to reveal of Himself can be known. One of God's attributes or qualities is “**light**,” meaning that He is self-revealing in information of Himself (Isaiah

60:19; James 1:17). The fact that God has revealed knowledge of Himself should not be neglected (Hebrews 4:1). Creation, the Bible, and the Word made flesh (Jesus Christ) will help us to know what God is like.

Let's start by understanding that God is our Creator and that we are a part of His creation (Genesis 1:1; Psalm 24:1) and are created in His image. Man is above the rest of creation and was given dominion over it (Genesis 1:26-28

**God is Eternal**, meaning He had no beginning and His existence will never end. He is immortal and infinite (Deuteronomy 33:27; Psalm 90:2; 1 Timothy 1:17).

**God is Immutable**, meaning He is unchanging; this in turn means that God is absolutely reliable and trustworthy (Malachi 3:6; Numbers 23:19; Psalm 102:26, 27). God is incomparable; there is no one like Him in works or being. He is unequalled and perfect (2 Samuel 7:22; Psalm 86:8; Isaiah 40:25; Matthew 5:48).

**God is Inscrutable**, unfathomable, unsearchable, and past finding out as far as understanding Him completely (Isaiah 40:28; **Psalm 145:3**; Romans 11:33, 34).

**God is Just**; He is no respecter of persons in the sense of showing favoritism (Deuteronomy 32:4; Psalm 18:30).

**God is Omnipotent**; He is all-powerful and can do anything that pleases Him, but His actions will always be in accord with the rest of His character (Revelation 19:6; Jeremiah 32:17, 27).

**God is Omnipresent**, meaning He is present everywhere, but this does not mean that God is everything (Psalm 139:7-13; Jeremiah 23:23).

**God is Omniscient**, meaning He knows the past, present, and future, including what we are thinking at any given moment. Since He knows everything, His justice will always be administered fairly (Psalm 139:1-5; Proverbs 5:21).

**God is One**; not only is there no other, but He is alone in being able to meet the deepest needs and longings of our hearts. God alone is worthy of our worship and devotion (Deuteronomy 6:4).

**God is Righteous**, meaning that God cannot and will not pass over wrongdoing. It is because of God's righteousness and justice that, in order for our sins to be forgiven, Jesus had to experience God's wrath when our sins were placed upon Him (Exodus 9:27; Matthew 27:45-46; Romans 3:21-26).

**God is Sovereign**, meaning He is supreme. All of His creation put together cannot thwart His purposes (Psalm 93:1; 95:3; Jeremiah 23:20).

**God is Spirit**, meaning He is invisible (John 1:18; 4:24). God is a Trinity. He is three in one, the same in substance, equal in power and glory.

**God is Truth**, He will remain incorruptible and cannot lie (Psalm 117:2; 1 Samuel 15:29).

**God is Holy**, separated from all moral defilement and hostile toward it. God sees all evil and it angers Him. God is referred to as a consuming fire (Isaiah 6:3; Habakkuk 1:13; Exodus 3:2, 4-5; Hebrews 12:29).

**God is Gracious**, and His grace includes His goodness, kindness, mercy, and love. If it were not for God's grace, His holiness would exclude us from His presence. Thankfully, this is not the case, for He desires to know each of us personally (Exodus 34:6; Psalm 31:19; 1 Peter 1:3; John 3:16, 17:3).

**Recommended Resources:** Knowing God by J.I. Packer and Logos Bible Software.

Here are a few more references that will further reveal the nature and character of God.

"For God is greater than our hearts, and **he knows everything**." (1 John 3:20)

"To God belong **wisdom and power; counsel and understanding** are his." (Job 12:13)

"...a faith and knowledge resting on the hope of eternal life, which God, **who does not lie**, promised before the beginning of time..." (Titus 1:2)

"For the LORD is **good** and his love endures forever; his **faithfulness** continues through all generations." (Ps. 100:5)

"...**God is love**. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him." (1 John 4:16)

"The LORD, the LORD, the **compassionate and gracious** God, **slow to anger**, abounding in love and **faithfulness**..." (Ex. 34:6)

"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the **God of all comfort**..." (2 Cor. 1:3)

"The LORD is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, **abounding in love**." (Ps. 103:8)

"**Holy**, holy, holy is the LORD **Almighty**; the whole earth is full of his glory." (Is. 6:3)

"The **God of peace** be with you all. Amen." (Rom. 15:33)

"He is the Rock, **his works are perfect**, and **all his ways are just**. A **faithful** God who does no wrong, upright and just is he." (Deut. 32:4)

"Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is **perfect**." (Matt. 5:48)

There are more references but these will give you a pretty good idea about who God is. He does not tempt us with evil (James 1:13). Nor does He cause bad things to happen. (James 1:17) They happen as a result of the Fall of Man into Sin and Man's misguided free will.

God is not the author of confusion. (**1 Corinthians 14:33**) He does not bring sickness, disease, and death of loved one, or other bad things. Yet lots of folks blame God for their loss or other bad happening. Why is that?

## **Lesson #4**

### **Related Discussion Questions**

Why does God allow bad things to happen?

1. Why should God be faithful to us who fall into sin all the time?
2. If God can get angry at evil, can He also get angry with me when I do not keep His commandments?
3. If God is Sovereign, where does that leave my "Free Will" and me?

4. If God knows the past, present and future, why should I strive to accomplish anything?
5. If God is the creator, why didn't He create a world without evil?

## **Lesson #5**

### **Who Do We Blame?**

I think we blame God because He is All-Powerful, All-Seeing and Sovereign. He could have stopped a thing from happening but instead; He sat back and did nothing. Isn't that how most of us feel when we fall into a difficult life situation?

**The truth of the matter is...God gave us "Free Will".** This means we can do whatever we want and He will sit back and let us shape our own destiny. He has chosen to put His power and sovereignty on hold, making them subject to our Free Will. He wants us to be free to come to Him. He does not take prisoners or twist arms to gain followers. He is interested in a relationship, not a robotic trophy.

Man gets drunk and crashes into another car and kills three people. Who's at fault?  
 Lady smokes for years and gets lung cancer. Who's at fault?  
 Elderly man crosses a busy highway without looking both ways and gets hit by a truck. Whose fault is it?

Bad choices will bring bad things into our lives and we should really own up to them and not blame God. Here are a few scenarios.

I can go on and on but it will always fall back to one central thing..."Free Will". We are held accountable for our actions and made to live out the consequences of what we do in life. I know what you're thinking...what about so called "Acts of God?" Things like Earthquakes, Floods, Tornadoes and other events that are beyond our control? An "Act of God" is an Insurance term. It is an event that is caused solely by the effect of nature or natural causes and without any interference by humans whatsoever.

Why do we automatically assume that a hurricane or flood is a direct act of God? The Bible says, "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now." **Romans 8:22** The whole creation is in a state of turmoil. No wonder there are violent acts of nature occurring around the world. That is not to say that they are a direct and vicious attack by God. We have already seen the nature of God through His attributes and how He is compassionate, merciful, loving...all of which are good. The so-called "Acts of God" would be out of character.

They do not line up with who God is and His care for mankind. Let's look at the fruit of God's Spirit. **The Fruit of the Holy Spirit** is a biblical term that sums up nine attributes of a Christian life according to St. Paul in his Letter to the Galatians "But **the fruit of the Spirit** is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control." **Galatians 5:22-23**. Does this personality fit with destruction and pain? I don't think so...not in an age of grace. So, what do we do when bad things happen to us? Here are a few thoughts.

1. Seek the Lord, applying **Proverbs 3:5-6** ("Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. <sup>6</sup>In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.") No matter what has happened, God will direct your paths if you trust in Him. He will lead you out of the sorrow, stress and heartaches.
2. Let the Lord comfort you. ("Blessed be **God**, even the Father **of** our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father **of** mercies, and the **God of all comfort**") **II Corinthians 1:3**
3. Know that Jesus is always with you. ("I, I am with you always, even unto the **end of the world**. Amen." **Matthew 28:20b**)
4. Realize that God will work everything together for good. ("And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose.") **Romans 8:28**
5. Refocus your eyes upon those things that you cannot see for they are eternal. "While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen *are* temporal; but the things which are not seen *are* eternal." **II Corinthians 4:18**
6. Rest in the Lord, knowing that He will deliver you. ("The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.") **Psalms 34:7**
7. Think on things that are positive, not negative. ("whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things *are* honest, whatsoever things *are* just, whatsoever things *are* pure, whatsoever things *are* lovely, whatsoever things *are* of good report; if *there be* any virtue, and if *there be* any praise, think on these things.") (**Philippians 4:8**)

Finally, God is a Spirit. (God *is* a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship *him* in spirit and in truth.) **John 4:24**

## **Lesson #5**

### **Related Discussion Questions**

1. If God is all knowing, why does He allow bad things to come into our lives?

2. Can thinking positive during stressful times really help?
3. What does creation being in turmoil have to do with bad things affecting us?
4. Can the Sovereignty of God and my "Free Will" exist together in the same life situation?
5. Does God really just sit back and watch as bad things happen to us?
6. Do our choices really affect our destiny?
7. If God does not cause bad things to enter our lives, who does?

## **Lesson #6**

# **Father Son & Holy Ghost**

## **Tri-Unity = The Trinity**

You and I live in a three-dimensional world. All physical objects have a certain height, width, and depth. One person can look like someone else, or behave like someone else, or even sound like someone else. But a person cannot actually be the same as another person. They are distinct individuals.

God, however, lives without the limitations of a three-dimensional universe. He is spirit. And He is infinitely more complex than we are.

That is why Jesus, the Son can be different from the Father and yet the same.

The Bible clearly speaks of: God the Son, God the Father, and God the Holy Spirit. But emphasizes that there is only One God.

If we were to use math, it would not be,  $1+1+1=3$ . It would be  $1 \times 1 \times 1 = 1$ . God is a triune God.

Thus the term: "Tri" meaning three, and "Unity" meaning one, Tri+Unity = Trinity. It is a way of acknowledging what the Bible reveals to us about God, that God is yet three "Persons" who have the same essence of deity. Some have tried to give human illustrations for the Trinity, such as H<sub>2</sub>O being water, ice and steam (all different forms, but all are H<sub>2</sub>O). Another illustration would be the sun. From it we receive light, heat and radiation...three distinct aspects, but only one sun.

**No illustration is going to be perfect.**

But from the very beginning we see God as a Trinity. Notice the plural pronouns "us" and "our" in Genesis 1:26 -- Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."

Though not a complete list, here is some other Scripture that shows God is one, in Trinity:

- There is no God but one. (1Cor. 8:4)
- And after being baptized, Jesus went up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming upon Him, and behold, a voice out of the heavens, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased." (Matt. 3:16-17)
- "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit." (Matt. 28:19)
- Jesus said: "I and the Father are one." (John 10:30)
- "He who has seen Me has seen the Father." (John 14:9)
- "He who beholds Me beholds the One who sent Me." (John 12:45)
- If anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him. (Rom. 8:9)
- "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for that which has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit." (Matt. 1:20)
- And the angel answered and said to her Mary, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy offspring shall be called the Son of God." (Luke 1:35)

[*Jesus speaking to His disciples*] "And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you, and will be in you." ... "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him, and make Our abode with him." (John 14:16-17, 23) Article taken from.....

Here's what we know so far. Islam follows Allah, which was the pagan god of the Babylonians. Buddhist and other religions that attest to many gods are polytheist. Pantheism is the belief that God is everywhere and is everything...so to worship a tree is to worship God.

The Bible is the only true account that reveals the nature of God. All other doctrines and religions are false and should be set aside from any serious investigation. If this conclusion seems to be narrow-minded, lets reason together.

Are trees and wind and fire really on the same level as God? What power do they have to shape our destiny or answer our prayers? Logic tells us that this is nothing more than the theological doctrine of fools.

What about Polytheism, the belief in many gods? Does it seem to make sense that life and eternity is governed by many gods? Mormonism thinks so. They believe that a man, not a woman, can ascend to a status of a god and have many wives. India boasts more than a million gods. Which one can help me find peace, joy or love?

The premise of this theology is way off base. Christianity is the only theological doctrine that shows man as a sinner, why, and how God so loved him that He sent His only Son as a sacrifice to justify us and give us access into His grace.

God is pictured in the Bible as a Spirit and we are to worship Him in spirit and in truth. ("God *is* a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship *him* in spirit and in truth.") **John 4:24** He is one God that manifest Himself to us as The Father of Creation, The Son of The Living God, and The Holy Ghost. This is glorious in all of life, to know God and to fellowship with Him in a day-by-day walk of Faith.

Are you like many modern religious folks...knowing about Jesus but not knowing Him personally? If you are, you will not see the kingdom of God. Nor will you find peace of mind here on this earth because you will miss out on the fruit of God's Spirit, which Peace is one.

I can say this because Jesus said it and the apostle John recorded it. ("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.") **John 3:3**. He was talking to a religious leader, not just the average Joe.

## **Lesson #6**

### **Related Discussion Questions**

1. Are there three thrones in heaven, one for the Father, Son and Holy Spirit?
2. If Jesus is seated at the right hand of God, the Father, where is the Holy Spirit seated?
3. If being, "Born Again" is the only way to see the Kingdom of God, how do I get born again?

4. If Jesus is in heaven, at the right hand of God, how can I know Him personally?
5. How will I know when Jesus and the Father God have arrived to live with me in my world here on earth as John 14:16,17 & 23 says?
6. What makes the Bible the only true account of the revelation of the nature and character of God?

## **Conclusion**

Who is God? He is the only true and living God. There is no other like Him. He is all knowing and sovereign. He is the Creator of all things and does not change in character of stature. He is a Spirit yet shows Himself as the Father of all creation and the Son who became the Savior of mankind. He is compassionate, longsuffering and kind. He is full of grace, peace, and great Joy. He is described as Love.

He is not a mystical force that portrays itself in and through everything. He is not a tree or a cloud. Everything is not God. It is rather His handiwork being full of intelligent design.

He is not one of many, “Do Nothing,” gods that man has made up for his own purposes. He is our Creator, our Sustainer, our Lord and Savior. He alone is worthy of our trust, love and worship.

May the Lord bless you and keep you and cause His face to shine upon you and give you peace through all the days of your life.

## **The Trinity** *(Triunity of God)*

### **Introduction**

Trying to explain God is very difficult. He is not like you and me. Think about it. He has always existed with no beginning or end. He is in everyplace at all times. He is all-powerful. He knows our future before it happens. He is the fullness of Love, Joy, Peace, Longsuffering, Kindness and so on and on it goes. Who can instruct Him or even search the depths of His being?

One of the great mysteries of God is the concept of a being that is three in one. The Bible says that God is one, "[Deuteronomy 6:4](#) - Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD." Jesus even said that God is one Lord. [Mark 12:29](#). So why do Christians believe in a triune God?

## Webster's Definition

Trinity: Webster's dictionary gives the following definition of trinity: "The union of three divine persons (or hypostases), the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, in one divinity, so that all the three are one God as to substance, but three Persons (or hypostases as to individuality)." Synonyms sometimes used are triunity, trine, triality.

The term "trinity" is formed from "tri," three, and "nity," unity. Triunity is a better term than "trinity" because it better expresses the idea of three in one. God is three in one. Hypostases is the plural of hypostasis which means "the substance, the underlying reality, or essence."

## The Doctrine of The Trinity (Excerpts From Bible.org)

The doctrine of the trinity states that there is one God who is one in essence or substance, but three in personality. This does not mean three independent Gods existing as one, but three Persons who are co-equal, co-eternal, inseparable, interdependent, and eternally united in one absolute Divine Essence and Being.

**Essence:** In its theological usage, essence refers to "the intrinsic or indispensable, permanent, and inseparable qualities that characterize or identify the being of God." The words triunity and trinity are used to refer to the fact that the Bible speaks of one God, but attributes the characteristics of God to three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

**Person:** In speaking of the Triunity, the term "person" is not used in same way it is in ordinary usage in which it means *an identity completely distinct from other persons*. Actually the word *persons* tends to detract from the unity of the Trinity. According to the teaching of Scripture, the three Persons are inseparable, interdependent, and eternally united in one Divine Being.

Typically, the words *triunity* and *trinity* are used to help us express a doctrine that is scriptural, though replete with difficulties for the human mind. Again, it needs to be emphasized that this is a doctrine that is not explicitly stated either in the Old or New Testaments, but it is implicit in both. Note the following points:

- (1) Evangelical Christianity has believed in the doctrine of the Trinity, Triunity, or the Triune Godhead because of the teaching of the Bible as a whole (Old and New Testaments) and not because of one or two particular passages. The whole of Scripture gives testimony to this doctrine.

- (2) There are many specific passages which teach us there are three distinct Persons who possess deity, God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit, but the Bible also teaches us with equal emphasis that there is but one true God or one Divine Essence or Substance and Being.
- (3) Taking the whole of Scripture, one can see that there is stress on: (a) the unity of God, one Divine Being and Essence, and (b) on the diversity of God in this unity, three Persons identified as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It speaks of these Persons in such a way that it ascribes absolute undiminished deity and personality to each while stressing that there is but one God in divine substance. It is the doctrine of the trinity that harmonizes and explains the thrusts of Scripture—oneness in three personalities.

When we see that the Bible teaches these three things: (a) there is but one God, (b) that the Father, Son, and Spirit are each God, and (c) that each is set forth as distinct Persons, we have enunciated the doctrine of the Triunity of God.

The three Persons are the same in substance, i.e., in essence or in their essential nature, but distinct in subsistence which describes God's mode or quality of existence in three Persons. By mode of existence we do not mean one God acting in three different ways, but one Divine Being existing in three distinct Persons within one Divine Substance or Essence.

Again, this is not exactly three individuals as we think of three personal individuals, but one Divine Being who acts and thinks as one within a three-fold personality. This is incomprehensible to our finite and limited minds, but it is the teaching of the Scripture. "There are not three individuals, but only three personal self distinctions within the one Divine Essence."

## ***Historical Background***

Though the Bible taught truth of the Triunity of God implicitly in both Old and New Testaments, the development and delineation of this doctrine was brought about by the rise of heretical groups or teachers who either denied the deity of Christ or that of the Holy Spirit. This caused the early church to formally crystallize the doctrine of the Triunity. Actually, Tertullian in 215 A.D. was the first one to state this doctrine using the term, Trinity. Concerning the struggle the early church went through, Walter Martin writes:

As the New Testament was completed toward the close of the first century, the infant church was struggling for its life against old foes—*persecution and doctrinal error*. On the one hand were the Roman Empire, Orthodox Judaism, and hostile pagan religions, and on the other hand were heresies and divisive doctrines. Early Christianity was indeed a perilous experiment.

Probably no doctrine was the subject of more controversy in the early church than that of the Trinity. Certainly the teaching of “one God in three Person” was accepted in the early church, but only as this teaching was challenged did a systematic doctrine of the Trinity emerge.

The Gnostic heresy, for instance, (which permeated Christendom in the lifetime of the apostles) drew strong condemnation in Paul’s Epistles to the Colossians and John’s First Epistle. Denying the deity of Christ, the Gnostics taught that he was inferior in nature to the Father, a type of super-angel of impersonal emanation from God.

Following the Gnostics came such speculative theologians as Origen, Lucian of Antioch, Paul of Samosota, Sabellius, and Arius of Alexandria. All of these propagated unbiblical views of the Trinity and of the divinity of our Lord.

But perhaps the most crucial test of Christian doctrine in the early church was the “Arian heresy.” It was this heresy, which stimulated the crystallization of thought regarding both the Trinity and the deity of Christ.

Today there are still remnants of the Gnostic heresy (Christian Science), the Arian heresy (Jehovah’s Witnesses), and the Socinian heresy (Unitarianism) circulating in Christendom. All of these errors have one thing in common—they give Christ every title except the one, which entitles Him to all the rest—the title of God and Savior.

But the Christian doctrine of the Trinity did not “begin” at the Council of Nicea in 325 A.D., nor was it derived from “pagan influences.” While Egyptian, Chaldean, Hindu, and other pagan religions do incorporate so-called “trinities,” these have no resemblance to the Christian doctrine, which is unique and free from any heathen cultural vagaries

The point, then, is simply this: While the term *Trinity* is never specifically used nor the doctrine explicitly explained in Scripture, it is nevertheless implicitly stated. The church councils, in their fight against heresy, were forced to think through what the Bible says about how God exists. The result was the doctrine of the Triunity, but let it be emphasized; the development of this doctrine was based on a careful study of Scripture.

Cairns discusses this theological controversy in the early church and the extreme care given to this issue:

It was an era when the main dogmas of the Christian Church were developed. The unfavorable connotation conveyed by the word “dogma” in a day of doctrinal laxity, such as the present, should not obscure the value to the Church of dogma. The word “dogma” came through the Latin from the Greek word *dogma*, which was derived from the verb *dodeo*. This word meant to think. The dogmas or doctrines formulated in this period were the result of intense thought and searching of the soul in order to interpret correctly the meaning of the Scriptures on the disputed points and to avoid the erroneous opinions (*doxai*) of the philosopher

Finally, it should be said that, the doctrine of the Trinity is the distinctive mark of the Christian religion, setting it apart from all the other religions of the world. Working without the benefit of the revelations made in Scripture, men have, it is true, arrived at some limited truths concerning the nature and Person of God.

The pagan religions, as well as all philosophical speculations, are based on natural religion and can, therefore, rise to no higher conception than that of the unity of God. In some systems we find monotheism with its belief in only one God. In others we find polytheism with its belief in many separate gods. But none of the pagan religions, or any of the systems of speculative philosophy have ever arrived at a Trinitarian conception of God.

The fact of the matter is that apart from supernatural revelation there is nothing in human consciousness or experience which can give man the slightest clue to the distinctive God of the Christian faith, the triune, incarnate, redeeming, sanctifying God.

Some of the pagan religions have set forth triads of divinities, such as, for instance, the Egyptian triad of Osiris, Isis and Horus, which is somewhat analogous to the human family with father, mother and child; or the Hindu triad of Brahma, Vishnu and Schiva, which in the cycle of pantheistic evolution personifies the creative, preservative and destructive power of nature; or the triad set forth by Plato, of goodness, intellect and will—which are not examples of true and proper tri-personality, not real persons who can be addressed and worshipped, but only personifications of the faculties or attributes of God. None of these systems have anything in common with the Christian doctrine of the Trinity except the notion of “threeness.”

## **Errors To Avoid Concerning The Trinity**

- (1) ***Tri-theism***... This is the teaching that there are three Gods, who are sometimes related, but only in a loose association. Such an approach, abandons the biblical oneness of God and the unity within the Trinity.
  
- (2) **Sabellianism or Modalism**... Sabellius (A.D. 200), the originator of this viewpoint, spoke of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, but he understood all three as no more than three manifestations of one God. This teaching came to be known as Modalism because it views one God who variously manifests Himself in three modes of existence: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

- (3) **Arianism...** This doctrine had its roots in Tertullian, who made the Son subordinate to the Father. Origen took this further by teaching that the Son was subordinate to the Father "in respect to essence." The result was ultimately Arianism, which denied the deity of Christ. Arius taught that only God was the uncreated One; because Christ was begotten of the Father it meant, the Father created Him. Arius believed there was a time when Christ did not exist. Arius and his teaching were condemned at the Council of Nicea in A.D. 325.
- (4) **The Jesus Seminar...** members assume that Jesus "couldn't have said" such things about himself, therefore the disciples must have made these things up.
- (5) **The Latter Day Saints...** seem to be monotheistic until you realize that every good Mormon male aspires to be a god to another planet, and that the founders of Mormonism saw God the Father only as the God of planet Earth, not of the universe, since he was appointed to be the God of the Earth by the council of the gods. This is not actual monotheism but a kind of polytheism.
- (6) **Jehovah's Witnesses...** see Jesus as a divine being, but not in any unique sense as sharing the Father's nature. **John 1:1** should read: "and the Word was God." They translate it: "and the word was a god."
- (7) **Unitarians...** reject the deity of Christ.

## ***Evidence of A Triune God***

While there is no explicit statement in the Old Testament affirming the Trinity, we can confidently say that the Old Testament not only allows for the Trinity, but also implies that God is a triune Being in a number of ways:

- (1) The name *Elohim*, translated *God*, is the plural form of *El*. While this is what is called a plural of plenitude pointing to the power and majesty of God, it certainly allows for the New Testament revelation of the Trinity of God.

- (2) There are many instances where God uses the plural pronoun to describe Himself (see Gen. 1:26; 3:22; 11:7; Isa. 6:8).
- (3) In the creation account, both God the Father and God the Holy Spirit are seen in the work of creation. It is stated that God created heaven and earth (Gen. 1:1), but that it was the Holy Spirit who moved over the earth to infuse it with life in the sense of protecting and participating in the work of creation (Gen. 1:2).
- (4) Writing about the Messiah, Isaiah reveals Him to be equal with God, calling Him the “Mighty God” and “Eternal Father” (Isa. 9:6).
- (5) Several passages reveal a distinction of Persons within the Godhead.
- In [Psalm 110:1](#), David demonstrates there is a distinction of Persons between “LORD,” the one speaking, and the one addressed called by David, “my Lord.” David was indicating the Messiah was no ordinary king, but his own Lord, *Adoni* (my Lord), one who was God Himself. So God the first Person addresses God the second Person. This is precisely Peter’s point when he quotes this Psalm to show the resurrection of the Messiah was anticipated in the Old Testament.
  - The Redeemer (who must be divine, [Isa. 7:14; 9:6](#)) is distinguished from the Lord ([Isa. 59:20](#)).
  - The Lord is distinguished from the Lord in [Hosea 1:6-7](#). The one speaking here is *Yahweh*, the Lord, yet, note the statement in verse 7, “I will have compassion ... and deliver them by the Lord their God.”
  - The Spirit is distinguished from the Lord in a number of passages [Isa. 48:16; 59:21; 63:9-10](#)).
- (6) In the Messianic prophecy of [Isaiah 7:14](#), God made it clear that the One who would be born of the virgin would also be Immanuel, God with us.
- (7) Two other passages which imply the Trinity are [Isaiah 48:16](#) and 61:1. In [Isaiah 48:16](#) all three Persons are mentioned and yet seen as distinct from each other. See also [Gen. 22:15-16](#).

Peter traces salvation to the same triunal source: ‘destined by God the Father and sanctified by the Spirit for obedience to Jesus Christ’ (**[1 Pet. 1:2](#)**). The apostolic benediction: ‘The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all’ (**[2 Cor. 13:14](#)**), not only sums up the apostolic teaching, but interprets the deeper meaning of the Trinity in Christian experience, the saving grace of the Son giving access to the love of the Father and to the communion of the Spirit.

What is amazing, however, is that this confession of God as One in Three took place without struggle and without controversy by a people indoctrinated for centuries in the faith of the one God, and that in entering the Christian church they were not conscious of any break with their ancient faith. From the above evidence, it should be clear that the Scripture teaches God is one and three.

## *The Godhead*

(Excerpts From GotQuestions.com)

The term *Godhead* is found three times in the King James Version: **Acts 17:29; Romans 1:20; and Colossians 2:9**. In each of the three verses, a slightly different Greek word is used, but the definition of each is the same: “deity” or “divine nature.” The word *Godhead* is used to refer to God’s essential nature. We’ll take a look at each of these passages and what they mean.

**In Acts 17**, Paul is speaking on Mars Hill to the philosophers of Athens. As he argues against idolatry, Paul says, “Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man’s device” (**Acts 17:29, KJV**). Here, the word *Godhead* is the translation of the Greek *theion*, a word used by the Greeks to denote “God” in general, with no reference to a particular deity. Paul, speaking to Greeks, used the term in reference to the only true God.

**In Romans 1**, Paul begins to make the case that all humanity stands guilty before God. In verse 20 he says, “The invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse” (KJV). Here, *Godhead* is *theiotés*. Paul’s argument is that all of creation virtually shouts the existence of God; we can “clearly” see God’s eternal power, as well as His “Godhead” in what He has made. “The heavens declare the glory of God; / the skies proclaim the work of his hands” (**Psalms 19:1**). The natural world makes manifest the divine nature of God.

**Colossians 2:9** is one of the clearest statements of the deity of Christ anywhere in the Bible: “In him [Christ] dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.” The word for “Godhead” here is *theotés*. According to this verse, Jesus Christ is God Incarnate. He embodies *all* (“the fullness”) of God (translated “the Deity” in the NIV). This truth aligns perfectly with **Colossians 1:19**, “God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him [Christ].”

Because the Godhead dwells bodily in Christ, Jesus could rightly claim that He and the Father are “one” (**John 10:30**). Because the fullness of God’s divine essence is present in the Son of God, Jesus could say to Philip, “Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father” (**John 14:9**).

In summary, the Godhead is the essence of the Divine Being; the Godhead is the one and only Deity. Jesus, the incarnate Godhead, entered our world and showed us exactly who God is: “No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known” (**John 1:18; cf. Hebrews 1:3**).

## *Three Analogies*

- (1) **The Three-Leaf Clover**... One clover but three distinct inseparable leaves.
- (2) **Time**... is a singular word with a distinct plurality, Past, Present and Future
- (3) **The Triangle**... One triangle with three distinct points.

The Bible is clear. There is only one God, yet He exists, and always has existed, as a Trinity of Persons—the Father, the Son, and the Spirit (cf. John 1:1-2). To deny or misunderstand the Trinity is to deny or misunderstand the very nature of God Himself.

**Why is the Trinity so important?** Because the Son of God, who always existed as God and is still God; that same one who created all things, actually humbled Himself and took upon Himself human flesh to be the spotless Lamb of God, the only sacrifice suitable to redeem us from our sins and to satisfy the just penalty required by God Himself.

The Apostle John wrote of this pre-existent one, the 2<sup>nd</sup> person of the Godhead, saying, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.”

“There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light, which lights every man that cometh into the world.

“He (Jesus) was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not.”

“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.

“And the Word 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.” **John 1:1-14**

The Word was with God and was God. (V.#1) This explains His pre-existence and His eternal equality. The Word became flesh. (V.#14) This explains His humanity. God became man to live the life we could not live because of sin and to die the death we should have died. He was our substitute, the ultimate sacrifice.

## The Triune God In Salvation

God, The Father, God, The Son and God, The Holy Spirit all participated in the creation of man and His redemption.

**Genesis 1:26 ...** And God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.”

**Let Us...this is the trinity at work.**

**John 6:44...** “No man can come to me, except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.” **The Father draws us to Jesus.**

**John 14:6...** Jesus saith unto him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man comes unto the Father, but by me.” **The Son, (Jesus) is the only way to God. Buddha, Mohamed, Allah and all the others are false and cannot get us there.**

**John 3:5...** Jesus answered, “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” **The Holy Spirit gives us a “New Birth” so we can enter His Kingdom.**

## Conclusion

How can we neglect so great a sacrifice? How can we reject such Godly love? How can we ever repay God for this incredible debt? “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.” **II Corinthians 5:21**

There is no way to pay God back for all He has done for us. In fact, He doesn't want us to pay Him Back. “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: **it is the gift of God**: Not of works, lest any man should boast.

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. **Ephesians 2:9-10**

# *The Sin Scenario*

## *The Fall of Man*

### **Introduction**

In Christian theology, the fall of man, or the fall, is a term used to describe the transition of the first man and woman from a state of innocent obedience to God to a state of guilty disobedience. Although not named in the Bible, the doctrine of the fall comes from a biblical interpretation of Genesis chapter 3. At first, Adam and Eve lived with God in the Garden of Eden, but the serpent tempted them into eating the fruit from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, which God had forbidden. After doing so, they became ashamed of their nakedness and God expelled them from the Garden to prevent them from eating from the tree of life and becoming immortal.

For many Christian denominations the doctrine of the fall is closely related to that of original sin. They believe that the fall brought sin into the world, corrupting the entire natural world, including human nature, causing all humans to be born into original sin, a state from which they cannot attain eternal life without the grace of God. **(Romans 5:12)**  
**(1 Corinthians 15:22)**

The belief that man fell from God's glory is predicated upon other beliefs i.e. That there is a God; That He created man as part of an ultimate creation of all things, That man originally existed to have fellowship with God, Spirit to spirit, That God's purpose for creating man was to place His image or reflection in the earth. If we deny these things, we lose sight of where man fell from and where man landed after his fall and how that affected the rest of the human race.

### **Back To The Bible**

Going back to the written record of man's beginning, when God created him, we hear God saying, "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: **(Gen 1:26)** 27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. 28 And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. **(Gen. 2:7)**

That, “*Breath of Life*”, which caused man to become a living soul, was the breath of God, His Holy Spirit. It was this that man lost when he disobeyed God and what Jesus said He had come to seek and to save, (“For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost. **(Luke 19:10)** But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you shall not eat of it: for in the day that you eat thereof you shall surely die. **(Gen. 2:17)**)

Thus the fall of man brought spiritual death to Adam and an exchange of DNA. He was created with God’s nature but now finds himself cut off from God and living in, as it were, an alternate reality... one that took on the nature of sin instead of innocence.

## ***DNA SWAP***

This new DNA, full of sin, is a condition that we call “The Flesh.” The apostle Paul in Galatians, chapter five, appropriately depicts this fleshly nature, Adam’s newfound image. **(Gal. 5:19-21)** “Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envying, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.”

So man fell into this awful nature that actually belongs to Satan. He lost the nature and image of God, which Paul describes as being **(Gal. 5:22)**, the fruit of the Spirit, characterized by **love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, 23 Meekness, temperance:** against such there is no law)... only to now be the mirror image of evil.

## **Spiritual Death**

The 1st man, Adam, died spiritually in the very instant that he disobeyed. He also started to die physically as well. He went on to live in the flesh but not in the Spirit of God. He was lost and dead in his sin. His nature was fallen and he continually missed the mark of God’s righteousness. **(Romans 5:8)**. This loss can be seen clearly in **Gen. 3:9** And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? God surely knew where Adam was. The question was to cause Adam to realize his condition. I guess we could say God was asking Adam, “What happened to you? Where is my Spirit? It’s no longer in you. The judgment of death given to Adam if he ate of the forbidden fruit had come upon him.

## **The Passing On of Death And A Fallen Nature**

All this happened to Adam long before we came on the scene...**so how does what happened to him affect us?** Here’s what the Bible says about that. “Wherefore, as by

one man, sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed all men, for that all have sinned” (**Romans 5:12.**)

All have sinned? Why? Because Adam’s descendants, that’s us, also possessed a fallen nature and could not help but sin. Therefore, everyone dies because of sin. And so it was and so it is and so will be. Mankind dies because of personal sins against a Holy & Righteous God.

## The Doctrine of Original Sin

The theological term “original sin” may be somewhat misleading in that it does not refer to the first act of sin. It refers rather to the results of that act. Though Eve sinned first, God designated Adam as the representative for mankind. By his sin, Adam brought death into the world (**Romans 5:12; 1 Corinthians 15:22**).

Because of this, the mortality rate among humans stands at a consistent 100%. We all die. Having sinned against God, Adam also became unholy, guilty, and unavoidably prone to sin. The formerly clear image of God in him was suddenly and terribly marred. Since then it is as if Adam’s spiritual DNA passes from one generation to the next, causing all people to bear this sad resemblance to their first father. We can see this through the Bible’s consistent descriptions of every one of Adam’s descendants (**Genesis 6:5; Romans 3:10-12, 23**). People do not become sinners when they sin; they sin because they are sinners “by nature” (**Romans 5:19; Ephesians 2:1-3**).

Just as a newborn baby rattlesnake possesses lethal poison and instinctively knows how to coil and strike, human beings naturally behave according to the sinful nature they inherited from Adam (**Psalms 51:5; 58:3**). Our sinful nature is not all we inherited from Adam. We also inherited his guilt. In **Romans 5:12-19**, Paul teaches Christians about Christ’s representative act on their behalf and the imputation of His righteousness. He also describes Adam’s representative act of sin as an inverse but parallel truth. “Therefore, as through one man’s offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man’s righteous act the free gift came to all men resulting in justification of life” (v. 18).

Paul clearly says that it was the one man’s offense that resulted in all men being made sinners and condemned. In verse 16, Paul writes, “the judgment that came from one offense resulted in condemnation.” One single sin resulted in the condemnation of the entire human race. And since a just God can condemn only guilty people, it becomes clear that one single sin resulted in the guilt of the entire human race. Just as Christ’s perfect obedience results in wonderful consequences for all who are in Him—that is, all believers, Adam’s sinful disobedience resulted in shameful consequences for all who were in him—that is, all of humanity. The verse that explains this most clearly is **Romans 5:12**—“Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned . . .” (emphasis added). Paul did not write, “because all sin,” (indicating a present and ongoing reality). He did

not write, “because all will sin” (indicating something in the future). He wrote, “because all sinned,” referring to something that occurred in the past. We were all, in a sense, in Adam when he sinned, and therefore we all actually sinned.

If Paul were saying that our condemnation is based solely on our own sins—those we commit during our lives—then his parallel between Adam and Christ makes no sense unless our justification is based solely on our own righteousness. If God cannot justly condemn based on the imputed guilt of our sinful representative, Adam, neither can He justly reward based on the imputed righteousness of our perfect Representative, Christ. If we are willing to accept the reward of Christ’s imputed righteousness, we must also accept the pain and shame of Adam’s imputed guilt and condemnation - See more at: <http://www.ccwtoday.org/article/understanding-the-fall-of-man-basic-truth-series-5/#sthash.7NCixTfA.dpuf>

## The Rest of The Story

But God did not leave man in this fallen state. He chose to pay the price, the penalty for sin, thus restoring access and fellowship with Him. Again, **Romans 5:8** gives us part of the answer...Jesus died for us. He became the sacrifice for our sins, paying the penalty that He Himself established. (**Ezekiel 18:20**)

**John 3:16** gives us the rest of the story. It tells us that Jesus was and still is the only Begotten Son of God. He came to earth as the 2nd or last Adam and lived life as it was intended, perfectly in tune with God’s law and will and then He went to the cross of Calvary and died for us, a willing sacrifice. He did this so we could be accepted based upon His righteousness. Our righteousness had long since missed the mark.

### The First And Last Adam

The First Adam - Was Created, (**Genesis 1:27**) The Last Adam - Jesus Christ - Is The Creator (**Colossians 1:15-17**)

The First Adam - Wanted To Become Like God, (**Genesis 3:4-6**) The Last Adam – Jesus Christ (God) Became A Man. (**Galatians 4:4,5; John 1:14**)

The First Adam - Believed A Lie. (**John 8:44**) The Last Adam - Jesus Christ - Is the Truth (**John 1:17; John 14:6**)

The First Adam - Disobeyed. (**Genesis 3:17**) The Last Adam Obeyed, even to the point of death. (**John 6:38; Philippians 2:6-8**)

The First Adam - Was Sent Away. (**Genesis 3:22-24**) The Last Adam - Was Sent to Pay. (**John 3:13-18**)

The First Adam - Brought Death to the Living. (**Romans 5:12**) The Last Adam – Jesus Christ - Brought Life to the Dying. (**1 Corinthians 15:21-22**)

As the sin and disobedience of the first Adam brought death to the world, the second Adam, Jesus Christ, brought life: "For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive." (**1 Cor 5:21-22 - NIV**)

If you can believe Jesus, which I do, He says WHOSOEVER believes on Him should not perish but have everlasting life. (**John 3:16**) When we put our faith in Jesus, we are, "Born Again". That term can be better explained in Chapter three of Saint John's gospel.

## **A Water Birth & A Spiritual Birth**

We are born first of water. (Physical Birth) When we confess to God that we are sinners and repent, we go through a new birth experience that fills us with the breath of God, His Spirit. (Spiritual Birth) We become as He intended us to be from the beginning. We are in Christ and that makes us alive.

Here are a few Bible verses from the book of Romans in the New Testament. They will help you to understand how to be saved.

1. **Romans 3:23** "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." We all have sin in our hearts. We all were born with sin. - ***Admit that you are a sinner.***
2. **Romans 6:23a** "...The wages of sin is death..." Sin has an ending. It results in death. We all face physical death, which is a result of sin. But a worse death is spiritual death that alienates us from God. This death will last for all eternity. The Bible teaches that there is a place called the, "Lake of Fire", where lost people will be in torment forever. It is the place where people who are spiritually dead end up and remain for all of eternity. ***Understand that you deserve death for your sin.***
3. **Romans 6:23b** "...But the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Salvation is a free gift from God to you! You can't earn this gift, but you must reach out and receive it. - ***Ask God to forgive you and save you.***
4. **Romans 5:8**, "God demonstrates His own love for us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." "When Jesus died on the cross, He paid sin's penalty. He paid the price for all sin, and when He took all the sins of the world on Himself on the cross, He brought us out of slavery, sin and death! The only condition is that we believe in Him and what He has done for us. **He did all this because He loved us.**

The early apostles said that we needed to believe that Jesus is the only Son of God; that He died on the cross of Calvary for our sins; that He was buried and rose again on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day. This belief opened the floodgates for a new life with God. No more hopelessness and fear of death. Now, we have hope and peace with God, knowing Jesus will help us through this life and the one to come.

## The Skeptics Are Wrong

Skeptics say that Jesus was a mere man and thus subject to the same DNA fault as Adam. However, the gospel story makes it clear that Jesus was born of a Virgin, one who had never been with a man. This was the only way Jesus could escape the sin nature and qualify to be the 2nd or last Adam.

Now, the “Born Again” man can manifest God’s divine nature, whereas, the unregenerate man or not born again man cannot. In effect, we have two natures and they are always in conflict, trying to control the image that is manifested in us.

Paul, The apostle says, “For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. (Galatians 5:17)

## Spirit Or Flesh

The “Born Again” man can choose to walk in the Spirit or to walk in the Flesh. Remember, God’s plan was to place His image and likeness in the earth. The fulfillment of that desire is now in the hands of the “Born Again” man. He can hate or love. He can be short tempered or longsuffering. He can be good or bad. However. He must deny one to release the other. We are encouraged to walk in the Spirit so we will not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

(“I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.” Gal.5: 16)

As we read the daily newspapers or view the nightly news, it’s all about what evil happened today. Satan’s image is being revealed everywhere. But quietly, among thousands of believers, God’s image and nature flourishes, revealing God to whomever wants to see.

The apostle Paul again talks about this double nature in his letter to the church at Rome. **(Romans 7:4-25)** 4 For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. 15 For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. 16 If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. 17 Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. 18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.

19 For the good that I would I do not: but the evil, which I would not, that I do. 20 Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. 21 I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. 22 For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: 23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. 24 O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this

death? 25 I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

This is a clear picture of two natures battling each other for supremacy, as the believer struggling with a fallen nature, as he tries to do what he knows is good.

Many folks that claim to be Christians do not believe in the “Born Again” experience or that man ever fell from God’s glory. They still look upon man as inherently good and not altogether wretched. **Jeremiah 17:10** tells us that the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? This condition of the heart is a result of man’s sin and remains today as a consequence of the fall.

## **All Men Are Not Brothers**

All men are not brothers, only those who are truly “Born Again” because they share in one Spirit and have the same father, God. Those folks that are not “Born Again” are not our brothers. They are unbelievers.

Paul, writing to the Corinthian church put it this way, **(II Corinthians 6:14)** Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? : Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? 15 And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? 16 And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

## **Will The Real Christian Please Stand Up?**

How do you know that the “Christian” sitting next to you is a believer? *That’s simple...* look for the fruit of the Spirit. True Christian fellowship is birthed out of God’s Holy Spirit. If you do not see Love, Joy, Peace, Longsuffering and the rest of the fruit, chances are they are not “Born Again.” However, do not be too hasty to draw a conclusion for many of today’s fine Christian folk are living in the Flesh and have never learned or forgotten how to walk in the Spirit. You just may be God’s instrument of  *blessing to show them the way back to having fellowship with God.*

## **The, “Being Like God,” Lie**

Adam must have thought that by knowing or experiencing evil, he would be like God. The irony of it all was that Adam was already like God, fashioned in His image and likeness. There was no evil in Him. God didn’t want Adam to know evil.

This “Being Like God” (by knowing evil) is a lie yet it is still with us today and has destroyed many believers and unbelievers over the years since Adam fell. Don’t fall for that lie. It will lead you straight into God’s judgment. Here’s a popular saying that we

should avoid, “The Devil made me do it.” He tempted Adam and Eve but they bought the lie. The Devil cannot make you do anything. It is our choice to do a certain thing or act a certain way. The only way to avoid confusion and fall prey to the Devil’s subtlety is to know the truth.

A serious study of the Bible, God’s Holy Word, will equip you to withstand the wiles of the devil. During the devil’s temptations of Jesus, He continually answered the attacks with, “It Is Written.” That is how it’s done in real life warfare. Adam didn’t have the Bible but He still had God’s spoken word and could have used it as a weapon against the Devil’s attack.

## Some Effects of “The Fall”

Some of the effects of man’s fall from God’s Glory into sin are listed below. You may see more as you personally study this topic.

1. The loss of God’s image and likeness.
2. The inability to walk in His Spirit as before.
3. The horror of a new nature that is prone to rebellion and sin.
4. The loss of immortality and ultimately spiritual life.
5. The sorrow of knowing that all of his descendants will be slaves to sin.
6. The pain of dealing with problems that are caused by the practice of sin.
7. The sadness of watching as death falls upon a loved one and they die.
8. The sorrow in knowing that many of his descendants will be damned.

## Conclusion

Thanks be to God for sending Jesus so we can find peace in this life and eternal life with Him forever. The effects of the fall are reversed in Jesus so we can be forgiven for all our sins and actually have fellowship with God. Now that’s a beautiful thing.

However, many do not and will not accept Jesus as God’s only Son and their sacrifice for their sin. They say that everybody should believe what they want. No one will really know what is true until they die.

These folks are not willing to believe all the personal testimonies of over 2000 years of Christianity and the Word of God that describes it. They are afraid of meeting their Maker now before they die, even though they read that He is a God of love and that it is not His wish that anyone should perish. They are deceived by the devil and have believed his lie.

On a more positive note, **Romans 8:16** says, “The Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.” We can know Him now and walk with Him and worship Him NOW. We can know that there is a real heaven and a real Hell and that it is our choice where we will go after we die.

# *How To Be Born Again*

## *The Biblical Way*

### **Preface**

This Teaching is written to explain and clarify the Biblical truth of being, “Born Again.” We will examine the theological importance of being, “Born Again”, as well as the process that takes place.

We will look at the experience as a life changing event and search for the many benefits that overtake the believer. We will examine the new reality that makes up the daily life of those who have experienced new birth in Jesus.

We will answer the three most asked questions by skeptics:

1. Why is there a need for a 2<sup>nd</sup> birth?
2. What proof is there that it really happened?
3. How does it change the life of the individual?

### *Introduction*

The recently released Pew Research Center Report By Stephen Mattson 05-15-2015 has revealed that Christianity within the United States is on the decline. Here are a few excerpts from his report.

Christians are freaking out and the fear mongering has begun — many seeing it as an apocalyptic sign of the moral downfall of our secular society coinciding with a theological weakening caused by “liberalism.”

Everyone seems to have an explanation of the data, and among Christians, the infighting has already begun, with most denominations rationalizing their growth, decline, or stagnancy by offering the same explanation: We’re theologically sound and remaining faithful to God while everyone else is getting it wrong.

**In 1965** — an astounding 93 percent of the United States population identified as Christian. But again, the sixties were hardly representative of a “Christian” nation. The point is that while the percentage of Christians in America was near its highest — the moral state of our society was far from “Christian.”

In many ways, today's America is more Christian than at any previous moment in its history! Slavery and segregation has been abolished, gender inequality is on the decline, the wage gap has decreased, church communities are more diverse than ever, and people's rights and opportunities related to education, jobs, and opportunities are better than ever.

Evangelical churches added more than 2 million people to their ranks, up from 59.8 million in 2007 to 62.2 million in 2014. Meanwhile, mainline churches lost 5 million people. "As a result, evangelicals now constitute a clear majority (55%) of all US Protestants," noted Pew.

In response, about one-third of American adults (35%) self-identified as evangelicals in 2014, nearly the same as in 2007 (34%). Meanwhile, Americans who self-identified as Christians dropped from 78 percent in 2007 to 71 percent in 2014. *(This is still a huge drop from 93% in 1965.)*

## The Problem

Today, Christians are more likely to consider themselves "born-again" or evangelical. Half of self-identified Christians described themselves this way in 2014, up from 44 percent in 2007. This includes 72 percent of those in historically black Protestant churches, up from 67 percent in 2007.

More surprisingly, a rising share of adults in other Christian traditions self-identify as born-again or evangelical, including: mainline Protestants (27% in 2014 vs. 25% in 2007), Catholics (22% vs. 16%), Orthodox (18% vs. 16%).

By contrast, 15 percent of adults in evangelical churches do not identify as born-again or evangelical. Neither do 21 percent of those at nondenominational churches, or 10 percent of those at Pentecostal churches.

Some Protestant denominational families are quite divided on this measure, including Methodists (45% born-again or evangelical vs. 51% no), Presbyterians (42% yes vs. 55% no), Lutherans (33% yes vs. 63% no), Adventists (63% yes vs. 29% no), and Restorationists (66 yes vs. 29% no).

Christianity is the most adhered religion in the United States, with 70.6% of polled American adults identifying themselves as Christian in 2014. This is down from 86% in 1990, lower than 78.6% in 2001 and slightly lower than 73% in 2012. About 62% of those polled claim to be members of a church congregation.

It should be noted that some folks that claim Christianity may very well be Born of the Spirit but are not familiar with the term, "Born Again" We do not want to pre-judge any one group. Statistics are just that, a snapshot in time. Data can be misleading and should be looked at as a guideline only.

The United States has the largest Christian population in the world, with nearly 247 million Christians, although other countries have higher percentages of Christians among their populations.

## The Evaluation

We have looked at Christianity as a religion. It is the only way that we can analyze it. However, the truth be known, being a Christian originally meant that you were a follower of Jesus, a disciple.

It was not a religion but rather a relationship. A convert to Christianity went through a time of repentance, a plea for forgiveness, and an acceptance of Jesus as Lord. Today, many churches offer a membership and boldly state that you can come just as you are, with no repentant heart, no plea for forgiveness and no need to live under the Lordship of Christ.

## *A Biblical Reality Check*

### Here's what Jesus said.

1. "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." **Luke 14:6**

The Contemporary English Version translates this verse like this, "You cannot be my disciple, unless you love me more than you love your father and mother, your wife and children, and your brothers and sisters. You cannot come with me unless you love me more than you love your own life." **Luke 14:6**

2. "And when He had called the people to Him with His disciples also, He said to them, whoever will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever will save his life shall lose it; but whoever shall lose his life for My sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it." **(Mar 8:34-35)**
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." **John 3:3**

The Pew report tells us that there are a large percentage of evangelicals that do not identify themselves as, "Born Again." What happens to these folks? Is there a different place that they will go when they die? According to Jesus, to see the kingdom of God, **you must be born again**. We know from the rest of the scriptures that there is a heaven, kingdom of God, and there is a Hell, a place of torment. It's either heaven or hell. Some will benefit and some will not.

Could it be that 51% of all Methodists, 55% of all Presbyterians, 63% of all Lutherans, 29% of all Adventists and 29% of all Restorationists will not see the kingdom of God?

The Pew report also says that 15 % of all Evangelicals and 21% of all nondenominational Christians do not identify themselves as, "Born Again" This report also says that 78% of all Catholics do not identify themselves as being, "Born Again".

## **The Question is *Why Be Born Again?***

The question is, are non "Born Again" Christians really children of God? I think it is important to examine why Jesus said, "You Must Be "Born Again" He was talking to Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews of that day. Listen to the story as recorded by John, the Apostle.

There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. <sup>2</sup> This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him."

<sup>3</sup> Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

<sup>4</sup> Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?"

<sup>5</sup> Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. <sup>6</sup> That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

<sup>7</sup> Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' <sup>8</sup> The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit."

<sup>9</sup> Nicodemus answered and said to Him, "How can these things be?"

<sup>10</sup> Jesus answered and said to him, "Are you the teacher of Israel, and do not know these things? <sup>11</sup> Most assuredly, I say to you, We speak what We know and testify what We have seen, and you do not receive Our witness.

<sup>12</sup> If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things? <sup>13</sup> No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, *that is*, the Son of Man who is in heaven. <sup>14</sup> And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, <sup>15</sup> that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. <sup>17</sup> For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. **John 3:1-16**

Nicodemus was a ruler of the Jews. That would be the equivalent to being a Pastor or Bible Teacher today. He was a member of an established religious group. He was seen as a man of authority, wisdom and one who was educated in the things of God. However, like many religious leaders of our day, he lacked the simple truth that makes a person a child of God.

It's not religion, being nice, doing good works, being smart, and wealthy or any earthly thing. Jesus qualified it by saying **you need a 2<sup>nd</sup> birth, that of the Spirit to see and enter His kingdom.** This can only happen by believing in Jesus who is the only begotten Son of God. The 1<sup>st</sup> birth is not eternal due to sin but the 2<sup>nd</sup> is eternal because of Christ. (See Romans Chapter 5)

## Deception Rules The Day

Sixty-five percent of all Christians say there are multiple paths to eternal life, ultimately rejecting the exclusivity of Christ teaching, according to the latest survey conducted by the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life.

Even among white evangelical Protestants, 72 percent of those who say many religions can lead to eternal life name at least one non-Christian religion, such as Islam or no religion at all, that can lead to salvation.

Dr. R. Albert Mohler, Jr., president of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, called the survey results "a theological crisis for American evangelicals," according to USA Today.

Majorities among white Evangelicals, white Mainline Christians, and Black Protestants who do not believe in the exclusivity of salvation say Catholicism and Judaism can lead to eternal life, Pew results show.

Smaller but still sizeable percentages (more than half) of white mainline Christians, black Protestants and white Catholics who say there are multiple ways to eternal life also say Islam can lead to salvation; among white evangelicals, 35 percent agree. And more than half of white mainline Christians and white Catholics who view heaven's gates as wide say Hinduism can lead to eternal life compared to 33 percent of white evangelicals and 44 percent of black Protestants.

Surprisingly, Christians also believe atheism can provide a ticket to heaven. Forty-six percent of white mainline Christians, 49 percent of white Catholics and 26 percent of white evangelicals who believe many religions lead to salvation say atheism can lead to eternal life.

Mohler called the findings "an indictment of evangelicalism and evangelical preaching."

## The Bible Tells The Truth

All of these folks that view the path to heaven as wide go against Biblical truth. Here's what the bible says:

1. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. **Acts 4:12**
2. Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. **John 14:6**
3. I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. **John 10:9**
4. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. **Revelation 3:20**

Jesus said, "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide *is* the gate, and broad *is* the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait *is* the gate, and narrow *is* the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. **Matthew 7:13-14**

It hurts me to read about how many people that claim to be Christian are deceived and on the wrong path in life. I guess they believe that their church will save them or their good works or the fact that they are worthy in some other way to qualify for eternal life.

Before we deal with how to be born again...to experience a new or 2<sup>nd</sup> birth, it is important to look at why it is necessary and why Jesus is the only one that can get us to heaven.

## *Just "One" Way*

It is hard for most folks that are not "Born Again" to understand why there is just one way to God, yet it is true. There is only one way and that is through Jesus Christ. The Bible is our source to prove that the one-way doctrine is valid. **Acts 4:12** says, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

**Here's why it's so important.** Adam sinned against God and died spiritually. "And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: <sup>17</sup> But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." **Genesis 2:16-17**

His creation account shows him being made of clay and God breathing into him the breath of life. He thus became a living soul. “And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.” **Genesis 2:7**. When he sinned, the breath of life was taken from him and he became a dead soul. He was truly the first of a race of the walking dead.

Life is always in relationship to God. It is His breath or Spirit that makes us alive. So, death passed upon all men for all sinned. (**Romans 5:12**) Their nature was now sinful. We see this in all of us and in our society.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> birth experience is by the Spirit. The Breath of Life is given to each repentant heart and their souls become alive to God. They become His children by birth.

**Jesus is the only way to attain salvation.** All the world religions cannot save us. Joining a church or specific faith cannot save us. It must be an acknowledgment of our sin, our cry before the throne of God for forgiveness, and our invitation for Jesus to come into our hearts and save us. His name is the only name that can get us through death into eternal life.

Here are a few scriptures that support the only “One-Way” doctrine.

1. ...there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time. (**I Timothy 2:5-6**)
2. ...Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved... (**Acts 16:31**)
3. 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. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. (**Romans 10:9-10**)

The skeptic would say, ”You mean to tell me that all the religions of the world are wrong and only Christianity is the one true religion?” Remember, Christianity is not a religion. It is a relationship born out of love between man and the one true and living God. There is no one true religion. Religion, in itself, will not get us to God. It is the blood of Christ that unlocks the door and our confession of faith in Jesus that makes it all happen. (**John 14:6**)

**Why is Jesus the only way to God?** ...Because God planned it that way. He set the penalty for sin, which was death. *The soul that sinneth, it shall die.* (**Ezekiel 18:20**) In fact, Jesus was the slain Lamb of God before the foundation of the world. (**Ephesians 1:3-7**)

Jesus Himself said, as recorded in **John 14:6**, “I am the way, the truth, and the life: No man cometh to the Father but by Me”. Christianity states that the God of the Bible is the only true God and salvation is only possible by accepting Jesus Christ, His only begotten

Son as Savior and Lord. **II Corinthians 5:21** says, “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.”

## Validation

God validated His Son as the only way in multiple ways so we could be assured that Jesus was indeed the only way to Him. Here are some to consider.

1. He claimed to be the only way as in John’s record 14:6 says but validation came through miracles that proved He was who He claimed to be.
2. Eyewitnesses saw Jesus’ miracles and validated them as authentic. Over 500 followers saw Jesus, after His resurrection, and watched Him ascend into heaven.
3. The prophets foretold of His coming, where He would be born, that He would be God in human flesh and lots more...all prophetic statements were realized in Jesus, even those like in Isaiah chapter 53 that were uttered hundreds of years before Jesus came.
4. God Himself validated Jesus as His sole pathway to Him. “While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear ye Him!”(**Mathew 17:5**)
5. The Apostles lost their homes, wealth, and even their lives preaching the gospel. Would they do that if it were a lie? I don’t think so. They testified to the truth and were willing to die for it if necessary. (Read Foxes Book of Martyrs)
6. Thousands of Believers, over several centuries have testified of how Jesus helped them and blessed them.
7. I can personally testify that I have seen the hand of the Lord in my life and communicate with Him daily. I know He is the Christ.

The provability that one man could fulfill all prophecies about a Messiah that God Himself said would come, (**Gen.3:15**), and perform fantastic miracles while here on earth, and be raised from the dead, and ascend into heaven while hundreds looked on is astronomical. But Jesus did just that...fulfilled everything that was foretold about the coming Messiah. He had to be who He said He was and therefore is truly the only way to God.

## How To Be Born Again

It should be obvious by now that it is essential for anyone who wants eternal life to be, “Born Again.” **Romans 10:9-10** will tell us how.

“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. <sup>10</sup> For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”

**Romans 10:9-10**

Confessing Jesus is to acknowledge His Lordship and openly proclaim your allegiance. There is no secret society. That’s why the scripture says, “With Thy Mouth.”

Believing with the heart is different than with the mind. When we believe with our heart, it means to rely upon, adhere to and trust in. We are to wholly embrace the truth that God raised up Jesus from the dead after being crucified for the sins of mankind.

The power to save us and birth us into His kingdom as His child is in the fact that our heart felt belief brings us the righteousness of Christ and our open mouth of continual confession in Him as our savior actually saves us.

Remember what Paul wrote to the Romans in Chapter 5. He said, in affect, that Adam was the 1<sup>st</sup> man who fell into sin and took the entire race with him. Thus death passed upon all of us. However, Jesus was the 2<sup>nd</sup> Adam or man that was sent outside of the pollution of human sinful DNA via a virgin birth to be the spotless Lamb of God and to be slain as a sacrifice for sin to abolish it forever. This is why the “New Birth” is necessary, to free us from the sin of the 1<sup>st</sup> Adam and propel us by spiritual birth into the Kingdom of God.

## **How Do We Know For Sure That We Are, “Born Again?”**

“The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: <sup>17</sup> And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.” **Romans 8:15-17**

We who have believed can say that we are His children, without a doubt or any question in our minds. We can because the Spirit of God is continually bearing witness with our spirits. He leads us; He communicates with us, He teaches us and shows us truth and error. **That’s how we know for sure.**

If you have never seen the hand of God in your life or heard the spirit speaking to you, you might want to go back to God and repent of your sins, ask his forgiveness and ask Jesus to come into your heart and save you. Then receive Jesus as your Lord and Savior. This is the only way you can be born again.

## How Does This Born Again Experience Change Us

And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, 2in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. 3Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.

4But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 5even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), 6and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus, 7so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

8For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, *it is* the gift of God; 9not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. 10For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.

12remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

13But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. 14For He Himself is our peace, who made both *groups into* one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, 15by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, *which is* the Law of commandments *contained* in ordinances, so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, *thus* establishing peace, 16and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity.

17AND HE CAME AND PREACHED PEACE TO YOU WHO WERE FAR AWAY, AND PEACE TO THOSE WHO WERE NEAR; 18for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father.

19So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household, 20having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner *stone*, 21in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord, 22in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit. **Ephesians 2:1-22 ASV**

Read this again. It tells you where you were or are now and where God takes you when you are Born Again. It is truly a life changing experience.

## **Benefits That Overtake Us At Our New Birth**

The above scripture passage reveals 10 benefits that overtake the believer at his new birth. They are:

1. We experience God's great Mercy and Love...verse #4
2. We are made alive to God, given eternal life...verse #5
3. We were raised up with Christ and seated with Him in Heavenly Places.... verse #6
4. We receive His Grace or unmerited favor...Verse # 8
5. We are brought close to God by the Blood of Christ...verse #13
6. Jesus becomes our peace...verse #14
7. We gain access to God through His Spirit...verse #18
8. We are no longer strangers but fellow citizens and joint heirs with Christ...verse 19
9. We are becoming a spiritual dwelling for God...verse #22
10. We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works that were established before we were saved so we could walk in them...v#10

## **Conclusion**

We have looked at statistics that show trends and percentages of those in error. We have discussed doctrines like Jesus as the only pathway to God The Father. We have looked at benefits of being Born Again and why it is necessary to attain eternal life. We have seen how to be Born again through repentance, a plea for forgiveness and an invitation to Jesus to enter our hearts and be Lord over our lives.

There is only one thing left to do, decide if you are, "Born Again" or not. If not, go before the Lord and ask to be born into His kingdom. Then follow the teachings of this eBook.

The Butterfly is a great example of a sinner being transformed into a child of God. Check it out on the next page.

## **The Story of The Butterfly**

The butterfly is a beautiful example of the Born Again experience. It is a new creation that came out of a metamorphic change that took place in the life of a caterpillar. The body of the 1<sup>st</sup> was changed into the body of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and it is totally different that the 1<sup>st</sup>. Thus is the butterfly, never to revert back to being a caterpillar.

This is what happens to us. We are changing ever so slowly until one day when we put off mortality and soar into the immortality of eternal life.

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May the Lord bless you and keep you. May He cause His face to shine upon you and give you peace.

## *The “Whosoever” Doctrine Of Salvation*

### *Introduction*

A certain man asked a little boy once, “What do you want to be when you grow up” The little boy thought for a few moments and then replied. He said, “Sir? I would like to be a “Whosoever”.

The man laughed and said, “ A Whosoever, what is that?” The little boy again replied saying, “Don’t you read your Bible.”

The little boy continued to explain. “If I become a doctor or lawyer or a successful business man, I no doubt will gain wealth, fame and maybe even power over others but if I loose my own soul in the process, what has it benefited me?”

“On the other hand, if I become a “whosoever” I gain eternal life. I will be blessed in this life and the one to come”

The little boy was wise beyond his years. He was an avid reader of the Bible and loved to learn about God. His desire to know led him to the greatest discovery of all times, the meaning of life and eternity. It was all there, wrapped up in one word spoken by Jesus, “**Whosoever.**”

### **What’s In A Word?**

The word, “Whosoever” is full of meaning. You just have to think about it. The dictionary says this: “an archaic or formal word for whoever”

Ok, whosoever preceded whoever. Again, here is what the dictionary says:

## A Pronoun

1. Any person who; anyone that: whoever wants it can have it.
2. No matter who: I'll come round tomorrow, whoever may be here.
3. An intensive form of who, used in questions: whoever could have thought that?
4. **(Informal)** an unknown or unspecified person: *give those to John, or Cathy, or whoever.*

So, the word describes an unknown person that does something. It requires action on the part of the unknown individual. He or she must do something in order to be a, “Whosoever.”

## The Actions of A “Whosoever”

Whosoever or whoever, whichever you like, must do something...jump off a cliff or get in the car or follows me home...(there is a reward or punishment based upon the action taken by the unknown or unspecified persons.)

Let’s look at some “Whosoever” Scriptures to see the actions of the “Whosoever”.

## Related To The Lord’s Supper

“Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink *this* cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.” **I Corinthians 11:27**

In this example: Paul, the apostle, is talking to Christians about the Lord’s Supper. The very next verse tells the story. “But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of *that* bread, and drink of *that* cup.” **I Corinthians 11:28**

The “Whosoever’ must examine himself to see if there is anything that stands between him and his relationship with his Lord.. If so, the remedy is to ask for forgiveness in accordance with **I John 1:9** and then accept the sacrament. To participate without seeking forgiveness is to take it unworthily.

The truth of the scripture is the revelation that the blood of Christ was shed for the remission of sin, our sin and His body was broken, in death, for us. His body now exists in a multitude of believers that are one in Him. We are His body. “Now you are the body of Christ, and members in particular” **I Corinthians 12:27**

## Related To Salvation

“For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.” **Romans 10:13** and “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” **John 3:16**

The actions of the, “Whosoever”, is clear. It is to call upon the name of the Lord and to believe in Him. There is no mention of joining a church, following a certain religion, keeping a strict set of rules, or doing lots of good deeds.

Salvation, per **John 3:16**, is offered to all who believe. It is a free gift given by God out of a deep love for us, even though we are full of sin. Read what the Bible says.

- “And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross” **Colossians 2:13-14**
- “As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath. But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.
- For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” **Ephesians 2:1-10 NIV**

Salvation is by the grace of God. It is offered to the, “Whosoever” of this world. They are those that accept the offer. If the call to salvation is rejected, the one who rejects it is not a, “Whosoever” and thus misses out on its blessings.

## Related To Being A Child of God

“Whosoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loves him that begat loves him also that is begotten of him.” **I John 5:1**

Here is a clearly stated benefit of being a, “whosoever”. Those that believe in Jesus are born of God. The apostle Paul wrote to the Christians in Rome and said this to them:

“The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with *Him*, that we may also be glorified together.” **Romans 8:16-17**

We need only to believe to become a child of God. His Holy Spirit will let us know in many different ways that we are His children. If we suffer with Him through ridicule or persecution, we will also share in His glory.

“We all suffer with Christ as we live out our salvation. It is a fight to the finish against evil forces. “For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.” **Ephesians 6:12**

## **Related To Spiritual Growth**

Then Jesus declared, “I am the bread of life. Whosoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whosoever believes in me will never be thirsty.” **John 6:35**

I believe that this is a shadow, not an image of the physical but rather a portrait of the spiritual. Our society is going hungry for a lack of God’s Word. We are in a full-blown Spiritual famine. Oh, yes, Spiritual food is all around us but labeled as fanatic, evil, silly and so forth. Many choose not to partake and end up Thirsty for the Gospel and Hungry for the truth of God’s Word.

Back in the days of the dustbowl, people went hungry for a lack of food. Some folks wised up and planted potatoes and survived but many narrow-minded Christians, said that potatoes were grown in the ground. They did not grow up like other stuff. Because God had cursed the ground, they would not eat potatoes and went hungry as a result.

When Spiritual food is all around us, being narrow-minded and abstaining for eating it is not the right thing to do. Yet many in Jesus’ day and now in ours do just that.

## **Related To Listening & Obedience**

“Therefore whosoever hears these sayings of mine, and does them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock.” **Matthew 7:24**

The benefit of listening and doing what you are told is the blessing of wisdom. Knowing the sayings of Jesus is not enough to gain wisdom. You also have to apply what you know. This is the cornerstone of Godly wisdom.

The story in Matthew chapter seven is about two types of men. Both are building a home, which is a type of lifestyle. One uses a solid rock; a symbol of Jesus and His sayings while the other ignores God and what Jesus has to say. This ignorance is pictured as a foundation of sand. The storms of life came to both but only the one that was solidly built on the Rock

of Ages remained in place. The other was destroyed by the storms and its destruction was great. It is important to listen for the voice of God and even more so to obey. Hearing the sayings found in the Bible is ware the, “Whosoever,” begins.

## **Related To Righteousness**

“Whoever pursues righteousness and love finds life, prosperity and honor.” **Proverbs 21:21**

We can find life, prosperity and honor by seeking righteousness and love. We are to pursue them or diligently search for them with all our hearts.

This does not mean to become righteous in our own eyes by keeping a set of rules or judgments. We, as Christians, already know that it cannot be obtained by our own efforts. We obtain it from Jesus as the Word of God teaches.

(Here’s a excerpt from Qot/Questions.com)...The apostle Paul writes, “But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it—the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe” (**Romans 3:21–22**).

Through our faith in Christ, the righteousness of God is given to us. This is called “imputed” righteousness. To impute something is to ascribe or attribute something to someone. When we place our faith in Christ, God ascribes the perfect righteousness of Christ to our account so that we become perfect in His sight.

“For our sake he made him [Jesus] to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God” (**2 Corinthians 5:21**).

## **Related To Our Relationship With Jesus**

”For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and *in his* Father's, and of the holy angels.” **Luke 9:26**

It’s clear that we must be all in or not at all. Being ashamed means to reject Him or deny Him when it really counts. Peter did that three times the night before Jesus was crucified. We do it all the time when we laugh at off color jokes, run with a crowd that uses His name in vein, and never publicly proclaim His love and salvation.

When was the last time you shared your faith with another person? When was the last time you stood up against folks that go against the Word of God? You know who they are, the folks that push free sex, abortion, Gay rights, and other immoral practices that the Word of God condemns.

We are the, “Whosoever” of this generation. We ought to proudly proclaim Jesus as Lord and Savior. We should not care if someone’s disagrees with us. We should follow Jesus anyway and share our faith with whoever will listen.

## **God’s, “Whosoever,” Fan Club**

We are the adoring fans of Christ. We are His “Fan Club”. We are millions of, “Whosoever” that put their faith and trust in God’s only Son. We answered the call of God to join His family. We are willing to take the criticism of those that will not believe and the insults from those that seek evil and immorality.

We come from every nation, every language and every cultural background. We are Black, White, Asian, American Indian, and stream through every nationality. We are Fireman, Policeman, Ministers, Housewives, Teachers, Unemployed, Homeless, Educated, Unschooling, and Male or Female.

We are the face of Him who bled and died on the cross for the redemption of mankind. We are in Him and He is in us. We bear the image of His likeness and dwell in His Spirit.

## ***Conclusion***

It should be obvious by now that the Biblical definition of a, “Whosoever” is one that believes in Jesus. They have responded to the call of God to trust in His only begotten Son and have made Him Lord over their life. Listen to what Jesus said:

**“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” John 3:16**

Jesus didn’t say that God was angry or mad at us. He said that the call to salvation was from a heart full of love. He also said that those who respond would not perish but instead attain eternal life.

**Note:** To perish is to be eternally separated from God. To attain eternal life is to eternally be with God, living in His love and blessings.

God is on our side. He wants us to live, not die. His destiny for us is to be with Him. His will is to allow us to be joint or equal heirs with Christ to His entire kingdom. It’s an exciting time that we should be so blessed. There is no sorrow, no tears, and no hell for the, “Whosoever”.

Hell is a place originally created for the devil and his angels (Demons). It is also a place where the lost will spend eternity. It is a place of torment and suffering where everyone will bear the judgment of their sin. We don’t want to go there.

## A Free Will Choice

Some have said that we do not have a choice in salvation...that it is all of God and nothing of man. He wills who will be saved and who will not, who will go to hell and who will not. I do not follow this doctrine.

I do believe that God chose us from the foundation of the world and that it is His election. We are the elect of God, a chosen generation. However, we are because we believed. Man does have a part in his own salvation. If we didn't, Jesus would not have said, whosoever believes attains life eternal.

I think the apostle Paul put it in perspective in his letter to the Roman church. Here's what he told them.

“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. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us” **Romans 8:29-31**

This scriptural text tells us several things:

1. God, in His foreknowledge, knew who would respond to His call.
2. He then pre-determined their destination...to be Christ-like.
3. The purpose of this action was to insure that Jesus would be the 1<sup>st</sup> born of many, a new race of man that is in harmony with God.
4. The called out ones are both justified and glorified because of Jesus.

Because God knew who would trust in Christ before they made a decision to follow Him, doesn't mean that His salvation was only offered to them and not offered to all of mankind.

## Inclusive And Exclusive

The, “Whosoever” doctrine is inclusive to all but limited to the few that accept it. The offer is to everyone but sadly, not everyone will believe. Those that do believe attain the blessings. Those that do not are like the may that built their houses without an adequate foundation. It will fall into ruin when storms come. Salvation is open to all and reserved for those who believe in Jesus.



death and resurrection that brought everlasting redemption to them. Now as Christ is the Lord of all things in heaven and earth, and as He is the central figure in God's plan of redemption, it is expedient for us, if we would attain a proper understanding of the Biblical doctrine of soteriology, to approach it from the perspective of the lordship of Jesus Christ.

## **The Lordship of Christ in Salvation**

If men are to be saved from their sin, it can only be in and through the Lord Jesus Christ. The reason for this is that men are in no condition to save themselves. The Scripture paints a dark picture of fallen man's predicament. Man is born in sin (Ps. 51:5; Rom. 5:12), and every aspect of his being has been corrupted by sin, rendering him helpless as to his own salvation. His mind is at enmity with God (Col. 1:21; Rom. 8:7), and cannot understand or receive the things of God (1 Cor. 2:14; Rom. 3:11).

His heart is deceitful and desperately wicked (Jer. 17:9; Gen. 6:5). His will is set to do evil, being controlled by the lusts of the flesh and a reprobate mind (Eph. 2:2-3; Rom. 1:28), making him a slave to sin (Jn. 8:34). He has no fear of God, no desire to seek God, and no faith in God (Rom. 3:11-18). What knowledge he does have of God he is actively suppressing (Rom. 1:18-32).

The desperateness of man's state is evident in that he considers the gospel, his only hope of salvation, to be foolishness (1 Cor. 1:18). In sum, the Bible declares that the unsaved are dead in their trespasses and sins (Eph. 2:1), and under condemnation (Rom. 6:23). Salvation for such as these must originate in the will of God and be carried out by the power of God.

Most errors in regard to the doctrine of salvation have their roots in an inadequate, unbiblical view of the moral and spiritual status of fallen man. Those who believe that man is merely spiritually sick also believe that the salvation of sinners is a joint enterprise between God and man. But those who read the Bible accurately understand that man is spiritually dead and can contribute nothing to his own salvation; consequently, they believe that salvation is solely the work of God from beginning to end. To better understand this work of God, let us relate it to Christ, the Son of God.

### **1. Those who are saved have been given to the Son.**

During His earthly ministry Jesus made a remarkable statement concerning the salvation of men. He said that the only ones who would believe in Him and be saved would be those who had been given to Him by the Father (Jn. 6:37-40). He also stated "no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father" (Jn. 6:65; cf. 6:44). Thus, prior to the incarnation of the Son of God, the Father had determined to give a certain number of mankind to Jesus Christ. Those the Father chose for His Son would also be enabled to come to Christ in faith (cf. Acts 13:48). Who are these individuals that are given to Christ? Simple logic and sound Biblical interpretation indicate that these are

those who are called the “elect” in Scripture (e.g., Rom. 8:33; Col. 3:12). Apart from any warrant in the actions of men, and on the basis of His own sovereign will and mercy (Rom. 8:28-30; 9:11-22), God chose who would be part of the blood-bought body of Christ.

The Apostle Paul explains when and on what basis this election of sinners took place: “According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and without blame before him. . . .” (Eph. 1:4). The time of the divine choice was before the heavens and the earth were created, and the basis of the divine choice was the work of Christ. Election was “in him,” that is, election is not based on what the elect would do, but solely on what Christ would do for them as their covenant head and representative. To teach that election is due to some kind of foreseen merit in the sinner (such as the sinner’s faith) is to rob Christ of the glory due unto Him by making man and his work an essential (though, perhaps, not equal) element in election.

## ***2. Those who are saved are redeemed by the Son.***

The Son of God came to earth to do the Father’s will and secure the redemption of those whom the Father had chosen and given to Him (Jn. 6:37-40; 17:2). Jesus said during His earthly ministry that He had come to give His life for the sheep (those chosen to be part of the fold of God’s covenant people) and for none other (Jn. 10:7-29). Jesus did not come to make salvation possible, but to actually procure it for those who had been chosen in Him before the foundation of the world (Eph. 1:7). Jesus’ death was substitutionary, that is, He died in the place of those who had been given to Him and thereby took the penalty of the broken law that was due unto them (1 Cor. 15:3; Gal. 3:13). In taking their judgment, He in fact secured their redemption (Col. 1:14), their reconciliation (Col. 1:20-22), their justification (Rom. 5:9), and their forgiveness (Eph. 1:7).

Unless they are Universalists,<sup>[2]</sup> those who teach that Christ died for the sins of all men do not understand the nature of substitutionary atonement, or the efficacy of Christ’s blood, which infallibly secures the redemption of all for whom it is shed.<sup>[3]</sup>

## **3. Those who are saved are called by the Son.**

In Matthew 11:25-27, the sovereignty of God in salvation and the place of the Son of God in bringing the elect to the knowledge of the truth is revealed by Jesus. Here we are told that according to God’s good pleasure the truth has been hidden from some and revealed to others; and because all things have been delivered to the Son, it is the Son Who reveals the knowledge of God and His truth to those who have been selected to receive it. During His ministry, we see Jesus revealing the truth to His chosen followers, while hiding it from others (Matt. 13:11-17). At the end of His time on earth, He prays to the Father and says that He has “manifested thy name unto the men which thou hast given me out of the world” (Jn. 17:5), and that He has given them the words of God (Jn. 17:8, 14; cf. 1 Jn. 5:20). Then, Jesus promises His disciples that when He is gone He will send the Spirit of God to teach His people the truth (Jn. 14:16-17; 16:7-15).

The exalted Christ is the One Who gives repentance and faith to men (Acts 5:31; 13:48; 16:14), and this He does through His Spirit (1 Cor. 2:11; Rom. 8:11-16). Faith is not, therefore, the sinner's gift to God that enables God to save him, but it is the Son of God's gift to His people (Eph. 2:8) that enables them to lay hold of the gospel and be saved by grace alone.

#### **4. Those who are saved are kept by the Son.**

Jesus Christ, while on earth, promised that all whom the Father has given Him will be kept by Him (Jn. 10:28-30); not even one will be lost (Jn. 6:39; 17:12). In His high priestly prayer, Jesus asked the Father, Who always hears the Son, to "keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me" (Jn. 17:11). At His ascension, Jesus was raised to the right hand of God the Father, and from there He exercises a ministry of intercession on behalf of His people. The effect of this ministry is that "he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb. 7:25). Paul confidently sees the resurrection of Jesus as ensuring the salvation of the people of God (Rom. 5:10). Therefore, he can triumphantly declare that nothing can separate believers from the love of Christ (Rom. 8:29-39), and that Christ will surely keep those who have committed the salvation of their souls to Him (2 Tim. 1:12).

Hence, it is contrary to Scripture and a denial of the power of Christ to preserve His people to teach that a man once saved by the grace of God can fall away and be lost. The Lord enables all true believers to continue in the faith. Any who do turn from their professed faith in Christ thereby give evidence that they were never truly converted in the first place. The true marks of conversion are an abiding faith and a life of obedience to the Word of God. Those whom the Lord justifies, He also sanctifies.

Thus, we see the sovereignty of the Lord Jesus Christ in the salvation of His people! Those who are saved can claim no credit whatsoever, but must rest their salvation in the fact that they have been given to the Son, redeemed by the Son, called by the Son, and kept by the Son. Sovereign election, particular redemption, invincible grace, and faithful preservation can alone account for the salvation of men who are dead in trespasses and sins — men with enslaved wills, corrupt minds, and vile affections.

# *Christian Baptisms*

## **Introduction**

Historically, baptism has been used as a rite of initiation, showing the inductee's entrance into a new belief or observance. Baptism in the church is also a token of the forgiveness of sins we experience at salvation—in much the same way that Pilate attempted to show his innocence by washing his hands with water (**Matthew 27:24**), Christians show they are cleansed by Christ when they are baptized by water.

We will look at Baptism to see how it operates and benefits the Christian believer. Our objective is to identify, clarify, and apply Biblical truth.



The Bible talks about many different baptisms. There is evidence of The Baptism of Moses, The Baptism of The Cross, The Baptism of Repentance, The Baptism In Water, The Baptism of Fire, The Baptism in the Holy Spirit, The Baptism of The Holy Spirit, The Baptism of Suffering and several more that I will not go into now.

There are five major baptisms that are crucial to the foundation of doctrinal belief. Every Christian should know them and how they affect their faith and lifestyle. It's important to know that the Holy Spirit initiates all baptisms. He is the Baptizer. I have broken them down and present them for your review but they are all from one main source, God's Holy Spirit. The following scriptures will validate what I am teaching:

**Baptism of Repentance...**The apostle John records Jesus talking about when the Holy Spirit comes. Here's part of what He said. "When He comes, He will convict the world about sin, righteousness, and judgment." **John 16:8** The Holy Spirit reproves the world of sin, exposes it for what it really is. This is done so men can repent.

**Water Baptism...** is only a symbol of what has already taken place in the heart. We separate this baptism with that of repentance but they are really the same. You repent and are baptized in water as a show of your change of heart. This is because of the work of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit does not stop with water baptism. He places you in the Body of Christ and indwells us and fills us with His presence. We call this a baptism into the body of Christ but it really isn't a baptism. It is a placement. Then He gives us gifts that are for edification of the body, evangelism of the lost and administration of the church.

Notice that there is really only one Baptism, the baptism of the Holy Spirit that initiates

repentance, emersion in water, placement into the body of Christ, the endowment of Spiritual Gifts and most of all the witness that we are the children of God. **Romans 8:16**

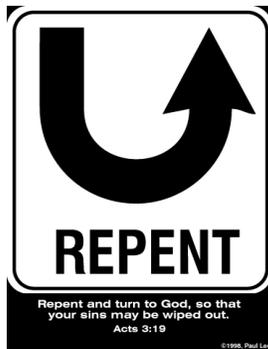
Now lets break it up into segments so we can study it better.

## *The Baptismal Process* **In The Life of A Believer**

The commentary from this point will be a combination of several contributors including Got/Questions.com, Robert Wells of HLLC,

### **1. Baptism of Repentance**

The Baptism of Repentance is the first Baptism that a believer experiences. He or she is immersed in the Spirit of Repentance that is given by God. The believer comes to a clear reality of how terrible their sin is and that they cannot be saved without the help of a loving God



The Baptism of Repentance is the beginning of the Baptismal journey that the believer takes. John The Baptist was the forerunner of Christ, proclaiming His identity as Messiah and His soon arrival. John, the Baptist, baptized all who repented and pointed them to a coming Messiah that would shortly follow him.

Those who were baptized by John were showing their faith in John's message and their need to confess their sin. In Acts 18:24–25, a disciple of John's named Apollos preaches in Ephesus; however, only knowing the baptism of John and the need for repentance, he needed to be further instructed in the death and resurrection of Christ. Later in the same city, Acts 19:1–7, Paul encounters some more followers of John. These disciples had been baptized for repentance, but they had not heard of the new birth or the Holy Spirit. Paul taught them the whole message of salvation in Christ, and they received the message and were subsequently baptized in Jesus' name.

Shortly before Jesus Christ was revealed to the people as the awaited Messiah, John the Baptist was baptizing people with the baptism of repentance, telling them to believe on him, which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus (**Acts 19:4**). Luke records it this way, " And he (John the Baptist), came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sin." (**Luke: 3:3**)

### **2. Baptism Into The Body of Christ**

The Baptism Into Christ's Body... This baptism, allows the repenting person to be spiritually converted into the faith of Jesus Christ, and the believer now looks to Jesus as

his Lord and Savior. The saved believer also recognizes that the wages of their sinful life was death but that the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ. (**Romans 6: 23**)

The believer has come to terms with the scripture as it's recorded in **Romans 10: 9-13** which says, "That if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved; for with the heart man believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation, for whoever will call upon the name of the Lord will be saved."

Having fulfilled the baptism of repentance, the believer is now ready to become baptized into the body of Christ and thus – they are “Born Again.” The new converts have been born of the Spirit of God and are now given the power to be called children of the Most High God.

## “Being Born Again”

Being, “Born Again” is to be fathered by the Spirit of God. He actually breathes life into our dead spirit and we become a living soul, just like Adam. This is again validated by Paul’s teaching in **Romans 5:12**,

“Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned. (For until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law.

Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned according to the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come.

But the free gift is not like the offense. For if by the one man’s offense many died, much more the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many.

And the gift is not like that which came through the one who sinned. For the judgment which came from one offense resulted in condemnation, but the free gift which came from many offenses resulted in justification. For if by the one man’s offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ. ” The walking dead lives again.

The new believer was dead spiritually until they accepted the gift of Life in Christ. The new believer in the body of Christ is now a totally new creature regardless of their past sinful life. The former sinful life has passed away, and the sins purged off by the cleansing power of the precious blood of Jesus Christ (**1 Corinthians 5:17**). The believer is transferred from the Kingdom of Satan into the Kingdom of God by faith through Jesus Christ.

# "One Baptism"

Baptism into Christ's body is what the Bible terms, "**One Baptism**". This baptism brings together all people on the same footing in the eyes of God – whether rich or poor, literate or illiterate, men or women, white or black, different races, tribes, ethnicity, and languages. It's recorded, "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into **One body**, whether Jews or Gentiles, whether bond or free and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." (**1 Corinthians 12:13**) What they all have now is, "One Lord", "One Faith" and "One Baptism." (**Ephesians 4:5**).

This Baptism is one of unity. It clarifies who is who and confirms true "New Birth" experiences. This is evident from Paul's teaching to the Roman believers. "The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children." **Romans 8:16**

## 3. Baptism In Water

CBN.org offers this historical summary...The Bible teaches the baptism of believers (see **Mark 16:16, Acts 8:36-37**). And in the early centuries, Christian baptism was by immersion. The concept of infant baptism is not specifically found in the Bible. The early church began baptizing infants because of the idea that children are born in sin and need immediate baptism to ensure their salvation.

At the time of the Reformation, though, Martin Luther rediscovered the biblical truth that spiritual regeneration and justification are by faith. A baby cannot exercise faith. Nevertheless, because so many of those who became his followers had already been baptized as infants in the Roman Catholic Church, Luther did not require them to be baptized again. In fact, he continued to baptize children of believers.

## "Covenant Theology."

When John Calvin came on the scene in Geneva, he taught what is known as "covenant theology." According to covenant theology, if the parents have entered a covenant relationship with God, then their children are part of the covenant, too, and are proper candidates for baptism as infants.

In churches that practice infant baptism there is usually some type of confirmation rite in which a child of ten, eleven, or twelve reaffirms the parental faith expressed at his or her baptism.

Some Reformation theologians strongly disagreed with infant baptism. They maintained that people should be baptized only as believers, because baptism is a symbol of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus (see **Romans 6:4, Colossians 2:12**). Baptism to them was the end of the old life and the beginning of a new life in Christ. Since a baby does not have an old life to deal with, they maintained, if someone has been baptized as

an infant, he would need to be baptized again as an adult believer. These people were called "Anabaptists," which means "rebaptizers."

Today there is still disagreement about the proper form of baptism. But, more and more, Methodist, Presbyterian, and some other churches that have historically practiced infant baptism are looking anew at both the qualification of a candidate for baptism and the mode of baptism. A number of people, even though they may have been baptized as infants, are being rebaptized by immersion as adult believers.

Got/Questions.com explains further... (**Matthew 28:19**)– this is a washing in water to symbolize the action of the Holy Spirit in a believer’s heart. Believer’s baptism is one of the two ordinances given to the church. Different churches practice different modes of baptism, but all who follow Christ should be baptized, since our Lord commands it.

Water baptism pictures some wonderful spiritual truths. When we are saved, we are “buried” with Christ and “rise” to newness of life; our sins are “washed away,” and we are cleansed. Water baptism is our outward expression of that event.

“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**).

Water baptism is biblically meant for all those who have repented and have consequently been baptized into the body of Christ. It is worthy to note that this type of baptism does not save a person from sin (does not cleanse sins), but it is a recognition rite, confirming a person's coming into the Church. The believer, after the initial cleansing of their sins by the blood of Jesus, then goes through water baptism following the example of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Baptism by water started in the New Testament and it continues up to this very day. Just like in our times, John the Baptist was baptizing using the medium of water. He baptized many people, as they turned away from evil, and turned to the living God. They came from Jerusalem, Judea, and regions around Jordan and were baptized in the river Jordan confessing their sins. This type of baptism follows only after the sinful person asks for forgiveness and repents of their sins. Sincere repentance is the only qualification for this type of baptism.

## **Jesus’ Baptism**

Jesus Christ, the son of the living and most high God, underwent a unique water baptism while here on earth in the form of a human being. Unlike mankind, who must repent first before going through a sincere and biblically founded water baptism; Jesus Christ instead was baptized without repentance.

