

SEARCHING FOR GOD

Why can't man find God for himself?

Romans 1:18-32 reveals man's search for God and tells us two reasons for man's failure.

1. Verse 18: God will punish all unrighteousness. God has made man to know in his heart that there is a God, who created all that exists. Only a fool will say that there is no God. (See Psalm 14:1) When men look at the world with all that exists or considers his own body, he knows that there must be a creator who made all these things.
2. Verse 20: God's character and His power is revealed in all that we see in our universe. But because men did not search for God, they became foolish in their thinking and began to worship idols made in the image of birds, animals and men. As a result of man turning away from God, we see the evil that was the outcome of his foolish thinking. (See verses 26-32).

Hebrews 11:1 also tells us why man will never find God through science.

1. Science is based on the things that can be seen. Faith is not seen. Hebrews 11:6 points out that we can never please God without faith. We must first believe

But God has done something to help us find Him. The Bible is the record of what God has done to reveal Himself to men.

The Bible is the record of the "Acts of God". God has chosen to reveal Himself in History, and we have a reliable record in our Bible. Even archeologists have admitted that they have never discovered anything that would prove the Bible to be wrong. Your Bible is trustworthy; you can place your life in its care.

Hebrews 1:1-3 points out that God has been revealing Himself for a long time and He has given us the full and final revelation of Himself in Jesus.

Colossians 2:9 states that Jesus is the fullness of God in bodily form. If we are to look for God, we must look at Jesus, only Jesus can show us the Father. Every aspect of God is shown to us in Jesus.

God has chosen to reveal Himself in history and the Bible is the record of what He said and what He did in the lives of men and women who trusted Him. God fully revealed Himself in Jesus and now we no longer look to men to find out about God, we look to Jesus.

WHO IS A SINNER?

God will place His wrath on sin. Sin is the barrier that is between man and God. Because man is a sinner he cannot enter into the presence of God. As long as there is sin in man's life, he will remain separated from God, for God is Holy. ONLY thru Jesus can we find God. Jesus took all our sins when He was nailed to the cross. Jesus was without sin but He took ours because He loves us. There are three aspects to sin:

- 1) The presence of sin,
- 2) The power of sin,
- 3) The penalty of sin.

A. Background

Jesus proved thru His resurrection that He was God, and now that we know that Jesus was God in the flesh we can be certain that what He said was the truth. During the period in which Jesus lived on earth, the order of the Old Testament (O.T.) was different than we have it now. The order of the books were different but we DO HAVE ALL the books in our present Bible (O.T.) that Jesus used.

The O.T. in that day started with the book of Genesis and ended with the book of 2 Chronicles. Jesus made a statement in Luke 11:51 that points out that the record of our Bible is a true account of what did take place in the lives of real people. Jesus mentions the death of two men, Abel and Zechariah. The death of Abel is recorded in Genesis 4, and the death of Zechariah is recorded in 2 Chronicles 24. This statement by Jesus lets us know that the records of the Bible are accurate from cover to cover,

B. How Did Man Become A Sinner?

Genesis gives us the record of how man first sinned and how God began to reveal Himself to man after his sin.

GENESIS 2-3

NOTE: Gen. 2:7 points out that man has a physical side (dust) and a spiritual side (God's breath). Gen. 2:24-25 points out that sex was not a part of original sin.

- 2:17 -This is the direct command of God, so Adam knew what he should not do. Compare this verse closely with Gen. 3:3 and you will see that Eve ADDED to what God commanded. She added that she couldn't even touch the fruit, GOD DID NOT STATE THAT. Adam had the direct commandment for God, but Eve was later told of God's command. (This is implied as Eve was not created when God spoke to Adam. We do not see anywhere in the record where God spoke directly to Eve.) The Devil went to Eve as she could be misled easier, not hearing the word of God for herself.

• C. Sin Is To Place Ourselves Equal To God

God had determined what was right and wrong, but Eve wanted to be Like God. She would determine for herself what was right and wrong. Eve examined the fruit and she determined that it was good. Her actions placed her in direct opposition to God, Either Eve is right or God is right, Adam also chose to rebel against God and determined for himself that he knew what was good for him.

- Gen. 3:7 - They immediately lost their innocence before God and hid themselves. They knew they were guilty.
- Gen. 3:11 God gives Adam a chance to confess his sin, but he and Eve both looked for someone else to blame.

• d. The First Promise From God

- Gen. 3:15 - God steps in between the Devil and the human race. Enmity means hatred and division. This enmity is the result of God's goodness. God places the division between all the offsprings of the woman and all the followers of the Devil. Also her seed would be a male that would crush the head of the Devil, but he would be bruised in the process.

• NOTICE:

- 1) This male child would come from the woman's seed, not from the union of a male and female. God was pointing to a spectacular birth that was fulfilled in the birth of Jesus. Mary was a virgin and the child in her womb was the Son of the Most High. (see Luke 1:26-38).
 - 2) This male child would be bruised. This points to the crucifixion of Jesus.
- e. Further Results & Punishment for Sin

Gen. 3:16 - The man shall rule over the woman

Gen. 3:17 - The whole world would suffer for Adam's sin

Gen. 3:19 - Men would struggle to make a living, and man will die.

f. God Covers Man's Sin

Gen. 3:21 God kills an animal to cover man's sin. The animal died in the place of Adam and Eve. However the covering was not complete, for Adam and Eve both died. (Heb. 9:22)

REMEMBER: Acts 4:12

...AND THERE IS SALVATION IN NO ONE ELSE: FOR THERE IS NO OTHER NAME UNDER HEAVEN THAT HAS BEEN GIVEN AMONG MEN, BY WHICH WE MUST BE SAVED (HIS NAME IS JESUS).

REVELATION 22:18.19

I TESTIFY TO EVERYONE WHO HEARS THE WORDS OF THE PROPHECY OF THIS BOOK: IF ANYONE ADDS TO THEM, GOD SHALL ADD TO HIM THE PLAGUES WHICH ARE WRITTEN IN THIS BOOK: AND IF ANYONE TAKES AWAY FROM THE WORDS OF THIS BOOK OF PROPHECY, GOD SHALL TAKE AWAY HIS PART FROM THE TREE OF LIFE AND FROM THE HOLY CITY, WHICH ARE WRITTEN IN THIS BOOK.

Sin is rebellion against God. Sin corrupts until every part of man is affected, but even in our sin, God reaches to us with "Good News". (Gen. 3:15 (Proto Evangellion))

g. Further Results & Punishment for Sin

1. We cannot enter into God's presence.
2. We have a fear of God. (This is not respect, but terror).
 - a. fear of the unknown
 - b. fear produced by guilt
3. We have an awareness of our sin (we know our nakedness)
4. Death - affected the senses and the total of human life (body, soul, spirit, mind and emotions) everything became sinful (Gen. 6:5)
 - a. Death in relationship to God
 - b. Man became a slave to sin, and he cannot stop sinning

- c. Physical death
- d. Eternal separation from God

5. The earth suffers under evil because of man's rebellion

6. The Tree of Life is guarded (Gen. 3:24)

Jesus is the Lamb of God. (John 1:29) Note that God was going to provide the lamb in Gen 22:8, for Abraham. However, God did not provide a lamb, He provided a RAM. (see Gen. 22:13) It was not until Jesus came into the world that God provided a "lamb", His only son.

NOTE: There is no record in the Bible that Adam ever repented for his sin. We must all repent or we shall perish.

- Repent:
 - a) involves the INTELLECT
 - b) involves the EMOTIONS
 - c) involves the WILL

REMEMBER - God loves us so much that He found a way to reach us. (John 3:16 (Amplified))

"FOR GOD SO GREATLY LOVED AND DEARLY PRIZED THE WORLD THAT HE EVEN GAVE UP HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN AND UNIQUE SON, SO THAT WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM, TRUSTS IN HIM, CLINGS TO HIM, AND RELIES ON HIM, SHALL NOT PERISH, NOR COME TO DESTRUCTION, NOR BE LOST, BUT HAVE ETERNAL AND EVERLASTING LIFE."

h. What is Sin?

Sin is transgression of the law (1 John 3:4)

Sin is coming short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23)

Sin is rebellion against God (Isaiah 1:2; 1 Sam. 15:22 & 23)

Sin is unbelief; it makes God a liar (1 John 5:10; John 16:7-9)

Sin is going our way, planning our life according to our own will, without seeking the will of God (Isaiah 53:6)

All unrighteousness is Sin (1 John 5:17)

Sin is ceasing to pray for the lost (1 Samuel 12:23)

Sin is showing partiality for individuals (James 2:9)

Sin is having contempt for others (Proverbs 14:21)

Sin is thought of foolishness (Proverbs 24:9, Luke 6:45)

Sin is failing to do what we know is right (James 4:17; Luke 12:47)

Sins of omission (Mat. 23:23; Luke 11:42; Mat. 25:45; Luke 12:47)

Sin is retaining your anger (Ephesians 4:26)

Sin is causing a fellow Christian to fall (1 Corinthians 8:8-13)

Sin is failing to forgive those who sin against you (Mat.18:21-,35)

Whatever is not of faith is sin (Romans 14:23)

"When there are many words, transgression is unavoidable" (Proverbs 10:19 (New American Standard Version) James 3:6)

Sins of ignorance (Luke 12:41-48; Matthew 25:45)

III. THE NECESSARY CHANGE - TRUE REPENTANCE

Prov. 28:13 He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them, will find compassion.

Ps. 32:3, 5 When you keep silent about your sins your body wastes away (vs. 3). But when we acknowledge our sin to God, we find that He will forgive the guilt of our sins. (vs. 5).

a. God Requires Everyone to Repent

Acts 17:30, 31 God has appointed Jesus to judge the world in righteousness, God has pointed out that Jesus will judge the world by the resurrection, and God will no longer overlook the ignorance of men. Man must now repent.

Sinners must repent to enter into salvation.

The saved must repent to remain in fellowship with God and man.

Romans 2:4 We see God's kindness leads us to repentance, as He deals with us patiently with forbearance.

True repentance towards God leads to faith in Jesus (see Acts. 20:21).

Repentance qualifies a man for salvation but only FAITH in Jesus will save him.

Faith without repentance is the ultimate in hypocrisy.

Repentance without faith in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ is folly before God. (see 1 Cor. 15:17) "If Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are STILL IN YOUR SINS."

SORROW is not repentance. Sorrow leads to repentance (see 2 Cor. 7:9-10). There are two types of sorrow:

a) God's sorrow which leads to repentance

b) The world's sorrow which leads to death

Mark 1:15 God calls us to repent and believe the Gospel (see also Acts 2:37f)

REFORM is not repentance. Judas tried to reform and mend his ways by giving back the 30 pieces of silver, but he died a sinner.

Repentance is a Change in Three Areas:

- 1. Intellect - you know in your mind that you are a sinner. (Change of mind.)
- 2. Emotion - your heart has been touched. (Change of heart.)
- 3. Will - you do something about it. (Change of will.)
- Luke 15:11-32 Three steps can be seen in the life of the prodigal son:
- Vs. 17 - Change in Intellect - He came to his senses
- Vs. 18 & 19 - Change in Emotion - "I have sinned", "I am no longer worthy".
- Vs. 18 - Change in Will - "I will get up and go". Vs. 20, he got up and went.

REPENTANCE:

1. Exalts Christ
2. Denounces sin
3. Warns of judgment
4. Costs you your life

- There is no in between., REPENT or PERISH (Luke 13:1-5)

We must bring forth the fruits of repentance:

- 1. A change in our walk
- 2. A change in our talk
- As you read through the Bible, you will see that God has never stopped calling men to repent.

If we say that we believe in God and have no change in our life, we may be deceiving ourselves. In James 2:19 it states that the demons believe, and we know that they will go to Hell. "You believe that God is one, you do well; the demons also believe and shudder". Repentance must accompany belief.

"The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand; REPENT AND BELIEVE in the Gospel". (Mark 1:15)

Just being in the the presence of God will not save you. We must REPENT. (see Luke 13:23-27)

We must be sure that we bring forth the fruit that is in keeping with repentance. (see Mat. 3:8) Jesus gives us clear warning about our lives. Salvation is more than saying Lord, Lord. (see Matthew 7:15-23)

Repentance is God's word to the church today
(Read Revelation Chapters 2 and 3)

IV. HAVING A NEW LIFE

2 Cor. 5:17 Therefore, if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; old things passed away: behold, new things have come.

a. 7 Steps to Salvation

1. Acknowledge Romans 3-023 Luke 18:13

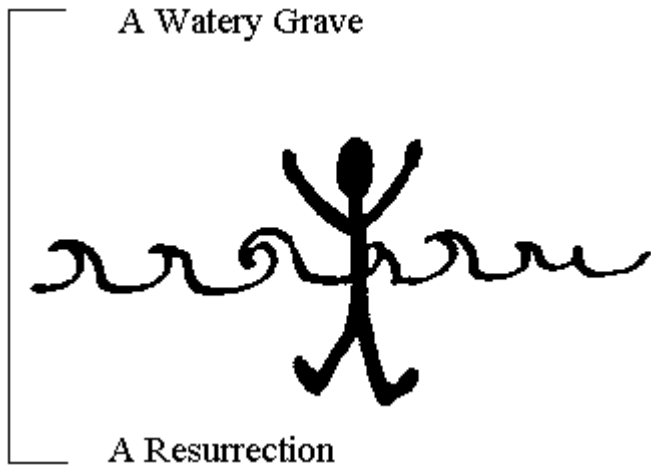
- 2. Repent Luke 13: 3 Acts 3:19
- 3. Confess 1 John 1:9
- 4. Forsake Isaiah 55:7
- 5. Believe John 3:16 Romans 10:9-10
- 6. Receive John 1:11-12
- 7. Obey Acts 5:32

God looks at us as new, because we are "in Christ". God uses many ways to illustrate this to us:



1. Baptism

Romans 6:3-11



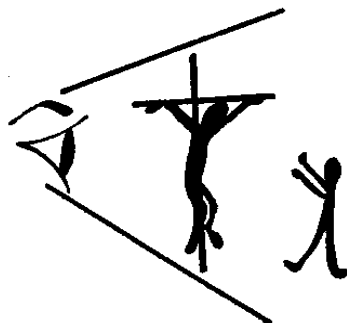
Like Jesus

2. Jesus spoke to Nicodemus about being born "of the Spirit" (see John 3). This pointed back to a promise that God made to Israel long ago. (see Ezekiel 36:25-27).

This is what takes place when you receive Jesus into your life as Lord and Savior. Your body belongs to God in three ways:

- 1. Father - by creation and resurrection
- 2. Jesus - purchased and redeemed
- 3. Holy Spirit - the indwelling.

Your body is now the Temple of God (see 1 Cor. 6:1)



God looks at you in a special way:

He sees Jesus (see Col. 3:3)

God loves us even though we hated Him. Romans 5:8 and because we have accepted God's love:

1. God is on our side (Romans 8:31)
2. God will do all things for you (Romans 8:32)
3. Jesus is praying for you now (Romans 8:34)
4. God loves you as He loves Jesus (John 17:23)
5. Nothing can separate you from God's love (Romans 8:35-39)

God is now in the process of conforming us into the image of Jesus. (Rom. 8:29)

You are no accident: God said, "Before I formed you in your mother's womb, I KNEW YOU". (Jeremiah.1:5; see also Psalms 139:1-18).

GOD HAS BEEN WAITING FOR YOU and He wants you to experience the fullness of His love. (Ephesians 3:14-19)

God does not look at us to express criticism; He wants us to experience His love. (John 3:16,17)

It is not what you do that makes God love you. He loves you right now without holding anything back. (Ephesians 2:8, 9; Romans 8:32; Titus 3:5).

b. Power and Authority of a True Believer

1. All the powers of Hell CANNOT stop the Church (God's true children - Matthew 16:18)
2. True believers have the power to bind those things that would stop the work of God. (Matthew 16:19)
3. True believers can confirm to those who come to Christ in faith and repentance that their sins are forgiven. (John 20:23)
4. Jesus has given the true believers power over the enemy but we must not concentrate on this power but rather rejoice that our names are written in Heavens (Luke 10:19-20)
5. We must remember that as we see the enemy at work in the world, we are never to fear his power, for we are now the Temple of the Living God (1 Cor. 6:19) and that Christ in us is greater than our enemy who is in the world. (1 Jn. 4:4)
6. The evil one in the world CANNOT TOUCH a true believer (1 Jn. 5:18)
7. We must never forget that the Devil is a tempter and the accuser of God's people. (Rev. 12:10)
8. The Devil is a liar and the truth is not in him. (Jn. 8:44)
9. As the Devil tempted Jesus to sin, so he will tempt us. (Mat. 4:1-11) We can be assured that with every temptation there IS an escape. (1 Cor. 10:13)

X. Be on guard for the temptations of the enemy and put away the lust (love) of the things that will hinder your walk with God. (1 Peter 5:8, 9; James 1:12-16)

REMEMBER: YOU are now the Temple of the Living God (1 Cor. 6:19) and you have been fully delivered from the power of darkness by Jesus. (Col. 1:13, 14)

It is up to us to:

1. Put away youthful lusts (2 Tim. 2:22)
2. Put on the full armor of God. (Eph. 6:10-17)
3. Submit to God's directions in obedience and then resist the temptations of the Devil and the Devil WILL flee from you. (James 4:7)

The power and authority of the believer comes from his relationship to Jesus Christ. Apart from Jesus, we can do nothing. (John 15:5)

Jesus alone has all Power and Authority in His hands. (Matthew 28:18).

We can rest in the power of our Savior, Jesus Christ, for there is NO POWER that can pluck a true believer from the hand of God. (John 10:29; Romans 8:31-39)

c. You Are Special

I. John 1:12 - "Children of God" - There are many children of God and we are all united into what the Bible calls a "body", - the "Body of Christ". If we look at a regular family, we see many of the brothers and sisters competing for the love of the parents and struggling with each other. The Children of God are born into God's family by God's doing, and we have nothing to boast about. God was calling us and seeking us for a long time. We finally heard Him and listened. (John 15:16) GOD CHOSE US!

II. None of God's children have any special privileges - we are all equal. We don't have to compete for God's love. It was and is given to all of us freely. (Romans 8:32; Luke 12:32).

III. But as part of God's family, we must cooperate with each other and keep our unity and maintain our relationship to each other in love. (Ephesians 4:2-3) This is important. (John 17:21) The world will see Jesus clearly when we are united in Jesus and one body.

IV. Each believer is spoken of as a member of Jesus' Body and the illustration of the human body is used to show that we need each other. (1 Corinthians 12:12-27)

V. Just as in our body, each part has different functions, so it is in the Body of Christ. We have different functions, and to fulfill our function, God has given us gifts and calls us to use them. We all have gifts. (Matthew 25:14-30)

vs. 14: all were given gifts and the gifts belong to God. God entrusted each of us with gifts or talents when we were born. God placed them there in our mother's womb. (Ps. 139:13-15; Jer. 1:5)

Note that some were given more gifts than others but each did receive a gift and the gifts were given according to the ability of the person (vs. 15).

vs. 21-23: God requires us to be faithful to the talents that He has given us and develop them for His glory. If we fail to use the gifts that God has given us, we will be judged (vs. 26-30).

VI. The gifts were given for the Body of Christ (Ephesians 4:8-16)

vs.11: Apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers are given to the Body. Their job or function is to prepare and equip all the believers (saints) so that the believers can do the work that God has given us to do.

vs. 12: When we as believers in Jesus Christ join together in unity of faith and knowledge of the Son of God (THAT MEANS ALL BELIEVERS - Protestant and Catholic, Pentecostal and Fundamental) only then will we see the full power of our Lord.

vs. 13: This will not happen until each of us uses the gift or gifts that God has given us.

vs. 16: "...the whole body (all believers) being fitted and held together by that which EVERY JOINT (each believer) supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, (each gift and talent MUST be working) causes the growth of the body for the building of itself in LOVE".

VII. God's request for NOW which is the end times (1 Peter 4:7-11)

vs. 10: USE your gift and talents to serve one another (other members in the Body of Christ). Then God considers you a good steward, when you serve each other.

vs. 11 'Your gifts are different - some are speaking gifts and some are serving gifts. Our functions in the Body of Christ will be different, just as in our physical body. The heart cannot be the lungs. They have different jobs in our body but the lungs and the heart will always be a part of the body for them to have life. Also in the Body of Christ, it does not matter what function we have in it; we must ALL do our job in the body for the Body of Christ to operate properly. The health of the Body of Christ depends on each of us using our gifts and talents in serving one another. (see also 1 Corinthians 12 & 13).

d. A List of the Gifts

Ephesians 4:11	Romans 12:6-8	1 Cor. 12:7-11; 28
Apostles	Prophecy	Word of Wisdom
Prophets	Service	Word of Knowledge
Evangelists	Teaching	Faith
Pastors	Exhortation	Gifts of Healing
Teachers	Giving	Effecting of Miracles
	Leadership	Prophecy
	Mercy	Distinguishing of Spirits
		Tongues
		Interpretation of Tongues
I Peter,4:8		Apostles
Hospitality		Prophets
		Teachers
		Helps
		Administrations

IX. Remember that the gifts are under the control of the Holy Spirit and He distributes them to further the work of God. (see 1 Cor. 12:7;11)

X. "For God's gifts and His call are irrevocable - He never withdraws them when once they are given, and He does not change His mind about those to whom He gives His grace or to whom He sends His call." (Romans 11:29 - The Amplified Bible)

V. TAKING A CLOSER LOOK A JESUS

God has spoken. But when? (Hebrews 1:1-3) God has never left man alone since the beginning of time. God has tried to speak to man, but man would not listen.

God has been revealing Himself for a long time and God has given us the clearest and final view of Himself in Jesus Christ.

So, the most important question for us is: WHO IS JESUS CHRIST?

2					Cor.					11:3-15
vs. 3	There	is	another	Jesus,	another	gospel,	and	another	spirit.	
vs. 13	There	are	false	apostles	of	Christ.				
vs. 14	Satan appears as an angel of light. (see also Galatians 1:6-9)									

John, in his Gospel, clearly presents Jesus as God (John 1:1-3;14,18)

Who did Jesus claim to be? Jesus claimed to be God, and no other religious leader claimed to be God.

Jn. 5:16-18: at Bethesda: The healing "And for this reason the Jews were persecuting Jesus, because He was doing these things on the Sabbath." But He answered them, "My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working." For this cause, therefore, the Jews were seeking all the more to kill him, because He not only was breaking the Sabbath, but also was calling God His own Father, making Himself EQUAL WITH GOD. Jesus said, "My Father", not "Our Father".

Jn. 10:22-33 Jesus asserts His Deity (vs. 30) "I and the Father are One . " The word "ONE" indicates the essence or nature . Note: vs. 13 - The Jews tried to stone Him because He was making Himself to be God.

Jn. 12:45 "And he who beholds Me, beholds the One who sent Me."

Jn. 8:19 "You know neither Me nor My Father, if you know Me, you would know My Father also".

Jn. 15:23 "He who hates Me, hates My Father also".

Jn. 5:23 ...He who does not honor the Son, does not honor the Father who sent Him".

Jn. 14:6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth and the life; NO ONE COMES TO THE FATHER, BUT THROUGH Most

Jesus claimed to be able to forgive sins.

Mk. 2:5-11 AND ONLY GOD CAN FORGIVE SINS. (Isaiah 43:25; "I, even I am the One who wipes out your transgressions for My own sake; and I will not remember your sins.")

Mk. 14:60-64 At the trial, they said He was to die, not for any crime He had done, but for who He said He was. He made Himself to be God.

Mat. 27:39-43 When Jesus was on the cross, they asked for proof that He was God. "Let Him come down from the cross, and we shall believe in-Him." (vs. 42)

We can see that Jesus claimed to be God and the Jews knew what He was claiming to be and they had Him put to death.

But.....WAS HE GOD ????????

Jn. 20:19-31 - Jesus visits the disciples and proves that He had risen from the dead.

I Cor. 15:1-8 Jesus was seen by 500 people at one time AFTER He was killed.

Jesus did prove that HE IS GOD by His resurrection from the dead.

Jesus said, "You search the Scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is these that bear witness of Me; and you are unwilling to come to Me that you may have life". (John 5:39-40)

Jesus Was Perfect Man

Hebrews 2:16-18 Fully Man

Matthew 1:18 Normal birth

Luke 2:40, 52 Normal growth as a child

John 8:40 Jesus refers to Himself as a man

Acts 2:22 Jesus was recognized by His disciples as a man

Jesus was MORE than just a man. He was a "PERFECT MAN". Jesus was all that man was intended to be. He never offered sacrifices to God. Jesus never prayed for His own forgiveness. Jesus was sinless. No one could convict Jesus of sin. (John 8:46)

Jn. 14:30 The Devil had nothing in Him

Heb. 4:15 He was tempted but He did not sin

1 Jn. 3:5 In Him there is no sin

2 Cor. 5:21 He was without sin but became sin for us

So, we in our weakness, can come to Jesus, who understands us totally and receive what we have need of, because He loves us. (Heb. 2-17-18)

VI. TAKING TIME TO GROW

1. There are many parallels between our earthly family and our Heavenly family. The Bible speaks about Christians as babes, children, young men, and grownups who are able to teach others.

- The food for your new life is the Word of God. (Mat. 4:4; Deut. 8:3; 1 Pet. 2:1-3; Heb. 5:11-14)
- 2. How do we grow?
 - a. Not by our own efforts.
 - b. Not by worry. (Mat. 6:27; Mat. 5:36: "You can't make your hair white or black.")
 - c. We grow by relationship to Jesus. (Jn. 15:1-17; 2 Cor. 3:7-18) We must now keep His commandments (Jn. 15:10-17) and believe in Christ (1 Jn. 3:23)
 - His commandments are not a burden. (1 Jn. 5:3)

- 3. How do we abide in Jesus?

John 15:9 We must abide in HIS love.

- The abiding is not our efforts or our love. It is clinging to and trusting His love for us.

- 4. God's love for us does not change

- "God cannot lie". (Titus 1:2)
- "Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever". (Heb. 13:8)
- At times we may not feel the effects of His love, but this does not change His love for us.
- To experience His love, we must remain in relationship to Him. We will fall short and fail. God at times, both knowingly and unknowingly. The Bible calls our failures "sin". (1 Jn. 1:8; Rom. 3:23)

- 5. God has given us a built-in device to handle sin:

- Guilt: The cause of guilt is sin. Our guilt is to drive us to God, that we can find forgiveness in Jesus, who has dealt with our sin.
- Forgiveness: Has more than one meaning - One meaning is to "carry away".
- Jesus dealt with our sin by becoming sin: (2 Cor. 5:21; Col. 2:13, 14) and nailing our sins to the cross. Jesus is now our Advocate with the Father. (1 Jn. 2:1,2) Now we can confess our sins and find forgiveness (1 Jn. 1:9). If we fail to seek God's forgiveness in Jesus, our guilt will drive us to try to justify our actions by finding faults in other Christians or attempting to stand before God by our own efforts.

- 6. The only motive for serving God: that God will accept is LOVE (1 Core 13)

7. We can only forgive others by accepting God's forgiveness. God took us as we were - sinners - and forgave us. (Rom. 5:8; 1 Cor 6:9-11) As we experience God forgiving us our weaknesses, we can extend that same forgiveness to others. (Col. 3:12,13)

- a. Have you been disappointed in yourself and ashamed of your failure to follow Jesus as you wished? YOU ARE FORGIVEN!
- b. Have you chosen to do what you knew was wrong, and feel that you no longer have a right to God's mercy? YOU ARE FORGIVEN!
- c. Have you forced yourself to work for Jesus out of guilt or duty? YOU ARE FORGIVEN!
- d. Have you built walls of self-righteousness to protect yourself from seeing your own sins? YOU ARE FORGIVEN!
- e. YOU ARE FORGIVEN NOW GO AND SIN NO MORE (John 8:1-11)

- 8. God accepts us where we are. We are in process - not completely transformed into the image of Christ. That will not happen until Jesus returns. (1 John 3:2)

- a. Can you accept where you are in Christ?
- b. Look back over your relationship to Jesus. Have you grown?

- a. The Fruit of the Spirit

1. Fruit-of Repentance:

- (Luke 3:7-14) We are to bring forth fruit in keeping with our repentance. Jesus also points to this fruit that results from true repentance. (Luke 13:1-9)
- 2. The Sower: Mark 4:1-20; Matthew 13:1-23
- 3. Things Needed for Fruit:
 - The Right Soil (Mat. 13:8 - a changed heart)
 - Rain (James 5:18 - prayer releasing God's increase)
 - Sunshine (1 Jn. 1:5-7; 1 Jn. 2:10 - abiding in the Light)
 - Cultivating & Pruning (Luke 13:8; John 15:2)
 - God's Blessing (1 Cor. 3:6,7)
- In the life of a Christian our fruit is also dependent upon:
 - Our Death (John 12:24-26)
 - Our New Life (Romans 7:4)
 - Our Abiding in Jesus (John 15:1-8)
 - Our Yielding to God (Romans 6:13-23)
 - Our Pursuit & Practice (2 Peter 1:2-11)
- FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT (Galatians 5:16-24)

A. LOVE

- Proof of discipleship (Jn. 13:34,35)
- Proof of sonship (1 Jn. 4:7)
- Proof of our new life (1 Jn. 3:14)
- We must love in our deeds and not just our words (1 Jn. 3:17,18)
- Our love is to include our enemies (Mat. 5:44)
- Without love we cannot claim to love God (1 Jn. 4:20,21)
- Love can be our only motivation (1 Cor. 13)
- B. Joy (Love's strength)
 - Joy is an inseparable part of the life of God's people. It is based on a right relationship between God and His people through Christ.
 - The Joy of the Lord is our strength (Nehemiah 8:10)
 - Joy points to the nearness of God (Psalms 16:11)
 - Joy is one of the results of salvation (Psalms 51:12)
 - Joy is one proof that the Kingdom of God is in you. (Romans 14:17; Romans 15:13)
- NOTE: Jesus suffered the cross for the joy that was-before Him (Heb. 12-.2)

C. Peace (Love's Security)

Peace points to our inner state of well being (Peace of God), and our outward relationship to another party (Peace with God).

- Peace is proof that our trust is in God (Isa. 26:3)

- Peacemakers prove to be sons of God (Mat. 5:9)
- Peace is the tranquil state of the soul assured of its salvation through Christ, and so fearing nothing from God, and content with its earthly lot, of whatsoever sort that is.
- D. Patience (Love's Endurance)
 - 1. Patience is endurance and long suffering when dealing with others, which is a characteristic of God. (Rom. 2:4; 2 Pet. 3:9) This quality points to someone who is able to revenge himself but refuses to do so.
 - 2. Patience is the quality that enables a man to bear up under trials. Dealing with circumstances, persevering and abiding. (Rom. 12:12) This is not a passive, submissive patience which resigns itself hopelessly to its unhappy lot. It is an active endurance marked by hope and assurance. Note: the life of Job. (James 5:11)
 - 3. Patience is an attitude that is gentle, yielding, reasonable, conciliatory; one that does not insist on its rights. (1 Timothy 3:2,3) (gentle)
 - 4. Patience is bearing up under evil (2 Timothy 2:24)
- E. Kindness (Love's Conduct)
 - Being gracious
 - Acts of mercy or pity extended to the needy
- F. Goodness (Love's Character)
 - 1. Being like our Heavenly Father both in character and action. (Mat. 5:13-16)
 - 2. Having a practical value within ourselves and using it for others. (Mat. 5:13-16)
- G. Faithfulness: (Love's Confidence)
 - We must prove to be faithful as God is faithful, not fickle or fluctuating. (James 1:6-8)
- H. Gentleness: (Love's Humility)

The common assumption is that when a man is meek it is because he cannot help himself. But the Lord was meek because He had the infinite resources of God at His command. Meekness is the opposite of self-assertiveness and self-interest. It is equanimity of Spirit that is neither elated nor cast down, simply because it is not occupied with self at all. (Romans 12:3)

- It is the inward attitude of submission to God and His Word.
 - Gentleness is the expression of our outward actions. (Isa. 42:3)
 - Gentleness is not weakness - it is controlled and bridled strength.
- I. Self-Control (Love's Victory)

Here we have moderation and self-restraint. It is the curbing of one's impulses for the sake of worthier ends. It is self-crucifixion and submitting to being controlled by the indwelling Holy Spirit.

 - It is required of a church leader. (Titus 1:7,8)
 - It is expected of older men. (Titus 2:2)
 - WE ARE TO SEEK IT. (2 Peter 1:5.6)

- It is essential for Christian Ministry.
(1 Cor. 9:25-27)
- These nine aspects of the FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT can be grouped in 3's.

LOVE

JOY Needed towards God

PEACE

PATIENCE

KINDNESS Needed towards others

GOODNESS

FAITHFULNESS

GENTLENESS needed within ourselves

SELF-CONTROL

REMEMBER: "Do not be deceived. God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh shall from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit shall from the Spirit reap eternal life. And let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we shall reap if we do not

VII. TALKING TO GOD

a. Prayer and Authority

To pray properly we must have a clear understanding of authority.

All authority comes from God. (John 19:10,11)

Jesus was under the authority of the Father. (Jn. 17:2, Jn. 12:49)

The centurion understood authority. (Matt. 8:5-13)

God has revealed three areas where He has delegated authority:

1. Government (Rom. 13:1-7; 1 Pet. 2:13-17; Titus 3:1,2; Matt. 22:21)

We are to obey our government UNLESS obeying it will place us in direct disobedience to God's Word. (See Acts. 5:29; Acts 4:19) We are directed to pray for our government (1 Tim. 2:1-3)

2. Family

The man as the head has authority over the wife. Eph. 5:22-28) The man must manage the household and the children. (1 Tim. 3:4) The wife receives her authority from the husband. The husband's leadership should be: a) Done in all humility, b) Done in gentleness, c) Motivated in love. The man must remember that Christ has given him his position as head of the family, and he will one day give account for it. The man did not earn his position; God placed him there.

3. Church

As we are taught we MUST search the Scriptures to see if these things are true. (Acts. 17:11; 2 Tim. 2:15; 2 Tim. 3:16-17)

We are to test EVERYTHING by God's Word (1 Thess. 5:21)

- A. Those over you must be examples (1 Pet. 5:1-3) Living like Christ, their lives will give authority to their words. (2 Thess. 3:6-15) Jesus is our only example. (Jn. 13:15; 1 Pet. 2:21)
- B. We are to obey the leader (Heb. 13:17; Heb. 13:7)
- C. We are to subject ourselves to the ministry of the Saints. (1 Cor. 16:15,16; 1 Thess. 5:12,13)
- D. Those who wish to lead must serve like Christ and not look to be served. (Matt. 20:20-28)

b. **What is Prayer?**

There are only two types of prayer: (See Luke 18:9-14)

- 1. Those that don't reach God
- 2. Those that do reach God

Matthew 7:7-11:

- a. Prayer is asking and receiving. When you know the will of God regarding a need. (1 John 5:14,15)
- b. Prayer is seeking and finding. When you do not know the will of God we seek in prayer. (Col. 3:1; Jer. 29:12,13)
- c. Prayer is knocking and opening. When you know the will of God and yet you find a closed door, you are to knock and keep on knocking until the door opens. (Luke 11:5-13)

C. **Why Pray?**

- a. We are commanded to pray. (Luke 18:1; Matt. 26:41)
- b. We will not receive unless we ask. (James 4:2)
- c. There is joy in prayer. (John 16:24)
- d. Prayer will save us out of our troubles. (Psalms 34:6)
- e. Prayer will open us up to God's wisdom. (James 1:5)
- f. Prayer is the channel to God's power. (Jer. 33:3)
- g. It is a sin not to pray. (1 Sam. 12:23)
- h. Sinners can be saved when they pray in faith. (Rom. 10:13,14)
- i. We pray in following Jesus. While Jesus was here in the flesh, He often prayed to the Father, and if Jesus the Son of God needed to pray, then we should pray without ceasing. (1 Thess. 5:17)

d. **How to Pray**

Jesus gave us a model prayer in answer to a request from the disciples. (See Luke 11:1)

Matthew 6:9-15:

- a. We pray to our Heavenly Father who is all-wise, all-loving and all-powerful.
- b. We pray in the name of Jesus, for apart from Him we can do nothing. (John 14:13,14; John 15:5)
- c. We pray as the Holy Spirit would direct our heart. (Romans 8:26,27)
- d. We pray for His will to be done in EVERYTHING (James 4:15)
- e. We are to pray for our daily needs. (Luke 11:3)
- f. We are to pray for the coming of His Kingdom. (Mat. 25:31-46)

- g. We are to pray for forgiveness and practice forgiving others. (Mat. 18:21,22)
- h. We are to pray for God's leading and deliverance from evil. (2 Chron. 16:9; Psalms 23:2)
- i. We are to pray in faith, for without faith, it is impossible to please Him. (Heb. 11:6)

e. **Where to Pray**

(1 Tim. 2:8) Instructs us to pray in all places. We should pray whenever we are gathered with other believers; and we should pray in a place where we can be alone with God. If we love God, we will want to talk with Him often.

f. **Hindrances to Prayer**

- a. Laziness (Prov. 6:6-11)
- b. Impatience (Psalms 37:7)
- c. Hypocrisy (Matthew 6:5)
- d. lack of Perseverance (Luke 11:5-10)
- e. Defective home relationship (1 Peter 3:7)
- f. Circumstances - we think the situation is impossible (Lk.1:37)
- g. Our ignorance (Isaiah 55:8,9)
- h. Rebelliousness (1 Samuel 15:22)
- i. Our lack of work (Col. 3:17; 23-25)
- j. Failure to keep watching (Mark 14:38)
- k. Unconfessed sins (Ps. 66:18; Isa. 59:2; 1 Jn. 1:9; Isa. 55:6,7)
- l. Lack of faith (Romans 14:23, Heb. 11:6)
- m. Selfish motives (James 4:3)
- n. Formality (Matthew 6:7)
- o. Unforgiveness (Mat. 5:23-25; Mat. 6:15; Mat. 18:21,22)
- p. Distractions - TV, radio, phone We need to quiet our thoughts to pray.

g. **Spending One Hour With God in Prayer**

I. Giving God a Gift of Time

- a. One hour a day (Mat. 26:40) In one year this time will equal six weeks.
- b. Prayer is an act of our will. It is not an emotional experience (2 Chron. 7:14)

"What we do for the Lord is entirely dependent upon what we are in the Lord"

"What we are in the Lord wholly depends upon what we receive from the Lord"

"What we receive from the Lord is directly proportional to the time we spend alone with the Lord in prayer"

TO SPEND A LITTLE TIME WITH JESUS IS TO ACCOMPLISH LITTLE IN JESUS

II. The following plan is taken from Dick Eastman's book, The Hour That Changes the World, 1978, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan. To fill the hour, it is broken into 12-five minute parts:

1. Praise

- a. Vocal adoration of God - the act of rendering divine honor, esteem and love.
- b. Praise declares God as sovereign in His nature and power.
- c. Praise moves our attention from ourselves to God.
- d. God inhabits the praises of His people (Ps. 22:3)

- e. As we praise God the enemy will flee.

Steps to follow:

1. Praise God for His name (Ps. 115:1; Isa. 9:6)
2. Praise God for His righteousness. All that God is deserves our praise. He is faithful, just and merciful. (Ps. 35:28)
3. Praise God for His infinite creation. (Ps. 150:2)
4. Praise God for His Word. (Ps. 19:7-14)

2. Waiting

Good relationships are built in part in silence - just being together. (Ps. 46:10; Zech. 2:13)

3. Confession

Before we pray for a change in circumstances, we should pray for a change in our character. When we confess a particular act that displeases God, we MUST recognize that we are responsible to change it. (See James 1:22) As the Temple needed cleansing, so will our lives. (2 Chron. 29:16; 1 Cor. 6:19-20, Ps. 66:18; Ps. 139:23,24)

Some areas of confession from Psalm 51:10,11

a. Cry for Divine Holiness.

"Create in me a clean heart" God does the leaning and the forgiving by His Grace. We should examine our past day. How was our personal conduct? Were our thoughts pleasing to God?

b. Cry out for a Divine Attitude.

"Renew a steadfast (upright) spirit within me". We are to have the right relationship to others having forgiveness and redemption or God will not hear us.

c. Cry out for Divine Guidance.

"Cast me not away from Thy presence". To overcome our temptations we need God's presence all day long.

d. Cry out for Divine Enablement

"Do not take Thy Holy Spirit from me . Without God we can do NOTHING.

4. Scripture Praying

God's Word has power, "Is not My word like fire?", declares the Lord, "and like a hammer which shatters a rock?" (Jer. 23:29) Fasting and long hours of prayer do not build faith. Reading books about faith do not build faith. ONLY THE WORD OF GOD BUILDS FAITH. (Rom. 10:17 our prayer book is the Bible).

Steps for Scripture Praying

- a. Listen or read a passage or chapter. This is not a Bible Study, it is searching the Bible for actual power that might be applied to you in prayer.

b. When you become aware of a verse, stop there and think on what that verse is saying to you. See how that verse' can be changed into your personal prayer to God.

c. Form a prayer from that verse or passage and pray it. Then continue reading until you see another verse that you can pray.

5. Watching

Jesus told the disciples to WATCH AND PRAY. (Matt. 26:41) We must become SPIRITUALLY ALERT.

a. Watching for the activity of the enemy that would hinder the presentation of the Gospel. (1 Peter 5:8)

b. Watching for the activity of the enemy in other believer's lives as well as our own. (Eph. 6:18)

QUESTIONS ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ?

How aware am I of the problems of World Evangelism?

How is Satan working to hinder God's workers?

Aides in Watching

a. Read things that make you aware of the specific needs of the world.

b. Read the daily news, noting economic problems, civic problems, and unrest, political changes, weather conditions. These areas can hinder God's work.

c. Ask the Holy Spirit what you should claim in prayer and how. Prayers should not be forms but lead by the Spirit. (Rom. 8:26)

6. Intercession

a. Pray for workers in the harvest. (Mat. 9:38)
God will provide the increase if we work. (1 Cor. 3:6)

b. Pray for open doors for God's Word. (Col. 4:2,3) Include prayers for the leaders in government. (1 Tim. 2:1-4)

c. Pray for fruit that will remain. (John 15:8,16)

d. Pray for financial support to send those called out (Romans 10:14,15) Our call is to reach the whole world and that takes money. We must be willing to support God's work.

e. When we pray, we must have simple faith and believe. (Matthew 7:7)

NOTE: When we are praying for someone who does not know the Lord and we cannot go to them ourselves to share the Good News of salvation, we can ask the Holy Spirit to place questions in their mind that will open them up to the Gospel. But, remember that someone must go to that person to be saved. We are the ambassadors for Christ. (2 Cor. 5:20).

Questions to Pray:

1. Whom can I trust? This may lead them to search for God.
2. What is my purpose and meaning for my life?
3. Is there truly any freedom in life?
4. Why do people hate religion?
5. How can I cope with my problems and the world?
6. Where will I go when I die?

7. Petition

- a. Be specific in your petitions - this is the only way you can know when God has answered your prayer. A notebook may be helpful, noting when prayed, and when answered.
- b. Your petitions should be complete and thought out.
- c. Be sincere - "We are to ask with a begger's humility, seek with a servant's carefulness and knock with the confidence of a friend".
- d. Our petitions should be simple.

*Begin your petitions by asking the Holy Spirit to help you claim ONLY those things and desires that will bring special honor and glory to the Lord.

8. Thanksgiving

Worship and praise is to give glory to WHO God is. Thanksgiving is to give glory for what God has done in your life.
Thanksgiving helps us to focus on God's faithfulness.

"What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits towards me?" (Ps. 116:12) "I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving and will call upon the name of the Lord." (Ps. 116:17)

- a. Confess Spiritual Blessings
- b. Confess Material Blessings
- c. Confess Physical Blessings
- d. Confess External Blessings - our friends, community, etc.

9. Singing

"Serve the Lord with gladness come before His presence with SINGING." (Ps. 100:2) Singing praise is a weapon. (Read: 2 Chron. 20-note vs. 22)

Themes for Songs:

- a. Songs of Praise - each song is special because of the sincerity of our hearts and because we are objects of the Father's love.
- b. Songs of Power and Mercy (Ps. 59:16,17)
- c. Songs of Thanksgiving
- d. Songs of God's Name
- e. Songs of God's Word (James 5:13)
- f. Songs of our Heart (New Songs - Ps. 144:9)

10. Meditation

This is where we ponder a spiritual theme and apply the facts and principles to ourselves as individuals and citizens of the Kingdom of God. The word means to mutter, a silent inner study of some spiritual truth. To give mental attention to something; it implies to be careful and to show care about the truth that has been revealed. God has promised that peace will come to those who keep their minds on God. (Isa. 26:3)

Points to Focus on:

a. God Himself - (waiting in an act of loving, meditation is an act of thinking)

1. What do I really believe about God?
2. What does the Bible say about God that touches my life?
3. How would I define God?
4. What qualities of God can I appropriate in my life?

b. Focus on God's Word (Ps. 1:1,2) God has given us nearly 3,000 promises.

c. Focus on the Works of God (Ps. 77:12) Nature truly has its beauty, but we are to concentrate on our Creator who is the source of all that is.

d. Focus on Past Victories (Ps. 143:5; Lam. 3:21-23)

e. Focus on Positive Thoughts (Phil. 4:8) Anything worthy of praise is worthy of meditation.

11. Listening

Waiting is to thoughtfully focus our attention on God in a love relationship, resting silently in His love.

Meditation is careful exploration of a particular spiritual theme.

LISTENING is to mentally absorb divine instruction from God concerning specific matters for that day.

When we are quiet, we show our dependence and faith before God expecting His guidance. Our goal in prayer is to discover what God wants us to do, that He will be glorified by our lives. (Luke 9:35; Read Ecclesiastes 5:1-7 *A gentle and quiet spirit is precious in the sight of God (1 Peter 3:4)

Listening at this point in prayer is so important. We must be certain that our plans of action are from the Lord. Whatever direction we receive it MUST comply with God's word. I repeat, any direction we receive MUST comply with the Word of God. ANY GUIDANCE THAT YOU RECEIVE THAT IS CONTRARY TO GOD'S WORD DID NOT COME FROM GOD. As we listen, we should write down the impressions that we receive.

12. Praise

We should begin and end our prayers in praise. We praise Him for the answer to our prayer. We praise Him for the strength that He has provided for us to pray. Apart from Him we can do nothing. Praise

brings us to leaving the hour giving to God and not asking. Praise Him for His Power, His Knowledge, and His Presence.

13. **A Final Note on Commitment**

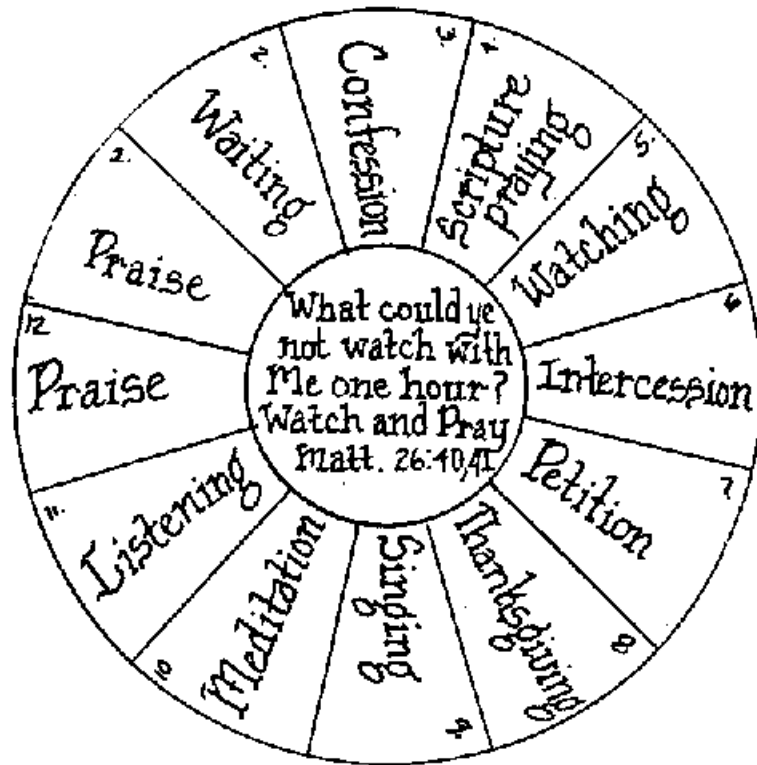
To climb any mountain, you must be committed to first climb the foothills. After you are committed to pray, there is need for perseverance. To be great in prayer requires time in prayer.

14. **A Plan of Action**

1. Find the best time for personal prayer. If you have no set time, you won't pray.
2. Declare your commitment verbally and daily. The most important appointment you have that day is with Jesus. Once we have set up a time to meet with Jesus, we should not disappoint Him.
3. Fight all interruptions - Fiercely!!
4. Develop a practical prayer plan - one that works for you.
5. Recognize the overwhelming importance of your daily hour with God. Prayer alone can change the world. WITHOUT PRAYER EVERY EFFORT IS WASTED, FOR IT LEAVES GOD OUT OF THE PICTURE.

There is much we can do after prayer, but nothing we can do until we pray. As you pray, you will be a part of Jesus' Ministry (Heb. 7:25)

"AND I SEARCHED FOR A MAN AMONG THEM WHO SHOULD BUILD UP THE WALL AND STAND IN THE GAP BEFORE ME FOR THE LAND, THAT I SHOULD NOT DESTROY IT: BUT I FOUND NO ONE" (Ezek. 22:30)



VIII. GETTING THE MOST OUT OF LIFE

"I came that they might have life, and might have it abundantly".
(John 10:10)

a. Introduction

The only way into eternal life is through faith in Jesus as your personal Savior. (Jn. 3:15,16) But do not stop here; to have eternal life is great - but there is more. Jesus came that YOU might have life abundantly. All believers have life, but not all have abundant life. You are living beneath your privilege if you are a believer and not enjoying the abundant life.

For life to be abundant, it must have abundant resources, and the ONLY unlimited source of life is in the person Jesus Christ the Son of God. (Jn. 14:6) To possess this fuller life, the believer must abide in Him. (Jn. 15:1-5) This dynamic abundant living is NOT for just a few - it is God's norm for all believers. If you do not have abundant life you will soon yield to the fleshly life around you. (1 Cor. 3:1-4) The fleshly life is circumstance-controlled; and the abundant life is Holy Spirit-controlled. The fleshly Christian life leads to defeat; the abundant life leads to victory in Christ. From this moment on determine not to be satisfied with anything less than God's best; living life abundantly.

b. **The Abundant Life is a Yielded Life (Romans 6:10-13)**

Jesus is our example of the abundant life. He yielded His life to God and not to sin. He lives to God and so must we. (Read Col. 3:1-4) It is one thing to have eternal life by faith. It is quite another thing to have abundant life by faith. It is one thing for you to "...become the righteousness of God in Christ." (2 Cor.

5:21) It is another thing for you to realize His righteous life is IN YOU. -(1 John 3:7) It is one thing for you to live in Christ (2 Cor. 5:17) and another thing for Christ to live His life through you. (Col 1:27)

In Romans 6:13 the believer has a choice. He may yield to God by faith and enjoy abundant life or he can yield to sin and endure a defeated life. (Rev. 3:1) God wants you to experience the power of a yielding life; it will lift you above circumstances that would destroy abundant living. The abundant life begins when you yield to Him as Master and allow Him to live His life through you by faith.

C. The Abundant Life is a Life of Service (Romans 12:1-2)

To live the abundant life you must serve the Lord Jesus Christ who Himself became our example. He served all the way to Calvary, and there he was the obedient servant, "...obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross". (Phil. 2:7,8) In Romans 12:1,2 we see that the believer is urged to take the necessary steps for abundant living:

1. You are to "present". This is volitional surrender to the perfect will of God, even though you may not know God's will for your life; it is on your part, an act of faith. (John 7:17)
2. You are to "present your bodies". God must control and use the whole man. "And may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." Your whole man was redeemed on the cross and sanctified. Set apart for service. (1 Thess. 5:23)
3. You are to "present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice". In the life of Paul, we see that he was a living sacrifice. He was a "bondservant of Christ Jesus". (Rom. 1:1) He was a warrior in battle. (Eph. 6:10-18) As to the will of God he was a "prisoner of Christ Jesus". (Eph. 3:1) Though Paul wrote this letter while he was in a Roman prison, he never refers to himself as a prisoner of Rome. To Paul, his stay in prison was a part of the perfect will of God; and with this conviction, he lived abundantly. (Phil. 1:12) When Paul faced death, he was victorious. (2 Tim. 4:7,B)

You have been "Transformed" when you received Jesus as your Lord and Savior, and were changed by the power of God and no longer "conformed to this world". Now you can be conformed to the "good and acceptable and perfect will of God and begin the abundant life".

d. The Abundant Life is a Separated Life (Romans 1:1)

Separation is both positive and negative. You are to be "...set apart FOR the gospel of God" - this is the positive. Also you are to come out from anything that is contrary to the perfect will of God. (2 Cor. 6: 6-18) - this is the negative side of separation. To be separated means to be sanctified (set apart for holy use) for salvation and for service.

1. The Word of God has the power to separate the believer from sin. (John 17:17; Psalms 119:11)
2. God, the Father, has the power to separate the believer to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Thess. 5:23)
3. God, the Son, has the power to separate the believer to righteousness, having no spot or wrinkle. (Eph. 5:24-27)
4. God, the Holy Spirit, has the power to separate the believer unto salvation and service. (2 Thess. 2:13)

Without being separated, you can have relationship with God; but you cannot have fellowship with Him. You may be united to Him in Calvary, but separated from Him in sin. (Isa. 59:1,2) Without separation, you can have

influence without power, movement without achievement; you may try, but not trust; serve but not succeed; war but not win. Without separation to God from sin, your whole Christian life will be "wood, hay, and straw". (1 Cor. 3:10-15) The abundant life is made possible by the death, burial and resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, but that life is made a reality by our being separated to Him.

e. The Abundant Life is a Mature Life (2 Peter 3:18)

The Scriptures reveal four stages of spiritual growth for Christians:

1. The baby stage (1 Cor. 3:1-4): A baby thinks only of self; and, if denied the things desired, it will raise a rumpus. It seeks its own; its feelings are easily hurt and it is often jealous. A baby lives to be served - it never serves. It drinks milk and cannot eat strong meat. It cries, but never sings. It tries to talk but never makes sense. These infant characteristics are so prominent in the lives of many church members. They have been born into the family of God, but have failed to develop spiritually. They are spiritual babies carnal Christians.

2. The little child stage (1 Jn. 2:12) Some Christians grow to be little children spiritually, but stop there. Here-are some of the characteristics of children: they are often untruthful, envious, and cruel. If rebuked, they become martyrs; if crossed, they are resentful and often make a scene. They are tale bearers, repeating everything they hear called (in adults it is gossip). They are given to emotional outbursts, and are easily puffed up. They love praise, and will accept it from any source. They seek only the things that appeal to self. Are you a spiritual child?

3. The young man stage (1 Jn. 2:13) Spiritual growth to that of a young man is not reached by many. He is strong and virile and is well able to overcome the enemy. He has a vision for the future and the faith and courage to tackle it. He is preparing for his productive years. You too can become a young man spiritually by doing "away with childish things", and grow. (1 Cor. 13:11)

4. The father stage (1 in. 1:13) This stage of spiritual development can be reached by all, but so few attain it. The spiritual father has peace with God. (Rom. 5:1) He knows the peace of God. (Phil. 4:7) He rejoices in his spiritual children. (1 Thess. 2:19; 1 Tim. 1:2) He has learned contentment under all circumstances. (Phil. 4:11) He knows the source of his true strength. (Phil 4:13) He does not brood over the past, but looks to the future. (Phil. 3:13,14) He knows that all things work together in his life for his eternal good. (Rom. 8:28) He enjoys abundant life NOW and will enjoy it in the life to come. (Eph. 2:6,7)

f. The Abundant Life is a Spirit-Filled Life (Ephesians 5:18-20)

The Holy Spirit indwells every believer. You may be immature, weak and imperfect; but if you have been "born again" of the Spirit, God the Holy Spirit dwells in you. (Jn. 3:3-7; 1 Cor. 6:19; Rom. 8:9) It is one thing for you to have the Holy Spirit dwelling in you, but .does the Holy Spirit have you, that He may fill you with abundant life? The abundant life is not found in environment or circumstances, or in the things you may possess. It is found in the infilling (or some call it "Baptism") of the Holy Spirit. "BE filled with the Spirit" (Eph. 5:18) is a command. You may be filled many, many times. (Acts. 2:4; Acts 4:31) The apostles that were filled in Acts 2 were again filled in Acts 4. To be filled with the Holy Spirit is to be Spirit-possessed, Spirit-empowered, Spirit-led, and Spirit-controlled. (See Acts. 8:26-40 and see how Phillip was led by the Spirit).

Some reasons why we need to be-Spirit-filled

1. You are filled with the Spirit that you might have joy (Eph. 5:19,20)
2. You are filled with the Spirit for service (Acts. 6:3; Acts 11:22-24)
3. You are filled with the Spirit for power to be a witness (Acts 1:8, Acts 2:4-11)

4. You are filled with the Holy Spirit for the hour of persecution (Acts 7:54-60)
5. You are filled with the Holy Spirit that you may "walk by the Spirit" (Gal. 5:16-26)
6. You are filled with the Spirit that you may be led by the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:14)

How can you be filled with the Holy Spirit?

1. Have the right attitude. Like an expecting child. (Matthew 18:3)
2. Have a repentant heart (1 John 1:9)
3. Reaffirm your belief in Jesus. That Jesus is the Christ, the only begotten Son of the Living God, and that God raised Him from the dead. Believe that Jesus is your personal Savior, and that in love He died and shed his blood to redeem you from your sins.
4. Have Jesus as your Lord and Master. Willing to love and obey Him. (John 14:15)
5. Understand the purpose of the filling of the Holy Spirit. (Luke 4:18; Acts 1:8)
6. Realize that the infilling of the Holy Spirit has been promised to you. (Acts. 2:38,39)
7. Know what to expect after you receive the infilling of the Spirit. (1 Cor. 12:4-11)
8. Ask Jesus (Matthew 3:11)
9. Ask in faith (Luke 11:9-13)
10. Receive in childlike faith (Gal. 3:2; Mark 11:24)

Praise, love and worship Him. After asking and receiving in simple faith in God's promise, start thanking Jesus at once, worshiping and praising Him for this great gift, His salvation, His love, His mercy, His goodness, His perfection, His glory.

Cease English and begin praise of Jesus in another language. Use your own breathing and voice, but expect the Holy Spirit to easily guide the "utterance" (See Acts 2:4) In anticipating child-like faith, begin to move the lips, tongue. When we receive by faith, we must begin to act on that faith. (Matthew 14:29) When Jesus told Peter to come, Peter started walking, and so must you.

IX. WHAT DOES GOD SAY ABOUT HIMSELF

a. Introduction

As we have stated before, the word of God is true in every thing it states. There can be no areas that will contradict itself, even if there are areas that are difficult for us to understand from our human point of view. One example is the life and resurrection of Jesus Christ. In no way would we conceive of a man rising from the dead or God coming to earth in, a human body to redeem man who had rebelled against Him. But this is the truth of God's love revealed to us in Jesus our Lord. It can further be stated that everything Jesus said was to reveal the nature of God and His Love. (John 14:7-11; Col. 2:9, John 10:30; Heb. 1:3). We can learn about the true nature of God by examining what Jesus revealed about God's nature. Without Jesus, we would have no idea about the true nature of God; God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit.

b. The Trinity

In the Old Testament we see a glimpse of the corporate nature of God, but we never could truly understand these passages until Jesus came. We see that at various times God refers to Himself as "We" and "Us". (See Gen. 1:26; Gen. 3:22; Gen. 11:6,7, Isa. 6:8) YET in the scriptures it is clearly stated that God is one and there is no other God besides Him. (see Deut. 6:4; Isa. 37:16; Isa. 43:10,11; Isa. 44:6-8; Isa. 45:21-23) and we must only worship God and Him alone. (Ex. 20:3-5)

But, here we come to a problem - How can God be one and yet refer to Himself in the plural? This can only be understood when we examine the things that Jesus said about Himself, the Father and the Holy Spirit.

. The Son is God. We know that Jesus claimed to be God (see study - Taking a Closer Look at Jesus)

2. The Father is not Jesus (Matt. 28:19; Luke 3:21,22; John 1:1; John 12:28; John 14:16; John 15:1; John 17:1)

3. The Holy Spirit is God (John 14:16,17; John 14:26; John 16:7-14) Jesus said that the Holy Spirit would be another comforter (Helper) "Paraclete" in Greek.

Another means another of the same sort, not different. Paraclete means one called to one's side; one's aide, one who gives aide* It was used in a court of justice to denote a legal assistant, counsel for the defense, an advocate, one who pleads another's cause, an intercessor.

Note: We also see that the Holy Spirit is called God in Acts. 5:3,4. So with this information about the nature of God, we can only state: THERE IS BUT ONE LIVING AND TRUE GOD. THERE ARE THREE PERSONS IN THE GODHEAD; THE FATHER, THE SON, AND THE HOLY SPIRIT - AND THESE THREE ARE ONE GOD THE SAME IN SUBSTANCE, EQUAL IN POWER AND GLORY.

It must be stated that no man can fully explain the Trinity because it is largely incomprehensible to the mind of man. But we do have an earthly example that helps us to get a vague grasp of the nature of the Trinity:

"The triple point of water" - Water, for example, under pressure and in a vacuum at a given temperature below freezing exists simultaneously as both liquid, gas, and ice; yet is identifiable always as water (H₂O), its' basic nature.

C. The Function of the Holy Spirit

a. The Holy Spirit-and scripture

He is given to us to help us to understand the things of God. (1 Cor. 2:12,13)

The Holy Spirit moved on men to write the scriptures (2 Pet. 1:20,21)

All scripture is "God-breathed" (literal Greek for, given by inspiration, KJV) (2 Tim. 3:16,17)

The Holy Spirit is a helper and comforter just like Jesus (Jn. 14:16)

He is known as the "Spirit of Truth"; He does not lie (Jn. 14:17)

Those who do not know Jesus as their personal Savior cannot know the Holy Spirit (Jn. 14:17)

The Holy Spirit will teach us all the things concerning Jesus. (in. 14:26)

He will bring things to remembrance that Jesus said. (Jn. 14:26)

The Holy Spirit bears witness of Jesus, not Himself. (Jn. 15:26,27)

The Holy Spirit convicts the world and the believer of sin. Jn. 16:7-11)

The Holy Spirit convicts the world and the believer of righteousness. (Jn. 16:7-11)

The Holy Spirit convicts the world and the believer of judgement. (Jn. 16:7-11)

The Holy Spirit will guide us into all truth. (Jn. 16:13)

The Holy Spirit will glorify Jesus. (Jn. 16:14)

The Holy Spirit will disclose the things that are of the Father and Jesus. (Jn. 16:14)

We are sealed by the Holy Spirit. (Eph. 1:13)

We are placed into the Body of Christ by the Holy Spirit. (1 Cor. 12:13)

The Holy Spirit distributes gifts as He wills. (1 Cor. 12:11)

We are born again into the Family of God by the Holy Spirit. Jn. 3:5)

The Holy Spirit produces fruit in the believer. (Gal. 5:22:-f)

The Holy Spirit is in the process of transforming us into the image of Jesus. (2 Cor. 3:17,18)

The Holy Spirit is to empower the believer to witness about Jesus. (Acts 1:8)

The Holy Spirit assists us in praying. (Rom. 8:26)

The Holy Spirit enables us to call God our Father. (Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:6)

The Holy Spirit will lead us. (Rom. 8:14)

The Holy Spirit indwells all true believers. (1 Cor. 3:16; 1 Cor. 6:19) The Holy Spirit is called the Spirit of Christ and the Spirit of God interchangeably (see Rom. 8:9,10)

The Holy Spirit joins with the Church (Bride) calling for the return of Jesus. (Rev. 22:17)

The Holy Spirit is given that we might obtain sanctification. (1 Thess. 4:3-8; Gal. 5:16-26)

d. A Further Look at the Gifts of Tongues (1 Cor. 12:1-14;40)

When Paul lists the gifts in 1 Cor. 12; he ends by pointing out a more excellent way, the way of Love. He first points to the gift of tongues and the need for love to be the controlling factor for all the gifts. In Chapter 14 he further points out: When you speak in tongues you speak to God. (1 Cor. 14:2)

Speaking in tongues builds up (edifies) the believer who speaks. (1 Cor. 14:4)

Paul wishes that all believers spoke in tongues. (1 Cor. 14:5)

There is need for an interpretation of tongues for the Church to be edified. (1 Cor. 14:5)

After you have the gift of tongues, pray for the gift of interpreting tongues. (1 Cor. 14:13)

We should pray in the Spirit (tongues) and pray with our minds also. (1 Cor. 14:14-18)

We should sing with the Spirit (tongues) and sing with our minds also. (1 Cor. 14:15)

Another purpose of tongues is a sign for unbelievers. (1 Cor. 14:22)

Uncontrolled speaking in tongues in a church will lead an unbeliever to think you are crazy. (1 Cor. 14:23)

When assembling as the Body of Christ, we are to do all things to edify each other. (1 Cor. 14:26-28)

Only 2 or 3 are to speak in tongues.

Each one is to speak in turn and not all at once.

Each tongue is to be interpreted.

If there is no one in the group that has the gift of interpretation of tongues, then the person should not speak out. They should only speak to themselves and to God and not disturb anyone else.

There is never to be any confusion in any assembly of God's people. (1 Cor. 14:33)

k. If anyone does not recognize the above rules as from the Lord, that person is not to be recognized. (1 Cor. 14:38)

l. We are never to forbid the speaking in tongues; but we are to be sure that things are done properly and in an orderly manner. (1 Cor. 14:40)

e. A Scripture Outline On the God-Head

1. God is an-Objective Personal Being.

Gen. 6:5-7

God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth ... and it repented the Lord that He had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him at His heart; and the Lord said., "I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth".

Num. 11:1

The people complained ... and ... the Lord heard it.

Isa. 42:5,8

Thus saith God, the Lord..."I am the Lord; that i My name: and My glory will I not give to another ... 11

Isa. 43:25 I, even 1, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for my own sake, and will not remember thy sins.

Jer. 29:11 "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you" saith the Lord.

Ezek. 18:30 "Therefore I will judge you..." saith the Lord God.

Matt. 6:10 Thy will be done.

II Tim. 2:19 The Lord knowth them that are His.

Heb. 1:3 His Son ... who being..*the express image of His person*..

2. God is the Supreme Creator.

Gen. 1:1 In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth.

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

Mal., 2:10 Hath not one God created us?

John 1:3 All things are made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made.

Col. 1:16,17 For by Him were all things created, that are in Heaven, and that are in earth, visible and in visible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him and for Him; and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist.

Rev. 4:11 *.*Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created.

3. God is one

Deut.-6:4 Hear O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord'.

Isa. 37:16 Thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth: Thou hast made Heaven and Earth.

Isa. 43:10,11 "Before me there was no god formed, neither shall there be after me. I, even 1, am the Lord; and beside me there is no salvation."

Isa. 44:6,8 "I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no god...Is there a God beside me? Yea, there is no god; I know not any."

Isa. 45:21-23 "*,there is no god else beside me; a just god and a saviour; there is none beside me. *..unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear."

4. Worship God and Him Only

Ex. 20:3-5 "Thou shalt have no other gods before me Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image,...Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve t hem: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God."

Deut. 5:7-9 (Same as above)

Deut. 6:13,14 Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and serve Him and shalt swear by His name. Ye shall not go after other gods of the gods of the people which are round about you.

5. Three Persons in the One God-Head

Gen. 1:26 God said, "Let us make man in our image...."

Gen. 3:22 And the Lord God said, "Behold, the man is become as one of us."

Gen. 11:6,7 The Lord said..."let us go down..."

Deut.. 6:4 Hear O Israel: The Lord our God is one (in Hebrew is "echod") Lord. Compare with Gen. 2:24, Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one (echod) flesh.

Isa. 6:8 I heard the voice of the Lord saying,..."who shall go for us?"

Matt. 28:19 "...baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

Lk. 3:21, 22 ... It came to pass that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon Him and a voice came from heaven which said, "Thou art My beloved son; in Thee I am well pleased."

II Cor. 13:14. 13:14. 13:14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all. Amen.

- as manifested in the creation:

Gen. 1:2: ... and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

Col. 1:16: By Him (Jesus) were all things created..*

Heb. 1:2: ..*by whom (Jesus) also He (God the Father) made the worlds.

- as manifested in the resurrection of Jesus:

John 2:19-21:.. Jesus said, "...destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."

Acts 3:26: ... God, having raised up his son Jesus,...

1 Pet. 3:18: ... put to death in the flesh but quickened by the Spirit.

6. The Distinction between God the Father and God the Son

Dan. 7:13,14 I saw in the night, visions and behold, one like the son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to

the Ancient of Days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion and glory...

Matt. 28:19 Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

Lk. 3:21,22 ... it came to pass, that Jesus also (was) being baptized ... and a voice came from Heaven which said, "thou art my beloved son; in thee I am well pleased".

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

John 12:28 (Jesus said), "Father, glorify thy name". Then came there a voice from Heaven saying, "I have both glorified it and will glorify it again".

John 14:16 "I will pray the Father..."

John 15:1 "I am the true vine, and my Father is..."

John 17:1 These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, "Father, the hour has come, glorify thy son..."

Acts 7:55,56 But he (Stephen when he was about to be stoned), being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God."

7. The Deity of Jesus

Isa. 7:14 Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel (God with us).

Isa. 9:6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.

Micah 5:2 But thou, Bethlehem Ephrathah ... out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.

Zech..12:10 (The Word of Jehovah God)... "They shall look upon me whom they have pierced.

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

John 5:18 Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.

John 8:58,59 Jesus said unto them, verily, verily, I say unto you, before Abraham was, I Am." Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple.*.

Compare with Exodus 3:14, God said to Moses, "I Am that I Am. Thus shalt thou say unto the Children of Israel, "I-Am" hath sent me to you".

John 10:30-33 "I and My Father are one," then the Jews took up stones again to stone him. Jesus answered them, "... (why) do ye stone me? "The Jews answered him saying, "...*for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God."

John 17:5 (Jesus speaking) "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." Compare with Isaiah 42:8, "I am the lord: That is my name: and my glory I will not give to

another..."

John 20:28,29 Thomas answered and said unto him, "my Lord and my God". Jesus saith unto him, "Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed. Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

Acts-20:28 Take heed therefore to yourselves, and to the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood.

Phil. 2:10-11 At the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of the things in Heaven, and things in earth and things under the earth; and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord (in Greek is "Kurios", used elsewhere to mean "Jehovah") to the glory of God the Father. Compare with Section IV, "Worship God and Him Only" . Compare with Isaiah 45:23, "unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear.

Col. 2:9 For in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.

Heb. 1:6,8 And again, when he bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he saith, "And let all the angels of God worship Him...unto the son He saith, "Thy throne O God, is forever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy Kingdom. Compare with Section IV, "Worship God and Him Only"

Rev.-1:8-18 I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty ... Verses 17, 18: Fear not, I am the First and the last: I am He that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and I have the keys of Hell and of death. Compare with Isaiah 44:6, I am the First and I am the Last; and beside me there is no god.

8. Jesus Christ is God in the Flesh

A. He came in the flesh

Col. 2:9 For in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the God-head bodily.

1 Jn. 4:2,3 Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every Spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is the spirit of antichrist.

B. He arose from the dead in the flesh:

Luke 24:39 "Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: Handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have".

Jn. 2:19,21 "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up". *.he spake of the temple of his body.

9. The Personhood of the Holy Spirit

Jn. 14:16,17 I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another comforter, that He may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

Jn. 14:26 The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

Jn. 16:7-14 ...when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgement ... when the Spirit of truth is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak; and He will show you things to come.

Acts 5:3,4 ... Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, ... thou hast not lied unto men but unto God.

Acts 13:2-4 The Holy Ghost said, "..."

Acts 21:10,11 "Thus saith the Holy Ghost..."

X. HOW TO SHARE YOUR FAITH

a. Introduction

The word witness in Greek is "Itartus" or liartur" where we get the English word "Martyr" - one who bears witness by his death; it denotes one who can and does confirm, verify, and prove as authentic by pleading what he has seen or heard or knows as true. It speaks of those whose lives and actions testify to the truth of what they plead to others. It should be noted that the last words that Jesus spoke to His followers states that they shall be His witnesses:

"He said to them, It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority; but you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and **YOU SHALL BE MY WITNESSES** both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth." (Acts 1:7,B)

b. You are a Missionary

1. Lk. 17:5-10 In answering the plea of the apostles to .increase their faith, Jesus points to their responsibility to do the things that He commanded them to do.

Verses 9-10 "He does not thank the slave because he did the things which were commanded, does he? So you too, when you do **ALL** the things which are commanded you, say, "We are **UNWORTHY SLAVES**,, we have done **ONLY** that which we ought to have done".

2. Jesus gave us two commandments:

1) (Jn. 13:34,,35) "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By **THIS** all men will know that you **ARE** my disciples, if you have love for one another."

2) (Matt. 28:19,20) "Go, therefore and make disciples of **ALL NATIONS**, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, **TEACHING** them to **OBSERVE ALL** that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

3. The Holy Spirit **MUST** use **YOU** to reach the world. We are the Church. **WE** are the temple of the living God. The Holy Spirit is not floating around in the air doing errands for us as we pray. We are the temple of the Lord. (1 Cor. 6:19,20) "Or do you **NOT KNOW** that **YOUR BODY** is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price; therefore, glorify God in your body." **AND HOW DO WE GLORIFY GOD IN OUR BODIES???** The same way Jesus did. (Jn. 17:4) "I will glorify Thee on the earth, **HAVING ACCOMPLISHED THE WORK WHICH THOU HAST GIVEN ME TO DO.**" So it is Christ **IN YOU**, The Hope of Glory (Col. 1:26-29) This is

"...the mystery which has been hidden from the past ages and generations; but has **NOW** been manifested to His saints, to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, **WHICH IS CHRIST IN YOU, THE HOPE OF GLORY.** And we proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, that we may present every man complete in Christ. And for this purpose

also I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily WORKS WITHIN ME."

"For it is God who is at work IN YOU, both to will and to work for His good pleasure." (Phil. 2:13)

"Now to Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, ACCORDING TO THE POWER THAT WORKS WITHIN US. (Eph. 3:20)

So it is Jesus Christ who is in every true believer who is trying to reach the dying world. So we MUST EXPECT to do the same works that Jesus did in His earthly ministry. As Jesus said in John 14:12:

"Truly, truly I say TO YOU, he who believes in Me, the works that I do shall HE DO ALSO: and Greater works than these shall HE DO; because I go to the Father."

and we know that Jesus HAS NOT CHANGED'!. GLORY.'

"Jesus IS THE SAME yesterday and today, yes and FOREVER" (Hebrews 13:8)

So expect Christ in you to: witness, comfort, visit, and heal the sick, speak the truth revealing God and His salvation; show compassion and demonstrate God in action in YOUR DAILY LIFE. For you are the one sent (in. 20:21) Jesus therefore said to them again, "Peace be with you; as the Father has sent Me, I also send you". (2 Cor. 5:20) makes it plain - "Therefore, WE ARE AMBASSADORS for Christ, as though God were entreated THROUGH US; we beg you on behalf of Christ be reconciled to God."

c. Principles in Witnessing (See Open Bible - Guide to Christian Workers)

1. Recognize the commission: Matt. 28:18-20; Acts. 1:8; Ezek. 33:7,8;
Matt. 5:13-16

2. Have compassion - An immortal soul is beyond all price. There is no trouble too great, no humiliation too deep, no suffering too severe, no love too strong, no labor too hard, no expense too large; but that it is worth it if it is spent in the effort to win a soul. God so loved man that He gave His only Son to redeem man's soul. And heaven rejoices over one sinner that repents (Lk. 15:7)

3. Be concerned - We do have a moral obligation towards others. (Ezek. 22:30; Ezek. 34:6; Lk. 10:29-37)

4. Have contact - Sinners don't go to churches. Jesus said that He would make us fishers of men and you don't fish in your bathtub; you go where the fish are. Jesus took the message to sinners:

In market places

Street corners

Mountain sides

Seashores

e. He even went to their homes. You will not have contact with sinners if all you do is sit in church buildings and pray for them to come to you. Jesus did not tell the church (which is you) to sit and wait for sinners, He said GO to them. (Lk. 14:23) "And the master said to the slave, 'GO OUT INTO THE HIGHWAYS AND ALONG THE HEDGES AND COMPEL THEM TO COME IN, THAT MY HOUSE MAY BE FILLED'"

So we must:

a. Contact others socially - If we isolate Christians, we will die out like any disease that is quarantined. Jesus' prayer was: "I do not ask Thee to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil one." (Jn. 17:15 - See also 1 Cor. 5:9-11)

Some ideas: Going shopping, attending concerts and plays, watching a ball game, eating a meal, befriending a neighbor or co-worker, or a smile and a hell-o to a stranger.

We must be willing to be a friend to someone. This most likely will require your listening to their problems and troubles. If you listen to someone, they will in turn listen to you when you share Jesus.

Sitting and having coffee is not a waste of time when you give your time to the Lord. HE will in His time provide you with a natural opportunity to speak about Jesus.

Ask yourself - "Who am I praying for by name everyday, asking God the Holy Spirit to open his eyes, enlighten him, and bend his will until he receives Jesus as Lord and Savior?" Ask God to show you someone He wants us to befriend, pray for, love, and in time bring to our Savior.

b. Establish a common interest - Most people will resent someone who has only a one way conversation where they expound their favorite theme without even bothering to find out if the listener is interested.

If we high pressure a message of the gospel at a person and they reject Jesus, they most likely will be rejecting you and the way that you presented Jesus. Just think about how you feel when a salesman tries to push you into buying something.

Find out where THEIR interest lie and let them talk. When we listen to someone, we are saying to them that they are important and that they have something worth listening to. We show them that we respect them when we listen. They will in turn listen to you.

c. Arouse their interest - Being a Christian does not mean that you are an oddball. Being an oddball may draw someone to you and not to Jesus. We are to be the salt of the earth. Our lives are to make people thirsty for the living water. We must never forget to acknowledge the source of our life in Jesus Christ or we will confuse them and rob God of His glory.

To be effective for the Lord, our life and what we say must not be full of inconsistencies; **WALK WHAT YOU TALK.**

When looking for the time to share Jesus, we must ask the Holy Spirit if this is someone that He is working with. Our witnessing ought to be relaxed in a natural tone of voice.

How to Arouse Their Interest

We can make a statement or ask a leading question:

"By the way, are you interested in spiritual things?" "What do you think is a real Christian?"

If you wait for their response and truly listen, you will learn his thinking and he will be interested in what you will say. You can point out that a true Christian is one who is personally related to Jesus Christ as a living person.

If speaking to a Roman Catholic, you can say:

"You know,, I have a lot more in common with you than I do with my liberal Protestant friends".

"You believe in the Bible as the Word of God, in the Deity of Christ, in the necessity of His death as an atonement for our sins, and in His resurrection from the dead; but many liberal Protestants deny these basic

facts of the New Testament".

"I suppose that in the Catholic Church you've discovered the same thing that I see in the Protestant Church: Some Methodists, Baptists, etc., really know Jesus Christ personally, and some don't."

As we get to know non-Christians on a personal basis, they will confide in us about their burdens, longings, aspirations, frustrations, and emptiness. If we have had similar experiences, we can say:

"You know I used to feel that way until I had an experience that completely changed my outlook on life. Would you like me to tell you about it?"

If we did not have a similar experience, we can say:

"You know I WOULD feel that way except for an experience that changed my outlook on life. Would you like me to share it with you?"

Be aware of questions that are asked of you that can lead you to a witness of the power of Jesus Christ:

"Why are you so happy?"

"What makes you tick?"

"You seem to be different, how come?"

THEN SAY:

"An experience I had changed my outlook on life" And IF they ask, share your experience with Jesus with them.

When discussing the world condition ask:

"Have you considered what Jesus said about this?"

If they show interest, share Mark 7:21-23

What is wrong with the world is the hearts of men.

Share a book:

"I'd be interested in your reaction to this book; and it's the only copy I have, so when you finish I'd appreciate your returning it."

d. Don't go too far. Give the person only as much of the Gospel message as he is ready for.

e. Don't condemn - because you don't condemn a certain attitude or deed does not mean that you condone or approve of it. If someone asks you to have a cigarette or offers you a drink, suggest some other activity. Don't turn the person away as they reach out to you. Don't say to them, "Oh I'm a Christian and I don't drink, smoke, etc." This only pushes them off and condemns them.

It also confuses the Gospel with a lot of don'ts instead of personally knowing Jesus. When they love Jesus, He will point out the way for them to please Him. You can have personal convictions without always linking it to Christianity; some non-Christians don't smoke or drink either.

If you suggest another activity the person sees that you are not rejecting him, only the choice of activity. You would not feel bad if someone wanted you to play chess and you said that you don't play because it is not your game.

Learn to give praise instead of criticism.

It has been said that we can discover in any person at least one thing as a basis for an honest compliment. In a true story, Charles Trumbull shares an experience on a train where he encountered a drunken man spewing profanity and filth and came to sit down right beside him. He then offered him a swallow from his flask. Mr. Trumbull, instead of blasting the man, replied, "No, thank you; but I can see you are a very generous man." This in turn, led to much talk and the man came to know Jesus as his Lord and Savior.

f. Stick with the main issue - Don't get sidetracked, bring them back to the cross and Jesus. Jesus said if I be lifted up, I will draw all men unto me. Our job is to lift up Jesus and avoid side issues.

g. Confront him directly - We must bring the person into direct confrontation with the Lord Jesus Christ so that he realizes his personal responsibility to decide for or against Him. When we know that an individual is fully informed about the Gospel, we should keep quiet, pray earnestly and daily for him by name, and love him into the kingdom of God.

These are some guidelines to keep in mind:

I must live it. Your strongest testimony is your daily life.

I must love people.

I must meet the public.

I must look for their need.

I must communicate Jesus, not side issues.

I must concentrate on Christ not our testimony.

I must use tact.

I must bring a person to a decision. Don't let people say of you at judgment day, "he never asked me to be a Christian".

I must teach them to listen to God's voice. Make sure that they know that these are not your words but God's.

I must make it crystal clear that there is a difference between knowing God and knowing about God.

d. Questions the Unsaved Ask

1. What about the person who has never heard of Jesus Christ? Will he be condemned to Hell?

First, acknowledge that we don't have the whole story about how God will deal with these people. He has not told us. Some things are only known to Him. (See Deut. 29:29) But:

a. God is just. He will be fair in His judgment.

b. Those who have not heard of Jesus will be condemned for violating their own moral standard, however high or low it has been. (See Romans 2:12-16)

c. Scripture indicates that every man has enough information from creation to know that God exists. (See Rom. 1:19,20) so man is without excuse. We may conclude that if a man responds to the light he has and seeks God, God will give him a chance to hear the truth about Jesus. (See Ps. 19; Matt. 7:7-11; Jer. 29:13)

d. There is no indication that a man can be saved apart from Jesus Christ. (John 14:6; Acts 4:12) The Bible is clear on this.

e. Point out to the person asking this question that this question does not apply to him. When he faces God, the issue will not be those who have not heard. He will have to account for what he has personally done with Jesus Christ.

2. Is Christ the only way to God?

This question brings up the matter of truth. Two people can have equal faith but faith does not make something true. It is the validity of the object of one's faith that makes it true. Believing something is true does not make it so, or denying something is true does not make it false.

Christianity is based on the Person of Jesus Christ. Jesus Himself claimed to be God the Son and that He died on the cross and rose from the dead. Either this is true or it is a lie. Christians are not bigoted saying that Jesus is the only way, Jesus Himself said this and there is only one stand a Christian can take and that is the stand that Jesus took. What the Christian claims is that God has revealed Himself in human history in the person of Jesus Christ. So this brings us to the matter of truth. Jesus claimed to be God; and if this is true, He will judge mankind. We can choose to believe as we please, but we must accept the result of our choice. We can choose not to believe in gravity and deny that it is there but when we jump off a building, we will know for a fact if our belief is based on truth or a lie.

3. Why do the innocent suffer?

Again, we must admit our partial ignorance. We don't have the full explanation of the origin and problem of evil because God has chosen to reveal only a part of it to us. We are clearly told, that God created the universe perfect. Man was given the freedom to obey God or disobey. Evil came into the universe through man's disobedience. Because of the pattern of the universe, man's actions are not limited to himself but always involve other people. Because man disobeyed and broke God's law, evil pervades the universe.

Also, we must not overlook the presence of evil in every one of us. Many people ask, "Why doesn't God step in and get rid of evil?" If God would execute judgment uniformly not one of us would survive. So we must admit that we have a personal problem with evil. Yet, God has done everything necessary to meet the problem of evil. He not only came into human history in the Lord Jesus Christ, but He died for our sins to solve the problem of evil. So that now every individual who willingly responds receives His gift or love, grace, and forgiveness in Jesus Christ.

4. How can miracles be possible?

The real issue here is whether or not God exists. If God exists, then miracles are logical and pose no intellectual problems. The greatest indication of the existence of God is His coming into human history. The solution is Jesus Christ Himself. I know God exists because He came into human history in Jesus Christ and I have met Him personally in my own life. Because Jesus claimed to be God, we must look at His credentials. The supreme

credential is the fact that He rose from the dead. As we examine the historical evidence for the resurrection of Jesus Christ, we find a solid case on which we can base our conviction.

5. Isn't the Bible full of errors?

First ask, what particular errors the person had in mind. Ninety-nine percent of the time people can't think of any. Most people heard someone else say this and they have assumed that it was true. However, if they do have a question and you don't have an answer, don't worry, there are mountains of books to help you. Christianity has stood for nearly 2000 years without a question destroying its foundation. You can, however, quote Dr. Nelson Glueck, an outstanding Jewish archaeologist who states, "No archaeological discovery has every controverted a biblical reference." (See *Rivers in the Desert*, New York, Grove Press, 1960, p.31)

6. Isn't Christian experience only psychological?

However, we find in comparing the lives of Christians, the lord Himself is the only constant factor. From one case history to the next, all other details may vary. Only Jesus remains the same. He alone in His power makes a thief honest, a liar truthful. It is He who can fill a hate-ridden heart with love. Christianity differs from auto-hypnosis, wish fulfillments, and all other psychological phenomena in that the Christian's subjective experience is securely bound to an objective, historical fact; namely, the resurrection from the dead of Jesus Christ. If the resurrection is true, it makes all the difference in the world. It is confirmation of God's revelation in Christ, an absolute truth, an historical fact outside of ourselves, an objective fact to which our subjective experience is tied.

7. Won't a good moral life get me to heaven?

If God grades on the curve, I'll make it. God doesn't grade on the curve, He has an absolute standard, Jesus Christ. If you can live a life that is absolutely perfect in thought, word, and deed, you can make it to heaven on your own steam. However, no man has ever or will ever succeed. All the other religions of the world are essentially sets of swimming instructions, suggested codes of ethics for a wonderful pattern of life but man's basic problem is not knowing how he ought to live. It is lacking the power to live as he ought. The good news of Christianity is that Jesus Christ, who invaded human history, does for us what we couldn't possibly do for ourselves. Through Him, we may be reconciled to God, given His righteousness and enabled to have fellowship with Him in His very presence.

Man's basic problem is not intellectual, it's moral. Mny people are not prepared to let anyone else, including God, run their lives. It's not that they can't believe, but they won't believe. They don't want to because they're unwilling to accept the moral demands it would make on their lives.

1. What to expect:

Some will want to be saved. (Acts 2:37)

Some will refuse to hear the truth. (Acts 7:54,57)

Some will seek to kill you. (Acts 7:58)

Some will contradict you. (Acts. 13:45)

Some will tell you to stop preaching. (Acts 5:28)

Some may put you in prison. (Acts 16:23)

Some will sneer. (Acts 17:32)

Some will call you mad. (Acts 26:24,25)

2. What to share

When you lead someone to the Lord, be sensitive to the Holy Spirit as to what aspect He will want to stress. A real Christian is one who:

- a. Has come to God as a lost sinner.
- b. Accepted, by faith, the Lord Jesus Christ as his personal Saviour by surrendering to Him as Lord and Master.
- c. Confesses Jesus Christ as Lord before the world.
- d. Strives to please Jesus in everything, everyday of his life.

3. 7 Steps to Leading Someone to the Lord

1. Realize that you are a sinner: "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." (Rom. 3:23) "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves." (I Jn. 1:8)

2. Truly be sorry for and-repent for your sins: "And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner". (Lk. 18:13) "For Godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation". (2 Cor. 7:10)

3. Confess your sins to God: "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them shall have mercy". (Prov. 28:13) "If we confess our sins (to Him) He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness". (I Jn. 1:9)

4. Forsake your sins,-or put them away: "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return to the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him ... for He will abundantly pardon". (Isa. 55:7; Prov. 28:13)

5. Ask forgiveness for-your-sins: "Who forgiveth all thine iniquities" (Ps. 103:3) "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. (Isa. 1:18)

6. Consecrate your entire life to Christ: "Whosoever therefore shall confess Me before men, him will I confess also before My Father which is in heaven". (Matt. 10:32) "But you are a chosen generation..that. you should show forth the praises of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light". (1 Pet. 2:9)

7. Believe-that God saves-you by His Grace., "For by grace are you saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. (Eph. 2:8,9)

e. New Believer's Prayer

Then pray with them this prayer:

"I believe on Jesus Christ, God's Son; I believe that in Your great mercy and love, You died for me, in my place. I believe that you bore my sins in Your own body on the cross. I believe You rose from the dead. I do here and now welcome You into my heart as my Saviour from sin, from Hell, and from all the power of the devil. I accept Christ as Lord of my life, and here and now devote my life to pleasing You. Jesus Christ, You have said that if I will come to you that you will in no wise cast me out. I have come to you with all my heart, as a poor, helpless, guilty sinner, seeking salvation, and trusting only in Your blood. I am sure that You do not reject me. I believe that You, at this very moment, take me in. I believe that you forgive me now. Your precious blood washes all my sins away. You were wounded for my transgressions; You were bruised for my iniquities; the punishment I ought to have endured was laid upon You. I know I am forgiven. Praise The Lord! Jesus saves me now'.

f. Follow-Up

Don't just leave them. Go over and see them. Listen to their problems and pray with them. Get them reading the Bible. Help them to pray and talk to Jesus daily. Take them to a church where they teach the Bible and live what they teach. Point out how important it is to publicly confess that you are a Christian and to follow the Lord's direction to be baptized. Take them through some of the studies that you have. They will need your love and your friendship. You are their first link to God and God will use you to help them mature.