

HALL, S.H.-BIBLE STUDIES #1

by Hall sh

Hall's educational Bible study manual designed for classroom use across various grade levels, providing structured lessons with guidance for teachers on effective instruction in biblical content and spiritual formation.

29 Chapters

Table of Contents

1. 04 Foreword
2. 05 A Word To The Teacher
3. 06 Introduction
4. 07 1. The Importance of Studying The Bible
5. 08 2. How We Got Our Bible
6. 09 3. The Miracle of The Ages or Jehovah's Greatest Wonder
7. 10 4. How to Study The Bible
8. 11 5. The Beginning
9. 12 6. The Church—What Is It?
10. 13 7. The Church—The Importance of Being Members of It
11. 14 8. The Church—How To Become Members of It
12. 15 9. What Man Must Do to Become Such As Should Be Saved (Pt 1)
13. 16 10. What Man Must Do to Become Such As Should Be Saved (Pt 2)
14. 17 11. What Man Must Do to Become Such As Should Be Saved (Pt 3)
15. 18 12. What Man Must Do to Become Such As Should Be Saved (Pt 4)
16. 19 13. A One-Hundred-Per-Cent Conversion
17. 20 14. The Human Heart, or Heart-felt Religion.
18. 21 15. Abrahamic Faith—What Is It, and How May We Know We Have It?
19. 22 16. Jehovah's Demonstration
20. 23 17. The Alien and Prayer
21. 24 18. A Reason for Our Hope
22. 25 19. The One New Man
23. 26 20. The Witness of The Spirits
24. 27 21. Seekers Who Always Find
25. 28 22. "By Every Word That Proceedeth Out of the Mouth of God"
26. 29 23. How to Establish Churches of Christ Here and There
27. 30 24. God's Power To Save
28. 31 25. Can We See The Bible Alike? If So, Why Are We So Sadly Divided?
29. 32 26. Non-conversion Or Why You Are Not Saved

04 Foreword

Foreword

Foreword

After the earnest solicitation of many who have used in mimeograph form the outlines of Scripture studies setting forth the teaching of the New Testament on the church of Christ and its work, I have decided to put these studies into more convenient and permanent form.

These lessons are suitable for Bible drills, prayer-meeting topics, ladies' Bible classes, and regular class work in the Lord's day school. The lessons are so presented as to be easily comprehended, and may be used by all students old enough to be members of the church. The lessons were prepared primarily for members of the church to give them a better understanding and appreciation of the Bible as a book from above, and of the church as the most glorious institution on earth. It is the hope of the author that all who use them will be edified and encouraged to adorn the doctrine of our Lord with a life of real service in extending the kingdom of heaven among men. The studies are sent forth with a prayer that God's name may be glorified and his Son exalted in the hearts of the people.

S. H. HALL.

05 A Word To The Teacher

A Word To The Teacher A Word To The Teacher

It is hoped that every one who conducts class meetings in these studies will be one who loves the Bible and one who will make an effort to know the lessons well before going to the class. One should not undertake to teach who is not interested enough in the work to know something to teach. Many classes have failed because the teacher was unprepared for the lesson. A teacher cannot lead a class who does not keep ahead of the class in the knowledge of the Bible. The desire to study with the class is good, but see to it that the students do not get ahead of the teacher. There is no reason why these lessons cannot be taught in every grade. There is nothing in them too hard for a child old enough to obey the gospel. But for the smaller grades it is suggested that the teacher divide each lesson into three parts. In some cases one lesson may be finished in two class meetings. Here the teacher must judge of the ability of the class. It would be well even for adults to divide some of the lessons. Stay with each lesson until the class knows it before passing to the next.

We are giving no questions at the end of the lesson; hence, would suggest that you read the lessons together, discussing fully each topic and reading all the Scriptures cited. May God use these lessons in building up his children and making them to become "steadfast and not moved away from the hope of the gospel." May he, in turn, use them in leading those out of Christ into him that they may be saved. Work hard to make the class grow and increase in numbers. The best way for the teacher to do this is to know his lesson every time he goes before his or her students.

S. H. HALL.

06 Introduction

Introduction

Introduction

There is no higher human endeavor than that of teaching God's word to our fellow men; no effort of man is more important than that of encouraging people to study earnestly and prayerfully the word of God. He who leads another into a fuller knowledge of the truth as revealed in the Bible is a benefactor of that one; he who helps another to understand the will of the Lord and encourages him to adjust his life with it is a benediction to him; he who helps any one to live as God directs is a coworker with the Lord. Brother S. H. Had has done a great service in the name of the Lord in preparing these lessons for those who desire to make a closer study of the Bible.

Any teacher should study the best method of presenting the truths of the Bible. In the educational world the process of learning and the method of teaching are being improved. No teacher is efficient in the public schools of our country or in the colleges of our land who does not keep abreast of the times and use effectively the best modern methods of imparting truth to the minds of our youth. The facts and principles of history, science, literature, and languages must be taught today along the pedagogical and psychological lines of instruction. The demand of the present day is so urgent upon teachers to present all themes and subjects and courses according to modern scientific methods that the institutions or teachers which will not follow these lines and methods are relegated as "back numbers" and are soon discarded. The facts, truths, and principles of the Bible are far more important than those of history, science, and language.

It is not fair to the Bible to use the best methods in teaching the theories of man and the wisdom of this world and not use the best tact and methods in teaching the Bible. It seems that if there should be any difference, the difference should be in favor of the Bible. Moreover, the importance of the truths of the Bible call for the best methods known to man in teaching them to all who will learn. As our civilization advances and new methods are discovered in the teaching profession, these methods and devices should be used in teaching the will of the Lord to the children of men. When Jesus said to his disciples, "Go, . . . make disciples of all nations: . . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you," he did not enjoin upon his disciples any particular way or method of going; neither did he impose upon them any particular method or device for teaching his will to the children of men. The teacher of the Bible is left free—yea, he is under obligation to God and to the one taught—to use the best method that will lead the mind to accept divine truth and to adjust the life to it. The student of these "Scripture Studies" will find that the most modern method of approach to the subject has been used. No teacher can teach that which he does not know. He may not be able to teach what he does know; it is an evident fact that he cannot teach that which he does not know. The teacher of God's word ought to study prayerfully and in humility the lesson that he plans to teach; he should be sure that he has the spirit of the Master Teacher when he begins to teach "the Master's truths" to others; he should be sure that he has firm hold on the truth and has a clear conception of it himself before he attempts to teach it to others. A perversion of the

truth of God is a fearful thing, it matters not whether this perversion is done willfully or ignorantly. The teacher who assumes the responsibility of teaching God's word should not only have the spirit of the Christ and the truth of God, but he should, moreover, have a life that emphasizes the life of our Savior. The teacher of the Bible should teach in the most effective way. The importance of divine truth and the value of souls demand that the truth be taught in the fear of God and in view of the judgment. Many teachers nullify the truth or contradict it by their lives. They may teach accurately the facts, truths, and principles of the Bible theoretically, but live a life inconsistent with them and weaken the force of them.

Every teacher should not only feel the obligation that weighs heavily upon him in teaching the truth, but he should also feel the fearful responsibility that rests upon him in making his life conform to the truth. There is much truth in the quotation which says: "How can I hear what you say, When what you are is forever thundering in my ear?"

There is a woeful neglect on the part of parents in teaching their children the Bible. Parents should know the Bible and should teach it to their children. It is not enough to depend on the children studying the "Sunday school lesson ;" they get but little Bible from the study of the Sunday lesson. Every parent should be a teacher—that is, every Christian parent should be able to teach children the word of God. This should be done daily and not just once in the week. If Christian parents do not teach their children the will of the Lord, they will likely grow up in ignorance of it. No greater obligation rests upon parents than to "nurture them in the chastening and admonition of the Lord." Parents owe it to their children as well as to the Lord to teach them the Bible. It will be a fearful thing for many fathers and mothers when they stand before God in judgment having neglected teaching their children the word of God. Brother Hall's "Scripture Studies" will help parents meet their obligations to their children in teaching them the word of God and will also help them to fulfill their obligations as Christian fathers and mothers. These studies are commended most earnestly to all lovers of the truth.

LEO BOLES.

07 1. The Importance of Studying The Bible

1. The Importance of Studying The Bible The Importance of Studying The Bible

INTRODUCTION To know any subject of importance is an advantage. But man, the little time he dwells on earth, cannot find time to master all subjects, to study out the details of all lines of thought. But man should certainly take time to become familiar with the only Book that tells him of his origin and destiny.

Man is a dual being, consisting of the "inward man" and the "outward man." Paul, in 2 Cor. 4:16, says: "But though our outward man is decaying, yet our inward man is renewed day by day." In verse 18 he speaks of this "outward man" as the things that are seen, and the "inward man" as the things not seen, and declares that this unseen man is eternal. Whatever, therefore, pertains to the welfare of this inward or unseen man is of more importance than those things that pertain to the welfare of the fleshly or outward man. Jesus suggests the difference in the following words: "And be not afraid of them that kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul." (Matt. 10:28.) The Bible was written for the sole purpose of teaching us concerning the welfare of the soul, the "inward man." There is no other book to which we may go for that food the soul needs. Well did Benjamin Beddome say: "May this blest volume ever Be Close to my heart and near my eye, Till life's last hour my thoughts engage, And be my chosen heritage."

WE ARE COMMANDED TO STUDY AND UNDERSTAND IT Study the following passages:

Isaiah 34:16 : "Seek ye out of the book of Jehovah, and read."

1 Timothy 4:13 : "Give heed to reading."

2 Timothy 2:15 : "Give diligence to present thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, handling aright the word of truth."

Ephesians 5:17 : "Wherefore be ye not foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is."

Colossians 3:16 : "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly." And David, known as "the sweet Psalmist of Israel," says: "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of scoffers: but his delight is in the law of Jehovah; and on his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the streams of water, that bringeth forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also doth not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." (Psalms 1:1-3.)

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT IGNORANCE In Ephesians 4:18 Paul speaks of those "alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them." We may be ignorant of some things and not be harmed, but certainly ignorance of what the Bible teaches on how to be saved is to be deplored.

God says in Hosea 4:6 : "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I also will forget thy children."

Many, due to their ignorance, did exactly the opposite of what God wanted them to do, believing, at the time, they were doing God's service. Can you think of a sadder condition? In John 16:2 Christ says: "They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the hour cometh, that whosoever killeth you shall think that he offereth service unto God." In Acts 3:17 we are told the cause of this terrible mistake: "And now, brethren, I know that in ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers." The people who had Jesus put to death, who put the apostles to death, and persecuted the early Christians, were religious people and thought they were doing God's service. It was ignorance of God's teaching that led them to do it. So may people be joined to a false religion today and, because of ignorance, hate and persecute those who are in the good and right way. How important to obey the command: "Understand what the will of the Lord is"!

MAN'S INABILITY TO GUIDE HIMSELF

Jeremiah 10:23 says: "O Jehovah, I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." In Proverbs 14:12 Solomon says: "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man; but the end thereof are the ways of death." Human judgment will not do in religion. Just because a man looks right to us does not make it so. In Deuteronomy 12:8 we are warned: "Ye shall not do after all the things that we do here this day, every man whatsoever is right in his own eyes."

JEHOVAH COMES TO MAN'S RESCUE

Psalms 48:14 says: "For this God is our God forever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death." He is a guide that always leads us right.

Psalms 73:24 says: "Thou wilt guide me with thy counsel." God's word, therefore, is spoken of as being a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our pathway. (See Psalms 119:105.) And verse 130 declares that the entrance of God's word "giveth light"—gives understanding.

What has been written, therefore, is for our learning. "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that through patience and through comfort of the Scriptures we might have hope." (Romans 15:4.) The Bible was not written as a memorandum lest God should forget, but it was written because man needed to know about the welfare of his soul. The very fact that God gave us the Bible is proof positive that he wants us to read it, study it, live it. This is the only way we can take Jehovah as our guide and keep ourselves from being led astray by blind guides.

OTHER REASONS FOR STUDYING IT In John 8:32 we are taught: "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." The truth known makes us free, not the truth we do not know. This not only means freedom from sin, but freedom from error, from blind guides, and from every evil way. In John 17:17 Jesus says God's word is truth.

False teachers are abroad in the land, and we are commanded to try them. "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but prove the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world." (1 John 4:1.)

How can one try a teacher who does not know what sound doctrine is? If one is ignorant of the true teaching, some false teacher may make him believe he is saved when he is not.

Christ says: "For what shall a man be profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and forfeit his life [or lose his own soul]?" How can one know the soul that is worth more to us than the wealth of all the earth is saved if he knows not the teaching of Jesus? In 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9 Paul says Christ will take vengeance on all who obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus, and will punish them with "eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might." Have you obeyed the gospel? Do you know you did what Jesus says do? If you know not the gospel, how do you know but that you obeyed the commandments of men? Jesus says: "But in vain do they worship me, teaching as their doctrines the precepts of men." (Matthew 15:9.) Paul says in Galatians 1:8 : "But though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema."

God's word is our only soul food. "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." So declares Jesus in Matthew 4:4. The only way we can appropriate this word is by study and meditation. In the judgment to come we will face this word which we are now commanded to study and live, and by it we will be judged. (See John 12:48 and Revelation 20:12.) Have we given reasons enough for studying the Bible? Do you not think it is important? May God help you as you go with us through the lessons that follow.

08 2. How We Got Our Bible

2. How We Got Our Bible How We Got Our Bible

INTRODUCTION The Bible claims to be the word of God to man. While there are statements in it from Satan and of wicked men, God had them put there that we may shun the ways of Satan and see the degrading influence of sin. There are things in the Bible no man could have known had not God revealed them to him. The Bible is, therefore, a revelation of the thoughts of God, or statements from others which God led the writers of the Bible to record.

HOW THE OLD TESTAMENT WAS WRITTEN The Old Testament writers were inspired. 2 Peter 1:21 says: "For no prophecy ever came by the will of man: but men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit." This is speaking of prophecies we find in the Old Testament. The Old Testament writers let it be known that they were writing as God's Spirit directed them. (1) Isaiah says: "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth; for Jehovah hath spoken." (Isaiah 1:2.) (2) Jeremiah 1:1-2 says: "The words of Jeremiah . . . to whom the word of Jehovah came." Ezekiel 1:3 says: "The word of Jehovah came expressly unto Ezekiel." The writers thus let it be known that they did not write or speak of themselves, but that God guided them by his Spirit.

God's Spirit guided the people in the Old Testament through the writers of that Testament. Nehemiah 9:20 says: "Thou gavest also thy good Spirit to instruct them." But verse 30 of the same chapter says: "Yet many years didst thou bear with them, and testifiedst against them by thy Spirit through thy prophets." The Old Testament is sometimes spoken of as "the law of Moses." "For the law was given through Moses." (John 1:17.) But Moses was guided by God's Spirit in giving this law to the people. God wrote with his own finger the law on tables of stone. (Exodus 31:18.) God's Spirit guided Moses in writing all other things of the law after the tenor of those words. God's Spirit was in Moses in a degree which others did not possess. When he complained that his burden was too heavy for him, that he needed help, he was commanded to gather before Jehovah seventy elders from among his brethren, and Jehovah said: "I will take of the Spirit which is upon thee, and will put it upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with thee." (Numbers 11:16-17.) You can see that the people were led by God's Spirit by hearing and obeying their Spirit-guided leaders. David wrote his part of the Old Testament by inspiration. In 2 Samuel 23:2 David himself declared: "The Spirit of Jehovah spake by me, and his word was upon my tongue." The writer of the Hebrew letter, quoting from David in Psalms 95:7-11 says: "Wherefore, even as the Holy Spirit saith." (See Hebrews 3:7-11.) It was the Holy Spirit speaking through David. The prophecies found in the Old Testament, when used by the New Testament writers to prove certain points, are declared to be the "witness of the Spirit." (Read Hebrews 10:15-17.) Here we have a quotation from Jeremiah 31:33. This passage is used to prove that a new covenant would be established, and, referring to it, the New Testament writer said: "The Holy Spirit also beareth witness to us." It was the Holy Spirit speaking or testifying through Jeremiah. The three main divisions of the Old Testament are recognized by Jesus in Luke 24:44.. He says: "These are my words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must needs be fulfilled, which are written in the

law of Moses, and the prophets, and the psalms, concerning me."

HOW THE NEW TESTAMENT WAS GIVEN In the Old Testament God speaks through Moses and the prophets, but in the New Testament he speaks through his Son, Jesus Christ. "God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things. (See Hebrews 1:1-2.)

Christ speaks through his apostles. (Read Matthew 10:1-20.) Verses 19, 20 read: "For it shall be given you in that hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you." Christ gave these apostles his words. "The words which thou gavest me I have given unto them." (John 17:8.) In verse 20 of the same chapter Christ prays for all who believe in him "through their word." The apostles had the words of God, and "belief cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Romans 10:17.) The Holy Spirit was promised to these apostles. "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he shall guide you into all the truth: for he shall not speak from himself; but what things soever he shall hear, these shall he speak: and he shall declare unto you the things that are to come." (John 16:13.) The Spirit came upon the apostles, after our Lord's ascension, on the day of Pentecost, as you will see in Acts 2, and they declared that the Spirit did guide them into the knowledge of all things pertaining to salvation. "Seeing that his divine power hath granted unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness." (See 2 Peter 1:3.) "Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness: that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work." (2 Timothy 3:16-17.) These Scriptures were given by the Holy Spirit and contain all the doctrine God wants taught and all the reproof and correction the human race needs. The apostles are ambassadors for Christ. "We are ambassadors therefore on behalf of Christ." (2 Corinthians 5:20.) An ambassador is one selected to speak for his government or ruler. Christ selected these apostles to speak for him the word of reconciliation which was "committed" unto them. (2 Corinthians 5:19.) They were "earthen vessels," and the gospel given them by the Holy Spirit was called "this treasure in earthen vessels." (See 2 Corinthians 4:7.) The preaching of these apostles was confirmed by signs and wonders. "And these signs shall accompany them that believe" has reference to the apostles. "So then the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken unto them, was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God. And they [the apostles] went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word by the signs that followed." (See Mark 16:17-20.) Connect with this passage Paul's statement in Hebrews 2:3-4 : "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great a salvation? which having at the first been spoken through the Lord, was confirmed unto us by them [the apostles] that heard; God also bearing witness with them, both by signs and wonders, and by manifold powers, and by gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to his own will." In 2 Corinthians 12:12 Paul says: "Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, by signs and wonders and mighty works." Every sign and wonder performed from the day the apostles were baptized in the Holy Spirit on Pentecost was performed by an apostle or someone who had come in contact with the apostles, hence was the sign or proof that these men had a message from God that none should dare refuse. Thus the New Testament was given and confirmed unto man as God's last will and testament unto man. It is to last until Christ comes again. His final words to the apostles were: "And Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." (Matthew 28:16-20.)

09 3. The Miracle of The Ages or Jehovah's Greatest Wonder

3. The Miracle of The Ages or Jehovah's Greatest Wonder

The Miracle of The Ages or Jehovah's Greatest Wonder

INTRODUCTION

Jehovah was one thousand six hundred years performing this miracle; but when finished, it was destined to manifest its wonder-working power in the hearts of the people of the earth until earth time shall be no more. This Book is a living wonder today—a living, powerful evidence of God's presence in the world.

Faith should grow exceedingly. The best way to make it grow is to know your Bible as the Book from God. A QUESTION FOR THE SKEPTIC

It must be admitted that either God or man wrote the Bible. If man wrote it, he was at his best—a staggering genius! The Bible has been here for centuries. It is claimed that man through a process of evolution has ascended from the lower to the higher order of being. If this be true, man should now be more capable of producing a Bible than when the Bible was written. The Old Testament, with its moral law, is about four thousand years old; the New Testament, with Christ and his teaching, is about two thousand years old. If the theory of evolution be true, man should now be above two thousand years more capable, to say the least, of producing a Bible than when ours was finished. Will the infidel tell us, if the Bible is of human origin, why man cannot give us another Bible better than the one we have? Is it not true that one of the outstanding characteristics of a human product is that man himself, who produced it, or some other man, can improve it? Men write books, but other men make improvements upon these books. They become obsolete and are discarded. Will the infidel tell us how it happened that man, centuries ago, finished a book that he has since been powerless to improve? Let the skeptic give us a Bible that is better than the one we have. Then, but not until then, shall we listen to his contention.

ARGUMENTS NO SKEPTIC CAN ANSWER The Anticipation or Foreknowledge of the Bible. In Galatians 3:8 Paul speaks of "the scripture, foreseeing." This simply means that the Mind that gave the Scriptures could foresee. The Bible claims to be a finished Book for the purpose intended. It claims to contain all things that pertain to life and godliness. But it claims more than this; it claims to be a shield against every wind of doctrine. The apostles were placed in the church, inspired of God, for the purpose of bringing the church "unto a full-grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." And all of this done for what? "That we may be no longer children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, in craftiness, after the wiles of error." (Ephesians 4:8-14.)

Divine revelation ceased with the book of Revelation in A.D. 96. Since then hundreds of erroneous doctrines, theories, and ways in religion, unheard of while the Bible was in the making, have arisen. The Mind that produced the Bible foreknow all these things, and, anticipating each of them,

He intentionally put certain statements in the Bible to shield the honest hearts from deception. This is what is meant by the anticipation or foreknowledge of the Bible. We claim the Bible meets every need of the human heart; that it not only teaches us how to live—what to do and what not to do—but that it shields us from every wind of doctrine. The Author of the Bible intentionally put certain things in it to keep us from being led astray by the winds of doctrine that have since arisen. No human mind knew one thing about these doctrines at the time God had placed in the Bible the statements to keep the human heart from believing them as they would arise. This fact proves that, in taking the Bible as our guide and shield, we are not following "cunningly devised fables," and that the men who wrote the Bible spake not "by the will of man: but men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit." (2 Peter 1:16-21.) Could man have written a book like this? All the brains of earth compacted into one gigantic brain could not write a book that anticipates all the errors that will arise in one generation. Here we have a Book that anticipated all the errors that have arisen during the two thousand years since it was finished. Get this one great truth, an absolute fact, about our Bible, and never be found again doubting its superhuman origin. The Utility of Every Scripture. By "utility" we mean "fitness for some desirable practical purpose." Paul declares that "every scripture inspired of God is also profitable." (See 2 Timothy 3:16.) This teaches that "every scripture" was given for some specific, definite purpose. But we have some Scriptures in the Bible that have no profit, no practical purpose whatever, until errors that they were given to destroy arise. Of course, everything that God wants men to do is clearly pointed out and is easily seen, but statements placed in the Bible to shield from error cannot be appreciated until the errors are advanced from which they were designed to shield us. Not one error can be named that the Scripture cannot be pointed out purposely put in the Bible to keep us from believing that error. The Thought Illustrated. Out before us there, we will say, is a five-hundred-acre field. At distances varying from one hundred to five hundred yards we have forty archers, standing with their bows in hand, well supplied with arrows in the quiver. In the field that lies out before them are targets, the same number of targets that we have arrows to be shot by the archers. Every target has a number, and on the arrows we find a number corresponding to a number on the targets.

Now, with this picture before you, let us advance a step further. We will say total darkness covers the land. These men have never seen this field and know nothing about the targets being in that field. But at different times during the night each pulls his bow and lets go an arrow. This continues until one thousand five hundred arrows have been shot. The darkness is then driven away by the morning sun, and what do we see? Every arrow has hit a target in the center, and, to our amazement, each arrow has the number on it corresponding to the target it hit. Could you explain a thing of this kind? Yes, but only by saying that some mind or power beyond those men directed the archers in shooting. The Bible is just such a wonder. Ranging from two to four thousand years ago, about forty men have written, and the Bible declares that they wrote as the Spirit guided them. They are the men used by Jehovah in writing the Bible. The future was lying out before them, but into its darkness they could not see. But, at different times and places, each pulled his bow and let go an arrow of truth into the darkness of the unexplored future. They themselves did not and could not understand the statements they made. Seemingly there was no utility in what they said. But out there in this great field of darkness there are errors that God knows will arise—blind guides, false apostles, and even Satan himself transforming himself into an angel of light. God wants an arrow shot into this darkness that will put to death every false doctrine that he

knows will arise. So these Spirit-guided archers, or writers, continue to let go statements until every error that shall arise has a statement made to put it to death in the heart of those who will believe what Jehovah says, making their writings a perfect shield for all the future needs of God's people. As time rolls on and light drives the darkness away, we see these statements sticking right in the heart of errors unheard of and unthought of at the time these men wrote. Can we say this is all an accident? Thoughtful souls will make no such assertions. They will know holy men of God wrote as they were guided by his Spirit. They will know that God, who can see the end from the beginning, was in it all and wrote a Book that would meet every need of his saints so long as earth time continues. The Bible is as great a wonder, living among us, as any miracle Jesus performed while here on earth. God help us all to open our eyes and behold what Jehovah has done for us and be not faithless, but believing. Truly it is declared: "The word of God is living and active." (Hebrews 4:12.) Yes, just as much so as if God personally were walking right by our side, letting words fall from his lips, pointing out dangers here and there, as we go along the way, that he knows will hurt and harm us. God's word is just as living and helpful as that.

Exemplifications. The Claim That the Author of the Bible Did Not Know the Rotundity of the Earth. The enemy talks much about the unscientific expressions in the Bible. He could not show just one such expression. In 1 Timothy 6:20, reading the Authorized Version, Paul says: O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called." This statement certainly places the Author of the Bible on the side of all true science and opposed to all false science. The Bible claims to be a book of science only in reference to how best to live while here on earth. Yes, it is a book of science on right living, and the skeptic is powerless to make improvements on it. The Bible claims to have been written to show what is "good for the sons of men that they should do under heaven all the days of their life." (Ecclesiastes 2:3.) In Deuteronomy 6:24 Moses says its statutes and commandments are "for our good always." Deuteronomy 10:13 says: "Keep the commandments of Jehovah, and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good." Does the man live who can show the Bible fails in this purpose for which it was written? As to how best to live, we have in the Bible a guidebook that cannot be improved upon. It claims to be a book of science in this sense only. But it touches on other books of science, such as zoology, the science of all animal life; botany, the science of plant life; and astronomy, the science of the heavenly bodies. And when it does touch on such things, it shows that the Author of the Bible knows these fields of science perfectly and states things about them before men ever dreamed of them.

We are told that such expressions as "the four corners of the earth" are unscientific expressions. It would have been very unscientific to have spoken of it otherwise. Jehovah, the Bible declares, sometimes "callethe the things that are not, as though they were." (Romans 4:17.) We speak of things as they appear to the masses and not always as they are in fact. It is perfectly scientific to do so. But did the Author of the Bible know all about the rotundity of the earth and that it rotates on its axis? He certainly did, and placed statements in the Bible to let us know that he knew centuries before man ever thought of it. It was Copernicus, in 1543, who first advanced the theory that the earth is round and rotates on its axis. Galileo, years later, championed this theory, and for so doing he was called before the church and persecuted. Even Bible-loving people then had not noticed these statements that were so shrewdly placed in the Holy Scriptures. Remember, the Bible was written to show man how to best live. God could not speak out on questions not germane to this

end. But he foreknew that scoffers would arise and make statements against the old Book and its Author at this point, so he let us know that he knows. He knew the day would come when we would need to know that he knows.

So, more than three thousand years before Copernicus was born, God dropped this from the pen of faithful Job: "He stretcheth out the north over empty space, and hangeth the earth upon nothing." (Job 26:7.) Can the modern scientist describe the fact about the earth more perfectly than this? We challenge him to make a statement that is its equal. Did not Isaiah declare more than two thousand years before Copernicus was born, "It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth"? (Isaiah 40:22.) Did not Jesus shrewdly let us know that he knew the facts in the case? When speaking of his second coming, he declares that he will come in "that day" when men are working in the field, and "in the night" when all nature will be slumbering in the darkness of the night and toilers will be resting? (See Luke 17:30-31; Luke 17:34.) So down to death goes the contention that our God knew not the facts in the case and spoke of "the four quarters of the earth" because he did not know any better. How unreasonable and unscientific for the Author of the Bible to have so spoken about matters of this kind as to have raised controversy over it! If even friends of the Bible would persecute Galileo fifteen hundred years after the Bible was finished for championing the idea that the earth is round and rotates on its axis, what would they have done in our Lord's day if he had so spoken of it as to have raised the question for study? Have I headed my series correctly when I put it: "The Miracle of the Ages; or, Jehovah's Greatest Wonder"?

Peter and the Pope.

Paul is very specific in foretelling of the falling away of some, and states that "forbidding to marry and commanding to abstain from meats" would be some of the false doctrines introduced after his day. (See 1 Timothy 4:1-3.) The "falling away" is prophesied of and to a degree described in 2 Thessalonians 2:1-10.

Let us remember that the Pope was unheard of in the days of the apostles. Not until Boniface the III, 606 A.D., did we have a fully developed Pope. "The mystery of lawlessness" that developed Roman Catholicism, and all other religious organizations not known in the New Testament, was at work in Paul's day. And we are not left to guess as to what it was. In Galatians 1:7 we have: "There are some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ." In 1 Timothy 1:3 we have Paul saying to Timothy: "As I exhorted thee to tarry at Ephesus, . . . that thou mightest charge certain men not to teach a different doctrine." But what are the claims of the Roman Catholic Church in behalf of their Pope? (1) They say he is infallible; (2) they teach the doctrine of celibacy—that the Pope cannot be a married man; (3) and, strangest of all, they claim Peter was the first Pope and that their one hundred and ninety-five Roman pontiffs are his successors. Was Peter a married man? Will you now remember that Paul says, "Every scripture inspired of God is profitable"? Every Scripture has its own utility. But we have some Scriptures placed in the Bible to put to death certain errors that God foreknew would be introduced. Tell me the profit or the utility of the following Scripture: "Have we not the right to lead about a wife that is a believer, even as the rest of the apostles, . . . and Cephas (Peter)?" Why single out Peter here? Why not say, "Have we not the right to lead about a wife as the rest of the apostles and James, or John?" Just because God foreknew there would arise no false doctrine about James' and John's right to marry, but he could see six hundred years ahead and see the full development of Roman Catholicism and its

doctrine concerning the Pope and Peter and celibacy. To ask, "Have we not the right to lead about a wife that is a believer, even as the rest of the apostles?" would have been enough, for Peter was one of the rest of the apostles. But God saw that the need of knowing that Peter undoubtedly? was a married man would come, hence placed it beyond a quibble. "Every scripture inspired of God is profitable." I challenge any man to name the utility or profit of singling out Peter if Roman Catholicism had never arisen. Was Peter infallible? Are you surprised when I tell you that, so far as the records go to show, not one of the apostles made a mistake or deserved to be blamed for anything after being placed in the church by the baptism of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost, except Peter? Some of the others may have made mistakes— doubtless did—but there is no record of it. In Galatians 2:11-14 you have Paul resisting Peter to the face at Antioch, rebuking him before all, because he stood condemned for his dissimulation. Think of this in connection with the Roman Catholic dogma that you must call their Pope "Lord God the Pope" and dare not rebuke or call in question his edicts. Every Scripture has its utility. What is the profit of this Scripture? And just here I am reminded of Acts 10:25-26, where Cornelius fell down at Peter's feet when he entered his home, but Peter tolerated no such, but "raised him up, saying, Stand up: I myself also am a man." Why is this Scripture in the Bible? Every Scripture was put in the Bible for a definite purpose. Can you not see that the Author of the Bible was looking to the future needs of his people while having such things placed in the sacred writings?

God's Foreknowledge Of Errors That Would Be Taught On Baptism.

Let us remember that Paul says: "Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness." It seems that man is prone to want his own way and introduce doctrines and ideas of his own. God foreknew just what these would be, hence placed something in the Bible to reprove and correct us when turning aside from his way.

There can be no doubt about what it takes to constitute the act of baptism. It took place in the river Jordan (Mark 1:5, 9, 10), or somewhere else where there was "much water" (John 3:23) . There was a coming unto the water, going down into it, the baptism taking place while in the water, then a coming up out of the water. (See Mark 1:10; Acts 8:35-39.) The baptismal act is declared to be a burial and resurrection. (Colossians 2:12.) No one can read what the New Testament says about baptism and have any doubt as to what constitutes the act itself. But, in spite of all this, Satan has introduced errors galore, and many, because they have not in their souls a knowledge of the exact sayings of the Scriptures on the subject, are led into the ways of man. The baptism of the eunuch. We turn, for example, to Acts 8:35-39. Before studying this Scripture, let it be said that words are signs of ideas. Let it also be remembered that babbling is condemned in the Holy Scriptures in the strongest terms. But who would accuse God of being a babbler? But this you unintentionally do if you are not careful as to how you handle the Scriptures. If God has ever used a word without some definite purpose in view, he has been guilty of babbling. If he has used a word when he was not trying to plant some idea in our minds, he has babbled.

But, in giving us this brief description of baptism in Acts 8, he tells us five times, in a short statement, that when the baptism took place, both the preacher and the one baptized were in the water. Let us now read it together: "They came unto a certain water; and the eunuch saith, Behold, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And he commanded the chariot to stand still:

and they both went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip; and the eunuch saw him no more, for he went on his way rejoicing." (Acts 8:36-39.) on account of careless reading some do not get the force of this Scripture. Here it tells us five times that when this baptism took place the one baptized and the one doing the baptizing were in the water. If it simply said, "They went down into the water, and he baptized him," this would put the baptizing in the water. And if it said nothing about their going down into the water, but read, "And he baptized him. And when they came up out of the water," this would put the baptizing in the water. But it not only uses the word they twice, but it uses the word both twice, and then renames the one to be baptized and the one doing the baptizing. "And they both went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they came up out of the water."

Now, in the light of this fact, we ask: Since Paul says, "Every scripture inspired of God is profitable"—that is, it was given for "some desirable, practical purpose"—what is the purpose here? Why tell us five times that this baptism took place in the water? Don't you know that this Scripture has no profit at all except to deal death out to the Roman Catholic doctrine that sprinkling will do for baptism? You go where there is much water, you go down into it, there you are buried with Christ in baptism and there you are also raised with him, then you come up out of the water, and you are baptized. About this there can be no doubt. But why go to all this trouble if any way will do? Baptism is based on the death and burial of Jesus. It is the form of that burial. We dare not change this form. "Every scripture is profitable." But the man does not live who could tell the profit in this Scripture if it is not to shield us from the false doctrine that sprinkling will do for baptism. But the writer of the Acts of the Apostles, where this Scripture is found, knew absolutely nothing about sprinkling for baptism. It was absolutely unheard of in his day. But God's Spirit, which guided him, could see out there in the darkness of the future the need of such a statement, hence had him record this. The baptism of the jailer. You find this in Acts 16:19-34. Was it possible for Luke, who wrote the Acts of the Apostles, to have known that, centuries after his day, men would arise and contend that the jailer and his household were sprinkled, and, to substantiate this contention, claim that he was baptized in the jail, and others claim that he was baptized in the jailer's house? Could he know that when you routed them from the contention that he was baptized in the jail by referring them to the fact that it says he "brought them out," that they would answer that this means he brought them out of the inner prison to the outer prison, hence that you would need to know this also is false? These things have been taught about the jailer's baptism—things that were unheard of in Luke's day; and no soul could have even then imagined that such perversions of these Scriptures could be indulged in. But Paul says: "Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable." Here is one by inspiration given. Let us note the facts.

First: "And they brought them out." Why this statement? Could there be any possible profit in this statement had not God foresaw that some would contend that the baptism was done in the jail?

Second: "And they spake the word of the Lord unto him, with all his house." Into what did the jailer bring Paul and Silas when he brought them out of the inner prison? He brought them into the place where the preaching was done viz., "in his house."

Third: "And when he brought them into his house." Why this statement? This was said after the baptism had been attended to. God foresaw that we would need to know that the baptism was not

done in the house where the preaching was done, but done out of his house; and when it was over, he brought these men back into his house, set meat before them, having believed in the Lord with all of his house.

Why does not the Scripture read this way: "And they spake the word of the Lord unto him and to all that were in his house. And the same hour of the night he washed their stripes, and was baptized, he and all of his immediately. And set food before them, and rejoiced greatly, with all of his house, having believed in the Lord"? I ask again: Why tell us they were brought out of the prison? Why tell us the preaching was done in the jailer's house? Why let us know that the baptizing did not take place in the man's house, but that they were brought back into the house after the baptism had been attended to? The Author of the Bible foresaw every erroneous idea that ever would be advanced. He intentionally placed something in the Scriptures to keep us from believing them. Name one error that has been advanced, and the Scripture can be found that deals out death to it. Could man have given us a Book like this? The Bible has to come to us from God or man, from a superhuman source or a human source. It could not have come from the latter; hence, God gave it to us. It is, indeed, the miracle of the ages!

10 4. How to Study The Bible

4. How to Study The Bible

How to Study The Bible

INTRODUCTION The class will repeat the first Psalm in concert. Name the books of the New Testament, beginning with Matthew and going to Revelation, then from Revelation back to Matthew. Give some thought on bounding each book in the New Testament. By this is meant: name the book that is on the right and the one on the left of the book you are bounding. For instance, take the book of Acts. It is bound on the left by John and on the right by Romans. Think of the position of each book in this way and be able to give the location at once when asked.

(A suggestion: In class work, such drills as the above should be given in each class meeting until all the books of the Bible have been learned and can be at once located. The teacher should also suggest from time to time Scriptures to be committed to memory and recited in the class.) **THE RIGHT MOTIVE IN BIBLE STUDY** In Psalms 25:14 we have these words: "The friendship [or secret] of Jehovah is with them that fear him; and he will show them his covenant." This has reference to a fear that comes from love and respect. If we are eager to know his will and live it, we can learn it.

Christ says: "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." He also says: "If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it is of God, or whether I speak from myself." (See Matthew 5:6; John 7:17.) In 2 Timothy 3:7 it is declared that there are some "ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." The trouble with them is given in 2 Thessalonians 2:10 : "Because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved." We must love the truth and desire to live it, otherwise a strong delusion or working of error God will send us. In 2 Peter 3:16 the writer speaks of "some things hard to be understood, which the ignorant and unsteadfast wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction."

Christ gives the full secret in John 8:31-32, when he says: "If ye abide in my word, then are ye truly my disciples; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Jesus here introduces the idea of actually abiding in and living what you already know of the truth as the guarantee of learning more of the truth. And this is the thought in John 7:17. I give you the translation from "The Twentieth Century New Testament": "If anyone has the will to do God's will, he will find out whether my teaching is from God, or whether I speak on my own authority." our motive is wrong if we do not desire to learn in order to live as God's word directs us. If this is our motive, we are living, we are doing, what we already know of God's will. This is the road that leads us into a knowledge of God that saves. "And this is life eternal, that they should know thee the only true God, and him whom thou didst send, even Jesus Christ." (See John 17:3.) This knowledge comes from living God's word. "And hereby we know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the

truth is not in him." (See 1 John 2:3-4.)

Get the point here: True knowledge of God and his Son come from actually living their teaching. If we say we know them when we have not lived their teaching and tested it, we lie. In 2 Timothy 2:15, Authorized Version, we have this command: "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing [or handling aright] the word of truth."

Whatever God has tried to tell us is of vital importance to man. Let me impress upon the student to never allow himself to pass by lightly anything God has tried to get him to see. There is a reason for God's wanting him to see a certain thing, else he would not try to tell him.

We want now to observe how hard Jehovah has tried to get us to see the difference between: THE OLD COVENANT AND THE NEW COVENANT A new covenant promised. The prophecy of Jeremiah 31:31-34 was made about six hundred years before Christ was born: "Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt." The covenant that was made when God brought Israel out of Egyptian bondage was the one written on the two tables of stone and known as "The Ten Commandments." Read 1 Kings 8:9; 1 Kings 8:21 : "There was nothing in the ark save the two tables of stone which Moses put there at Horeb, when Jehovah made a covenant with the children of Israel, when they came out of the land of Egypt." "And there have I set a place for the ark, wherein is the covenant of Jehovah, which he made with our fathers, when he brought them out of the land of Egypt." This prophecy is declared fulfilled. Turn to Hebrews 8:6-13 and you will find, in A.D. 60, that this very prophecy made by Jeremiah six hundred years before Christ was born is declared to be fulfilled. The priesthood changed, making it necessary to change the law. Hebrews 7:12 says: "For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law." We are under a different law from what they had under the old covenant.

Christ is mediator of a new covenant. Hebrews 9:15 : "And for this cause he is mediator of a new covenant." Read all of these verses and you will see that this new covenant could not go into effect until after our Lord's death.

Christ was born and lived and died under the old covenant. Galatians 4:4-5 says: "But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, that he might redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." For this reason Jesus was circumcised when eight days old according to the law (Luke 2:21); his mother offered "a pair of turtle doves or two pigeons" for her purification when Christ was thirty-three days old according to the law (Luke 2:22-24; Leviticus 12:1-8); he observed the Passover (Luke 22:14-15), also the Sabbath, and taught that not a "jot" or a "little" should pass from the law till it was fulfilled (Matthew 5:17-18); hence, he had those whom he had cleansed to offer what Moses commanded for their cleansing. He would not allow them to disregard the least command of the law. (Matthew 5:17-18; Mark 1:40 The law was fulfilled when he died on the cross. Colossians 2:14 : "Having blotted out the bond written in ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us: and he hath taken it out of the way, nailing it to the cross." (Read also Ephesians 2:14-15.) And while dying on the cross he said: "It is finished." (John 19:28-30.) The double purpose for which Christ came. In Hebrews 10:9 we have the words of the Psalmist fulfilled in Christ: "Then hath he said, 10, I am come to do thy will. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second." The

second covenant, or new covenant, could not be established until the "first covenant" was removed. This was our Lord's first work—viz., fulfill and end the first covenant that he might establish the second. The law was to last until the second covenant was established. In Galatians 3:23-25 we have these words: "But before faith came, we were kept in ward under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. So that the law is become our tutor to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith is come, we are no longer under a tutor." Could anything be plainer than this? The apostles were made ministers of the new testament. Study 2 Corinthians 3:6-14. Paul declares: "Who also made us sufficient as ministers of a new covenant." He says they were not made ministers of "the letter," referring to "the ministration of death, written and engraver on stones." Note that he used the expressions, "passeth away," "done away in Christ," in speaking of the old covenant. The law itself taught that when the new covenant was established we were then to live under the new and not the old. Study Galatians 4:21-31 in connection with the first five verses of chapter 5. Those who now try to live under the old are in rebellion to both the old and the new. And as Paul says in Galatians 5:4 : "Ye are severed from Christ; ye are fallen away from grace." The Old Testament taught when the Messiah came we must hear him as our Lawmaker. In Deuteronomy 18:15-19 we have the prophecy of Christ's coming, and to him we would then have to listen. In Acts 3:22-26 it is taught that this prophecy had been fulfilled and that we must now hear Christ in "all things whatsoever he shall speak unto you." God reaffirmed this in the transfiguration on the mount. (See Matthew 17:1-8.)

"The law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ." (John 1:17.) Who cannot see the importance of recognizing the difference in the two covenants, that we are now under the new, not the old, and that grace and truth come to us through the new? Under the new covenant we are dead to the law and can be married to Christ. We could never be married to Christ under the old. (See Romans 7:4.)

AN IMPORTANT RULE IN BIBLE STUDY

Notice who is talking.(1)The Bible contains some things the devil says;(2)it also records some things evil men have said;(3)and in it we have exactly what God and Christ have said to us through inspired teachers.

Notice under what dispensation the talking is done.(1)From Adam to Moses was the Patriarchal Dispensation. During this time each father was priest over his own household, and had his own family altar, and could approach God in behalf of his family. (2)From Moses to Christ was what is known as the old covenant, or the law of Moses. Under it was the Levitical priesthood, and through these priests the people had access to God. (3)From Christ to the end of the earth time we have that glorious new covenant of which Christ is mediator.

Observe what is said and who is being addressed. (Read Matthew 25:31-46.) Who are addressed in verses 34-36? Who is speaking? Who are addressed in verses 41-43? How would it do to exchange these words and make the latter apply to the former? You get the importance of this rule from this example.

11 5. The Beginning

5. The Beginning

The Beginning

INTRODUCTION

It is our purpose in this lesson to learn what the expression, "at the beginning," means. (Acts 11:15.) To do this, we must learn (1) what it was that began, (2) when it began, (3) where it began. This lesson is vitally connected with our last lesson and throws more light on it.

SOME STATEMENTS IN PROPHECY The Lord's house to be established. "And it shall come to pass in the latter days, that the mountain of Jehovah's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many peoples shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem." (Isaiah 2:2-3; see also Micah 4:1). The points in this prophecy are easily seen: (1) That the Lord's house would be established; (2) all nations to enter it; (3) it would be established in Jerusalem; (4) the time would be in the "latter days." The house of God is the church. (2 Timothy 3:15; see also Hebrews 3:6.) "The house of God, which is the church of the living God." It is the same institution Christ called "my church" in Matthew 16:18.

Jesus quotes the prophecies of Isaiah and Micah as the ground for making Jerusalem the place to begin. "Thus it is written [here he must refer to what was written in the Old Testament prophecies], that the Christ should suffer, and rise again from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name unto all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things. And behold, I sent forth the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city, until ye be clothed with power from on high." (See Luke 24:44-53.) The prophecies fulfilled. The apostles returned to Jerusalem and there tarried until the Holy Spirit came to guide them. Read Acts 2:1-17 and you will find the Spirit came upon these apostles on the first Pentecost after the Lord's ascension to heaven. They were in Jerusalem—the right place. Peter quoted Joel's prophecy, which was to be fulfilled in the "last days"; so it is the right time. The fulfillment of this prophecy was to begin in the city of Jerusalem. (Joel 2:32.) It is easy to see that the prophecies of Isaiah and Micah are now being fulfilled and the "house of; the Lord," or the church, is being established. This Pentecost was the beginning. Turn to Acts 11:15. Peter says the Holy Spirit fell upon Cornelius and his house as it did on "us [the apostles] at the beginning." Pentecost, then, was the beginning of something. What was it? Was it not the beginning of that church Jesus said he would build? Read verse 47, where it says: "The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." (King James Version.)

WHEN THE KINGDOM CAME, OR BEGAN The kingdom—the power and the spirit. Christ says in Mark 9:1 : "There are some here of them that stand by, who shall in no wise taste of death, till they

see the kingdom of God come with power." The kingdom, therefore, would come when the power came—they were both to come together. And at least one of them would die before it came. The expression, "some of them that stand by, who shall in no wise taste of death," declares that at least one of them would. Judas did die before the kingdom came on Pentecost. (See Matthew 27:3-5.)

Turn to Acts 1:8, where it says: "But ye shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon you." The power, then, would come when the Holy Spirit came.

Now read Acts 2:1-5 : "And when the day of Pentecost was now come.... And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. Now there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven." Could anything be more easily seen? The kingdom was to come when the power came; the power was to come when the Holy Spirit came. The Holy Spirit came on the first Pentecost after our Lord's ascension, and it was all fulfilled in the city of Jerusalem. The kingdom of heaven began on that day. If you will read Matthew 16:18-19 and Hebrews 12:22-23; Hebrews 12:28, you will see that "the kingdom of heaven," "the church of the firstborn," and what Christ called "my church" are spoken of interchangeably. The church and the kingdom began here on earth the first Pentecost after our Lord returned to the Father. A LOOK AT THE TYPES A type of Christ's resurrection. Read Leviticus 23:9-11, where we have a type of our Lord's resurrection. This was "the first fruits of the harvest," and it was offered always on "the morrow after the Sabbath," which had to be the first day of the week. On this day our Lord arose from the dead. "Now when he was risen early on the first day of the week." (Mark 16:9.) "The first fruits of the harvest" typified "the first fruits of the resurrection." The type was offered on the first day of the week, and Jesus fulfilled it in rising from the dead on the first day of the week. He did not arise by accident on this day. God had fixed it as his resurrection day fifteen hundred years before Jesus was born into the world when he gave Moses the type, the first fruits of harvest, and had him teach the people to offer them on "the morrow after the Sabbath." "But now hath Christ been raised from the dead, the first fruits of them that are asleep." (1 Corinthians 15:20.)

A. type of the new covenant. Let us now read Leviticus 23:15-16. Here we have the day designated for "the new meal offering." And it was to be offered on "the morrow after the seventh Sabbath" from the time-of the first fruits of the harvest. The seventh Sabbath was certainly the forty-ninth day, and the morrow after it was the fiftieth day, and it was the first day of the week. This "new meal offering" was a type of the "new covenant" prophesied of in Jeremiah 31:31-34. Turn and read it. "Pentecost" means "the fiftieth day." The purpose for which the Holy Spirit came upon the apostles was to give to them this "new covenant" of which Christ is now mediator. In Hebrews 9:15-16 Christ is declared to be "mediator of a new covenant."

We have already learned that this covenant could not go into effect until after his death and his removal of the first covenant. Hebrews 7:12 declares that we have "a change also of the law." Read again Hebrews 10:9 and Colossians 2:14. In John 16:13-14 Christ told the apostles that the Holy Spirit would guide them into all truth; that he would not speak of himself, but only what he heard Christ command, this he would speak; that "he shall take of mine, and declare it unto you." This is the way we got the "new covenant"—the doctrine of our Lord and Savior. This teaching began on Pentecost.

All the preaching done by John the Baptist and Christ and his apostles before our Lord's death was to the effect that "the kingdom of heaven is at hand"— that is, soon to be established. (See Matthew 3:1-2; Matthew 4:17; Matthew 10:7; Luke 10:1-9.) Joseph of Arimathea was "waiting for the kingdom " when he buried our Lord. (See Mark 15:43.) But now the kingdom exists, and every baptized believer is spoken of as delivered out of the kingdom of darkness and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son. (See Colossians 1:13.) To learn what to do to be saved, we must go to the teaching of these Spirit-guided apostles, which began on Pentecost. We must also go to them to learn how to work and worship in the church of Christ today. Let us remember this teaching had a time and place to begin. It was on the day of Pentecost, and the Holy Spirit speaks of it as "the beginning."

12 6. The Church—What Is It?

6. The Church—What Is It?

The Church—What Is It?

INTRODUCTION In Matthew 16:18 Christ says: "Upon this rock I will build my church." We begin now a series of lessons about the church of Christ. The thought before us is:

What is the church? ITS PROPER NAME By "proper name" is meant that name by which it must be known, or that name by which it must be called. It is called "the church of God" and "churches of God" in the following places: I Cor. 1:1, 2; 11:16, 22; 15:9; 2 Corinthians 1:1; Gall. 1:13. These passages speak of the church in the universal sense, including all of God's children in any locality or on the earth, and also as local congregations. It is always used in the singular in the first sense and the plural in the second sense. In Matthew 16:18 Christ speaks of it as "my church." In Acts 20:28 it is spoken of as "the church of the Lord," in its universal sense, and in Romans 16:16 as "churches of Christ," in the local sense. There are more than forty local congregations in Nashville, and because of this fact we speak of "the churches of Christ in Nashville"; but when we speak of all the redeemed on earth or in any one section, we must speak of them as "the church of God" or "the church of Christ." This is the way the Holy Spirit used these expressions, and we dare not add to nor take from them. BY RIGHT OF PURCHASE

Suppose Mr. Smith buys a lot and on it builds a house and moves into it. If someone should ask you, "Whose house or home is that?" what answer would you give? You could give but one—viz.: "Mr. Smith's home." It is his by right of purchase, and this fact demands this answer. You could not answer, "It is Mr. Brown's home," or give it any other name and tell the truth. Of course, you could speak of it as "Mrs. Smith's home," because all that belongs to Smith also belongs to his wife.

Just so does Jesus declare that what belongs to him belongs to his Father also. "All things that are mine are shine, and shine are mine," declares Jesus in talking to his Father in prayer. (See John 17:10.) In Acts 20:28 we have the words: "The church of the Lord which he purchased with his own blood." And in Matthew 16:18 he says: "Upon this rock I will build my church." The church belongs to Christ by right of purchase. And think of the price he paid! And you can argue and reason forever, but never can you suggest a better way to speak of the church, when the proper name is to be used, than the way in which the Holy Spirit has spoken of it—viz., "church of God," "church of the Lord," or "church of Christ." These expressions are in harmony with every fact or truth connected with the church.

NOTHING IN A NAME

It is contended that there is nothing in a name; hence, people who so believe are exceedingly indifferent about the name they give the church or even themselves as individual disciples. Let us look into this now and see.

If there is nothing in a name, God did a useless thing the day he made Adam and Eve and "called their name Adam, in the day when they were created." (Genesis 5:2.) If there is nothing in a name, why did God name these two souls?

If there is nothing in a name, why did God change Abram's name to "Abraham" and Sarai's name to "Sarah"? "Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be called Abraham." "As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be." (Genesis 17:5; Genesis 17:15.) But why change their names if it be true that there is nothing in a name? We are not looking into the meaning of these names nor ascertaining why God made the change. We are merely emphasizing the fact that to assume that there is nothing in a name is not only erroneous, but reflects on God by making him do things there is nothing in.

If there is nothing in a name, God sent an angel all the way from heaven to earth on a useless mission to change Jacob's name to "Israel." "And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob. And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel." (See Genesis 32:27-28.) Hence, the Bible calls the twelve tribes that descended from the twelve sons of Jacob "the twelve tribes of Israel," not "the twelve tribes of Jacob." Why all this if there is nothing in a name? Would it not be better to let names stand as God has seen fit to use them and stop this practice of choosing human names and trying to defend them?

Some have contended that "Christian church" is a proper name, on the ground that it is Christian in contradistinction to pagan. On identically the same grounds the Catholics could justify calling it "the Holy Catholic Church." "Catholics" means universal. And certainly the New Testament contains the idea of the universality of the church. The words "catholic" and "Christian," when so used, are simply adjectives. These words are nowhere in the New Testament used as the proper name of the church. Whatever there may be in them of merit, certainly is comprehended in the name used by the Holy Spirit—viz., "church of God," "church of Christ." No man can improve on the way the Bible speaks of things.

DESCRIPTIVE TITLES OF THE CHURCH

It is called "the house of God." (1 Timothy 3:15.) As a building, our Lord is its rock foundation (Matthew 16:18; 1 Corinthians 3:11), and his disciples are known as "living stones" built upon him, the immovable rock (1 Peter 2:5; Hebrews 3:6).

It is called "the body of Christ." (Ephesians 1:22-23; Colossians 1:18; Colossians 1:24.) As such, Christ is declared to be "head over all things to the church" (Ephesians 1:22-23), and his disciples are declared to be "severally members thereof." (1 Cor. 12:20-27.) We have just one Lord. This Lord has just one body, or one church, through which he works to bless the world. (See Ephesians 4:4-6; 1 Corinthians 12:12-20; 1 Corinthians 12:25-27; Romans 12:4-5.) It can break itself up into factions and parties, but such is rebellion against Christ, the head. 1 Corinthians 12:20-25 says: "But now they are many members, but one body. . . . That there should be no schism [faction] in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another." How can you break the church up into factions, or parties, and keep the members from having more care for the members of their own party, or faction? God's way is the best way. Christ prayed that we be one, as he and the Father are one. (See John 17:20-21.) The Spirit pleads in 1 Corinthians 1:10, "Now I beseech you, brethren, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same

thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment."

It is called "the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 16:18-19; Hebrews 12:22-23; Hebrews 12:28.) As such, Christ is the King and the disciples of Christ are its citizens. (Psalms 2:6-7; Acts 13:32-33; Ephesians 2:19.)

It is called "the sheepfold." (John 10:16.) As such, Christ is the "good shepherd" and his disciples are the sheep. (John 10:11; John 10:14; 1 Peter 2:25.)

It is called a "family." (Ephesians 3:14-15.) As such, God is the Father, Jesus is "the elder brother," and all his faithful disciples are declared to be "joint heirs" with him. (Matthew 23:9; Galatians 4:6-7; 1 John 3:1-2.) "The Jerusalem which is above," spoken of as the church, is declared to be "the mother of us all." (Galatians 4:26.)

It is called an "army." As such, Christ is our Captain (Hebrews 2:10), and every disciple a soldier (2 Timothy 2:3-4; 2 Corinthians 10:4; Ephesians 6:10-20; Revelation 19:11-16) .

And, last, the church is spoken of as "the Lamb's bride." (Revelation 19:6-9; Romans 7:4; 2 Corinthians 11:1-2; Ephesians 5:22-32.)

THE MATERIAL OUT OF WHICH THE CHURCH IS BUILT The church is not the house in which its members meet. Such a building is only "a meetinghouse," or place where the church meets; but this material building is not the church. (Acts 7:48; Acts 17:24.) The church at Corinth was said to have "come together into one place" (1 Corinthians 14:23), and the Jerusalem church was "scattered abroad" (Acts 8:1). The church is a living, loving, serving, walking, singing, praying institution; as an army, fighting sin and Satan. (1 Timothy 6:12; Ephesians 6:12). As a bride, we must bear fruit. (Romans 7:4.) As a building, it is God's habitation. (Ephesians 2:22.) As a body, we take orders from Christ and no one else. (Ephesians 1:22-23.) The church was typified of or foreshadowed by such buildings as the tabernacle of Moses and Solomon's temple, both of which were made of the most precious material obtainable. They were types of God's house today, which is the church. And this house has as its foundation Jesus Christ. Can you think of anything more precious? It has as its superstructure the souls of men and women purchased by the blood of Jesus and declared to be living stones built on this foundation. Just one soul is worth more than all the wealth in the earth. This precious material put in the tabernacle of Moses and Solomon's temple was not to teach us to build magnificent church houses.

Let us remember that Christ is "head over all things to the church"; hence, no gospel or doctrine but his can we teach. (Galatians 1:6-9; 2 John 1:9-10.)

13 7. The Church—The Importance of Being Members of It

7. The Church—The Importance of Being Members of It

The Church—The Importance of Being Members of It

INTRODUCTION It is claimed by some that it is not necessary to become members of the church in order to be saved. In studying this or any other subject, we should see to it that we are not prejudiced either for or against the question. If it is God's will to save us out of the church, there is no good reason for objecting to his doing so; hence, we should teach it and so live while on earth. The Lord's will and way should be our constant desire and prayer. **THE QUESTION CONSIDERED IN THE LIGHT OF SYMBOLS** In "the house of God."(1 Timothy 3:15.) Christ is the rock foundation. (Matthew 16:18; 1 Corinthians 3:11.) How can we rest on Christ as our rock foundation and be no part of that house that is built upon him? The foundation sustains the superstructure of the building. We must be connected with that superstructure if we are to rest on the rock foundation. We become a part of that superstructure by hearing and doing what Christ says. "Every one therefore that heareth these words of mine, and doeth them, shall be likened unto a wise man, who built his house upon the rock." (Matthew 7:24.) In "the kingdom of heaven." Christ is the King. (Psalms 2:6-7; Acts 2:36; Acts 13:32-33; 1 Corinthians 15:24-25.)

How can we accept him as our King, crown him Lord of all in our hearts, and refuse to become citizens of the kingdom over which he reigns? (See Matthew 23:13; Luke 19:14; Luke 19:27.) In "the body of Christ." Christ is the "head over all things" to the body. (Ephesians 1:22-23.) The relationship existing between the head of a human being and his body is used as a symbol or shadow of that relationship that exists between Christ and his church. The shadow is never as great as the substance or that which is symbolized by it. Hence, the relationship between Christ and his church is closer, more living, and vital than that existing between a living human being's body and his head. No human being has ever fully comprehended the wonderful relationship, because of blood and nerve, that exists between the human head and body. Are you surprised, then, that the Bible says we are blessed "exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think" just because we are members of this church of Christ, this body of Christ? Commit to memory Ephesians 3:20-21. But how can we have this relationship to Christ as Head and be not grafted into his body and become a part of it? Disconnect your arm from your body, and it at once loses its vital relationship to your head. We must be members of his body, his church, to enjoy this relationship. In the sheepfold. Jesus is the Shepherd, and he says: "I am the door; by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved." (John 10:9.) Where is the promise for those who stay out and will not go in? The church Christ's bride. How can one be wedded to him, take him as a spiritual husband, and refuse to be a part of his bride? (See again Romans 7:4.) The church as an army. Christ is Captain. (Hebrews 2:10; 2 Timothy 2:3-4.) How can one take him as Leader, or Captain, and refuse to be a soldier in his army? The church as a family. How can one be recognized as a child of God, a joint heir with Christ, and refuse to be born of water and the Spirit into this family? (See John 3:5.)

These symbols mean something. Can you name one thing the Bible says about the church that does not teach that one must be a member of it in order to be saved?

SOME DIRECT STATEMENTS In Isaiah 46:13 we have the following prophecy: "I will place salvation in Zion for Israel my glory." Compare Hebrews 12:22-24 and you will find the people came unto "Zion" under the preaching of the apostles, and you will find "Zion" there followed by the explanatory modifiers: "city of the living God," "the heavenly Jerusalem," "innumerable hosts of angels," "general assembly and church of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven." observe that when they came into this glorious church, or assembly, they found God, Christ, and "the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better than that of Abel." The church is where God and his Son here on earth can be found. The church is "builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit." (Ephesians 2:19-22.) In Hebrews 3 : 1 we are commanded to "consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, even Jesus." But in Hebrews 10:21 we learn that he is "a great priest over the house of God." The "house of God" is the church. (1 Timothy 3:15.) Christ is now in heaven in God's presence for "us" (Hebrews 9:24), but the "us" in this verse is the church—those of us who have surrendered to Jesus. (Hebrews 3:6.) God is able to save us to the uttermost need if we undertake to go to him by this living Savior we have in heaven as High Priest over the church. He does not function as High Priest over the world, but the church that he purchased with his own blood. (Hebrews 7:12.)

Acts 2:47 says Christ daily added to the church "such as should be saved," or "those that were being saved." The very moment you become "such as should be saved" you get into the church. In Ephesians 5:23 Paul says: "Christ also is the head of the church, being himself the savior of the body." The church is the saved body; hence the importance of being a member of it. **THE TABERNACLE OF MOSES**

Moses was commanded to make all things according to the pattern shown him in the mount. (See Hebrews 8:5.) God's reason for wanting him to be faithful was "for a testimony of those things which were afterward to be spoken." (Hebrews 3:5.) The tabernacle of Moses was a type of the church, or, as Hebrews 8:5 puts it, "copy and shadow of the heavenly things." The "most holy" was a type of heaven itself, where the mercy seat is. (See Hebrews 9:24.) The "holy place" was a type of the church, or the kingdom of heaven on earth. The tabernacle was so built that you could not go from the worldly sanctuary, or the outside, to the most holy without going through the holy place. The walls were, so to speak, tongue-and-grooved together and there was but one entrance—the door on the east end of the tabernacle. They had to enter the holy place and pass through it to the veil that separated the holy from the most holy, and through the veil into the most holy was the way to the mercy seat.

See the application in the words of Jesus: "No one cometh unto the Father, but by me." (John 14:6.) Where is he stationed in the scheme of redemption? "I am the door; by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved." (John 10:9.) How can anyone go from the world to the Father without going through Christ, the door, and through his institution, the church? (Matthew 16:18.) Look at the diagram above. When Christ said, "Upon this rock I will build my church," he was not talking about building a nonessential, a playhouse, out of which salvation can be had as well as in it.

14 8. The Church—How To Become Members of It

8. The Church—How To Become Members of It

The Church—How To Become Members of It

INTRODUCTION

We have learned what the church is, the importance of being members of it, and now we want to study how to become members of the church. Do not forget that we are considering that institution Christ calls his "church." (Matthew 16:18.) It should be the desire of every soul to be in the church of Christ—the identical institution, not something like it. This can be done, for Christ says: "If any man willet to do his will, he shall know of the teaching." And David says: "The friendship of Jehovah is with them that fear him; and he will show them his covenant." (John 7:17; Psalms 25:14.) IT IS EITHER CONDITIONAL OR UNCONDITIONAL

Jesus tasted death for every man (Hebrews 2:9), and he wants all to be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth (1 Timothy 2:3-4). He is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. (2 Peter 3:9.)

If the Lord adds people to the church unconditionally, every soul on earth would be in the church, for he wants all saved. But the church is called "the saved" and placed over against those who are not saved. "For the time is come for judgment to begin at the house of God [the church]: and if ii begin first at us, what shall be the end of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous is scarcely saved, where shall the ungodly and sinner appear?" (1 Peter 4:17-18.) "The house of God," the "us," those who obey the gospel of God, and "the righteous" are classed together. Those not in the house of God, or church—those that have obeyed not the gospel of God, or "the ungodly and sinner"—are placed in another class, and they will not be saved. But if salvation is unconditional, they would all be saved—all placed in one class. The Lord adds to the church. "The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." (Acts 2:47, King James Version.) The Lord opens and shuts. "He that hath the key of David, he that openeth and none shall shut, and that shutteth and none openeth." (Revelation 3:7.) "I am the door; by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved." (John 10:9.) It is absolutely certain, therefore, that if you are in the church, the Lord added you to it. This is what Jesus meant when he said: "Upon this rock I will build my church." He does the building by adding souls to the church. Whom does the Lord add? He adds "such as should be saved." But the question arises: Does man have to do anything to become "such as should be saved?" "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned." (Mark 16:15-16.) Those who believe and are baptized are saved. All such he adds to his church.

"They then that received his word were baptized: and there were added unto them in that day about three thousand souls. . . . And the Lord added to them day by day those that were saved"—marginal reading,

"those that were being saved"; King James Version, "such as should be saved." (Acts 2:41; Acts 2:47.) The Lord says those that believe and are baptized shall be saved. The Lord adds such daily to the church—"such as should be saved," or those that are being saved. He added on the day of Pentecost those who gladly received the word and were baptized. It follows, therefore, that we have just as many members in the church today as we have souls who have become "such as should be saved." There is no such thing as your becoming "such as should be saved" today and added to the church tomorrow. Jesus adds to the church daily "such as should be saved." The very day you become "such as should be saved," into the church you go, for it is our Lord's business to add all such to the church. He never forgets or neglects his part of the work—it is done daily.

SOME ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES The saved are those who obey him. Hebrews 5:9 says: "And having been made perfect, he became unto all them that obey him the author of eternal salvation."

All who will not hear Christ in all things whatsoever he commands shall be destroyed from among the people. (Acts 3:22-23.)

Christ will take vengeance, when he comes again, on all those who obey not the gospel. (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9.) We must obey the gospel, then, if we would be the "such as should be saved." In conclusion, those who hear and do what Christ says build on the rock. (Matthew 7:24.) The rock on which we build is Christ, and he is the foundation of his church, his house. (1 Corinthians 3:11.) May God bless all in seeing and obeying the gospel of his Son that they may be saved.

15 9. What Man Must Do to Become Such As Should Be Saved (Pt 1)

9. What Man Must Do to Become Such As Should Be Saved (Pt 1)

What Man Must Do to Become Such As Should Be Saved

(Part 1)

INTRODUCTION In the preceding lesson, the subject, "How to Become Members of the Church," was considered. We viewed the subject in a general way. We learned that the Lord adds to the church daily "such as should be saved," and that being added is conditional. One must do something to become "such as should be saved." Do not forget the strength of Jehovah's proof: that if we will take all he says on any question, no man can strengthen his proof, or make it more easily understood. Let us test this statement in this lesson. And remember what was said about "the anticipation of the Scriptures"—that is, the Author of the Bible foreknew the errors that would be taught and intentionally put something in his teaching on that subject to shield us from the error.

MAN MUST BELIEVE The absolute necessity of faith. The student will carefully check the following Scriptures:

Faith purifies the heart (Acts 15:9), and the pure in heart are the ones that shall see God (Matthew 5:8).

Those who believe shall through Christ's name receive remission of sins. (Acts 10:43.) The forty-eighth verse of the same chapter says that we are baptized into the name of Christ. (See also Acts 2:38.)

We are sanctified by faith. (Acts 26:18.) And without sanctification "no man shall see the Lord." (Hebrews 12:14.) We are justified by faith. (Romans 5:1.) Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." (Romans 14:23.)

We walk by faith. (2 Corinthians 5:7.) "Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him." (Genesis 5:24.) "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death." (Hebrews 11:5.) There is no such thing as right walking unless it is done by faith.

Right living is by faith. "And that life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God." (Galatians 2:20.) No victory without faith. "And this is the victory that hath overcome the world, even our faith." (1 John 5:4.)

"And without faith it is impossible to be well-pleasing unto him." (Hebrews 11:6.) How can we be saved without pleasing God? And this is not possible without faith. Can you strengthen this proof? The church of Christ—that church he established and that I am happy to represent—teaches that there can be no such thing as a pure heart, justification, sanctification, right living, right walking, overcoming the world, and pleasing God, without faith. The Bible doctrine is, believe or perish! Read all of Hebrews 11 and name the question that is emphasized more than faith is here emphasized.

How does this faith come?

God would not leave us in the dark on a question of so much importance as faith. He would not leave even a doubt about how we get this faith the justifies, sanctifies, and saves.

Collate what God has said on how to get faith. "Belief cometh of hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ." (Romans 10:17.) Study verses 11-17. All faith comes by hearing, but the faith that saves comes by hearing God's word. Faith in Mormonism comes by hearing the peculiar doctrine of the Mormons. Such faith will not save. Christ says: "Every plant which my heavenly Father planted not, shall be rooted up." (Matthew 15:13.) This was the only way the Gentiles could get saving faith. "God made choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel, and believe." (Acts 15:7.) The devil knows how faith comes. "Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. And those by the wayside are they that have heard; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word from their heart, that they may not believe and be saved." (Luke 8:11-12.) The devil knows the faith that comes by hearing God's word will save. He does not want the word to get into the heart; and when it does, he attempts to get it out. The doctrine that you can get faith without God's word is the devil's most effective way of keeping it out of the heart. Such a doctrine is taught by many. Of such Paul speaks in Ephesians 4:14 in warning us not to be tossed about with every "wind of doctrine." Some of these "winds of doctrine" are that the word of God is a dead letter, and that the sinner's heart is totally depraved and beyond the reach of the word. But God knew that such error would be taught, and anticipated it in these words: "For the word of God is living, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword." ("Quick and powerful" is the rendering in the King James Version.) (Hebrews 4:12.) It is a "two-edged sword"—the sharpest of all—and it cuts to death with one of its edges all error, and with the other edge the saving faith is established in your heart.

If God gives faith in some mysterious, miraculous way, independent of his word, why do we send Bibles and missionaries to heathen lands? Why does God not give them faith without these agencies? **THE KIND OF FAITH THAT SAVES** The Bible speaks of at least two kinds of faith—the living faith, or perfect faith; (2) dead faith, or imperfect faith. (James 2:14-26.) It is living faith, and not dead faith, that saves. Faith only—faith by itself—is declared to be a dead faith. How could God make it plainer than he has here? When the Bible says we are purified by faith, sanctified by faith, justified by faith, what kind is meant? Who would say a dead faith can purify and justify?

Examples of the two kinds of faith: (1) Dead faith. John 12:42-43 : The chief rulers "believed on him." Were they saved? John 3:36 : "He that believeth on the Son hath eternal life." Do these chief rulers have eternal life? They believed on the Son, but it was faith only, and that kind of faith is dead. Note that it says: "But because of the Pharisees they did not confess it, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: for they loved the glory that is of men more than the glory that is of God." Here is your dead faith. It does not save. Who would say these chief rulers were saved? (2) Living faith. Acts 6:7 : "And a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith." What is the difference in the faith of these priests and the chief rulers? one has the obedience of faith and the other has faith only. The former will save and the latter will not. John 3:36 : "He that believeth on the Son hath eternal life; but he that obeyeth not the Son shall not see life." When the Bible says faith does anything for us, it always, without an exception, means the obedience of faith. The faith mentioned in the commission Christ gave to his apostles was the obedience of faith. "Through

whom we received grace and apostleship, unto obedience of faith among all the nations." (Rom. 1:5.) And in Romans 16:25-26, Paul says: "According to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the commandment of the eternal God, is made known unto all the nations unto obedience of faith."

Read also Romans 6:17-18 from the King James Version.

It is plain, then, that faith purifies, sanctifies, justifies, and saves; but it does this for us when we step out in whole-hearted surrender and obedience to what God's word says for us to do. In Mark 16:16 Christ says: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned." He that believeth not" is put over against the one who believes and is baptized; hence, one that merely believes, as did the chief rulers, and refuses to be baptized, is not to be considered the believer who becomes "such as should be saved." As a final argument, turn to Acts 2:37-41; Acts 2:47 and find that the ones that were added to the church were those who became "such as should be saved," and that these were those who "gladly received the word" and were baptized. The obedient faith saves. "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith working through love." (Galatians 5:6.)

16 10. What Man Must Do to Become Such As Should Be Saved (Pt 2)

10. What Man Must Do to Become Such As Should Be Saved (Pt 2)

What Man Must Do to Become Such As Should Be Saved

(Part 2)

INTRODUCTION

We learned in our preceding lesson that it is "the obedience of faith" that saves; hence, it is a faith that includes repentance, the lesson before us now for study. Remember, we are still studying how to become members of the church. We have learned that Christ adds to the church daily "such as should be saved." We have also learned that there are certain things that we must do to become "such as should be saved." Is repentance one of the things we must do?

WE MUST REPENT In Luke 13:3-5 Christ twice declares: "Except ye repent, ye shall . . . perish."

Repentance was the burden of the preaching of John the Baptist. "And in those days cometh John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, saying, Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Matthew 3:1-2; see also Luke 3:3.)

Repentance was the message of the first proclamation of Jesus after his baptism. "From that time began Jesus to preach, and to say, Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Matthew 4:17.) When the apostles were sent out by Jesus under the first commission, they were instructed to make the burden of their message "that men should repent." (Mark 6:12.)

Jesus upbraided the cities where most of his mighty works were done "because they repented not." (Matthew 11:20-24.) And note that the doom of these cities was declared to be greater than that of Sodom. The great commission, given after our Lord's resurrection and just before he ascended to heaven, and which commission includes all the nations and is to last till Christ comes again, has repentance incorporated in it as one of the great needs of the people of the earth. (Luke 24:46-49.) And note that in the first sermon preached under this commission the people were commanded to repent and be baptized for the remission of their sins. (Acts 2:38.)

And, in closing the list of citations, we listen to Paul on Mars' Hill in Athens: "But now he commandeth men that they should all everywhere repent: inasmuch as he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." (Acts 17:30-31.) This is not all the proof, but all that space will permit in this division of the lessons.

WHAT IS REPENTANCE?

It has been correctly said that repentance is the most difficult command to obey. This is due to the fact that it is a change of the stubborn will.

It is not sorrow, for "godly sorrow" comes just before repentance and produces it. (See 2 Corinthians 7:10.) In this case "godly sorrow" is the tree and repentance is the fruit of this tree.

It is not areformation of life, for reformation of life comes after repentance and is declared to be the fruit of repentance. Here study closely Luke 3:7-14. In this case repentance becomes the tree and reformation of life the fruit of this tree. Never can we have true repentance without "godly sorrow," nor can we have a real reformation of life without repentance.

What, then, is repentance? The answer is easily seen—viz., it is that change in a man's stubborn will that comes between "godly sorrow" and a reformation of life. The "godly sorrow" produces this change in the stubborn will, and this change in the stubborn will results in a change in our way of living. Jesus gives us an example: "But what think ye? A man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work today in my vineyard. And he answered and said, I will not: but afterward he repented himself, and went." (Matthew 21:28-29.) What change took place in this son between "I will not" and his going? Certainly it was a change in his will from "I will not" to "I will." The going was not repentance, but came as the fruit of it.

Just so it is with the sinner. The stubborn will must be changed from "I will not quit sin and obey God" to "I will quit sin and obey him." This is repentance. It is always preceded by "godly sorrow" and followed by a reformation of life. All need repentance who are consciously refusing to do anything God says do. Our will must be changed into a state of submission to the will of Christ, our King.

HOW REPENTANCE IS BROUGHT ABOUT.

It is spoken of as a gift of God, yet we know it is a command that we must all obey. "He commandeth men that they should all everywhere repent." (Acts 17:30.) It is not always easy to see how a thing can be a gift of God and at the same time something that we must do. But repentance is a gift of God only in the sense that God gives us those things that produce repentance in our hearts, just as food is a gift of God. "Give us this day our daily bread" (Matthew 6:11) shows that food is a gift of God, and yet we know that God gives it to us through certain channels or means. Just so repentance is a gift of God.

Repentance is produced by the power of the gospel of Christ. (Read 1 Corinthians 1:18-24; Romans 1:16.) In 2 Corinthians 7:8-10 you will see that Paul produced in the hearts of the Corinthians "godly sorrow" by a letter he wrote them. This "godly sorrow" led them to repent. The gospel contains the power. This gospel presents God as he is—viz., (1) a God of terror and severity toward those who will not recognize his right to rule in their hearts and lives. (Study here 2 Corinthians 5:10-11; Hebrews 10:28-31; 2 Peter 3:7-11; Revelation 20:10-15; Revelation 21:7-8.) But a God of goodness to those who will recognize his right to rule and let him rule them in life. (Study here Romans 2:4; John 3:16; 1 Corinthians 1:18; 2 Corinthians 5:14).

We are commanded to "behold then the goodness and severity of God." (See Romans 11:22.) In connection with these facts, study John 6:44-45. Here we see no man can come to Christ except God draws him, but that this drawing is done by teaching the true God unto the people. Those who hear and learn of God come to Jesus for salvation. And study with these Scriptures Exodus 34:28; Romans 2:4-11.

Watch Christ and his apostles as they endeavored to lead people to repentance. You find them preaching the certainty of a judgment that is to come upon evildoers as a means to this end. (See Matthew 11:20-24; Acts 17:30-31.) Under their preaching such men as Felix trembled. (See Acts 24:25.)

One thing needful. The human heart must come to know: "God is not man, that he should He, neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and will he not do it? or hath he spoken, and will he not make it good?" (Numbers 23:19.) So long as we are believing all the warnings in the Bible as mere jokes, there will be no such thing as repentance.

Consider your own heart. Let God come into your heart just as he is revealed in the Bible, and you will find that stubborn will yielding. But, of course, you can let Satan steal these words from your heart; hence, repentance is not fully produced. How hard Satan these days is trying to make man believe there is no such thing as punishment after death! (Luke 8:11-12.)

TWO KINDS OF SORROW

"Godly sorrow." This sorrow comes as a result of our being taught of God. Those who come to know God as he is can have "godly sorrow." It comes as a result of our seeing his goodness to those who will let him rule in their hearts and his terror for those who will not. "For godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation, a repentance which bringeth no regret." (See 2 Corinthians 7:10.) Such repentance never even allows us to suggest an alibi for our sins. We are not found trying to lay the blame on the shoulders of others. Study two cases—Luke 15:18-19 and Psalms 51:1-4. The sorrow of the world. This is sorrow that comes from being caught up with, one who is sorrowing because his sins are known. Such sorrow works death, because you actually He about your sins and try to whitewash and make them less than they are. Study 2 Corinthians 7:10. In verse 11 note that the Corinthians had "godly sorrow," and this led them to clean up their impure lives, correct their wrongs.

People have claimed repentance and made confession, then afterwards expressed regrets for having done so, saying that if they had not admitted it, the people could never have proved it. Such sorrow works death. But "godly sorrow" leads one to turn from all his evil ways, confess them, and, as a result, joy and peace fill the soul. One never regrets repenting if the sorrow is of a godly sort.

It can be seen, then, how repentance is a gift of God and yet how one is responsible for not repenting. God gives the incentives; man can reject them or accept them.

17 11. What Man Must Do to Become Such As Should Be Saved (Pt 3)

11. What Man Must Do to Become Such As Should Be Saved (Pt 3)

What Man Must Do to Become Such As Should Be Saved

(Part 3)

INTRODUCTION

We come to the study of baptism, the third lesson on what man must do to become "such as should be saved." We have learned that a man must believe that Christ is the Son of God and repent of his sins before he can be considered "such as should be saved." The question before us now is: Can a man be considered "such as should be saved" if he refuses to be baptized? The question of this lesson is not whether God gives remission of sins before baptism, in the act of baptism, or after baptism. The question before us today is: Does our Lord consider one who knows what Christ says about baptism and refuses to be baptized "such as should be saved? " TO WHOM IS THE PROMISE OF KNOWLEDGE?

Those who "hunger and thirst after righteousness. " "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." (Matthew 5:6.) Are you hungering for the truth on this subject?

Those who desire to know the will of God. "If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it is of God, or whether I speak from myself."

(John 7:17.) Let us be sure that we want his will on this question.

Those who love the truth. "And with all deceit of unrighteousness for them that perish: because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God sendeth them a working of error, that they should believe a He: that all might be judged who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." (2 Thessalonians 2:10-11.) It is dangerous to study any subject with prejudice in our hearts. Let us see to it that we are honest, that we are sincere, that we hunger only for the pure word of God on all subjects.

Those who are willing to submit to God. Whether baptism is essential or nonessential to the salvation of my soul is not a matter of preference. God wrote his will several thousand years before I was born, and it matters not what our preferences in such matters may be, God has fixed it, and it will so remain till the judgment. The heavens and earth will pass away, but God's word will stand unchanged, and these very words we must face in the judgment. (John 12:48.) How foolish for any man to be prejudiced and try to force himself to believe that the Bible teaches a thing it does not! If we permit ourselves to be satisfied with the wrong way here, we will be undeceived in the judgment, to our everlasting shame and contempt.

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT BAPTISM

John the Baptist "came into all the region round about the Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance unto remission of sins." (Luke 3:3.)

"The Pharisees and the lawyers rejected for themselves the counsel of God, being not baptized of him [John]." (Luke 7:30.) Our Lord himself walked more than sixty miles from Nazareth of Galilee to where John was baptizing to be baptized, not because he had any sins to be remitted, but "to fulfill all righteousness." (See Matthew 3:13-17.)

Baptism now is a command of our Lord and is backed with all the authority God has in heaven and on earth, and it is administered in the great name of God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit. (See Matthew 28:16-20.) The words of our Lord in the great commission are: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." (Mark 16:15-16.) When Saul of Tarsus asked our Lord what he must do, he was told to go into the city and there it would be told him what he must do. (See Acts 9:6.) He went into Damascus. Ananias was sent to him by the Lord, and he was told to "arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on his name." (Acts 22:16.) When the people asked what to do on the day of Pentecost, Peter answered them: "Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." (Acts 2:38.)

Salvation is declared to be in Christ. (See Romans 8:1; 2 Corinthians 1:20; Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:13-14; Colossians 2:10; 1 John 5:10-11; 2 Corinthians 5:17.) The blessed dead are those who die in the Lord. (See Revelation 14:13.) Those who go to sleep in Jesus have the promise of being brought with Jesus when he comes again. (1 Thessalonians 4:13-14.) The Bible declares that we go into Jesus by being baptized into him. (See Romans 6:1-5; Galatians 3:26-27.) When the Samaritans believed what Philip preached, they were baptized. (Acts 8:6; Acts 8:12; read also Acts 8:26-39.) Preaching Jesus led people to want to be baptized without delay. (See also Acts 16:16-34.) Such preaching does the same today. THE LESSON SUMMARY Whom did the Lord add on Pentecost? The answer is: "Such as should be saved." (See Acts 2:47.)

But, again, who were added "unto them" on Pentecost? The answer is: Those who gladly received the words of Peter and were baptized. (See Acts 2:41.) Whom does Christ say shall be saved? "He that believeth and is baptized." (Mark 16:15-16.)

It is not difficult to see that the "such as should be saved" were those who gladly received the word and were baptized. So we must conclude, therefore, that the command of baptism, with faith and repentance, must be obeyed in order to become "such as should be saved."

18 12. What Man Must Do to Become Such As Should Be Saved (Pt 4)

12. What Man Must Do to Become Such As Should Be Saved (Pt 4)

What Man Must Do to Become Such As Should Be Saved (Part 4)

INTRODUCTION

We have learned that man must believe with all his heart that Jesus is the Son of God, repent of his sins, and be baptized in the name of Christ before he becomes a member of that group that the Bible speaks of as "such as should be saved." (Mark 16:15, 16; Acts 2:37-41, 47.) We now wish to study further the subject of baptism—(1) its mode, (2) its design, and (3) the proper subject. THE ELEMENTS OF SCRIPTURAL BAPTISM

Some tell us that sprinkling a few drops of water on a person's head is baptism; others say that pouring a little water on a person's head is baptism; still others say that either of these two acts or the act of immersing the whole body in water is Scriptural baptism; while others contend that immersion only constitutes the Scriptural act. We should want the truth on this question, and it is hoped that every reader or student of this series of lessons will study the question without prejudice. Certainly our Lord, who died that we might live, should be given a chance to say something on the subject, and we should be satisfied with his will on the subject. We cannot afford to reject his doctrine. (See 2 John 9-11.)

It takes Scriptural elements to constitute Scriptural baptism. Here there can be no room for controversy. Scriptural elements are those elements named in the Holy Scriptures. Most certainly a thing could not be Scriptural that the Scriptures say nothing about. In the following diagram I give you the elements named in the Scriptures and leave you to judge which of the three acts named above has these elements:

The Elements Named in the Scriptures

Immersion

Sprinkling

Pouring

Coming unto the water (Acts 8:36)

Yes

No

No

Much Water (John 3:23)

Yes

No

No

Going down into the water (Acts 8:38)

Yes

No

No

Form of a Burial (Rom. 6:4, Col. 2:12)

Yes

No

No

Form of a Planting (Romans 6:5)

Yes

No

No

Form of a Birth (John 3:5)

Yes

No

No

Form of a Resurrection (Rom. 6:4, Col. 2:12)

Yes

No

No

Washing of the Body (Heb. 10:22)

Yes

No

No

Coming up out of the water (Mark 1:9-10, Acts 8:38)

Yes

No

No

There is one element that all three have—viz., water. None would dare suggest some other fluid, such as milk or oil. If they sprinkle, pour, or immerse, all agree that water must be used. Now, does not the Bible name nine other facts connected with baptism as plainly as it says water—viz., (1) coming unto it, (2) much water, (3) going down into it, (4) a burial, (5) a planting, (6) a birth or coming forth, (7) a resurrection, (8) a washing, (9) and coming up out of the water? Immersion has every one of these, and you cannot immerse without every one of them. Sprinkling and pouring have not one of these nine other thoughts. Then, how can any human soul be satisfied with them for baptism? They cannot if they read their Bible, hungering for God's will in them to be accomplished. This accounts for thousands becoming dissatisfied with their sprinkling and pouring simply from reading the Bible, when never has a soul become dissatisfied with immersion. You certainly must see this. If you have been immersed, you cannot talk about your baptism without talking about it just as the Bible reads about baptism. THE SCRIPTURAL DESIGN OF BAPTISM With Jesus it was to "fulfill all righteousness." (Matthew 3:13-17.) Christ had never sinned; hence, he could not be baptized as others—viz., for the remission of sins. But he would have sinned had he refused to be baptized; hence the journey of sixty miles from Nazareth of Galilee to where John was baptizing. For the remission of sins. (Acts 2:38; Acts 22:16.) Baptized in order to be saved. (Mark 16:15-16.) Baptized into Christ. (Romans 6:3; Galatians 3:26-27.)

Baptized into the name of Christ. (Acts 10:48.) Here let it be seen that salvation is in Christ, in the name of Christ. (See Acts 4:12; Romans 8:1; 2 Corinthians 1:20; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:13-14; 1 John 5:10-11.) Hence, the blessed dead. (Revelation 14:13; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-14.) THE SCRIPTURAL SUBJECT The subject is first to be taught, then baptize him. (Matthew 28:19.) Hence, only those who are taught are Scriptural subjects.

They must believe what they have been taught. (See Mark 16:15-16; see also Acts 8:12; Acts 8:36-37.) In every account of baptism something is said that shows that infants were not among the number. (1) only those who confessed their sins were baptized. (Mark 1:5.) Infants cannot do this. (2) only those who gladly received the word were baptized. (Acts 2:41.) Infants cannot do this. (3) Not only those who believed were baptized, but it is specifically stated that they were men and women. (Acts 8:12.) We can hardly believe there were no infants in the city of Samaria. They were there, but they were not subjects of baptism.

Household baptism. Here an effort is made to get infants in; but in every case of the whole household being baptized, something is said to show there were no infants in that household. I have baptized whole families in which there were no infants. (1) The jailer's household. All believed and rejoiced. (See Acts 16:32-34.) Infants can do neither of these things. (2) The household of Stephanas. Paul baptized them all, but all "set themselves to minister unto the saints." Infants cannot do this. (1 Corinthians 16:15.)

Infants are safe. Baptism is for those who have sins for which they are responsible. All such must be converted and become as little children in order to be saved. (Matthew 18:3; Matthew 19:14.) God gives back to the human race in Christ all they lost in Adam unconditionally. (See 1 Corinthians 15:22.) Baptism is for those who have sins of their own to be remitted or who have

become old enough to know it is a command of God. It is something the human soul obeys from the heart; hence, the heart must recognize and be conscious of doing. (Read Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:38; Acts 2:41; Romans 6:4-5; Romans 6:17-18.)

19 13. A One-Hundred-Per-Cent Conversion

13. A One-Hundred-Per-Cent Conversion

A One-Hundred-Per-Cent Conversion

INTRODUCTION

Having gone over the law of pardon to aliens—or the things that aliens must do to become "such as should be saved"—in single subjects, we now present outlines that comprehend the whole law of pardon to aliens. In this lesson we wish to study conversion with the view of what it takes to make a one-hundred-percent convert, or a complete conversion. **THE MEANING OF THE WORD**

Conversion is turning again. "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out." (Acts 3:19, King James Version.) Reading this same statement from the American Revised Version, we have: "Repent ye therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out." Here "turn again" is used for "be converted." The American Revised Version so translates this word in Matthew 18:3.

It is something we accomplish. Conversion is not a change that takes place by our being acted upon wholly by some outside force or power, but something in which we ourselves have a part.

THE IMPORTANCE OF CONVERSION No remission without conversion. Referring to our text, it reads: "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out." "That your sins may be blotted out" is a purpose clause and shows why we need conversion. No conversion, no remission of sins.

Die in sins without conversion. Jesus said to the Jews: "I go away, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sin: whither I go, ye cannot come." (John 8:21.) We cannot afford to die in our sins. To do so means that we are lost forever. But we cannot get rid of our sins unless we are converted; hence the importance of conversion.

HOW CONVERSION IS PRODUCED By the law of the Lord. In Psalms 19:7 we have: "The law of Jehovah is perfect, restoring [converting] the soul." "Perfect" here means that the law of Jehovah is adequate, or all-sufficient, to the conversion of the soul. Just remember here that Satan has circulated the idea that "the law of the Lord is not perfect" to the conversion of the soul; hence, we have to look to some miraculous power independent of the word to accomplish the work. By teaching God's way. Note how beautifully the following harmonizes with Psalms 19:7 : "Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee." (See Psalms 51:13.) By preaching. "For seeing that in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom knew not God, it was God's good pleasure through the foolishness of the preaching to save them that believe." (1 Corinthians 1:21.) Read the great commission, as given by Christ, and see the emphasis he has placed on teaching and preaching. (See Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16.) "Go, teach the nations," is the command. Of course, the thing to be taught is "the law of the Lord" that is perfect for the conversion of the soul, or the gospel, which is God's power to save. (Rom. I: 16.)

Taught of God. Study the significance of the following words: "It is written in the prophets, And they shall all be taught of God. Every one that hath heard from the Father, and hath learned, cometh unto me." (See John 6:45.) Teaching is God's way of drawing people unto Christ. Read verses 44 and 45 together. But it is teaching the gospel which is his power to save. No teaching, no conversion. Christ made some failures in trying to convert people. He used the same method of conversion while he was here in the flesh— viz., that of teaching the people. But some of them would not be taught; hence, they were not converted. Read this: "For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them." (Matthew 13:15, King James Version.)

Note the order: (1) See with their eyes and hear with their ears, (2) understand with their hearts, (3) be converted, (4) and I should heal them. Where does the healing or the forgiveness of sins come? Is it not after conversion? This is the way our text (Acts 3:19) puts it. Where does conversion come? Is it not after an understanding heart? There is no such thing as being ignorantly converted. One who is converted knows it and knows how he was converted. Conversion follows an understanding heart. But where does this understanding heart come? Does it not follow teaching—hearing with your ears and seeing with your eyes? Indeed, "the law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul." And, as David says, when it is taught unto the people, sinners are converted.

Satan knows how sinners are converted. "Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. And those by the wayside are they that have heard; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word from their heart, that they may not believe and be saved." (Luke 8:11-12.) This certainly should be considered enough on how conversion is brought about. It comes as a result of teaching the pure word of God on the subject to the human heart. Certainly you can understand now how it is that a sinner can prevent his conversion, even when Jesus was the teacher. OF WHAT IT CONSISTS

There must be a change of heart. God has faith right here as his appointment to change the heart. This faith comes by hearing God's word. (See Romans 10:17.) Shut the word out, and you keep the faith that saves out.

There must be a change of life, habits, associations, or conduct. Just here we have repentance as God's appointment to attend to this. In Acts 2:40 "Save yourselves from this crooked generation," was the work of repentance. It meant: Step down and out of that sinful crowd with whom you have been running and stand aloof from them. Repentance makes you throw away all your had habits, get out from among your evil associates, or turn around in the road with a complete change in your conduct or way of living.

There must be a change of state, or relationship. And just here baptism is God's appointment for this. Baptism is for the soul that has come to Christ by faith and repentance and now is ready to go into Christ.

"For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ." (Galatians 3:26-27.) The soul that comes to baptism without faith and repentance has not the power to be baptized into Christ. Read John 1:12 and you will learn that

"believing on" the name of the Son of God does not make you a son, but gives you the power to become a son. We are baptized into Christ. "Into" means a change of state, or relationship. From all that we have thus far studied it is easy to see that conversion begins always with teaching and is consummated in baptism. It begins with a sinner out of Christ; it ends with his soul in Christ, sins forgiven, and rejoicing. Take all the examples of conversion in the Acts of the Apostles and study them and see if this is not true. Try Acts 8:35-39 and see if this was not true of the eunuch. Then turn to Acts 16:32-34 and see if this was not true of the jailer and his household. No soul was ever, under the preaching of the apostles, recognized as a complete convert until he was baptized into Christ. The sin of this day is that preachers are going all over the country making souls believe they are converted and their sins are blotted out when they have had only faith and repentance, hence are only partially converted.

TWO NOTED EXAMPLES The Pentecostians. Certainly these murderers needed conversion if souls ever needed it. Begin with Acts 2:22 and read to the close of the chapter. Note in verse 23 that Peter tells them that they at the hands of lawless men did crucify and slay Jesus. Peter preaches earnestly unto them. But when you come to verse 37, you find a change has taken place in their hearts. They cry out: "What shall we do?" They had been pricked in their hearts by the teaching. Now, what change has taken place? The answer is easy: They have a change of heart. What brought about that change? Faith did it. How did they get that faith? The preaching of Peter produced it. Of what does this change consist? Before the sermon they did not believe Christ to be God's Son, but now they believe it. Before the sermon they hated the Christ and mocked the apostles, accusing them of being full of new wine, but now, at the feet of the apostles, loving Christ, they ask the apostles what to do to be saved. This is what is meant by a change of heart. Who will say they did not have a genuine case? Did the apostles declare them to be full converts, with sins blotted out? Verse 38 gives the command: "Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." This would complete their conversion. Verse 41 states: "They then that received his word were baptized: and there were added unto them in that day about three thousand souls." Verse 47 tells us to what they were added, by whom they were added, and why they were added. Christ did the adding. He added them to his church. He did this because they had become "such as should be saved." Could anything be plainer than this?

Saul's conversion. A full account of this is found in Acts 9:1-19; Acts 22:3-16. Compare these references. This conversion is unique in that Jesus himself did the first part of the teaching.

We just cannot fully appreciate Paul's attitude with out referring to Matthew 28:1-4; Matthew 28:11-15 and reading of the He that was told for "much money" as given by one translation, and "large money" as given by another. The soldiers who had been placed at the grave to watch saw what took place, and they were "scared stiff," as we sometimes express it, or became "as dead men," as the Bible expresses it. They knew that something wonderful had happened. They related this to those hardhearted, prejudiced rulers, and they, to keep it from becoming known, paid these soldiers "large money" to circulate a He instead of the truth. It has been said that "every man has a price"—that is, that if you will go high enough you can buy any man. This is not true. No man has a price. Anyone who can be bought is not a man, in God's estimate of what it takes to constitute a man. (Read Jeremiah 5:1.) A man, like thousands you have heard of, will die before surrendering the truth. Saul, the man whose conversion we are now studying, was just such a man. He became

a victim of this He. And we should not be amazed. Were not sixty soldiers witnesses enough to establish a proposition? They were telling something, too, that was in perfect harmony with what he and all his associates really believed about Christ. All of their fleshly nature helped them to believe this story told by the soldiers. And, believing this, Saul's blood ran cold at the thought of his kindred and people falling victims to the story of the resurrection, for he verily believed deep down in his heart that Jesus never had arisen. Be patient with Saul. Have pity and compassion. Our Lord did, and so should we. Here study I Tim. I: 12-16. Christ knew how sincere he was—that he was whole-heartedly opposing him just because deep down in his soul he believed the body of Jesus was out somewhere hidden away, having returned to the dust from whence it came. Christ respected his honesty and sincerity, and set about to save him; but he never saved him in his error, but led him out of it and saved him on the same conditions he saves others.

OUR LORD'S APPEARANCE TO SAUL

While on his way to Damascus with others and with letters of authority on his person to bind all Christians there found and take them back to Jerusalem to be punished, Christ appears to him and cries out: "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" The appearance of Jesus was so much brighter than that of the noonday sun that Saul was blinded with its brilliancy. But this voice was the voice of a stranger. He knew not who it was that was speaking, so he exclaimed: "Who art thou, Lord?" "Lord" means some superior one--one that was above and beyond him. But who is it? Saul wanted to know. The answer came back: "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." Can you imagine the sensation in Saul's soul? Think of the psychological effect! Saul had been believing all the while that the story of the resurrection of Jesus was a hoax. Now he perceives that he has been misled. How natural, how reasonable that he should exclaim, as given in the King James Version, while trembling and astonished: "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"! Jesus tells him to go into the city and there it would be told him what he must do.

Let us check up a little just here. I said this conversion is unique in that Christ did the first part of the teaching. And this teaching resulted in faith and repentance. It was a believing, repentant heart that cried out: "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Who can deny this? You cannot find a better faith and a more complete repentance than this man had. And it all came by hearing the word of the Lord and actually seeing him. Does he have a change of heart? Who can doubt it? Does he have a change of life, conduct, associations? Well, he has no further use for the papers on his person giving him the right to bind Christians and punishing them. He has no further association with the haters of Christ with whom he had formerly run. Yes, he has repentance, and deeper repentance you cannot find. Is he a one-hundred-per-cent convert? Are his sins blotted out? Countless thousands have been made to believe that they were fully converted just because they believed and had repented. If Saul is not a full convert, how dare we make souls believe today that they are full converts and have remission of sins just because they have believed and repented? Will someone tell me?

Go with Saul to Damascus. He is there for three days and nights. And what is he doing? He is praying, fasting, and mourning over the awful mistake he has made in believing that all men were paid "large money" to tell. But Jesus turns the further teaching of this man over to Ananias, a faithful preacher of his, who was in that city at the time. Ananias comes to him and says: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on his name." (Acts

22:16.) This man could not eat, drink, nor sleep until he learned what Christ said he must do. And note that he arose and did this before any eating and drinking took place. This one, later known as Paul, has something to say of his own conversion. Perhaps we had better read it. Turn to Romans 6:3-4 : "Or are ye ignorant that all we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?" Here he lets us know that he, with the Roman brethren, got into Jesus—into the benefits of his death—by baptism. He also leaves us not in the dark as to how he was baptized. "We were buried therefore with him through baptism into death." Paul was buried and also raised in his baptism, he declares. So are we, if we are taught aright on baptism. Then in verses 17, 18 he tells these brethren that in obedience to this form of doctrine (baptism) we are then made free from sin.

How could anything be made plainer? Christ had told Peter, in Matthew 16:19, that he would give him the keys of the kingdom of heaven and would bind in heaven what he bound on earth. In the study of the conversion of the Pentecostians we certainly learned that baptism was bound as one of the conditions of the remission of sins. In Saul's conversion we have our Lord declaring unto us that he bound it in heaven, as he said he would, for he would not release a man from it to whom he had appeared face to face and talked and made as strong a penitent believer as a soul could be. He must go into the city and learn what he must do in addition to this. And this one thing was to be baptized and wash away his sins, calling on the name of the Lord. Certainly we now know what it takes to make a man a one-hundred-per-cent convert. If any student discovers that he is a partial convert, let him arise and complete his conversion by doing that which he has not done, or that which he was taught was nonessential to salvation. If you believed baptism a nonessential when you were baptized, you did not have the faith that Saul had when he was baptized, nor that the three thousand had on Pentecost. So I would advise you to now do what you perceive to be the truth.

20 14. The Human Heart, or Heart-felt Religion.

14. The Human Heart, or Heart-felt Religion.

The Human Heart, or Heart-felt Religion

INTRODUCTION

Much has been said about "heartfelt religion." The Bible teaches that nothing less than the whole heart called into exercise will meet the demands of our God. Observe how complete is the following testimony in establishing this thought: A FULL CONVERSION DEMANDS THE WHOLE HEART

"And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart." (Jeremiah 29:13.) We cannot multiply quotations here, but this one Scripture teaches us that God cannot be found without the whole heart's being called into exercise.

"And he said unto them, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." (Matthew 22:37.) Here we see that the love that we must have calls into action the whole heart.

"My son, give me thy heart." (Proverbs 23:26.) It is left with the student to say whether this call is for all of the heart or a part of it.

THE HEART WE ARE STUDYING

Man is a dual being—two in one—known as the "outward man" and the "inwardman." The student is asked to turn to 2 Corinthians 4:16 and read right on till he comes to the eighth verse of the fifth chapter. Here he will find the "inward man" in the eighteenth verse of the fourth chapter spoken of as the unseen man and as being eternal. In verse one of the fifth chapter he will find the "outward man" spoken of as "earthly house of our tabernacle"—that is, this "outward man" is simply a clay house in which the "inward," or unseen and eternal, part of us lives. In verses six and eight of the fifth chapter he will learn that death simply means that the "inward man" has become absent from the body and is at home with the Lord. Now, each of these two men have what we call the heart—the seat of life for each man. This lobe of flesh in the left side is the heart of the "outward man." But we are studying the heart of the "inward man." There is no such thing as a change of heart for this lobe of flesh in our left side, unless we want to suffer physical death. It is not thought of or appealed to by our God in conversion.

Examples of each. (1) The physical heart. You know the story of Absalom's rebellion against his father, David. Joab was the leader of David's army. Absalom had an unusually heavy head of hair. In fleeing from David's men, the mule on which he was riding went under the branches of a great oak, and his hair became entangled, and the mule went from under him and left him hanging there. Joab was told, and he came to the tree, and it is said that "he took three darts in his hand, and thrust them through the heart of Absalom, while he was yet alive in the midst of the oak." (See

2 Samuel 18:9; 2 Samuel 18:14.) And we all know just what heart was pierced with these carnal weapons. Such weapons cannot touch the heart of the "inward man." This is taught when Jesus says: "Be not afraid of them that kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul." (Matthew 10:28.) The heart of the "unseen" Absalom was not touched with those carnal weapons. Sin is the thing that enters the heart of the unseen man and brings death to it. The spiritual heart. And, turning to 1 Samuel 24:1-5, the student will learn that David, when fleeing from Saul, hid in one of the secret places in the cave of Engedi. Saul came in hunting for him, and he could have easily killed him, and David's servants insisted that he so do, but he would not. But he did cut off Saul's robe without his knowing it, and after Saul left the cave for a distance, David came out and held it up as proof that he could have killed him and would not. But the point here is: "And it came to pass afterward, that David's heart smote him, because he had cut off Saul's skirt." Now, what was it that smote David? This lobe of flesh in the left side? Most certainly not. It is that heart that Absalom is spoken of as stealing from his father's subjects that enabled him to bring about such a rebellion. Here turn to Sam. 15:1-6 and learn just how Absalom "stole the hearts of the men of Israel." THIS HEART ANALYZED The divisions made by man. Man, in what is called psychology, divides the human heart into (1) the Intellect, (2) the Sensibilities, (3) the Will. While the Bible uses not these terms, yet these three divisions in the Bible use of the terms are clearly seen.

What the Bible says about the heart. The Bible, in speaking of the heart, says:

It is the part of the man that (a) Thinks (Genesis 6:5)(b) Understands (Proverbs 3:5) (c) Believes (Romans 10:10). This is what man calls the Intellect.

It is the part of the man that (a) desires (Romans 10:1), (b) loves (Matthew 22:37), (c) trusts (Proverbs 31:11). This is what man calls the Sensibilities.

It is the part of the man that (a) Intends (Hebrews 4:12)(b) purposes (2 Corinthians 9:7) (c) Obeys (Romans 6:17). This is what man calls the will.

Now, you can easily take your reference Bible and find that even other things the heart is spoken of as doing, but the above comprehends fully the three divisions of the heart; hence, this will suffice in this lesson. In order to have a complete conversion, it follows, just as certain as day follows night, that there must be a change in our thoughts, our understanding, and our faith. This comes first. Then follows this: there must be a change in our desires, our love, and also our trust. This comes second. And, finally, there must come a change in our intentions, our purposes, and our obedience. The heart is spoken of as acting in all nine of these thoughts; and when all nine are called into exercise, the whole heart God has in conversion, and he receives you as his own.

Will you please note how the brief statement in 2 Corinthians 10:5 comprehends them all, though all are not named. It begins with the thoughts and ends with obedience. "Bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ." When you begin with the thoughts and run the scale till you come to obedience, you have a completely changed heart.

SOME EXAMPLES The Pentecostians again. The student should go now to Acts 2 and begin with the first verse and read thoughtfully till he comes to verse 41. Before that day began they thought Christ was an impostor. This was their faith, their understanding of the matter. They did not love Christ, but hated him—had no desire for him and absolutely no trust to be placed in him. It was their intention and purpose not to obey him. All nine of these things that the heart is said to do

were wrong. But at the close of Peter's sermon, do you not see a change in their thoughts of Jesus, their understanding, their faith? A blind man could see this. Do you not also see a change in their love, their desires, and their trust? They now are willing to put all their trust in him. But what about their intentions and purposes? Aren't they wholly changed? And, finally, do you not see obedience when they gladly received the word and were baptized?

Here are about three thousand seekers seeking with the whole heart, and who will say that every one of them did not find? A partial change of heart. "Nevertheless even of the rulers many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess it, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: for they loved the glory that is of men more than the glory that is of God." (John 12:42-43.) Was not the intellect—viz., their thoughts, understanding, and faith about Jesus—all right? But what about the other two divisions of the heart—the sensibilities and will? Their love, trust, desires, intentions, purposes, and actions were all wrong.

Another partial conversion. This time we give you a man whose intellect and sensibilities were all right, but the will is unchanged. I refer you to the rich young ruler who came to Jesus and wanted to know what to do to inherit eternal life. Turn to Mark 10:17-22. Did not this man have the correct thoughts, understanding, faith, desires, love, and trust? You cannot say his intellect was wrong or his sensibilities were wrong. But his will was not brought into a state of surrender by repentance. He loved Jesus. He desired salvation, just about as much as many of our church members do. But he went from Jesus sorrowful instead of being filled with joy, just because his intentions, purposes, and obedience were not right. He did not intend to let go his money. His actions were the very opposite to what Jesus told him to do, but no more so than that soul who claims to love Jesus and trust in him and refuses to be baptized when Jesus says be baptized. But study all the cases of conversion in the book of Acts (Acts 2:38; Acts 2:41; Acts 8:5; Acts 8:12; Acts 8:39; Acts 10:47-48; Acts 16:32-34; Acts 18:8; Acts 22:16), and you will find the conversions completed with obedience.

WHAT GOD SAYS WHOLE-HEARTED SEEKING IS

Searching with all the heart. "Ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart." (Jeremiah 29:13.) We should be willing to let God tell us just when he can say we are such seekers.

Seeking with the whole heart. Turning to Psalms 119:2-3, we find in verse 2 he tells us that the blessed are those who seek him with the whole heart. But verse tells us that they are those who quit their meanness and walk in his ways. Could anything be more simple than this?

Whole-hearted seekers. Deuteronomy 4:29-30 states plainly: "Thou shalt find him, when thou searchest after him with all thy heart and with all thy soul." You find this in verse 29. But in verse 30 the following is given as to what God considers whole-hearted seeking: "Thou shalt return to Jehovah thy God, and hearken unto his voice." Associate this with Isaiah 55:6-7, and it does seem that you should be able to see just how we give God the whole heart and just when he declares we have done so.

We close the lesson with Romans 6:17-18, from the King James Version: "But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness." The form of doctrine here referred to was obeyed from the heart. It is baptism mentioned in verses 3-5 as a

burial and resurrection. Baptism is an outward, bodily act, hence is done from the heart. Faith, repentance, thinking, purposing, loving, trusting are all done in the heart. For a complete conversion, something must be done from the heart. This is when the body is placed on God's altar by being baptized into Jesus.

21 15. Abrahamic Faith—What Is It, and How May We Know We Have It?

15. Abrahamic Faith—What Is It, and How May We Know We Have It?

Abrahamic Faith—What Is It, and How May We Know We Have It?

INTRODUCTION

There is no better way to learn the faith that saves than studying it as exemplified and exercised by Abraham. Whatever Abrahamic faith may be, it is that faith that saves, and that is the kind we want. The promise is to those "who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham," or to that soul "which is of the faith of Abraham." (Romans 4:12; Romans 4:16.) It is highly important, then, that we know (1) what is the faith of Abraham, and (2) how we today may know we have it.

WHAT IS ABRAHAMIC FAITH?

Abraham believed God. "For what saith the scripture? And Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness." (Romans 4:3.) This raises the question: What does the Bible mean when it says, "Abraham believed God"? Whatever this means and whatever he did in this act of the soul, it is the thing that was "reckoned" unto him "for righteousness."

Some others who believed God. (1) The people of Nineveh believed what God said through Jonah. (Jonah 3:4-5.) (2) Paul believed God. (Acts 27:21-25.) He believed exactly what God had said to him. In each case here you find God talking to man, and the expression, "believed God," simply meaning that the people had undoubting faith in what God was talking about. The statement in Genesis 15:1-6 that Abraham "believed in Jehovah" has the same meaning. If God had not spoken to Abraham, never would it have been said that he "believed God." Such an expression has reference to the disposition we make of Jehovah's utterances to us. The faith that saves is a compound faith. (1) It believes that Jehovah is—that he exists; (2) it also has undoubting confidence in what he says on any question. (Hebrews 11:6.) Merely believing that a certain thing or person exists is not believing that thing or person. This expression applies only to that person or thing that has by language communicated intelligence unto us, and it has reference to the disposition our hearts make of this communication. We can make but one of two dispositions—viz., (1) believe it, or (2) disbelieve it. One can believe that certain mountains are—that they exist; but I can never intelligently speak of believing mountains, for they cannot communicate by means of words anything unto me. So the expression, "Abraham believed God," tells us the sum total of the disposition he made of what God had said to him. Nothing will help you more in Bible study than to learn to let Jehovah's statement be the end of controversy. "Yea, let God be found true, but every man a liar." (Romans 3:4.)

THE PECULIAR CIRCUMSTANCES UNDER WHICH ABRAHAM BELIEVED JEHOVAH'S STATEMENT

When Abraham first believed God. It was not in Genesis 15 : 1-8 that Abraham first believed God. Seventy- five years before this we find God talking to Abraham, and he believed what God said. (Genesis 12:1-4.) His great faith

is recorded in Hebrews 11:8-10. "He went out, not knowing whither. he went." God said if he would leave his kindred and his own country, he would bless him, make his name great, and in his seed bless all nations. Abraham had gone for twenty-five years believing that God would bless all nations in his seed when he did not have any seed. As he is nearing his hundredth birthday—too old to have a child—and Sarah, his wife, having been barren all of her life and now ninety, he was sitting and wondering, not doubting, just how God could bless all nations in his seed when he had no seed. After twenty-five years, God, for the first time, explained to Abraham, or told him, just how he would give him an heir. (Genesis 15:1-3.) When Abraham heard it, he "fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall a child be born unto him that is a hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?" (Genesis 17:17.) The sublimity of Abraham's faith is now seen. Paul says that, because of this circumstance, his faith in what God said to him in Genesis 15 was accounted unto him for righteousness. "For this cause it is of faith, that it may be according to grace; to the end that the promise may be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all (as it is written, A father of many nations have I made thee) before him whom he believed, even God, who giveth life to the dead, and calleth the things that are not, as though they were. Who in hope believed against hope, to the end that he might become a father of many nations, according to that which had been spoken, So shall thy seed be. And without being weakened in faith he considered his own body now as good as dead (he being about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah's womb; yet, looking unto the promise of God, he wavered not through unbelief, but waxed strong through faith, giving glory to God, and being fully assured that what he had promised, he was able also to perform. Wherefore also it was reckoned unto him for righteousness." (Romans 4:16-22.) The peculiar circumstances under which Abraham believed. The circumstances of his believing was the cause of God's prizing so highly his faith. It was a faith that "in hope believed against hope." It was contrary to nature for Abraham to have a child at this old age. Here reason rebelled. But he glorified God by saying: God said it, and it must be so; God promised it, and he is able to perform it. For this reason was his faith reckoned unto him for righteousness. And note in Romans 4:13 that "the righteousness offaith," which is made equivalent to a life of sinlessness, is just such faith as Abraham here has. It is a faith that believes anything God says, even when it requires faith that against hope believes in hope. It is a faith that takes hold of those things we cannot ourselves see through; but if God said it, that settles it with this kind of faith. The trial of Abraham's faith. Turn to Genesis 22:1-2; Genesis 22:11-18 and see Abraham's faith reaching the heights. Here we find God telling him, after Isaac had been born and had grown to be quite a lad, to take him and offer him as a sacrifice upon an altar. The words, "so shall thy seed be," refer to the stars in number—that is, that the descendants of Isaac should become as the stars in number. Isaac did not have one descendant, and here God is telling Abraham to burn Isaac into ashes upon the altar. Would not Abraham's mind at once think of the question: How, then, can God bless all nations in my seed, mate Isaac's descendant become as the stars in number, if I kill him? But did he doubt? Not for a moment. In Hebrews 11:19 Paul represents Abraham as saying in his heart: "God is able to raise up, even from the dead." His idea was that God would take care of his promise by bringing Isaac back to life again. Can you think of greater faith? It was at this very point in Abraham's life that God confirmed his covenant with him with an oath: "And the angel of Jehovah called unto Abraham a second time out of heaven, and said, By myself have I sworn, saith Jehovah, because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, shine only son, that in blessing I will bless

thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heavens, and as the sand which is upon the seashore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice." (See Genesis 22:15-18; see also James 2:21-24.) At this juncture Abraham looked and saw a ram behind him in the thicket held by the horns, and he took him and offered him instead of his son. This ram was a type of Christ, who died in our stead. We can have him ourselves when we put the dearest thing in our lives on the altar, but not until then. How glorious is the doctrine!

OTHERS WHO HAVE HAD JUST SUCH FAITH

Some are liable to say: "We are not expected to have such faith today," and, "No one has ever had such faith but Abraham." Let it be remembered that the promise is to those who "are of the faith of Abraham." If we do not have Abrahamic faith, the promise is not ours. But others have had such faith, as we shall see. The brazen serpent. Turn to Numbers 21:4-9. Study carefully the facts in the case. What did God say to these people? Here it is: "It shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he sees it, shall live." Here are penitent sinners wanting to know what to do to get rid of their sins and to be healed of the snake bite. God tells them to look at that brazen serpent on the pole and they shall live. But what sense is there in looking at a brass snake to be healed and to get rid of sins? Not one bit of sense, if God had not commanded it. What is it to believe God? Is it not to believe what he says? Could these people have believed God without believing this statement? Certainly not. But when they believed this statement, did they not have to have that faith that "in hope believed against hope"? Is this not the kind that Abraham had to have to believe what God said to him? And when these people had this faith, was it not the faith that Abraham had? Are you beginning to see what Abrahamic faith is—(1) that faith that will believe just anything God says, regardless of the circumstances, and that it is a faith that will try to do what he says, regardless of the cost or difficulty in doing it? Abrahamic faith is not believing just some things God says and pushing other things aside because they do not suit you or are not in harmony with your preconceived ideas. I say again: There is nothing that means more to a human soul than to learn to do with what God says about everything just what Abraham did—viz., believe it and not argue against it.

Walking around the walls. We now turn to Joshua 6:1-5. What did God say to these people? Here it is: "And it shall be, . . . the wall of the city shall fall down flat, and the people shall go up every man straight before him"—that is, after they had walked around the city once each day for six days, had gone around it seven times on the seventh day, and had blown the trumpet and shouted with a loud shout. Could those people have believed God without believing this? Certainly not. But tell me how they could believe it without having that faith that "in hope believed against hope"—the very kind Abraham had. Only Abrahamic faith can believe a proposition like this. (Read Hebrews 11:30.)

Washing in the Jordan. We go now to 2 Kings 5:1-14. Naaman did not have faith enough at first, but after being rebuked kindly by his servants, he reconsidered and stepped out "in obedience of faith" and dipped seven times, as commanded. It took a faith that "in hope believed against hope" to do this. Naaman's preconceived ideas hindered him at first. He said: "Behold, I thought." He had been thinking just how the cure would be effected; and when it did not come according to his theory, he got mad about it, as many do today about how we get rid of our sins.

HOW WE MAY KNOW WE HAVE THIS FAITH

Commands that require such faith. Find those statements of our Lord that cannot be believed without having that faith that "in hope believed against hope" God has always tested man here—that is, placed something in his law that calls into exercise this kind of faith. Here study 1 Corinthians 1:25-29.

Here is a statement we cannot believe without having Abrahamic faith: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned." (Mark 16:15-16.) What is it to believe God? Is it not to believe what he says? Can any soul believe Christ and believe not these words? Most certainly not. But when he does, he has the same kind of faith that Abraham had, for nothing but this kind of faith will take hold of this statement.

Those who have this faith are children of Abraham by faith. "For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus." Now note how he knows they are: "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ.... And if ye are Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, heirs according to promise." (See Galatians 3:26-27; Galatians 3:29.) This settles it. Here is God's test of faith. It is a statement you cannot believe without faith that "in hope believed against hope." The waters of baptism look as barren as Sarah's womb, so far as human reason goes; but Jesus said it, and this ends it, say those who have that faith Abraham had.

All of this staggering, halting, hesitating, and doubting when you come to baptism is proof positive of a lack of Abrahamic faith. What would Abraham do with Mark 16:16 were he here on earth today, hence under the law that we are now under? Don't you know, without a moment's hesitation, he would submit to baptism? But baptism is our Lord's test of faith; hence, if there is a lack of faith, this is exactly where it should be seen, and so it is today. In conclusion, let me say again: "Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness." And the statement he believed was made under circumstances that forbid his believing it without that faith that "in hope believed against hope." The statement had the promise of a son when he was about one hundred years old and his wife ninety. We become heirs of the promise by believing similar statements. Let us not be found trying to change the statements on account of a lack of faith. When Moses put the serpent on the pole, he did not tell the people the moment they believed his statement they would be healed and to then look because they were healed. That would not have been believing God, for God never said that. Joshua did not tell the people to expect the walls to fall the moment they believed his statement, then go around and blow their trumpets and shout because they were down. If the people had believed that, they certainly would not have been believing God, for God never said that. Just so it is today. When people are taught to believe "he that believeth and is saved may be baptized," they are being taught something God did not say, and faith in this is not believing God. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." This is what Christ said. Abrahamic faith takes it as it is. (Galatians 3:26-27; Galatians 3:29.)

22 16. Jehovah's Demonstration

16. Jehovah's Demonstration

Jehovah's Demonstration

INTRODUCTION

We have covered the law of pardon to alien sinners. We have followed this with a study of conversion, the human heart, and Abrahamic faith. We pause now to resume the study of "The Miracle of the Ages; or, Jehovah's Greatest Wonder," in Chapter III. The anticipation of the Bible was introduced in that chapter as proof of the superhuman origin of the Bible. This proposition is now submitted as further proof—viz.: when Jehovah undertakes to teach or prove a certain thing, if we will take all of his proof, collate it, place it together before our eyes, no man has brains enough to suggest one thing that would strengthen the proof. If all the brains on earth were compacted into one gigantic brain, even this brain could not suggest how the proof could be strengthened. And here we speak of what God knew we would need to know, and has undertaken to give us all needed light on the subject. We are not speaking of unrevealed subjects or parts of subjects, but only of those things he has revealed or undertaken to tell us on subjects or parts of subjects. This statement cannot be made of any human production. All human productions can be strengthened either by the author himself or some other man; but not so with Jehovah's efforts.

Let us now take a proposition God has affirmed and examine his proof, as an example.

"FOR THERE IS NO DISTINCTION [DIFFERENCE] BETWEEN JEW AND GREEK."

(Romans 10:12.)

Here is a proposition our Lord affirms, and one that it was necessary for him to prove to both Jew and Gentile. It is well to observe why he had to prove it. There was a difference made between them under the old covenant. The Jews took the lead under it, and other nations could become the beneficiaries only by being circumcised and proselyted to it. This all grew out of God's covenant with Abraham. (See Genesis 17:1-22; John 7:22-23.)

Under the first commission, during our Lord's personal ministry, there was a difference made. Turn to Matthew 10:5-6. John the Baptist's work, that of the twelve, and the seventy was all restricted to the Jews. The fact of the difference made under the old covenant and our Lord's personal ministry accounts for the difficulty that our Lord had in getting even the apostles themselves to know they must make no difference under the new covenant. And here we, incidentally, see how hard it is to get even the best of men to take the truth if it is not in keeping with what they have formerly believed. We should be exceedingly patient with others. The great commission, as recorded by Matthew, Mark, and Luke, says teach "all nations," "every creature," and to baptize those who believe the preaching. Yet these apostles themselves did not see it.

Peter had the keys of the kingdom (Matthew 16:18-19), and opened the door to the Jews on the day of Pentecost. Study carefully Acts 2:22-36, and you will see that Peter addressed only Jews in that speech on Pentecost. Of course, he was speaking as the Spirit moved him, and in verse 39 you will find the Spirit saying more than he himself understood and believed. The expression, "For to you is the promise, and to your children, and to all that are afar off," comprehends both Jews and Gentiles. The expression, "to those who are afar off," can mean only the Gentile world. But Peter did not understand it to mean this. His former faith and practice blinded him. The law of pardon to those Jews included water baptism. (Acts 2:37-38.) And it was continually given to Jews whenever they asked for it thereafter, with no one objecting. But God had to prove that the Gentiles had as much right to water baptism as did the Jews.

THE PROOF EXAMINED The case of Cornelius. Christ sent an angel from heaven to earth to Cornelius, the Gentile, who was honest; and this angel instructed him to send for Peter, who was a Jew and also an apostle, and he would tell him what he ought to do, or words whereby he and his house could be saved. (Read Acts 10:5-6; Acts 10:22; Acts 11:13-14.) This Gentile would never have gone to a Jew for such information unless he had such assurance given him that he was safe in so doing, for the Jews had no dealings with Gentiles. (See Acts 10:28.) A vision was sent to Peter on the housetop to make him know that he must call no man "common" or "unclean",—that is, not a subject of salvation. (See Acts 10:9-28; Acts 10:34-35.) In the home of Cornelius, with six Jewish brethren to witness the scene, the Holy Spirit was poured out upon these Gentiles as upon the apostles on the day of Pentecost, at "the beginning," when the door was first opened to the Jews. (Acts 11:1-18.) For what was all this done? The answer is found in Acts 10:46-47 : "Can any man forbid the water, that these should not be baptized, who have received the Holy Spirit as well as we? " It was all done to prove their right to water baptism. All the Jewish converts, and even the apostles themselves, had until now denied water baptism to Gentiles. They had never objected to Gentiles believing Christ is God's Son, nor had they objected to Gentiles repenting of their sins; but since water baptism put them into the church, here a stand was taken against the Gentiles. God is here showing them that there must be no distinction made between Jews and Gentiles—that Gentiles have as much right to water baptism as do the Jews. So they were commanded to be baptized into the name of Christ. (Verse 48.)

Now, name one thing more God could do to make this stronger. Can the proof that Gentiles have as much right to water baptism as do the Jews be strengthened? If so, suggest how it could be done. Could the proof that there must now be no difference made between Jews and Gentiles be made stronger? We are perfectly willing to see you try your hand at this. An angel is sent from heaven to earth, a vision is had by Peter, then the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon these Gentiles, and all to show we must make no distinction; that since water baptism was given the Jews on Pentecost and thereafter, we must also let it be granted unto the Gentiles, which brings them into the one church Jesus established. And may we ask in closing this point: If baptism is nonessential, why all of this to show the Gentiles' right to it?

SOME HURTFUL ERRORS

Some have contended that since the Gentiles in this case were baptized in the Holy Spirit before they received water baptism, then all others should be taught to expect the baptism of the Holy Spirit before receiving water baptism. This is not true. This Holy Spirit baptism came as proof that

we dare not deny to the Gentiles water baptism. When this is once proven, it settles the question. Let us argue this out to its ultimate conclusion. Would it be right to argue that no man has a right to send for a preacher until he sees an angel? I hardly think you would take this position. But Cornelius did not until he had seen an angel. Would it be right for a preacher to refuse to go when sent for until he had seen a sheet let down from heaven, as did Peter? You would hardly so contend. Well, Peter did not go until he had seen this vision. The angel was sent to make Cornelius send for a Jew for the needed information. The vision was sent to Peter to make him go to a Gentile and give the needed information. Then the Holy Spirit fell upon them in the presence of six Jewish brethren to forever end the controversy over Gentiles' right to water baptism. This, once proven, is settled, and we must abide by it. God is not going to do these miracles over again, but expects us to take his proof as final. As proof that the foregoing argument is correct, how did the other apostles and Jewish brethren come to know that Gentiles must not be denied water baptism? Study again Acts 11:1-18. Did not the other apostles and Jewish brethren "contend" with Peter about his going to Gentiles when he went up to Jerusalem? Certainly they did. How did Peter silence them? By relating the whole account of the first Gentile converts, and doing this with six Jewish brethren there as witnesses. After they heard the whole story, does it not say, "And when they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then to the Gentiles also hath God granted repentance unto life"? (See verse 18.) These other apostles and Jewish brethren saw not one of those miracles; they learned the Gentiles' right to water baptism just as you and I learned it—viz., by this report Peter made, which contains God's proof that we dare not deny to the Gentiles water baptism. Proving their right to water baptism established their right to "repentance unto life"—the same repentance given to the Jews on Pentecost in these words: "Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins." No conversion can be recognized as complete until we are baptized in the name of Christ, no heart can be considered wholly changed until we obey from the heart that form of doctrine (Romans 6:17-18), no faith can be considered as Abrahamic until it submits to baptism.

23 17. The Alien and Prayer

17. The Alien and Prayer

The Alien and Prayer

INTRODUCTION This lesson would not be necessary were it not for some erroneous ideas that have been and are now being taught in reference to the alien sinner and prayer. We should ever desire the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth on every subject that comes before us for consideration. The statement, "Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts," should be remembered. (Psalms 51:6.) God is with that soul that trembles at his word and remembers him in his ways. (Isaiah 64:5; Isaiah 66:2.) We should enter this study, therefore hungering for the truth on it. So often is the question asked: "Will God hear a sinner's prayer?" As a rule, when this question is asked, the alien sinner is meant. There are, at least, four questions that should be considered in connection with this subject.

WILL GOD LISTEN TO A SINNER PRAY?

There is a sense in which we must consider ourselves sinners every day we live. Here I refer to the fact that the Bible teaches that "there is none holy as Jehovah" (1 Samuel 2:2); that "there is no man that sinneth not" (1 Kings 8:46); that there is no one who can "discern his errors" (Psalms 19:12); that "surely there is not a righteous man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not" (Ecclesiastes 7:20); that "in many things we all stumble" (James 3:2); that "if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us ;" and that "if we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us" (1 John 1:8; 1 John 1:10). What is known as the law of works was based on God's holiness, and it demanded sinless perfection, else damnation. (Galatians 3:10.) The only way to be justified by that law was to live without sinning in thought, word, act, and imagination from the day of accountability till death. That law was holy, spiritual, righteous, and good. (See Romans 7:12; Romans 7:14.) But, in the eyes of that law, every accountable being on earth is shown to be a sinner. (See Romans 3:19-20.) Even Jesus, while tabernacled in the fleshly body, objected to being called good (Mark 10:17-18)—not that he ever sinned, but, being in the flesh, he was a partaker of humanity and could not claim the superlative goodness that belonged only to God. Study the question, "Who can understand his errors?" and you will soon come to realize that man, at his very best, falls short, somewhere and somehow, unconsciously. But none of the Scriptures cited even intimate that we have to consciously, knowingly sin. We must consider ourselves sinners—all of our holiness and sanctification as relative and not absolute. "There is none holy as Jehovah." The active, conscious sinner God will not hear. Here there is abundant proof: "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear" (Psalms 66:18); "The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to Jehovah; but the prayer of the upright is his delight ;" "Jehovah is far from the wicked; but he heareth the prayer of the righteous" (Proverbs 15:8; Proverbs 15:29); "Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry, but shall not be heard" (Proverbs 21:13); "He that tumeth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer is an abomination" (Proverbs 28:9).

Consider here the reasoning of the man born blind. Read the whole story. (John 9:1-34.) The Pharisees claimed that Jesus was a sinner—an active sinner—because he violated, as they thought, the Sabbath law. The blind man's reply and his logic is worthy of our thinking. "Why, herein is the marvel, that ye know not whence he is, and yet he opened mine eyes." Note in verse 29 the Pharisees claim that they do not know from whence Christ is. They had told the blind man to give glory to God, that Jesus is a sinner. Read verses 12-30. Here are blind leaders, who are indeed bond servants of sin, bound and tied with their own prejudices. The blind man's argument is:

God hears not sinners. (See Proverbs 15:8; Proverbs 15:29; Proverbs 28:9.) This man was a Jew. He knew, and he knew that these Pharisees knew, what the law taught. This means active sinners—those who consciously engage in sin. (See Psalms 66:18.)

Jesus could do nothing unless God heard him. (See verse 33.) But Jesus did do something—he opened the man's eyes. The inevitable conclusion, then, is that he cannot be a sinner—that he is from God. This argument the Pharisees could not answer; so they jeer at him, accuse him of being a sinner, and they cast him out. How mean is prejudice! And though it is cruel, its greatest cruelty is to the one who possesses it. The blind man's statement is often quoted to prove that God will not hear an alien pray. The idea here is, God will hear no active sinner pray, let him be in the church or out of it. Whether in the church or out of it, we must cease to consciously listen to the devil if we are to expect an audience with God. We cease to be active sinners the moment we become penitent of sins and cease to consciously sin.

WILL GOD LISTEN TO AN UNBAPTIZED MAN PRAY?

God will hear anyone who will hear him, and he begins to listen the very moment we begin to listen or desire to know what his will is. "Fear not, Daniel; for from the first day that thou didst set thy heart to understand, and to humble thyself before thy God, thy words were heard: and I am come for thy words' sake." (Daniel 10:12.) That soul has not come to know God as he indeed is who could doubt God's listening to anyone who is trying to listen to him.

Examples of those whom he has heard. The reference to Daniel above might be answered by saying he was in covenant relationship with God; but my answer is that the Scripture there sets forth a principle that holds good for every soul. But we have examples of unbaptized people whom God heard, and this should settle the question.

Cornelius. You should begin at Acts 10:1, and read the whole chapter and down to verse 18 in chapter 11. You will learn the following facts: (a) He was an unsaved man and needed to know what to do to be saved. (See Acts 11:13-14.) The angel that came to him was a warning angel, hence made him know that he must get this needed information. (See Acts 10:22.) But God heard his prayer. (See Acts 10:30-31.) He had never been baptized, but needed to be so commanded, and this is what Peter told him to do. (See Acts 10:48.)

It is contended by some that he was not an alien, but was in covenant relationship with God under the Patriarchal Dispensation. But Paul, in Ephesians 2:11-12, says he was an alien. Turn and read it. But Cornelius wanted to hear God. Cornelius knew all about the history of Christ—his wonderful works— but did not know he had a right to the salvation he offered. Read Acts 10:34-38.

Saul. Turn to Acts 9:10-11 and you will find Christ telling Ananias that Saul is praying, and that God had sent him a vision telling him the name of the man who was to be sent to him to tell him what he must do.

There is no need of giving other examples. Here we have two examples of God's listening to unbaptized people praying, and he listened just because they wanted to hear him. They were hungering for the truth. You go to Acts 8:26-40 and ask the question: Why did Jesus direct Philip into the road that led to deserted Gaza? There is only one answer: A man who wanted to hear God had been up to Jerusalem to worship, and he was a praying man, and God listened to him. Go to Acts 16:15 and ask the question: Why did Christ direct Paul, Silas, and Timothy to Philippi? There is just one answer—viz., a prayer meeting was being held just out of the city, and God had been "listening in," and sent them the needed men to tell them what to do.

WILL CHRIST GIVE THE UNBAPTIZED MAN REMISSION OF SINS IN PRAYER?

There can be but one answer to this, and that is, No! And if you want the proof, we introduce:

Cornelius. Go back and read it again. The angel found him in prayer, at prayer. Did he tell him that he was in the right place, doing the right thing, and just to pray on until God gave him pardon. Certainly not. He told him that he must send for Peter and let him tell him words whereby he and his house should be saved. If Christ would not give him pardon in prayer, how can you think he will give us, while aliens, pardon in prayer? "God is no respecter of persons;" but he would be if he gives aliens pardon now in prayer and refused to do so for Cornelius and his house.

Saul. Read Acts 9:1-19; Acts 22:16. Christ had met him and talked with him. Saul had cried out: "Who art thou, Lord?" Christ had answered: "Rise, and enter into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do." He went into the city, and was so anxious to know what this was that he must do that he could neither eat nor drink until he found out; hence, he fasted and prayed for the three days while he was waiting for someone to come and tell him what to do. Not only is this true, but Christ let him have a vision, revealing unto him in this vision just what the man's name was who would be sent to him to tell him. But he did not get remission until he was told what to do for the remission of sins and did it—viz.: "Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on his name." (See Acts 22:16.)

Christ has a law of pardon to aliens. It matters not who he was, how many angels he had seen, or if he had seen Christ and talked with him, he must comply with it. That law is: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned." (Mark 16:15-16.) Peter, who had the keys of the kingdom (Matthew 16:18-19), first gave this law to aliens on Pentecost. (Acts 2:37-38.)

SOME ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS

We must ask according to his will. "And this is the boldness which we have toward him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us." (1 John 5:14.) Our prayer must be in harmony with his will, then. It is not his will to give an alien pardon in prayer. This we have learned in the case of Cornelius and also in the case of Saul. But where is the Scripture that teaches that it is not his will to listen to any honest heart who is seeking to know what to do to be saved and praying to know?

It matters not how honest and sincere we may be, if we ask him to do something contrary to his will, he will not do it. We ask that you turn to Numbers 12:9-14. Here is as good a man as Moses forgetting for the moment God's law as to how the unclean was to be cleansed. Miriam was his own sister. This, with the pleading words of Aaron, caused Moses to cry out: "Heal her, O God, I beseech thee." But did God heal her now? He certainly did not. He reminded Moses of the law, had her shut out of the camp seven days according to the law, then healed her.

THE ADVANTAGES THE CHILD OF GOD HAS OVER THE ALIEN The way some teach, there is no advantage in being a child of God. But John teaches there is: "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called children of God; and such we are." (John 3:1.) But what is there to behold if the alien can obtain pardon as quickly as the child of God? The child of God can obtain pardon in a moment's time. Remission of sins in prayer is a privilege of a child of God and not of an alien. An illustration: Suppose it is election day and two men are at the voting place. One is a citizen of these United States, the other is a citizen of another nation. What advantage has the citizen here over the alien? Much every way. All he has to do is to drop his vote in. Not so with the alien; he must comply with the laws of naturalization before he can vote. Remission of sins in prayer is promised only to a child of God. But God listens to aliens when they begin to listen to him and seek to know how to become citizens of his kingdom, just as we do when foreigners begin to ask how to become citizens of this nation.

24 18. A Reason for Our Hope

18. A Reason for Our Hope

A Reason for Our Hope

INTRODUCTION In 1 Peter 3:15 we have the command: "But sanctify in your hearts Christ as Lord: being ready always to give answer to every man that asketh you a reason concerning the hope that is in you, yet with meekness and fear." To sanctify in our hearts "Christ as Lord" simply means to have him set apart there as the only one who has a right to rule and reign in our lives. This is the object of the confession we make. "The word of faith " that Paul preached says: "Confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord. " (Romans 10:8-9.) It has been decreed by Jehovah that "every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord." Too often the confession is thought to include merely the historicity of Christ— viz., that he came, died, arose from the dead, and returned to the Father. This is not enough. The confession that leads to salvation acknowledges him as Lord— as the only one who has a right to a throne in our hearts.

You will also observe from our text that the Spirit concedes that these people have hope, that they have a reason for it, and they are here informed that it is their duty to pass this reason on to others who want to know about it, remembering to give it in the spirit of meekness and fear.

THE MEANING OF THE WORD

Hope is composed of desire and expectation. To say that you hope to pass through the gates into that city that awaits the people of God means that you not only desire to do so, but that you are expecting this very thing to be your ultimate realization. The question comes: If I were to be right now slipping through death's door into the unseen world, or if I were to see Jesus coming in the clouds, would I go out with the strongest expectation of being forever with him in the heavenly state? You say you desire to go to heaven. This is not enough. Are you undoubtingly expecting it? If so, why? An answer to this question will bring us to the heart of our lesson.

TWO EXTREME POSITIONS

Some have been taught that man can do nothing that will in any way affect his salvation, that God through Christ has done it all, and that if he is one of the elect he will be saved whether or not he gives it any thought. This doctrine is damnable. It dishonors God. It makes God responsible for the damnation of the unsaved. Those who believe this doctrine are never satisfied, for they are ever wondering if they are among the elect, God having not told them just how they could come to know they are. They have been taught to expect a light, a vision, a dream, or some wonderful experience, and by this come to know they are among the elect. But there being no definite way they can know just what experience to expect when they are excited into thinking they have one, they are then left to wonder if it was from God. So it led to the writing into one of their hymns the following words:

It is a thing I long to know, Oft it causes anxious thought: Do I love the Lord or no, Am I his or am I not?

Others have gone to the other extreme and have introduced the doctrine of sanctification, or sinless perfection. Now, understand the Bible teaches such a doctrine, but they tell us that we must attain to this by our own personal efforts—that is, we must come to live a life of sinlessness, otherwise we cannot be saved. This doctrine puts too much emphasis on what man must accomplish by his own efforts; the other doctrine puts too much emphasis on what God has done for man. You will find the truth between these two extremes.

MAN'S CONDITION The Bible clearly teaches that man at his very best falls short. Here all that is necessary is to cite you to the Scriptures that teach this: 1 Samuel 2:2; 1 Kings 8:46; Ecclesiastes 7:20; Luke 17:10 : James 3:2; 1 John 1:8; 1 John 1:10. The law of works also teaches this. This law, as learned in the preceding lesson, is holy, righteous, spiritual, and good. (See Romans 7:12; Romans 7:14.) But it demanded sinless perfection on man's part, and the only way to be justified by it was to live a life of sinlessness—sinning not in thought, word, act, or imagination—from the day we become accountable until death. This is what the law demanded. Hence, Paul says that those who seek to be justified by that law are under a curse. Read Galatians 3:10; also go to Romans 3:9-20. Study these verses carefully and you will learn that the law convicts all of sin. Then note how Paul begins in verse 21 and reasons to the conclusion in verse 28: "But now apart from the law a righteousness of God hath been manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets." He tells us what that righteousness is, and that it comes to us through Christ, and concludes: "We reckon therefore that a man is justified by faith apart from the works of the law." The law of works demanded sinless perfection. And in the eyes of the law of works every soul on earth is shown to be a sinner, even the very best in the church. A study of David's statement. "Who can discern his errors?" Who can? Does not this question teach that none of us can know all of our weaknesses and imperfections? "Clear thou me from hidden faults." of what faults does he here speak? Faults that he has and knows about, but keeps hidden from others? Nay, verily; they are faults that he himself has, but does not know. The statement simply means that man at his very best falls short and needs someone to come to his rescue.

CHRIST COMES TO OUR RESCUE

"But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law." (See Galatians 4:4.) He came to redeem them that were under the law—viz., that law that demanded sinless perfection on our part. The only way he could get under this law was to be born under it—born of a woman. He was once a helpless babe, as we all have been. He grew to the age of accountability, as we all do. But after becoming accountable he stepped out as a subject of the law and never once violated it in thought, word, act, or imagination. He could make a challenge at the end of life's way that no other soul who has lived in the flesh since Adam's fall—viz.: "Which of you convicteth me of sin?" (John 8:46.) Is it not a thing to be wondered at that, notwithstanding the fact that we have had atheists and infidels all of these years since Christ lived upon the earth and they have opposed the Bible, they all say Jesus was a good man?

Yes, Jesus lived the life that we could not live—viz., a life of sinlessness. He became the law personified, hence was able to go to the cross and nail that law to the cross and take it out of the way. He had no sins of his own to atone for, hence gave his own blood to atone for ours. But when

we say he took the law out of the way, it should be remembered that this was done only for those who come to see their helpless and undone condition and take Jesus as their city of refuge. Those who will not have Jesus as their Savior have nothing remaining by which to be judged except the law of works that demands sinless perfection, and by it no man can be justified. He gave his blood to atone for our sins, but it should be remembered that this blood can atone only for those who see their need of Jesus and take him in his own appointed way as their sacrifice for sin.

THEN, WHAT IS MY HOPE?

Christ is our hope. Paul puts it in the following words:

"Christ Jesus our hope." (1 Timothy 1:1.) "Which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." (Colossians 1:27.) MY hope begins, continues, and is consummated in Christ Jesus. (See John 14:6; 1 John 5:12.)

Through him we have the gospel of grace. The law of works said, "Be thou perfect unto death, and the crown is yours ;" but the gospel of God's grace tells us if we will come into Jesus and be faithful unto death, the crown is ours.

Perfection located. Does not Paul say that we may be presented "perfect in Christ"? (See Colossians 1:28.) We should seek to know why we may be presented perfect in Christ. It is certain we cannot be so presented out of him.

What Christ means to a human soul. The law of works demanded sinless perfection, and said cursed is the man that attains it not. Jesus came and lived the life the law demanded, then died in our stead, paid sin's debt for all who will take him as their Savior.

Though we fall short, if we will come into him and are faithful till death, all that we lack in attaining sinlessness he will supply from his own perfect life. He is made unto all of those who are in him wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. (1 Corinthians 1:30-31.) He does not demand, as did the law, a life of sinlessness, for he knows we cannot live it; but he does demand that we come into him first, then live a life of faithfulness till death.

Those who do this are complete in him, because all that they lack is supplied from his perfect life, and because of this can be presented perfect in Christ in the judgment. (See Colossians 2:10; Revelation 2:10.)

Salvation located. God has plainly pointed out the place where we are saved and kept saved. (1) Freedom from condemnation is in Christ. (Romans 8:1.) (2) All of God's promises are in Christ. (2 Corinthians 1:20.) (3) We become new creatures in Christ. (2 Corinthians 5:17.) (4) Redemption and the remission of sins through his blood is to be found in Christ. (Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:13-14.) (5) Eternal life is in Christ. (1 John 5:11.) (6) The blessed dead are those who die in the Lord. (Revelation 14:13.) (7) And those who have "fallen asleep in Jesus" are the ones he promises to bring with him. (1 Thessalonians 4:13-14.) other Scriptures could be given, but these suffice to show where salvation is found—viz., in Jesus. We can appropriate Christ only by coming into him.

How we may know we are in him. Here we are not left to guess. "For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ."

(See Galatians 3:26-27.) And you turn to Romans 6:3-5 and you find Paul saying: "Or are ye ignorant that all we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?" And he tells us that this baptism is a burial and a resurrection, hence was not sprinkling. This is why Christ announced in the great commission: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." This puts us in Jesus, where we not only obtain the remission of sins, but where he becomes our righteousness, sanctification, wisdom, and redemption.

Light thrown on some examples of conversion. Philip went down to the city of Samaria and "proclaimed unto them Christ." (Acts 8:5-12.) Verse 12 says that when they believed what Philip preached. they were baptized, both men and women. What led them to be baptized? The answer is simple—viz., believing what Philip preached. When man sees his lost and undone condition and is shown what Christ has done for him, and that if he will come into Jesus and be faithful till death, salvation is his, and that he gets into Christ by being baptized into him—the soul that believes this will be baptized. Only those who refuse to believe this are the ones who fail to be baptized. In verses 35 to 39 of the same chapter you find Philip preaching Jesus unto the eunuch. What did he preach? The answer is simple: He preached Jesus. What did preaching Jesus unto him lead him to desire and ask for? And this answer is also simple—viz., it led him to want to be baptized into Jesus; hence, he asked for baptism, was baptized, and went on his way rejoicing. Jesus has been preached unto you, dear reader, just as Philip did. You cannot be saved out of Jesus. Our only hope is in Jesus, and we get into Jesus by being baptized into him, if we are penitent believers hungering for salvation.

CAN WE BE FAITHFUL IN SPITE OF IMPERFECTIONS? With this question answered we close the lesson. Remember, the law of works demands sinless perfection. Man could not attain to its demands. Jesus did this for us, and now tells us if we will realize our need of him and come into him and be faithful unto death, he will let his perfect life cover our imperfections, and thus present us perfect in the judgment, because we are in him. May we know we are faithful in spite of imperfections? An illustration is in order. Three men are constructing a building. One is a father, forty-five years old, who has been doing this kind of work for twenty- five years, having begun when he was twenty years old. The others are his oldest son, twenty-four years old, having begun this kind of work when he was only nineteen, having had five years' experience; then his youngest son, eighteen years and six months old, having been in this work with his father and brother six months. They work side by side until the building is completed and the key is turned over to the owner of the building. What kind of workman was that father? You answer: "He was almost perfect." And "almost" is the best you can say, for he made mistakes. You may not be able to see them, but he made them. Man does nothing perfect in the absolute degree. How about the older son? He, too, is a splendid workman, but it is easy to be seen he is not the equal of his father. And the younger son? How hard he tried! Perspiration rolled from his face, while his father worked along with ease and hardly raised perspiration. Yes, and the younger son ruined some of the best tools, sawed lumber too short and crooked, and came off the job at the end with his fingers mashed and bruised.

Now, we place these three before our Father in heaven and ask him to gently let his hand rest on the head of the most faithful of the three. Do you see him lovingly letting his hand rest on the younger son's head and saying: "Here is the most faithful of the three"? Though the most imperfect, yet there was a yearning in his heart to do it right that his father really did not

experience.

Thank God for the gospel of grace that saves us from the curse of the law that demanded sinless perfection! Jesus says: Come unto me, and be faithful unto death, and all of my righteousness, sanctification, and redemption are yours. In the judgment he will say to us, "Well done, good and faithful servant;" not, "Well done, good and perfect servant." So we go to the judgment with undoubting assurance, and why? Because we are so good? No, but because he was. Because we are so sanctified? No, but because he was. Here is the gospel of grace. It is our only hope. But don't forget the gospel of grace can be preached in the spirit of the law of works that destroys hope. May God help us to give the message to all the nations.

25 19. The One New Man

19. The One New Man

The One New Man

INTRODUCTION

Several lessons have been given teaching the importance of becoming members of the church and how to become members, that the way of salvation may be seen from the different viewpoints taught in the Holy Scriptures. The lesson now before us is one of the most interesting and instructive of them all. The text of this lesson is Ephesians 2:14-15 : "For he [Christ] is our peace, who made both [Jew and Gentile] one, and brake down the middle wall of partition, having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; that he might create in himself of the two [Jew and Gentile] one new man, so making peace." The "one new man" was created after the "middle wall of partition" was broken down, after "the law of commandments contained in ordinances" had been removed. "He taketh away the first [covenant], that he may establish the second." (Hebrews 10:9.) Colossians 2:14 says that he took the first covenant away when he died on the cross. Hebrews 9:15-17 says that Christ is the. "mediator of a new covenant," which could not go into effect until after his death.

These Scriptures are sufficient to introduce the subject of "the one new man" that was created after our Lord's death—after he had ended the old covenant. This subject comprehends all that God through Christ has now to offer us.

THE SIMPLEST METHOD OF TEACHING

Jesus, while here, adopted the plan of teaching by analogy. In Mark 4:30 he says: "How shall we liken the kingdom of God? or with what parable shall we set it forth?" He then gives a number of things that the kingdom resembles in some point. We have also the simile, another figure of speech based on comparison; then the allegory, which is a parable stretched out more into a story, the parable itself sometimes being called a brief allegory. But the metaphor is the figure of speech with which we are dealing in this lesson. It is also based on analogy, but is used only when the analogy is practically perfect or runs all the way through the two things compared. It is a figure of speech in which one object is spoken of as if it were the other. "Ye are the salt of the earth," also "Ye are the light of the world," are examples of metaphors. A real Christian, in his influence over others, is so nearly like the influence of live salt over meat that Jesus just calls the real Christian salt. The same is true of a real Christian and light. Light drives out darkness, shows us where and how we may place our feet in safety. Just so is the influence of a real Christian—he sends light into our hearts, and we are not digressing from the path of right living when we follow in his footsteps.

There is a one-hundred-per-cent analogy between a living man and the institution which God, through Christ, created after ending the old covenant; hence he calls it "one new man."

THE OUTSTANDING ELEMENTS THAT GO TO THE MAKING OF MAN

Objectively considered. The two main divisions of man are: (1) His head, (2) his body. These two words, head and body, comprehend man objectively considered. Man cannot exist without a head, nor can he exist without a body. These two together constitute man simply considered as an object. All know these two main divisions of man, and that it takes both to make man.

Subjectively considered. The indwelling of the human spirit is necessary to have a living man. "For as the body apart from the spirit is dead," the Bible declares and human experience confirms. (James 2:26.) We must also have blood. Children know that it takes blood to make a living man. Our own son, to whom this book is dedicated, when but a little tot, after his mother had taught him all about the first man and woman—who made them and how they were made— raised the question: "But how did God get blood in them?" Then there is the law of physical life, which we violate almost daily, given by Jehovah for the good of man.

These are the outstanding elements that go into the making of a living human being. He must then have a name. Nameless men have never existed. God never intended man should go without a name. He named the first man and woman. "Male and female created he them, and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created." (Genesis 5:2.)

GOD'S OWN ANALYSIS OF THE ONE NEW MAN

The new man must have a head and a body. Christ is the head, and the church he established and called "my church"(Matthew 16:18) is the body. "And he put all things in subjection under his [Christ's] feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all." (Ephesians 1:22-23.) Read also Colossians 1:18; Colossians 1:24. The head of this "one new man" is Christ, and his body is the church. This body, or church, is "the fullness of him that filleth all and in all." Let us not be led to think, as some teach, that the church is an empty shell, out of which you can be saved as well as in it. A living human being needs but one head and one body. The Bible declares that the church is one body. "But now they are many members, but one body." Read Romans 12:4-5; 1 Corinthians 12:12-14; 1 Corinthians 12:20. In Ephesians 4:1-5 seven things are modified with this little numeral adjective "one"—viz., one body (church), one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God. We have one church for the body and one Lord for the head of this "one new man." The "new man" must also have a name, law of life, spirit, and blood. The name. This has been discussed briefly in Lesson VI, and will be discussed more fully later. The law of life. We cannot discuss this now in particular, but, briefly stated, we have "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:2) in contradistinction to the law of works. And this does not mean that the church is without rules and regulations or any law at all. When the old covenant was removed, we were given a new law. (Hebrews 7:12.) And we are taught that only those who contend lawfully will win the prize. (2 Timothy 2:5.) We have a law then to govern this body, which is declared to be the church. The Spirit. The Spirit of this "one new man" is the Holy Spirit. God's holy Spirit dwells in this "one new man," gives it life, and operates through this "one new man" in sending the gospel to all the nations, feeding the hungry and clothing the naked, continuing the work that Jesus began while here in the flesh. one of the blessings that comes to one in the church is this indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Many teach aliens to pray for the Spirit before becoming members of the church. The reception and indwelling of the Spirit comes to us because we are in the church. (John 14:16-17; Galatians 4:6.) In 1 Corinthians 12:13 we are taught that by the instruction of the one Spirit we are baptized into the one body, the church, and there are "made to drink of one Spirit." Read also Acts

2:38; Acts 5:32.

Consider the question: Where is the human spirit? Does it not reside in and function through the members of the human body? Certainly so. And just so the Holy Spirit resides in and functions through the members of this "one new man," and not out of him. The blood. What is the blood of this "one new man?" It is the blood of Christ. Christ purchased the church with his own blood—all of it, and not just a part of it. (Acts 20:28.) Where is human blood to be found? It resides in the human body, and by means of it the head and the body are in constant living contact. There is no other flesh that can become the beneficiary of the blood in the body unless it is grafted into the body and becomes a part of it. The Bible declares that we are grafted in. (See Romans 11:17.) Here the figure is that of the good olive tree, but the grafting is the same. THE SECRET OF BEING SAVED AND STAYING SAVED The meaning of Mark 16:15-16. When Christ said unto his apostles, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," he meant more than we have, as a rule, taught that he meant. Saved from past sins is the salvation usually thought of here. It is certainly true that the penitent believer is saved from his past sins when he is baptized into this one body. The very moment we come into the body of Christ we come in contact with the blood of Christ, for the blood resides there, just as the only way you can come in contact with my blood is to break into my body where the blood is. You cannot pierce my body with the smallest cambric needle without touching my blood. Just so those who are baptized into the body of Christ at that very moment come in contact with the blood of Christ, and their past sins are blotted out or washed away. This is the explanation of Acts 22:16 : "Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on his name." It is also the explanation of Romans 6:17-18, King James Version: "But ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness." The "form of doctrine" is the burial and resurrection with Christ in baptism. Note that it says that "then" we are made free from sin. Baptism puts you into the one body, or church, where the blood is. Your past sins are all washed away in this blood. But we have no right to restrict "shall be saved" here to past sins. Baptism brings you into the body, where the blood is. It not only gives you remission of past sins, but you are constantly in touch with the blood, and it keeps you washed all the time. You have come into the place where you are not only saved from past sins, but you are now where you can stay saved. Your blood right now is in your body. But what part of the body? Every part of the body. There is not a cell from the tips of the toes to the crown of the head that the blood does not touch; and this blood is constantly building up worn-out parts of the body, throwing off waste matter, etc. There is not a mind on earth that can comprehend the wonder-working power of the blood in the body. The white corpuscles are called the "standing army" in the body. They are there to attack and make war on any poison that may get into the body and that is calculated to do it harm. This blood is doing its wonder work even while we sleep. Just so the blood of Jesus, more powerful and more wonderful in its effects, is doing for every living, active, loving member of his body, the church. The faithful members are in touch with the blood all the time—every moment. Remember that the admonition is, "Be thou faithful unto death;" and that we have shown man, at his very best, falls short. What becomes of all our ignorant and unintentional sins and mistakes? If we are in the church, where the blood is, they are washed away as we commit them. The blood of Jesus not only saves us from our past sins, but keeps us saved so long as we are faithful. This is what is meant in 1 John 1:7 : "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ

his Son cleanseth us from all sin." Here is the gospel of his grace. Here is our hope. Who knows just when death is coming? But if you are in the body of Christ, where the blood is, and are faithful doing your best to walk as he directs, you are ready— his blood keeps you ready. When I started out to live the Christian life, the teaching I had heard so impressed me as to make me believe that I touched the blood only when I was praying. I made it a rule to pray in the morning, at noon, and at night, as did David. Am I to believe that the child of God touches the blood only in skips and jumps? No; I am in touch with it all the time, just as ready to go one moment as another, if I am faithful.

SOME SCRIPTURES STUDIED IN THE LIGHT OF THIS

"Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be the glory in the church." (Ephesians 3:20-21.) Do you note that this promise is to those in the church, the body of this "one new man?" And what about the assurance? It is that God is able and does do for us exceeding abundantly above all of our thoughts and asking. We can think a great deal and we can ask a great deal, but he goes above it all—"exceeding abundantly" so. This Scripture is not hard to understand when you realize that the work that the blood does for the members of our own fleshly body does this very thing—viz., goes beyond our thoughts, "exceeding abundantly" so, and that the church is compared to this.

"Wherefore also he is able to save to the uttermost them that draw near unto God through him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." (Hebrews 7:25.) In our left side there is the heart or pump whose duty it is to see that the blood is sent out to every member of the body. The heart of this "one new man" is Christ. He is now at God's right hand in our behalf. (Hebrews 9:24.) Making intercession simply means he is praying and offering his blood for our every need. He is "High Priest of our profession." He functions as such in the church, his body, or over the church, which is his body. He is in the holy place with his own blood in our behalf. (See Hebrews 10:19-22; Hebrews 3:1.) Yes, he saves us, and keeps us saved constantly so long as we are trying to walk in the way he would have his children go. He teaches us that at our best we will stumble here and there, but not to worry; that his blood will take care of all such mistakes and keep us clean. CAN WE FALL FROM GRACE?

We are taught that we can fall, hence admonished to take heed. (1 Corinthians 10:12.) We are taught that some did fall. (Galatians 5:4; Hebrews 12:15.) We are taught how to keep from falling. (2 Peter 1:5-11.)

There is such a thing, because of disease, as some member of the body not getting its needed amount of blood. There is such a thing as physical paralysis. Since there is a Perfect analogy between the physical body and the body of Christ, we should expect such a thing as spiritual paralysis. Knowingly, consciously sinning will produce spiritual paralysis. David says: "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear." (Psalms 66:18.) But you do not have to do this. If you see your need of Jesus, come in to him, because you know at your best you fall short; then allow yourself to be faithful to him; he will take care of your unintentional sins and shortcomings instantly along the way as you need the blood. To "regard iniquity" in the heart is to welcome it there and give it a place to dwell. It does not mean some thought or imagination that flits through the mind. It is stopping the evil thought and entertaining it that produces spiritual paralysis, that breaks the connection with the blood. As it has been well said: "We cannot keep birds from flying over our

heads, but we certainly can keep them from building nests in our hair." But when we allow ourselves to sin consciously or knowingly, repentance, confession, and prayer will cure this disease that has broken the connection, and the blood resumes its wonderful work. (See James 5:16.) This is talking about our confessing our sins as erring church members. Read verses 19, 20 of the same chapter.

You can now see how to be saved and stay saved continuously. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" comprehends all the blessings God has in store for those who take Christ as their Savior. This, doubtless, is the ground for the expression: "Which also after a true likeness Doth now save you, even baptism." (1 Peter 3:21.) Just how long these Christians to whom Peter wrote these words had been baptized, I know not; but baptism was saving them right then. He says it "Doth now save you." It put them into the body of this "one new man, " where the blood is and where they were constantly in touch with it.

26 20. The Witness of The Spirits

20. The Witness of The Spirits

The Witness of The Spirits

INTRODUCTION The subject of this lesson is suggested in Romans 8:16 : "The Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God." It is so often called "the witness of the Spirit," but it is evident that our text calls for two spirits, testifying jointly to the fact that we are God's children. The Holy Spirit. This is God's Spirit, the only Spirit that can reveal unto us God's mind, or God's will. "Even so the things of God none knoweth, save the Spirit of God." (1 Corinthians 2:11.) The question, then, in verse 16 of this chapter, "For who hath known the mind of the Lord?" is answered here. God's Spirit can reveal his mind, his will, to us. It is our only way of knowing. The human spirit. What other human spirit can know your heart? No other human spirit may know it. Others may come to believe that you are a good man, that your heart is right, but only your spirit that dwells in you can know your heart. "For who among men knoweth the things of man, save the spirit of man, which is in him?" (1 Corinthians 2:11.) only the Holy Spirit knows the mind of God. So these are the two spirits that bear witness with each other that one is a child of God. It is not the Holy Spirit bearing witness to the human spirit, but with the human spirit. The two testify jointly to the fact that one is a child of God.

HOW THE HOLY SPIRIT TESTIFIES

People have been taught that God's Spirit in some mysterious, miraculous way comes into the heart, changes the heart, gives remission of sins, and testifies to man's spirit that he is a child of God. This is not true. God's Spirit testifies with words—testifies in a sensible, tangible way.

Examples of the Holy Spirit testifying, or witnessing. A quotation from Jeremiah. Paul says: "The Holy Spirit also beareth witness to us." (Hebrews 10:15.) Begin with verse 1 and read on to verse 15 of Hebrews 10 : The "first" testament, or covenant, had to be removed before the establishment of the "second." (Verse 9.) Then verse 15 connects the testimony of the Spirit to this proposition. "And the Holy Spirit also beareth witness to us." But where and when did the Holy Spirit do this? Read on and get the answer: "For after he hath said." But what did he say? "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord: I will put my laws on their heart, and upon their mind also will I write them; then saith he, And their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." The Holy Spirit said this in testifying that a new covenant would be established; that the law of this new covenant would be written on the heart instead of tables of stone, as in the case of the old; and that absolute remission would be given instead of temporary remission, as with the old covenant. But when did the Spirit so testify? Read Jeremiah 31:31-34. Paul quoted the exact words of this passage and said it was the Holy Spirit testifying to what he was teaching. But why call it "the witness of the Holy Spirit"? Nearly every chapter and paragraph of the book of Jeremiah begins with: "Now the word of Jehovah came unto me, saying." (Chapter 1:4.) Chapter 31 begins with: "Saith Jehovah." Verse 10: of that chapter says: "Hear the word of

Jehovah, O ye nations, and declare it in the isles afar off." That is one peculiarity of the new covenant—it includes all the nations. And verse 31, from which paragraph Paul quotes, begins: "Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah. But why call God's word through Jeremiah the "testimony" or "witness of the Holy Spirit"? Hear Nehemiah 9:20. "Yet many years didst thou bear with them, and testifiedst against them by thy Spirit through thy prophets." God was doing this very thing through Jeremiah. It was God's Spirit in Jeremiah testifying against Israel and promising the new covenant. Note that Nehemiah 9:20 : says: "Thou gavest also thy good Spirit to instruct them." This Spirit did the instructing through the inspired prophets, and the instruction is found in what they taught. So in quoting an Old Testament prophet on a subject, Paul calls it the "testimony" or "witness of the Spirit." A quotation from Psalms. Reading Hebrews 3:7-11, you will find a quotation of Psalms 95:7-11. Be certain to read this, then turn and read the quotation as found in Psalms. But Paul begins the quotation by saying: "Wherefore, even as the Holy Spirit saith." Why call the quotation the saying of the Holy Spirit? This is simple. David wrote that Psalm, but in 2 Samuel 23:2 we find David saying: "The Spirit of Jehovah spake by me, and his word was upon my tongue." Hence, the New Testament writers, in quoting David, oftentimes called it the "sayings of the Holy Spirit," the "witness or testimony of the Holy Spirit." An example in the New Testament. The second and third chapters of Revelation contain seven short letters written to seven local congregations in Asia. Each letter closes with these words: "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches."

Other examples could be given, but these are sufficient for this lesson.

THE SPIRIT'S MESSAGE TO US The word committed to the apostles. Christ committed "the word of reconciliation" unto the apostles. (2 Corinthians 5:19-20 : The apostles are Christ's ambassadors, or spokesmen. Christ gave to these apostles the word that God had given to him. (John 17:14.) The message of the Holy Spirit. The word, or message, was given to the apostles by the Holy Spirit. (1 Pet. I: 12.) The apostles were not to begin preaching the new covenant until the Spirit came to guide them. Read Luke 24:48-49. The Spirit should guide them into all the truth—teach them all things man needs to know about his salvation. Read John 14:26; John 16:13-14. The apostles began this preaching, as Jesus had instructed them, when the Spirit came. Read Acts 2:1-4; also verses 14-41. Christ said that when the Spirit came he would convict the world of sin, of righteousness, and of the judgment to come. (See John 16:7-11.) Did not the Holy Spirit do this very thing on Pentecost? But how did he do it? Was it not through the preaching of an apostle, who spoke as the Spirit moved him? The same thing was done by the Spirit in Acts 24:25, and Felix trembled under the testimony. In this case Paul was the preacher. It was the Spirit in Paul doing the preaching. Paul himself said: "Which things also we speak, not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Spirit teacheth; combining spiritual things with spiritual words. (1 Corinthians 2:13.) The Holy Spirit gave the apostles not only the thoughts God wanted expressed, but the very words in which to express them. (Matthew 10:19-20 :

THE WORK OF THE TWO SPIRITS

It is the work of the Holy Spirit to tell what Christ commands men to do to be saved. He must tell it in a way or in words that men can understand.

It is the work of the human spirit to receive or reject these things. The human spirit must have a consciousness of having received and done what the Holy Spirit says. The gospel of Christ is God's power to save. (Romans 1:16.) In it God has revealed his will to us. All that it says is the testimony of the Holy Spirit, for this gospel, Peter says, was preached by them "by the Holy Spirit sent forth from heaven." (1 Peter 1:12.)

THE TWO SPIRITS TESTIFYING The Holy Spirit says we must hear Christ in all things. Read Acts 3:22-23. Peter, speaking by the Holy Spirit, is quoting what the Holy Spirit said through Moses. And in Matthew 17:5 God reaffirms the fact that we must hear Christ. Can your spirit now testify with God's Spirit that you are willing to hear Christ in all things? If so, your spirit bears witness with the Holy Spirit to that extent. An example of the human spirit testifying. Acts 10:33 states that Cornelius and those with him were assembled to hear all things commanded of God. The Holy Spirit testifies that we must believe with all of our heart that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. The human spirit answers when it believes. The two spirits thus testify in Acts 8:35-39. The eunuch had asked to be baptized. The Holy Spirit in Philip said that he could be baptized if he believed with all of his heart. The eunuch said: "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." (King James Version.) Do the two spirits not agree here and testify with each other that the eunuch is a fit subject for baptism? The Holy Spirit testifies that we must repent or perish. (Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38; Acts 17:20. Is it not the Holy Spirit through Christ and the apostles testifying to the necessity of repentance? The human spirit answers: I have repented and turned from all error and sin. Every one baptized in the days of the apostles could say this, for only penitent believers were baptized. The Holy Spirit testifies that we must be baptized for the remission of sins. (Acts 2:38; Mark 16:15-16.) Have you answered the Holy Spirit by being baptized? If so, the two spirits bear witness with each other that your sins are blotted out—that you are a child of God.

Paul declares that he knows he is in Christ, because he was baptized into him. (Romans 6:3-5; Romans 6:17-18.) The Holy Spirit, through Ananias, told Paul to arise and be baptized and wash away his sins. Did his own human spirit not know that he had done this? Did not the two bear witness with each other that he was a child of God? Did not the Holy Spirit, in verses 17, 18, tell the Roman brethren that when they obeyed from the heart the form of doctrine, they were then made free from sin? Did they not know they had done this? Did not the two spirits thus bear witness with each other that they were God's children? The Holy Spirit tells us what to do. The human spirit does the thing commanded. This completes the testimony. And thus it is that the two spirits bear witness with each other. In the same way the two spirits bear witness with each other that we are faithful. The Holy Spirit gives us God's will as to how to live the Christian life. He tells us just how to feel and act toward all and what to do to make our calling and election sure. (2 Peter 1:5-11; Acts 2:41-42.) Paul exhorts us "by patience in well-doing" to "seek for glory and honor and incorruption, eternal life." (Romans 2:7.) He also admonishes us to be rich in good works and to lay up in store "a good foundation against the time to come" that we may lay hold on eternal life. (1 Timothy 6:18-19.) We are also told that this is salvation by grace, and that the grace that saves comes through teaching. "For the grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing [teaching] us, to the intent that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly and righteously and godly in this present world; looking for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ." (Titus 2:11-13.) Paul further exhorts that we continue in the faith, rooted and grounded, and be not moved away from the hope

of the gospel. (Colossians 1:23.) Space forbids more. The point is, the Holy Spirit testifies concerning how to live the Christian life—not forsaking our assembling together (Hebrews 10:25); to give of our means to support the gospel (1 Corinthians 16:1-2); to live the life of prayer and consecration; to bridle our tongue; to visit the widows and fatherless in their affliction and keep ourselves unspotted from the world. (See James 1:26-27.) Do we not know whether we are trying to live this way? At the very best, we will have imperfections, but be faithful, and He will take care of your imperfections from his own perfect life and through his blood. As a final word, the Bible says: "These things have I written unto you, that ye may know that ye have eternal life." (1 John 5:13.) In 2 Corinthians 13:5 we are commanded to examine ourselves to see if we are in the faith. This is done by going to the teaching of the Holy Spirit in the Bible and seeing what it says for us to do, then examining our own hearts as to whether we have done it and are living as the Spirit directs

.

Thus "the Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God."

27 21. Seekers Who Always Find

21. Seekers Who Always Find

Seekers Who Always Find

INTRODUCTION

"Seek, and ye shall find" and "He that seeketh findeth" are declarations of our Lord. (See Matthew 7:7-8.) A principle is involved here, and we want to study this Scripture and come to see it as it is. You will observe that these words give room for no contingency, no room for failure. Every seeker contemplated in this statement finds. If you could find just one seeker, in the mind of our Lord when he uttered these words, failing to find, you would prove him not to be the divine Son of God; for it would prove that he was not infallible as a teacher—that he said things that were not true. He does not say, "Some who seek findeth," but, "He that seeketh findeth." He does not say, "Seek, and you may find," but, "Seek, and ye shall find." Do you see, then, that he leaves no room for a failure? Hence, the subject of the lesson is, "Seekers Who Always Find."

WHAT THE WORD "SEEK" COMPREHENDS

It is safe to say that the whole plan of salvation is couched in this little word seek. You can prove Christ to be superhuman simply from his power to choose words in which to express himself. Suppose you take the sayings of our Lord and try to find words that better express the thought than the ones he used. Find how powerless you are to do so. Even the enemies of our Lord had to exclaim: "Never man so spake." These were officers who had been sent to arrest Christ and stop him from teaching. But they made the mistake when they reached the place where he was teaching in listening to him. He was so powerful in his teaching that they returned without him. When asked why they made no arrest, the reason they gave was: "Never man so spake." (See John 7:45-46.) So let us raise the question: What ideas go to the making of this word? Words, we are correctly told, are signs of ideas. What are the ideas couched in this word? The idea of a seeker and an object sought are in the word. You cannot use the word without these two ideas in your mind. Here is the seeker and there is something he desires, hence seeks it. The idea of separation is in the word—that is, the seeker is in one place and the object sought is in another, and the purpose of the seeking is to bring the seeker and the object sought together. The idea of motion, or action, is in the word seeks. It is an active verb, and the thought always is that of the seeker moving, acting, and not the object sought. The ideas of darkness or of ignorance are in the word seek. The seeker, therefore, needs light, needs a guide. Use the word seek if you can without these ideas therein. People who are seeking for anything need information; they need light on the subject. The guide that they need is one who can tell them exactly where the object sought is located and the way to that place. This is the light they need about the thing they are seeking.

Now, in common everyday speech, we always use the word in this sense. Jesus, when here, picked up those words that contained the ideas he wanted to express, and these are the words he used.

WHO IS OUR GUIDE?

"For this God is our God forever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death." (Psalms 48:14.) So you see we are not left to guess as to who our guide is. When Jesus said, "He that seeketh findeth," he had in mind seekers who take Jehovah as their guide. Could it be possible for any such seeker to fail?

Blind guides. You certainly have heard of people seeking and not finding, but they are not the seekers Christ is talking about, for all of them find. But the Bible speaks of blind guides. (See Matthew 15:14.) "They are blind guides. And if the blind guide the blind, both shall fall into a pit." And we are not left to guess who blind guides are. Read verse 9 of this chapter and we are told who they are: "But in vain do they worship me, teaching as their doctrines the precepts of men."

Now, those who follow blind guides sometimes are led to think they have found; but, as a rule, they find only a delusion. They are made to think they are God's children, that their sins are blotted out, when this is not true. But among their seekers there are many who do not find. Not so with our Lord's seekers; they all find, and not one of them finds anything except salvation—the thing the seeker wants.

HOW JEHOVAH GUIDES THE SEEKER

"Thou wilt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory." (Psalms 73:24.) In harmony with this statement, we have David saying in Psalms 119:105 : "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and light unto my path." Here is the way Jehovah gives light to the seeker. And Satan so understands, hence tries to keep this light out. In 2 Corinthians 4:3-4 you learn that people are lost because Satan has blinded them from "the light of the gospel." The entrance of God's words gives light. (See Psalms 119:130.)

God guides man in an intelligent way. He approaches him by teaching him by means of words that he can understand. "It is written in the prophets, And they shall all be taught of God. Every one that hath heard from the Father, and hath learned, cometh unto me." (John 6:45.) This is the way Jehovah, our Guide, draws or leads us to Christ.

These are the seekers who always find. "Seek ye out of the book of Jehovah, and read: no one of these shall be missing." (Isaiah 34:16.) Could language be plainer? These are the kind of seekers Jesus had in mind when he said: "He that seeketh findeth." The devil is powerless when he sees you going to God's word determined to let God through it guide you into the way of salvation. How he dreads to see the word enter your heart! Listen to Jesus tell us about the devil's fear of the word: "Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. And those by the wayside are they that have heard; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word from their heart, that they may not believe and be saved." (Luke 8:11-12.)

LISTENING TO THE GUIDE SPEAK

We want salvation. Does our Guide know where it may be found? Here is what he says: "I will place salvation in Zion for Israel my glory." (Isaiah 46:13.) If you will read verses 9 and 10: you will find that he is here giving us a prophecy of what he would do some time in the future. But the question now naturally arises: What is Zion? "Zion" is the prophetic word for the church Christ established. When Christ said, "Upon this rock I will build my church" (Matthew 16:18), he was

referring to the very place in which he said he would place salvation. Will you here turn to Hebrews 12:22-24; Hebrews 12:28 and study carefully, and you will find that Zion is followed by explanatory modifiers—viz., "city of the living God," "heavenly Jerusalem," "general assembly and church of the first-born." You will also find that when they came into "the church of the first-born" they found God, Christ, and the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel. In verse 28 you will learn that in coming to Zion, "the church of the first-born," they received "a kingdom that cannot be shaken."

OurGuide says salvation is in Zion. Blind guides say that salvation is found out of the church. Do you see the difference? our Guide says that the church, which is the body of Christ, is "the fullness of him that filleth all in all." (See Ephesians 1:22-23.) Blind guides say there is nothing in the church. Our Guide says the church is Jehovah's habitation. (See Ephesians 2:19-22.) Blind guides say you can find God out of the church as well as in it. The way to Zion. When the seeker is told that salvation is in Zion, how natural it is for him to ask the way to Zion! And God anticipated this. "They shall inquire concerning Zion with their faces thitherward, saying, Come ye, and join yourselves to Jehovah in an everlasting covenant that shall not be forgotten." (Jeremiah 20:5.) There is no such thing as being in covenant relationship with God out of Zion, which is "the church of the first-born."

WHAT OUR GUIDE SAYS ABOUT THE WAY TO ZION

Remember, we are studying seekers who always find. Let our Guide just here tell us exactly who they are: "And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart." (Jeremiah 29:13.) This settles it. The seekers who find are those who search with all their heart.

What does our Guide say is whole-hearted seeking? He plainly says it is ceasing to do unrighteousness and walking in his ways. (See Psalms 119:2). Go to Deuteronomy 4:29; Deuteronomy 4:20. and you will find that wholehearted seeking is: "Thou shalt return to Jehovah thy God, and hearken unto his voice." Going to Isaiah 55:6-7, you will learn the same thing. Tell me, in which direction am I going when I quit doing wrong and walk in Jehovah's ways? There are but two directions in religion—viz., (1) the one that leads to God, and (2) the one that leads from God. How could it be possible for a soul to fail to find God if he ceases to do evil and becomes obedient to the voice of our Lord? This is the way to Zion. You cannot miss it if you walk in this way.

EXAMPLES The Pentecostians. You will turn to Acts 2:22-42 and study it carefully. What do you find? You find people who were taught of God by the preaching of Peter. They were certainly great sinners, but they turned their backs on all of their evil ways and gladly received the words of the Spirit and were baptized— about three thousand of them. Not one seeker was left seeking—they all found. And why? They sought God with all their heart by repenting of their sins and obeying what Christ says a sinner must do to be saved. (See Mark 16:15-16.)

Other examples. (1) The Samaritans (Acts 8:5; Acts 8:12), (2) the eunuch (Acts 8:35-39), Saul (Acts 9:1-19; Acts 22:16), the jailer and his house (Acts 16:32-34). They were taught how to get into Christ, into the remission of sins, into the church, or Zion. (Galatians 3:26-27; Romans 6:1-5; Romans 6:17-18.) The apostles never left a seeker seeking—they all found, because they were taught to turn their backs on sin and do what Christ says to be saved.

28 22. "By Every Word That Proceedeth Out of the Mouth of God"

22. "By Every Word That Proceedeth Out of the Mouth of God"

"By Every Word That Proceedeth Out of the Mouth of God"

INTRODUCTION The words at the heading of this lesson are those used by Christ in his reply to Satan's temptation to command that the stones become bread and meet the demands of our Lord's intense hunger at the time. His reply was: "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." (Matthew 4:3-4.) I am sure that these words of Jesus are not understood as they should be, hence this lesson.

BACK TO THE ORIGINAL STATEMENT

We must go back to Deuteronomy 8:1-3 and Exodus 16:4-20 and study this statement of our Lord in the light of its context, for it is a quotation of Deuteronomy 8:3. The purpose for which the manna was given. "Then said Jehovah unto Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a day's portion every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law, or not." (Exodus 16:4.) Here is your purpose clause in Italics. These words state the purpose for which the manna was given. It was not done merely to satisfy hunger, but to prove the people as to whether they would respect God's orders. There were special instructions to the end that they must gather enough for one day only, the present need, except the double portion on the sixth day that they might not have to gather on the Sabbath day. But Deuteronomy 8:3 is where we find the exact quotation: "And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by everything that proceedeth out of the mouth of Jehovah doth man live." Here we put the purpose clause again in Italics. It is easily seen.

THE MEANING OF THIS STATEMENT The words do not mean that man must consciously know everything that God has ever said to man and by all of these words daily live. The idea is that man must live by every word that hath proceeded out of God's mouth on the one thing that we are trying to obey and at the time we obey it. God did not give them the manna and just say, "Eat it," and stop there. He gave them rules by which to go in gathering and eating of it. "This is the thing which Jehovah hath commanded. Gather ye of it every man according to his eating; an omer a head, according to the number of your persons, shall ye take it, every man for them that are in his tent. . . . Let no man leave of it till the morning." That rule is simple. No one could have any excuse for not understanding it. The rule violated. "Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto Moses; but some of them left of it until the morning, and it bred worms, and became foul." (See Exodus 16:16-20.) And why did it breed worms and become foul? It is declared that it was done that man might learn that he does not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Just to go out and gather and eat was not all that God had said about the manna. An omer for each person was said. Also they must leave none of it over till the morrow was said. One of these statements must be respected as well as the other. And when they refused to listen

to even one thing he said about the manna, it ceased to be food to their bodies, but became worms and unsuited for food.

THE LESSON TO US But what is the lesson to us? This is an important question. The lesson to us is simply this: Man must not live by just one thing Jehovah says about a matter, but by every word that hath proceeded out of his mouth on the subject. To take a part of what God says and do that and reject another part is tantamount to not hearing him at all. The part we have done ceases to be food to our souls and becomes rebellion in God's sight, which is equivalent to the sin of witchcraft and idolatry.

OTHER EXAMPLES

Saul. Turn to 1 Samuel 15 and read where God commanded Saul to go and destroy the Amalekites— to "spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass." Read the record, and it seems that Saul came very near doing everything that God said—more than nine-tenths of the command was done. Every Amalekite was slain, except Agag, the king; all that they possessed was destroyed, except the fat sheep and the fat cattle, and these they meant to offer in sacrifice to God. God said: "It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king; for he is turned back from following me." Man does not live by just one thing, two things, or three things that Jehovah says on a subject, but by every word that hath proceeded out of his mouth on that subject. How easily seen is this!

Nadab and Abihu. Another case in point is that of Nadab and Abihu. They were the right persons to burn incense. They had been named by Jehovah for this work. They were at the right place—viz., at the altar, where incense was commanded to be burned. They were using fire that burned as well, perhaps, as any other fire obtainable. But the very fire they were using went out from the altar and destroyed them. How nearly did they do all that God said? They simply substituted a fire that God had said nothing about for the fire God had commanded them to use. We cannot live by just some of the things God says on a subject, but by every word that hath proceeded out of his mouth on that subject. The law of pardon to aliens. Jesus requires alien sinners to (1) believe that he is the Christ, (2) repent of all their sins, (3) confess him before men, (4) be baptized into the name of God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit for the remission of sins. Now, who has the right to change this great principle Jesus announced here and say that man does not have to live by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God to aliens, but that faith only is enough? We dare not do this.

I have not given the references here, because we have gone over the ground and you know where to find the Scriptures that teach aliens to do just what I have here stated.

A PRACTICAL SUGGESTION TO CHURCH MEMBERS And while we could go on and name other instances by the dozens in which this principle is clearly seen, we must come to something closer to home and of more of a practical nature to us. We have not a command in the Bible that does not exemplify this principle. But now to what is known as our duty on "the first day of the week," known as "the Lord's day." Certainly the early Christians met on this day to eat the Lord's Supper in memory of our Lord's death on the cross; and doing it on the day he arose from the dead, his resurrection was commemorated. (See Acts 2:41-42; Acts 20:7.) This day was the set recurrent time known as the day of assembly, and they were commanded not to forsake this

assembling. (See Hebrews 10:25.) But in 1 Corinthians 16:1-2 we have this command: "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I gave order to the churches of Galatia, so also do ye. Upon the first day of the week let each one of you lay by him in store, as he may prosper, that no collections be made when I come."

Now, what about the members who are so prompt and loyal, as they claim, to meet and eat the Lord's Supper, but ignore what he says about giving? Man does not live by one thing God says as to what we must do on the first day of the week, but by every word that hath proceeded out of his mouth as to our conduct on the Lord's day. May I not say that there is not a church member who can eat the Lord's Supper in the true sense and knowingly refuse to hear what God has said about giving on the first day of the week? If he can, let him tell us how it can be done. If the Bible does not teach that partial obedience is tantamount or equivalent to disobedience, it teaches nothing on the subject of obedience. And here let us look just a little further. It does not say, "Now on the first day of the week you must give," but it says do this "as he may prosper." To just give with no regard as to whether you have given as you have been prospered most certainly is not living by every word that hath proceeded out of God's mouth on the subject.

Happy indeed is that soul who has learned this lesson and, down deep in his heart, has determined that "while others may do as they please, yet as for me, I will take not just one thing or two things on what God says on a subject, but by every word that hath proceeded out of his mouth on the subject will I live." And live he will, and go home to glory when his work is over.

29 23. How to Establish Churches of Christ Here and There

23. How to Establish Churches of Christ Here and There

How to Establish Churches of Christ Here and There

INTRODUCTION

There is nothing so vitally essential to our pleasing God as evangelists and teachers, as doing our best to do things as the inspired apostles of our Lord did them. Paul says: "The things which ye both learned and received and heard and saw in me, these things do." (Php 4:9.) In 1 Corinthians 11:1 he says: "Be ye imitators of me, even as I also am of Christ." As we now study the work of the apostles as they went about establishing churches here and there, we want to note carefully just how they began and continued until a church of Christ was established at the place where they were laboring.

THE ONLY FOUNDATION In building a house the first thing is to lay the foundation. The church, as we have already learned, is "the house of God." (1 Timothy 3:15.)

Christ is the only foundation that we can lay. "For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ." (Study 1 Corinthians 3:10-11.) This one statement should forever settle the question as to the foundation.

Christ, in Matthew 16:18. Here our Lord anticipates himself as the rock foundation: "Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it."

Here you are referred back to what was said about the anticipation of the Bible in Lesson III. Our Catholic friends tell us that Peter is the rock on which Christ said he would build his church. Turn to Matthew 16:13-20 and let us study it together. You find Christ here eliciting an expression of the faith of the disciples as to who he really was. When he pressed them for their own judgment, Peter spoke up and said: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Now, this is the foundation truth or rock that Jesus said he would use as the foundation of his church. Of course, Christ confessed Peter at once. This is in keeping with his statement that all who will confess him before men he also would confess before his Father who is in heaven. (See Matthew 10:32-33.) But because Jesus said, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church," the Catholics say Peter is the foundation. But did God foreknow that the Catholics would make this argument? Most certainly he did, as we will see. Any soul can take the context, without any knowledge of the Greek language, and see that the foundation Jesus was talking about is the very thing he was talking to his apostles about—viz., who he really was. The question he raised is: "Who Amos 1?" Peter said: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Christ said: "Upon this rock [by which he meant the undoubting certainty that he was the Christ] I will build my church." But let us look back of this English sentence into the Greek and see what we shall see. It is admitted that Peter comes from the Greek Petros, which means a fragment of a stone or rock. But here is the sentence: "Thou art Petros, and upon this Petra I will build my church." Petros is a noun in the masculine gender,

meaning a bit, a fragment, or a part from a mass of rock. Petra is a noun in the feminine gender, and means a mass or a ledge that is immovable. The very idea of taking Petra, feminine in gender, and contending that it refers to Petros, masculine in gender! The very idea of taking Petra, which means an immovable ledge or mass of rock, and saying it refers to Petros, which means a bit or fragment broken from a ledge! No, God has so spoken here through his Son that we are without excuse if we let blind guides lead us astray. At the time Jesus said, "Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it," the church had not been established. He had to become the stone of prophecy. "Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone of sure foundation." (Isaiah 28:16.) You remember that we learned in our preceding lesson that Zion is the prophetic word for the "church." Christ' before he could be laid as the rock foundation, had to become that tried and tested stone. The last test was death itself. This is what he means when he says, "The gates of Hades shall not prevail against it"—that is, the gates of the Hadean world, into which he went when he left his body on the cross, were not to hold him within its confines, but that he was to come forth through the gates of Hades in the resurrection and build his church. He did not become the corner stone, the triedstone, until he arose. Here study Acts 4:8-12; Luke 13:31-32; Matthew 27:62-65; Romans 1:1

Christ's soul went to Hades. (See Acts 2:31.) When he arose, he declared that he had the keys of Hades. (See Revelation 1:17-18.) Had not Christ arose from the dead, he could not have built his church. Do you see, then, that when he said, "Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it," he meant the gates of the Hadean world would not prevail against his building his church. How foolish, then, for some to contend that the church was built in the day of John the Baptist or during the personal ministry of Jesus before he became the tried stone, the chief corner stone!

What Jesus says of himself. He says that he is our Leader (Matthew 16:24), the object of our faith (John 8:24), the first place in our love (Matthew 10:37); that he has all judgment in his hands (John 5:22); that all power in heaven and on earth has been placed in his hands (Matthew 28:18); that no man can go to the Father except by him (John 14:6); and that all nations before him some day shall stand to be judged (Matthew 25:31-33). Figuratively speaking, he says that he is the light of the world (John 8:12), the good shepherd of the sheep (John 10:11), the door through which we enter the true sheepfold (John 10:9), the way and the truth and the life (John 14:6); that bread that came down from heaven, of which we eat and hunger no more (John 6:53-58); that well that gives forth water that we drink and thirst no more (John 4:13-14); and that the day will come when all the sleeping dead shall hear his voice and come forth (John 5:28-29).

These are some of the many things Jesus says of himself. Are you surprised, then, that he should be the rock on which we build? A significant fact. Notwithstanding Jesus said all that is given above, and even more, about himself, you never get the slightest impression that he is egotistical or selfinflated. Will you meditate on: Why is this? In all of your study of Jesus, and that of all other men, egotism is never thought of, but rather that of humility and meekness. Yet no man ever so spoke of himself as did Jesus. Account for this.

HOW THE APOSTLES WENT ABOUT LAYING THIS FOUNDATION

First things first. This principle the apostles ever observed. The first thing they did for individuals and groups of people was to establish in their hearts the great fact that Jesus is the Christ, the Son

of the living God. This they did, without an exception. Now, is this not additional proof that Christ is the foundation? Where did they ever preach on Peter and try to lay Peter as the foundation on which to build? The first thing to do in building a house is to lay the foundation. Of course, we sometimes have to clear away rubbish and just so do we have to remove from the hearts of the people erroneous ideas before laying Christ as the rock foundation. The apostles did this. But their first work, before building, was to get the human heart to take hold of the undoubted fact that Christ is God's Son. May I not ask. Have we not, perhaps, endeavored to build before the heart has taken hold of this great truth?

How great our folly when we do such a thing! We do harm to the soul thus dealt with, and also bring into the church semi-Infidels. We cannot be too careful to lay well Christ as the foundation in the heart before building.

Examples of the apostles at work.(1) Study their work on Pentecost in Jerusalem. Read Acts 2:22-36. Christ and him crucified, buried, raised, ascended, and crowned was laid in the hearts of the people. This caused them to cry: "What must we do?" Had we better not stay with the laying of the foundation until people become hungry to know what to do before telling people what to do? Do we not, as a rule, start to building by preaching on baptism and subjects of this kind when the heart is not ready for it? (2) See Peter's second sermon in Acts 3:12-18. Read also Acts 4:8-12. Planting in the heart that Jesus is undoubtedly the Messiah was the way they began; this was laying the foundation. (3) Watch Philip in Samaria and also with the eunuch. (Acts 8:5; Acts 8:12; Acts 8:32-35.) (4) The sole purpose for our Lord's appearing to Saul on his way to Damascus was to lay this foundation in his heart, and this is all he did. He left the building to Ananias. Of course, Christ meant to make Saul an apostle, and he had to let him see him before he could become an apostle. Study Acts 9:16; Acts 22:16; 1 Corinthians 9:1. (5) Paul says, in speaking to the church at Corinth: "I laid a foundation." Turn to Acts 18:1-5 and you will find Paul, on his first visit to Corinth, began by "testifying to Jews that Jesus was the Christ." (6) Follow them to Thessalonica and you will find them "opening and alleging that it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom, said he, I proclaim unto you, is the Christ(Acts 17:1-3.) Apollos, after learning the way of the Lord more perfectly, started out establishing churches, but the burden of his message was "that Jesus was the Christ." Read Acts 18:24-28. But this is enough. Certainly we can see how the apostles laid the foundation. They established in the heart undoubting faith that Jesus is the only Savior we have, the divine Son of God.

HOW THEY BUILT UPON THIS FOUNDATION

Paul's admonition. "But let each man take heed how he buildeth thereon." (1 Corinthians 3:10 : I know of no admonition more needed than this one. May I say that every denomination that now exists has come into existence because of a failure to heed Paul's admonition? All religious bodies that teach that Christ is God's Son, and that he died for us, conquered the Hadean world, has returned to the Father, and is coming again, have the rock foundation. But what have they done? They have not taken heed as to how they build upon it; hence, they have laid a little foundation of their own upon this rock and have started a party—a human organization. About this there can be no doubt.

Let us note how some of the Corinthians were laying another foundation—not that they were repudiating Christ as the Savior, but they were building parties on this great rock, Jesus Christ.

One group had laid as their foundation their preference for Paul; another had laid as their foundation their preference for Peter; and still another had laid as their foundation their preference for Apollos. Who is it that cannot see from the context that this was the reason Paul said: "Let each man take heed how he buildeth thereon"? All of these people had confessed that Jesus was the Christ, but they had taken their preferences for different men, and upon this they built a party. This was another foundation. Paul condemned it. Read 1 Corinthians 3:21, "Wherefore let no man glory in men," and right there these men in whom they were glorying are named. Read verses 1-6 of this chapter and note that Paul declares that they are carnal when so doing. But how happy we should be that there was a group in this congregation that still took Christ as their only foundation! know some have said that they constituted a party, but this is not so. They were, indeed, the faithful church there, who would take nothing but Christ and him crucified as their Leader.

Now, if time would permit, we could take every human organization that teaches that Jesus is the Christ and show that they came into existence by laying another foundation, some point of emphasis besides Christ as the Son of the living God. The foundation is the point of emphasis. Let us remember that Christ is the point of emphasis. But do not many among us lay another foundation? Some make opposition to Bible colleges the point of emphasis, and upon this they have built a sect; others take opposition to teaching the Bible in a systematic way in classes with the written comments as well as the oral, and upon this they have built a party, a sect. How much we need to heed the admonition: "Let each man take heed how he buildeth thereon"! And note the reason for the admonition is: "For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ." And are we to say that some among us have not built upon their preferences for their preachers? Have not congregations been divided, and all for what? Because some preacher has pushed himself forward as the bone of contention. He gets the congregation to rally around him, to "pull" for him. And is it not a shame that some who claim to be disciples of Christ will follow preachers in such divisive work? Study the modesty and humility of Paul as he rebuked those Corinthians for making him the point of emphasis, saying: "I am of Paul." But how did the apostles build upon Christ, the rock? Here the lesson is simple and easily seen.

Let Christ tell us how first, then we will watch the apostles. In Matthew 7:24 he says we build upon him by hearing and doing what he says. After we are convinced that Christ is God's Son, we build upon him by doing his sayings. What is more easily learned than the sayings of Jesus? He says we must believe that he is the Christ. When this we do, the foundation is laid in our hearts. He says we must repent. (Luke 13:3.) He says we must confess him before men. (Matthew 10:32.) He says we must be baptized. (Mark 16:15-16.) All religious bodies will admit that Jesus says these things. Don't stop to argue whether they are essential or nonessential—just do them; and who is it that can doubt that you are on the rock? But is this the way the apostles got people to build on the rock? It most certainly is. You may follow the apostles in all their work, and you will find that they, without exception, after convincing the people that Christ was God's Son, told them what Christ says for them to do to be saved. Here just recall all the cases of conversion in the Acts of the Apostles.' The good confession. It is enough here to remind you that the apostles, after getting people to believe that Christ is God's Son, took as their very next step to enforce his absolute Lordship. Turn to Romans 10:9 and you will find it is said: "Confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord." What does this mean? It means that we take him as our only rightful Ruler; that he can take the throne in our heart; to him only will we listen. Read Php 2:11 and you will find it again: "And that

every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord." This is exactly the meaning of the prophecy by Moses in Deuteronomy 18:18, quoted and applied by Peter in Acts 3:22-23 : "To him shall ye hearken in all things what soever he shall speak unto you." We can set aside as nonessential nothing he says. This is exactly what God meant on the mount of transfiguration. (See Matthew 17:5.)

Believing the facts about Christ is to have the foundation laid in our hearts. But it is only by doing what he says that we build upon him as the only foundation. You will find many human organizations stopping with just the facts. They teach correctly the historicity of Jesus—as to his birth, the wonderful life he lived, his death, burial, resurrection, and ascension. But here they stop. We must teach that Christ is head over all things to the church, that him we must recognize as our only Guide and Lawmaker, and that his commandments we must obey or not be permitted to enter heaven.

30 24. God's Power To Save

24. God's Power To Save

God's Power To Save

INTRODUCTION

Nothing can mean more to a human soul than wholehearted and unprejudiced study of the Bible. David says the blessed man is that soul whose "delight is in the law of Jehovah; and on his law doth he meditate day and night." (Psalms 1:2.) Have you committed the first Psalm to memory? If you have not, do so. It contains the secret of real success.

We are studying in this lesson "God's power to Save." There is but one way to do this, and that is to read and meditate on the exact statements God has made about his power to save. "To the law and to the testimony! if they speak not according to this word, surely there is no morning [light] for them." (Isaiah 8:20 : In all of our teaching we must seek to do as we are commanded. "If any man speaketh, speaking as it were oracles of God." (1 Peter 4:11.)

THE GOSPEL IS GOD'S POWER TO SAVE

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." (Romans 1:16.) Could a statement be plainer and more definitely made? Note that it is the power, and not one of the powers. Some have the idea that the gospel is one of the powers and that there is at least one other—viz., the operation of the Holy Spirit independent of the gospel. Whatever the Holy Spirit does in conversion and sanctification comes through the power of God unto salvation, and this the Holy Spirit declares is the gospel. It is the Holy Spirit speaking here through Paul. (1 Corinthians 2:13.) Certainly the Holy Spirit would not declare that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation, then operate on the heart of a sinner independent of the gospel. The great commission. "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation." (Mark 16:15.) Since the gospel is God's power to save, it must be preached and taught to all the nations—to every creature. Note the harmony here in what Christ instructed his apostles to preach and what is declared to be God's power to save.

THE MEANING OF THE WORD

"Gospel" primarily means "good news" or "glad tidings." " But many things might be brought to our ears that would be "good news" or "glad tidings" that have no connection whatever with God's power to save. The "good news" that saves concerns Christ; it is wholly restricted to Christ. The gospel in its totality is all the "good news" about Christ.

It is something we must believe or be condemned. (Mark 16:15-16; Hebrews 4:2.) Note in Romans 1:16 it is said: "For it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." Any teacher or preacher that tells you that his doctrine is good, but that you do not have to believe it in order to be saved, confesses in that admission that it is not the gospel of Christ, for we must believe the

gospel of Christ or be condemned.

It is something we must obey. (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; 1 Peter 4:17.) Read these references. The "more no- be" examine the Scriptures for themselves: "Now these [the Bereans] were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the Scriptures daily, whether these things were so." (Acts 17:11.) It is not a compliment, therefore, for a man to say that the doctrine he is teaching is a good doctrine, but that you do not have to obey it in order to be saved, for the gospel we must obey else suffer "eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might." (2 Thessalonians 1:9.) It will bear no substitution. (Galatians 1:6-9; 1 Timothy 1:3;

John 9:11.) "But though we, or an angel from heaven should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema." These words we must heed. Note the warning against being tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine in Ephesians 4:14. See this also in Hebrews 13:9, where we are commanded not to be carried about with divers and strange doctrines. In 1 John 4:1 we are commanded to prove the spirits, "because many false prophets are gone out into the world." A definite good news and glad tidings. We must conclude from what we have learned above that the good news, the glad tidings, that is God's power to save is definite, restricted wholly to Christ, and must be believed, obeyed, and will bear no substitution.

THE GOSPEL ANALYZED

It is necessary that we ask the question: of what does the gospel of Christ consist? In this we will come to understand why it is something we must believe and obey and will bear no substitution.

Facts to be believed. The gospel is God's power to save only to those who believe it. An important question arises just here—viz.: What must we believe? Romans 10:8-10 tells us that "the word of faith" that the apostles preached is that we must "confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead." Here the Lordship of Jesus is declared as a thing we must openly acknowledge, and his resurrection from the dead must be believed. In 1 Corinthians 15:1-4 the facts of the gospel are more clearly stated: "Now I make known unto you, brethren, the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye received, wherein also ye stand, by which also ye are saved, if ye hold fast the word which I preached unto you.... For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried; and that he hath been raised on the third day according to the scriptures." You see here the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus as the great facts of the gospel that these brethren had received and in which they then stood. And please to note that Paul here says these things come first in the gospel. "First things first" states a principle that should not be overlooked. He delivered unto them "first of all" these facts, and they received them. And when we go to Peter's first sermon after the Spirit came (Acts 2:22-36), we find the Holy Spirit in Peter preaching these great facts to the people on Pentecost, with the ascension and coronation of Christ included. Be certain to turn to this Scripture and read it. This is, as has been already learned, laying the foundation in the human heart—viz., that Jesus undoubtedly is the Messiah, the anointed of God. At this point it will not be amiss to meditate upon these facts. Do we not here find the secret of the power? To illustrate, we turn to Daniel 3:24-29 and study it. Nebuchadnezzar was a heathen king, who knew not the living God; but when he cast Shadrach, Meshach, and

Abednego into a furnace of fire, made seven times hotter than it was wont to be made, and they came forth without a hair of their head being even singed, his mind was wholly changed, and he exclaimed: "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego." He also decreed that "every people, nation, and language, which speaketh anything amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made a dunghill." And why this exclamation and this decree? His answer is: "Because there is no other God that is able to deliver after this sort." And will we not here come to appreciate that the secret of the power that is in the gospel of Christ adheres to the fact of his resurrection?

And, too, you will note the Old Testament prophecy here is referred to, for "according to the scriptures" in the Scripture above quoted refers to the Old Testament predictions. Christ came in perfect fulfillment of these prophecies, and died and rose again. Here it would be good, if space would permit, to note how continually the resurrection of Jesus is emphasized all through the gospel. If Christ arose, he is the Savior of man, the soul survives the death of the body, and Jesus, when he comes again, will bring our loved ones with him. Read 1 Thessalonians 4:13-14, and note that the hope there given us is based on our Lord's resurrection. In fact, here is the very foundation of all our hope. The God who delivered Jesus, to use the words of Nebuchadnezzar, "after this sort," is indeed the living God and through Jesus can save our souls.

Commands to be obeyed. Vengeance is to be rendered to those who obey not the gospel. (2 Thessalonians 1:8.) But we know very well that the facts of the gospel we cannot obey; such things we can believe and must believe. In 1 Peter 4:17 we have this question: "What shall be the end of them that obey not the gospel of God?" 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9 answers this question definitely. There can be no doubt, then, that the gospel must be obeyed. But what do we do in obeying the gospel? We obey the commands of Jesus. (See Matthew 7:24-25; Acts 3:22-23.) Faith is a command of Jesus. (Mark 16:16; John 8:24.) Repentance is a command of Jesus. (Luke 13:3; Luke 24:46-47; Acts 17:30-31.) That we confess him as Lord, our rightful Ruler, is his command. (Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:8-9.) And certainly we know that baptism is his command. (Matthew 28:18-19; Mark 16:15-16.) And Matthew 28:20. says he commanded his apostles to teach those whom they baptized "to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you." All of the commands of Jesus are to be found in the teaching of the apostles, and they must be obeyed. This is salvation by grace. Grace and truth came by Christ. (John 1:17.) Grace saves through teaching us how Christ commands us to live. (See Titus 2:11-15.) You will observe that Titus 2:15 says for us to speak these things "with all authority." In Matthew 28:18 Christ tells us that he has all the authority God has in heaven and on earth. There can be no doubt, then, that the commands of Jesus as to what we shall do to become Christians and those teaching us how we must live must be obeyed.

Promises to be fulfilled in us here and hereafter. The gospel of Christ abounds in promises. The first promise we receive when we obey the gospel is the remission of all our past sins and our names enrolled in heaven as members of the church of Christ. Christ gives us remission when we obey and adds us to his church the very same moment. (Romans 6:17-18; Acts 2:41; Acts 2:47.) But the path in which Jesus has asked us to walk after being baptized is strewn all along the way with promises. The following Scriptures name some of them: 1 Corinthians 10:13; 2 Corinthians 12:8-9; Ephesians 3:14-21; Php 4:4-7; Php 4:13; Hebrews 13:5-6. 2 Peter 1:3 says these promises are "precious and exceeding great," and that we through these become partakers of the

divine nature. In Hebrews 6:15 we are taught that Abraham, "having patiently endured, he obtained the promise." Paul, in Romans 2:7, says: "To them that by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and incorruption, eternal life." This all looks to the future and is consummated in that heavenly home. These promises that are received here as we live the Christian life and that shall be fulfilled in heaven are a part of the gospel, God's power to save. We must teach them to those we baptize. Christ now is in heaven on specific business for those who come into his church. (See Hebrews 9:24.) He is ever making intercession in our behalf if we are trying to be faithful to him. (Hebrews 7:25.)

CONCLUSION

If all churches and preachers would teach only these facts that we must believe, these commands that we must obey, and the promises that we by faith must lay hold on both here and hereafter—teach just this and nothing more as essential to the salvation of a human soul—would we not have a united church, and would not the prayer of our Lord in John 17:20-21 in us be answered?

God's power to save, declared to be the gospel of Christ, contains these things. We are taught not to add to nor to take from his precious word. (Revelation 22:18-19.) It is the desire of that body of people known as the church of Christ to do just as here commanded. We want to ever stand on Scriptural grounds, where any sincere soul who wants only God's truth in all of his faith and practice may stand with us without sacrificing any statement of our Lord. Hence, we strive to teach those things that people must believe and those things that they must do and hold before them those things that they should expect to be fulfilled in their lives right here on earth and also in the world to come. Life is too short to waste time teaching more than this.

31 25. Can We See The Bible Alike? If So, Why Are We So Sadly Divided?

25. Can We See The Bible Alike? If So, Why Are We So Sadly Divided?

Can We See The Bible Alike? If So, Why Are We So Sadly Divided?

INTRODUCTION

One of the most outstanding conditions is the divided state of the religious world. We have more divisions, more strife and confusion, over the subject of religion than any other question known to the writer. This is exceedingly sad in view of the fact that religion has to do with the salvation of the soul, and that there is nothing so important to us as this. One of the most prolific causes of infidelity and skepticism is the divided state of the religious world. Jesus anticipated the baneful effects of division when he said in his prayer: "That they may all be one; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they may also be in us: that the world may believe that thou didst send me." (John 17:21.)

You find that many wink at the divided state of the religious world, and some even try to defend it, contending that it exists by the wise providence of God, that God has willed that we be so divided, that one way is as good as another—just so you are honest and sincere. We want to weigh present conditions and see if it can be right. IN THE BALANCE OF COMMON SENSE

We look at present conditions simply from the standpoint of common sense and see if even common sense, exercised, can indorse it.

Let us suppose a preacher comes to our community to conduct a revival and proceeds as follows: The first night he preaches that salvation is by faith only; but the second night he contends that it is not by faith only, but faith exercised in obedience to the gospel; the third night he preaches that sprinkling, pouring, or immersion is baptism; but the fourth night he contends that immersion only is baptism; the fifth night he says you should baptize your infants; but the sixth night he says you should not—that penitent believers are the only Scriptural subjects for baptism; the seventh night he preaches that if you are once in grace you are always in grace; but the eighth night he tells you just as earnestly that you can fall from grace, that we are warned not to fall, that some have fallen, and that we are told how to keep from falling; the ninth night he teaches that human creeds and disciplines are all right; but the tenth night he says we should take the Bible only as our guide in religion. I say, suppose a man should come to us and preach just as I have suggested, would he not be teaching doctrines that are daily taught in the name of Christ here and there throughout the world? Would you listen to a man so preach? You would not. And why? "oh," you would say, "this man preaches one thing tonight and contradicts himself the following night!" But if it is not right for one man to do this, how can it be right for a number of different men to so preach? Do you say it makes one man inconsistent? Exactly so. But what kind of God have you if he indorses all of these doctrines and has sent out preachers to preach them all?

I heard of a man who taught that God is in one church or one doctrine as much as another, and he began to join the different churches, and he preached their contradictory doctrines. Or, in other words, he undertook to practice his theory by preaching all the doctrines, and his friends got together a group of doctors and were thinking of trying him for lunacy and sending him to the asylum for the insane, and finally they decided that he was a harmless lunatic and did not do so. Just so God seems to an honest soul if you make that soul believe God is in all the doctrines taught. Do you not see that no honest soul could possibly defend the divided state of the religious world simply from the standpoint of common sense? IN THE BALANCE OF GOD'S TRUTH

God says in Psalms 133:1 : "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" If it is good to be united—and God says it is—it is bad to be divided.

Christ, in his prayer to his Father, as recorded in John 17:20-21, says: "Neither for these only [that is, the apostles] do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word; that they may all be one; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee." Does Jesus mean what he says here? Does he earnestly desire that we be one, as he and the Father are one? Paul says: "But if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." (Romans 8:9.) How may we have his Spirit and not desire and pray for the same thing he desires and for which he prays?

Paul, in 1 Corinthians 1:10, gives us the following touching exhortation: "Now I beseech you, brethren, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment." How can we wink at division with this statement before us? In Ephesians 4:3-6 we are commanded to give "diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," and the basis of this exhortation is that there is but one body (the church), one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God. You remember Paul asks the question in 1 Corinthians 1:13 : "Is Christ divided?" Let us here also ask the question: Is the Spirit divided? We are commanded "to keep the unity of the Spirit." This certainly means that the Spirit has unity. In 1 Corinthians 12:13 we are taught that "in one Spirit [that is, by the direction or teaching of one Spirit] were we all baptized into one body [the church]." Could you believe that the one Spirit would lead a husband into one church, the wife into another, the daughter into still another and a son into another, and these churches so divided that these members of the same family cannot eat the Lord's Supper together? No, you cannot believe any such thing, if you know the Holy Spirit. In Php 3:16 we are commanded: "By that same rule let us walk." We do not have a multiplicity of rules by which to walk; there is but one. In John 10:16 Christ said, in speaking of the new sheepfold he was to establish: "They shall become one flock, one shepherd." Here he is speaking of the one body, the church, into which he calls both Jews and Gentiles. (Read Ephesians 2:13-16.) The one body is the church. (See Eph. 1:22, 23.)

Finally, Proverbs 6:16-19 says: "There are six things which Jehovah hateth; yea, seven are an abomination unto him: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood; a heart that deviseth wicked purposes, feet that are swift in running to mischief, a false witness that uttereth lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren." I have put this seventh hateful and abominable thing in Italics for emphasis. How can it be right to condemn all of the six "hateful" things first mentioned and wink at the seventh? We may never live to see the religious world united, but we can see the day when we know we are not among the number responsible for the

divided state of the religious world, and we will soon show you how to keep free from such responsibility. CAN WE SEE IT ALIKE? The contention that we cannot see the Bible alike we will now put in the balance of God's truth and see if it be true. "To the law and to the testimony!" is the slogan given us by Jehovah. (Isaiah 8:20 : "Prove all things" is the admonition of Paul in 1 Thessalonians 5:21. "Prove the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world," is the command of the Spirit through John. (1 John 4:1.)

All must either say that we can obey the command in 1 Corinthians 1:10 or that we cannot obey it. Are you ready to say we cannot? If so, you are accusing Christ of commanding us to do the impossible. If you say we can obey that command, down goes the contention that we cannot see the Bible alike, for that says: "Speak the same thing," "that there be no divisions among you," "perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment."

We must say that we can obey the command in Php 3:16 or that we cannot obey it. If you say we cannot, again you have accused our Lord of asking the impossible; but if you say we can, then you admit that we can be one by walking by the same rule, as we are here commanded.

There are many ways of misunderstanding the Bible, but there is but one way to understand it. If we understand it at all, we understand it alike, for there is but one way to understand it. But most certainly there are a multiplicity of ways of misunderstanding it. Let us heed the admonition, then: "Wherefore be ye not foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is." (Ephesians 5:17.) THE RULE BY WHICH TO WALK

Let us here study this same rule by which to walk. It is simple and it is very practical. We give it in three simple sentences.

Preach only what is revealed. This we should do, it matters not what subject we are handling. "The secret things belong unto Jehovah our God; but the things that are revealed belong unto us and our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law." (Deuteronomy 29:29.) We have no right to preach or teach unrevealed subjects or unrevealed parts of subjects. Just stay within what is revealed is the command, or rule.

Preach all that is revealed. Paul, when he delivered his farewell address to the elders of the church at Ephesus, could say: "Wherefore I testify unto you this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I shrank not from declaring unto you the whole counsel of God." (Acts 20:26-27.) It would be well to read the whole address—verses 17-35. The rule says preach only what is revealed on the subject we are teaching, and it also says preach it all. Be careful to add nothing to or make any subtractions from what is revealed. This has ever been God's will to man. "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish from it." (Deuteronomy 4:2; read also Revelation 22:18-19.)

Now, tell me how any two preachers could be divided—or a thousand preachers, as to that matter— if they speak on the same subject and each adheres to this rule, speaking only what is revealed on it, all that is revealed, and making no additions to it or subtractions from it. Do you now see how it is that we "speak the same thing," "have no divisions among" us, as commanded in 1 Corinthians 1:10 : This is exactly what is comprehended in Paul's charge to Timothy: "I charge thee in the sight of God, and of Christ Jesus, who shall judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: preach the word." (2 Timothy 4 : 1, 2.) "Preach the word" certainly

means to preach only the word—all of the word; to make no additions, for in doing this we would be preaching something else; and to make no subtractions, for in doing this we would not be preaching all of the word. And read the preceding chapter—2 Timothy 3:16-17—and you will find the ground for this charge The word was by inspiration given, and contains all the doctrine God wants taught and all the reproof and correction the human race needs, and will give us every good work in which God wants us to engage; or, to express it in the language used by Peter: "Seeing that his divine power hath granted unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness." (2 Peter 1:3.)

WHY, THEN, ARE WE DIVIDED? The whole cause of division is to be found in preachers and churches exercising what they call the liberty to preach things not in the divine rule.

We are united on what is in the rule. Let us submit a few examples that what we say may be exemplified. (1) Has there ever been any division over the fact that God appeared unto Moses in a burning bush? (Exodus 3:1-4.) Ask any preacher if God so appeared to Moses and he will say: "Yes, this is what the Bible declares." Now ask him what kind of bush that was. Some have even tried to tell us, but they differ when they speak here, because it has not been revealed. (2) Has there ever been any division over the fact that Paul had a thorn in his flesh? (2 Corinthians 12:7.) Here we are all perfectly united, for this is in the rule—the divine revelation. But ask someone what this thorn was. How can we speak the same thing here? Some have said it was blindness, or bad eyes, and have made very good arguments for it. But who knows? All we know about that thorn in the flesh is that it was "a messenger of Satan to buffet" Paul that he should not be exalted overmuch. (3) Have we ever spoken other than the same thing so far as the fact that Nicodemus came to Christ by night is concerned? (John 3:1-2.) This fact is revealed. But let us start out now and try to speak the same thing as to why he came by night. I have heard some preachers say one thing and others another as to why Nicodemus came by night. But who knows? of course, churches have not been torn asunder over things that I have suggested, but I merely suggest these that you may appreciate the fact that we get along well so long as we stay in the rule—viz., preaching only what is revealed on each subject. But when we begin to talk about things not revealed on these same subjects, we are bound to differ. Here we should not speak at all. If it had been good for us to know the kind of bush, God would have told us; or if it had been good for us to have known what Paul's thorn in the flesh was, more than what is said, or why Nicodemus came by night, we also would have been told this.

SOME DOCTRINAL DIFFERENCES

Scriptural baptism. Are we divided here? Certainly not. Scriptural baptism is that baptism taught in the Scriptures. A thing could hardly be called "Scriptural" that the Scriptures say nothing about. Here the reader is asked to go back to Lesson XII and review the diagram there given. The Scriptures teach that baptism took place where there was much water, that there was a coming unto the water, a going down into the water, a burial, a resurrection, and a coming up out of the water. When a penitent believer does this, who says he has not been baptized? Here we are united, and this is in the rule. But our division comes over sprinkling a few drops of water on the head and calling it "baptism." Where is this called "baptism"? It is out of the rule entirely, and those who so teach are responsible for the confusion over what is called "the mode of baptism." The Scriptural subject of baptism. The Scriptures, as we learned in Lesson XII, speak of baptism being

administered to both men and women, and only those men and women that believed and repented. We know this is a Scriptural subject, for it is taught in the Scriptures. But when you begin to baptize an infant who does not know his right hand from his left, division arises, and the Bible is as silent as the grave about such. We are united on the former, and it is in the Scriptures; but we are divided over the latter, and it is out of the Scriptures. Those who introduced it are responsible here for the division. The Scriptural name. I hardly think you could find a soul who would say it is wrong for us to wear the name of Christ, our spiritual Husband (Romans 7:4), or that we could ever find a better name to wear. Here we are united. But where is our division here? It is when you introduce human names, such as "Baptist," "Methodist," "Presbyterian," "Lutheran," "Congregationalist," "Episcopalian," etc. These are not in the Bible, and certainly we all know it. And just so we could take up every division that has ever arisen and show it was occasioned by the INTRODUCTION of something not in the rule.

We close this lesson by asking you to go with us to 1 Corinthians 1:10-13. Here are four groups in the same congregation, and three of them are wrong and only one right. One group was building on their preference for Paul, another on their preference for Peter, and still another on their preference for Apollos. These brethren were not divided over doctrine; they all did the same thing in becoming Christians, and they were taught the same things as to how to live the Christian life. Paul, Apollos, and Peter taught identically the same doctrine. We should note that a part of that congregation was clinging to Christ, saying: "We are of Christ." They were glorying, but they were glorying in Christ. The others were glorying in men. (See 1 Corinthians 3:21-22.) In verses 7 of this third chapter they are declared to be carnal, walking as men of the flesh. And why? Just because they grouped themselves into parties, factions, and preferred to be Paulites, Cephasites, and Apollosites. Some, we should be thankful, were content to be just Christians for Christ. (Acts 11:26.)

Note the force of Paul's rebuke: "Is Christ divided?" If Christ is divided, so may we be. Ask this question in the light of present conditions, and tell me how you can try to justify division. "Was Paul crucified for you?" We must recognize the man who was crucified for us as Lord and rally around him and not some man or set of men. "Were ye baptized into the name of Paul?" We should wear the name, work in the name, of the one into whose name we were baptized. (Colossians 3:17.) Though united in every article of faith and practice, if we divide ourselves into groups and adopt human names by which to be known, we have sinned. Let us ever be found "giving diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," as we are commanded.

32 26. Non-conversion Or Why You Are Not Saved

26. Non-conversion Or Why You Are Not Saved

Non-conversion Or Why You Are Not Saved

INTRODUCTION

We come now to the last lesson in this series, and it shall be devoted to a talk to every reader or student who has thus far followed us who is not a Christian. Two great desires have been on our heart all the way through these lessons: (1) We have desired to show those who are not saved how to be saved; (2) we have desired to strengthen and confirm the faith of those who are already saved. Part II of "Scripture Studies," which we hope you will obtain and study, is devoted to the life we must live in Christ. Some who read these lessons in Part I doubtless will not be Christians. We are giving this lesson exclusively for them. We want you to be saved—to become a child of God; then study Part II that is devoted to the Christian's life. With Paul we say: "Knowing therefore the fear of the Lord, we persuade men." (2 Corinthians 5:11.) It is not enough to know what God says for us to do to be saved; we must do it. Christ "became unto all them that obey him the author of eternal salvation." (Hebrews 5:9.) We want you to obey Christ. Christ himself asks the question: "And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46.) Heed the admonition: "Come now, and let us reason together, saith Jehovah." (Isaiah 1:18.) We want you to think now about doing what you have learned in these lessons; and if you do not become a Christian, we want you to know just where the responsibility lies.

NO NEUTRAL GROUND

It is true that some try to be neutral—neither for nor against Christ. But this ground cannot be found. You are either for Christ or against him. "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth." (Matthew 12:20. This settles the question of neutrality. You cannot find such ground on which to stand. Even a desire or an effort to be neutral places you definitely against Christ. Satan does not want you to obey the gospel. In refusing to be saved, you take a stand where Satan wants you to stand; and Paul says we are the servants of the one we obey. "Know ye not, that to whom ye present yourselves as servants unto obedience, his servants ye are whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" (Romans 6:16.) "No man can serve two masters," says Christ in Matthew 6:24. So just know that all who have followed us in these studies can be classed in only one of two classes—viz., the saved and the unsaved—those who are for Jesus and those who are against him, those who now take Christ as their Master to obey or those who choose to still cling to Satan's wishes.

THE RESPONSIBILITY DEFINITELY PLACED In ascertaining, without doubt, who is responsible for your not being a Christian, we will do what we call "clearing the question" by approaching it negatively—first learning who are not responsible for your going on in your sins.

God is not responsible. He "is long-suffering to you-ward, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." (2 Peter 3:9.) If you have not repented of your sins, it is no fault of God's; he wants you to repent. "This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior; who would have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth." (1 Tim. 2:3, 4.) "Have I any pleasure in the death of the wicked? saith the Lord Jehovah; and not rather that he should return from his way, and live?" (Ezekiel 18:23.) Honestly, would you say: "I am unsaved, and it is all because God is withholding from me some influence that is indispensable to my conversion and salvation"? Certainly you know you cannot say this. "Cast away from you all your transgressions, wherein ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, o house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord Jehovah: wherefore turn yourselves, and live." (Ezekiel 18:31-32.) And he calls on his ministers to "say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord Jehovah, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live." (Ezekiel 33 : 1.) No, sinner friend, God is calling, begging, and waiting. He so loved you as to send his only Son to die that you might live. (John 3:16.) Any doctrine that makes you think that your being unsaved is due to some unwillingness on his part, or to his withholding some influence from your heart that is necessary to your conversion, is one of the doctrines of the devil. Paul tells us, in 1 Timothy 4:1, that some would "fall away from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons." To teach that God is withholding some influence necessary to your conversion would be one of the doctrines of the devil. In Luke 8:11-12 you will find that it is Satan who steals God's good word out of your heart lest you believe and be saved. God wants you saved. He is waiting and begging. Do not let Satan take this good doctrine from your heart by believing God is withholding from you some influence needful to your conversion.

Christ is not responsible. You cannot say: "I am not saved, and it is all due to Christ's unwillingness—to his withholding from me some influence necessary to my conversion." He says: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls." (Matthew 11:28-29.) And hear him again: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that killeth the prophets, and stoneth them that are sent unto her! how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" (Matthew 23:37.) Luke says: "And when he drew nigh, he saw the city and wept over it." (Luke 19:41.) Who would say: "I am not saved, and Jesus is to be blamed for it"? Certainly you cannot say this. Jesus is begging and waiting to save. He died that you might live. He has given you the law of pardon and begs you to accept it. The Holy Spirit is not responsible. "The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And he that heareth, let him say, Come. And he that is athirst, let him come: he that will, let him take the water of life freely." (Revelation 22:17.) "Wherefore, even as the Holy Spirit saith, Today if ye shall hear his voice, harden not your hearts." (Hebrews 3:7.) The Holy Spirit is begging you to come to Christ, and he says, "Today"; and nowhere can it be found where the Holy Spirit or God or his Son ever said, "Tomorrow, come." Their call is now. It is left with you, sinner friend, to surrender to Christ and be saved now. If you refuse to surrender, you go against the pleading words of God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit. The angels are not to be blamed. "Even so there shall be joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine righteous persons, who need no repentance. . . . Even so, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." (Luke 15:7; Luke 15:10 : Angels are more interested in you right now than

they are in the saved. This is true of the most humble and the poorest person on earth. "See that ye despise not one of these little ones: for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven." (Matthew 18:10 : This has reference to a little one who believes on Jesus. It means little in importance so far as the world evaluates persons. (See verse 6.) The fault is not to be found in the gospel. "The gospel . . . is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." (Romans 1:16.) This gospel was preached unto us by the Holy Spirit that was sent down from heaven. (1 Peter 1:12.) Its entrance brings light and understanding. (Psalms 119:130; 2 Corinthians 4:3-4.) It is perfect for the conversion of the soul. (Psalms 19:7.) "Wayfaring men, yea fools, shall not err therein." (Isaiah 35:8.) We are plainly told just what we must do to be saved, as you have learned in the lessons we have studied. But if the gospel were inadequate— difficult to understand—the responsibility for its so being would fall back on God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit, for they gave us the gospel.

THEN WHERE IS THE RESPONSIBILITY TO BE PLACED? At your feet. You cannot even begin to justify yourself in trying to place it anywhere else. Where did Jesus definitely place the responsibility for the souls he left unsaved? Did he not place it at their own feet? Hear him speak: "How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" (Matthew 23:37.) Where is the blame placed here? To ask the question is to answer it. In Matthew 13:15 he speaks to those he left unconverted, and here is what he says: "For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest haply they should perceive with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should turn again, and I should heal them." I know you must think this language is too strong to apply to you; but I want you to answer this question: Can you go on unsaved without stopping your ears, closing your eyes, and hardening your hearts against the pleading words of Christ, his Father, the Holy Spirit, and even keep the angels looking in vain to see you let Christ save you? Tell me how you can remain unsaved and not go against the wishes of God. Satan is the one who wants you to remain unsaved. It is heaven's will that you give your heart to Jesus now in a whole-hearted acceptance of his conditions of salvation. Is this an exception? I have found a number of souls in my ministry who said they wanted to be saved, but that they were seekers, some of them having been seeking for fifteen years; that they wanted to be saved, but that they were waiting on God to send his Spirit and give them a new heart, or effect some miraculous change in their soul. I say I have met with a number who gave this as their reason for not being saved, and I am not questioning their sincerity. But were they not being led by blind guides? (See Matthew 15:9-14.) Certainly in placing the responsibility of such as these not being saved we have to put a large part of it at the feet of these false teachers who had been-teaching them that they had to wait on God. But are we not taught to read after preachers and see whether or not the things they teach are true? (See again Acts 17:10-11.) But it matters not how much you have heard such teaching, you know better now; hence, the responsibility of your going on in your sins we must leave at your feet. CAN YOU BE HONEST AND REMAIN UNSAVED? In concluding this lesson I want to impress upon your heart that you cannot be an honest man or woman, boy or girl, and remain unsaved. This is based on the threefold application of the word duty.

You cannot be honest with God. Duty to God' his Son, who died that you might live, forbids your saying: "Lord, I know you died for me, but I have other things I love better than I do the life you

offer; so excuse me from submitting to your appeals." Have you read: "And they all with one consent began to make excuse"? (See Luke 14:16-24.) The feast is now ready. It cost Christ his life to prepare it. You are invited. Tell me how you can be honest with God and his Son and turn this invitation down. Is it unjust for him to say, if you persist in so doing, that "none of those men that were bidden shall taste of my supper"?

You cannot be honest with society, with your friends and loved ones. You certainly owe it to society to ever let your influence over it be the best you are capable of making it—the uplifting of all and the pulling down of no one. Can this be done and you remain unsaved? How can others pattern after you without doing it to their own damnation? You have loved ones, and the time of separation must come. If they go first, will they be worrying about your condition? If you go first, will you leave in them that great hope of your everlasting salvation? Tell me not that you owe it not to mother, father, and all of your loved ones to leave not one doubt in their mind about your eternal safety. I have seen mothers bury their wayward sons and wring their hands and say: "oh, if I only had one ray of hope for my boy!" Are sons honest when they so die? Paul, in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-14, says something about our loved ones who go to sleep in Jesus. He tells us not to sorrow as others who have no hope, for just as certain as Jesus died and rose again, we may rest assured that our loved ones he will bring with him when he comes again. Tell me how any son or daughter can be honest with his or her parents and give them not this hope.

You cannot be honest with yourself. You owe it to yourself to be the best man or woman that God's grace can make of you. How can you be honest with yourself and let your soul stand in jeopardy? If you had an eternity in which to try it, you could not even begin to show that you can be an honest father or mother, son or daughter, and knowingly live in an unsaved state. May I beseech you, therefore, to surrender your heart to Jesus now in loving obedience to what he tells you to do to be saved—viz., by believing in him as the Christ, repenting of your sins, confessing him before men, and being buried with him in baptism and raised to walk in the new life. Then "live soberly and righteously and godly in this present world; looking for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity. and purify unto himself a people for his own possession zealous of good works." (Titus 2:11-14.)

HOW TO MAKE THE WORLD BETTER Do you wish the world were better?

Let me tell you what to do:

Set a watch upon your actions, Keep them always straight and true;

Rid your mind of selfish motives, Let your thoughts be clean and high.

You can make a little Eden Of the sphere you occupy. Do you wish the world were wiser?

Well, suppose you make a start By accumulating wisdom In the scrapbook of your heart. Do not waste one page on folly;

Live to learn and learn to live.

If you want to give men knowledge, You must get it ere you give. Do you wish the world were happy?

Then remember day by day Just to scatter seeds of kindness As you pass along the way; For the pleasures of the many May be oft-times traced to one, As the hand that plants an acorn Shelters armies from the sun.

—Ella Wheeler Wilcox.

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
 - 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net