

NOW THAT YOU ARE BORN AGAIN

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Table of Content

LESSON ONE: UNDERSTANDING OUR OLD LIFE	3
LESSON TWO: UNDERSTANDING OUR NEW LIFE IN CHRIST	12
LESSON THREE: ELEMENTARY DOCTRINES (Part One)	19
LESSON FOUR: ELEMENTARY DOCTRINES (Part Two)	33
LESSON FIVE: SPIRITUAL REALITIES (Part One)	50
LESSON SIX: SPIRITUAL REALITIES (Part Two)	58
LESSON SEVEN: OTHER IMPORTANT CHRISTIAN DOCTRINES AND TERMINOLOGIES (Part One)	72 71
LESSON EIGHT: OTHER IMPORTANT CHRISTIAN DOCTRINES AND TERMINOLOGIES (Part Two)	79

LESSON ONE

UNDERSTANDING OUR OLD LIFE

INTRODUCTION

The secret of living an effective Christian life is our understanding and recognition of the old life of sin we had lived...without understanding what the flesh is, it will be very difficult to checkmate, nay even stop the encroachment of the flesh upon our lives once again after we are born again. Seeing our old life the way the Lord sees it will be our focus in this study.

Main Text: Eph.2:2 [AMP]

1. WHAT IS THE FLESH?

Jn.3:6, Rom.7:18, Rom.8:7-8, Rom.8:12-13, 1 Cor.15:50, Gal.5:16-17, Col.2:23 [AMP].

The flesh is known by several names in the Bible. Sometimes it is called sinful nature, old nature, sinful self, old man, self, corrupt nature, carnal self, lower nature and so on.

The flesh is the lifestyle of every normal human being. **It is living one's life**, speaking, thinking and acting according to what is seen, heard, felt, touched or tasted. It is the way we were born and the life of sin we were used to [Ps.51:5, AMP]. It is the unholy, depraved and carnal nature [or way of life] that we inherited from Adam. It is a life outside the control or influence of God.

2. ORIGIN OF THE FLESH

Gen.5:1-3, Gen.6:3, Job14:4, Job 25:4, Gen.2:16-17, Rom.3:23.

Adam was originally created in the image of God. When he sinned, he became separated from the life and nature of God. By the time he was to give birth to his children, he was already a fallen man with a fallen nature. The Bible specifically said about him, **“Adam was 130 years old when his son Seth was born, the very image of his father in every way.”** Gen 5:3 [TLB]

The image Cain, Abel and Seth received was purely their father’s image. God had made Adam like Himself [Gen.1:26-27]; but Adam’s descendants were born in his own fallen, godless and corrupt human nature.

3. WORKS OR NATURE OF THE FLESH

Gal.5:19-21, 1 Cor. 6:9-10, Rom.1:18-32, Rom.7:15-20.

By works of the flesh, we mean the practices, actions, capabilities, propensities and tendencies of Mr. Flesh. *For an exhaustive study on each of the 17 works of the flesh listed in Galatians 5:19-21 and other scriptures, we will refer you to our Bible Study Companion: You Must Be Born Again, What Jesus meant; Lessons 4 and 5: Understanding Self.*

4. THE FOUR ENEMIES OF GODLINESS

Eph.2:2, Rom.8:7-8, James 4:4, 1Pet.5:8, 1Jn.5:19

There are ‘enemies’ that will fight us vigorously, doing all they can to hamper or outrightly stop our relationship with God. Recognizing what these enemies are is one sure way of knowing how to handle and conquer them.

Enemy number one: Sin

Jn.8:34 [NKJV, AMP], Eph.2:2 [AMP, TLB], Rom.6:12, 14; 1Jn.3:8[NKJV, AMP], Rom.7:11-21, AMP; Jn.8:44, Matt.12:43-45, 1 Cor. 2:12, Rom.6:16-17.

Every human being is ruled by something [Rom.6:16]. It is either one is ruled by the Holy Spirit [Gal.5:16] or by evil spirits [Eph.2:2]. Every unbeliever is more or less in agreement and in submission to demons that rules them and pushes them to violate God’s laws [Eph.2:2 AMP, 1 Cor.2:12, 1 Tim.4:1 AMP, Rom.7:13-20].

By sin here, we are not talking about *sins*, as in acts of sin but Sin as the fountain, the origin and source of sins. The Bible says: “**...You were following** the course and fashion of this world [were under the sway of the tendency of this present age], following the prince of the power of the air. [You were obedient to and under the control of] the [demon] spirit that still constantly works in the sons of disobedience [the careless, the rebellious, and the unbelieving, who go **against the purposes of God**].” Eph 2:2 [AMP]

Mr. Sin is the controlling evil spirit over the life of each human being born of a woman since the fall of Adam and Eve. He holds the person bound as a slave,

bound whether or not he likes it to do his own will [Jn.8:34, Jn.8:44, Rom.6:16; Rom.7:13-20]. This is why several people who are living today are ashamed of what they are doing but they have no power to stop-for they are slaves and a slave has no will of his own [Jn.8:34]. (Please read very carefully Jn.8:34, Rom.6:17-18, AMP; 2Pet.2:19, Rom.6:16, Rom.6:12-14, AMP, TLB; Rom.5:10 AMP).

To some people, Mr. Sin manifests mostly as anger. They just don't know why every little thing gets to them. They blow up and get angry very quickly...to some, it manifests mostly as lust for women, position, fame or greed for gain.

In every case however, it is a Master that dictates, demands, pressurizes, threatens, orders, insists, forces, governs, argues and rebels quietly within (the **throne room**) of a person's heart...

It is like a tree, producing fruits. Sin is the tree but acts, thoughts and speeches of sin are its fruits. This is the evil spirit ruling over each person that has not accepted the Lord Jesus as the Lord and Master of his or her life. Are you still being pushed by Sin? Are you still doing his will? Submit yourself to the Lord Jesus today and be free [Rom.6:14, James 4:7]!

Enemy Number Two: The Flesh

Gen.5:1-3[RSV], Rom.7:18, Rom.8:7-8, 12-13 [ERV, AMP, ICB, TEV], Eph.4:17-19 [TLB, AMP], Jer.17:9 [AMP, MSG, TLB], 1 Cor.3:3, Gal.5:17, Col.2:23, Eph.2:3 [AMP].

The flesh is the willful and compliant slave ruled by Mr. Sin. Being in the flesh is simply being a normal human being—and you know we were all born as *normal human beings* by our parents. The implication is that we were all born as sinners or as slaves of Mr. Sin—for a slave-owner is equally the owner of the child the slave gives birth to. [Please read carefully Gen.15:3 ERV, NCV, NSB; Ps.51:5, Jn.3:6, Job 14:4]

Adam was made in the image of God [Gen.1:26-27, Gen.2:7, Gen.5:1], but by sinning against God, Adam lost that image and all that was left is a wicked, deceitful, seemingly-independent but imprisoned and hopelessly corrupt man with base animalistic tendencies with no hope of renewal or escape.

The flesh is the godless human nature. It is what the spirit of man is reduced to after the fall of Adam [i.e after Adam was separated from God]. It is our former way of life, characterized by living according to what we see, hear, touch, feel, or taste.

Who each of us used to be before we met Jesus is the *flesh*. Sin had always been our quiet Master [Rom.7:14-25 AMP, TLB]. Your exact behaviour, attitudes and tendencies or inclinations before coming to Christ constitutes being fleshy. Several who *think* they are born again today in different churches are still hopelessly lost in the flesh. In fact, one cannot say his salvation is complete except the flesh has been put to death [see Rom.6:6, Gal.2:20, Gal.5:24]. This is a necessary step if one intends to truly experience a new life in Christ.

Enemy Number Three: The World system

Jn.17:14-16 [AMP, MSG], Rom.12:2, James 4:4, 1Jn.2:15-17, Jn.15:18-21, Titus 2:11-13, James 1:27, 2Pet.2:20, Jn.7:6-7 AMP.

The system of this world is the community-life of the flesh. It is the communal life built and based on the deception of the devil. It is the alternative lifestyle offered by the devil for all the people of this present evil world. It is the opposite of life in the Spirit.

There is a spirit of this world [Please see 1Cor.2:12], and it is the spirit of the devil [see Eph.2:2, 1Jn.5:19, Lk.4:5-8]. **Thus, to do anything the world's way** is to have the devil as the chief architect and advisor of what we are doing. The world system is like a turbulent river that has a course [Eph.2:2].

There is a direction the system of this world is heading. It is towards perdition [see Matt.7:13, 1Jn.2:17]. For this present evil world, of which the devil is its god [2 Cor.4:4, 1Jn.5:19] must of necessity pass away—along with everything that belongs to it [Please see 1Jn.2:15-17].

Are you worldly? Are you at home among people who belong to this world and will have nothing to do with God? Remember, to love or value or cherish this present world or anything in it is to hate God with perfect hatred [1Jn.2:15, James 4:4].

Be warned.

Enemy Number Four: Satan and his angels

1 Pet.5:8, Isa.14:12-15, Ezek.28:13-17, Matt.4:1, Matt.13:39, Matt.25:41, Eph.6:11, James 4:7, Eph.4:27 [AMP], Rev.12:9.

The most dangerous enemy of the Christian is the devil. The devil is a personal enemy of each Christian. He is obsessed with making sure that each of us accompany him to the lake of fire that is to be his eternal place of torture and confinement—and several are following him today [see Rev.20:10, Matt.25:41, 46].

He was a mighty archangel the Bible referred to as Lucifer, the anointed Cherub. He was perhaps the highest ranking archangel before pride entered his head and he rebelled against God. He is immensely wise and crafty but unlike God, whose wisdom is infinite, **Satan's** wisdom is limited and he had been proved wrong several times.

Jesus defeated the devil through His death, burial and resurrection [please see Col.2:15]. That defeat was an eternal defeat. The devil lost his right to hold the souls of men in bondage. Anyone still in bondage today is either ignorant of the finished work of Jesus for our salvation or the person has not come to Jesus for the cleansing and washing away of his or her sins. There is no reason to be under satanic bondage...Jesus has set us free!

NOTE: For a more detailed study on these Four Enemies of godliness, please request our Bible study companion, Four Enemies of Godliness.

NOTE: For an exhaustive study on the origin, history, works, strategies, kingdom and doom of Satan the devil, please request our Bible study companion, Understanding Spiritual Warfare.

5. CHRIST'S VICTORY OVER THE FLESH

Rom.6:1-14 [AMP, MSG], Gal.2:20, Col.3:3.

The Lord Jesus defeated our old nature—the flesh, by his own crucifixion on the Cross. While on that Cross the Lord died, but he didn't die alone. He took our godless old nature along with Him, so when He died, we equally died as well [Rom.6:6, Gal.2:20, Col.3:3]. All I was before I came to Jesus died that same day Jesus gave His life for me on the Cross of Calvary...my victory is assured and I now have a brand new life because when He rose, I also rose up in newness of life!

CONCLUSION

It is obvious that something mighty happened to us when we came to Jesus Christ. Our old life ended and a new life began. Are we daily living in that new life or are we still behaving, thinking or talking like our dead old self?

PERSONAL ASSESSMENT

1. Mention three areas in your life that you know you have really changed since you came to Jesus.
2. According to this study, what is the origin of the flesh? Did God created us originally in the flesh?
3. What are the enemies of godliness? List and explain them.
4. Do you fully understand how Jesus defeated our flesh? Explain with practical examples.

LESSON TWO

UNDERSTANDING OUR NEW LIFE IN CHRIST

INTRODUCTION

Becoming a Christian is beyond saying *the sinners' prayer*. Several have come out to the altar and said the *sinners' prayer* but they are still bound by sin and wrong doctrines...the need for us to really understand what happened at our conversion is the aim of this lesson. We pray that you enter into the fullness of your salvation after going through this study in the name of Jesus. [Amen]

Main Text: 2Cor.5:17

“Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”

1. “Therefore...”

a. Why a **‘therefore’**?

A *therefore* is needed at the beginning of the verse above because there is something there before. That is, something led to that point of conclusion. It is that *something* that we will attempt to study closely and it is the fact that we Christians do not know any human being any more after the flesh. (Please see Phil.3:7-8, Matt.12:48-50, Mk.3: 31-35, 1Cor.1:26-29, Col.3:11).

“So, from now on we will not regard any person by worldly standards, even though we *once* regarded Christ that way. But we will not regard Him *that way* anymore. *Note: Paul seems to be saying that before his conversion he viewed Christ on the basis of His family, His education, His position, etc., but since his conversion he does not view Him that way anymore.*” 2Cor.5:16 [AUV]

The true way to view people is not by human or worldly standards. What a person has, where he’s born or what family he comes from, how educated or highly placed a person is are all wrong ways of viewing a person—because God does not see those things. The crucial thing He looks at is whether or not a person is saved. Whether or not a person has eternal life—whether he is presently on the broad way that leads to eternal damnation or he has crossed the bridge of God’s grace and he is on the narrow way that leads to eternal bliss.

How do you view people? A sinner that has billions of Naira or Pounds is not a *billionaire* before God. He is just a sinner—and if he slips into a Christ-less eternity in that condition, all his billions will not be enough to save him. The Lord Jesus said: “**Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing'—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked—I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see.**” Rev.3:17-18 [NKJV]

2. If any man is in Christ...

2 Cor.5:17, Col.3:10-11, Acts 10:34-35, Rom.2:11, Rom.3:22.

God does not show favouritism. If we are in Christ, then we are really new creatures!

a. What is the implication of the *if* used here?

i. It is the conditional foundation for the New Creation

Jn.15:4-5 [amp], Jn.6:68-69.

Being IN Christ is what gives us access to a new life. The *if* here is important because the basic question becomes: Are you born again? Are you IN Christ? It also implies a definite decision in coming to the Lord. Have you come in person to Jesus? I am not saying people telling you about Jesus or describing where He is to you. The main issue is this: Are you remaining and continuing in Him? It is not just enough to shed tears on the day of your conversion. The core question is *remaining* in Christ. Are you REMAINING in Him? (Study the following verses carefully: Col.2:6-8 [amp], 1 Thes.4:1, 2Thes.2:15-17)

3. What **does the Bible mean by 'any man'?**

2 Cor. 5:17, John 3:15-16, Mk.16:16, Jn.3:18, Heb.7:25 [AMP].

'...**any man**' here means anyone, anybody, any person regardless of their past or their present condition, whether they are sick in their bodies, whether they are terminally diseased or whether they think or know that they are the worst

of sinners. If they are in Christ, they are made new and they become a new creation! There is no sin you have committed nor any depth that you have gone into sin that Jesus cannot forgive you and pull you out...

4. **What does it mean to be 'in' Christ?**

It means to be in a fixed position in a place, time or state. For example, James and John were *in* a boat when Jesus saw them [see Matt.4:21], it means that at every point in time, from henceforth, we live *inside* the life of Christ just as one lives under a roof [see 1Jn.2:6]. It is to abide, remain and settle down as in a new place where one wants to begin living in. To be in Christ means being outside of sin, being outside of this present evil world and being outside the control and influence of the devil (please read carefully: Jn.15:4-6, Jn.17:14-16, 1Jn.5:19).

A person who is now in Christ cannot willfully live a sinful life for one cannot sin in Christ. If one wants to sin, such a person will have to go outside of Jesus—for the Bible says in Him there is no sin [please see 1Jn.3:5 AMP, AUV].

5. He is a new Creature

2 Cor. 5:17, 1 Jn.2:25, 1Jn.5:11-13

The word *new* here comes from an old Greek word that means something that is not introduced or known until now, hence, better than what exists now. It also means being new, qualitatively.

6. Old things are passed away

Gal.2:20, Gal.6:14 NLT

What are the *old things* that are passed away?

a. A lifetime servitude to Sin

Matt.1:21, Jn.8:32, 36; Rom.6:6-7, Isa.53:5-6.

This is the very first change every genuine child of God should experience. Every descendant of Adam was born into the slavery of sin. It is very important for us to understand this—we are not sinners because of what we have done, we are sinners because of who we are ... [Gen.5:1-3, Ps.51:5, Job 14:4, Rom.7:14-17.]

When the Lord came to rescue us from our evil task master, it was then we became free—at that point when we trusted Jesus for the salvation of our souls.

At this point, we were not only forgiven our sins, rather, the Master destroyed the spirit of sin that held us in bondage to be perpetually doing his will. Our sins were forgiven and Jesus destroyed the spirit, principle and power that compel, pressurize and force us to live in sin, always doing the things we hate. We were helpless under this power, until Jesus destroyed him at Calvary.

Have you been freed from sin? Have you accepted in faith, the finished work on the Cross as the only necessary price for your sins? Could it be possible

that you are trusting Jesus for provision of mere bread and butter and you still have not responded to this urgent matter that the Lord is raising today?

The hold Satan and his spirits of sin have on us is broken when we come genuinely to the Lord, trusting in His substitutionary sacrifice for us.

Will you?

b. Sin and its consequences

Eph.2:1-7 AMP, 1Thes.5:9, Rom.5:5-11, Rom.6:23.

It is important also for us to understand that sin has consequences. The wages of sin is death. Most people willfully forget this fact. We were all condemned by sin and were on our way to destruction when the Lord Jesus rescued us.

Once we are saved, we need to realize that regardless of how horrible our past had been, the Lord Jesus has blotted it out and we are completely new beings.

It doesn't matter the dimensions or depths of our sins... once we come to Jesus, sin and its consequences are removed forever! [Please see Heb.7:25-28 AMP, GNB].

This is why it is important for us to ask you, have you truly believed in Jesus as the only Saviour from your sins? Or do you just know Him as a *Father Christmas* that gives *blessing* and *prosperity*? I am asking you if you have been saved from the deadly power of sin.

You can be sure if you have come to the Master in truth, hoping only in His finished work on the Cross of Calvary; then, for you too, all things shall be made new as your sins and its consequences are blotted out forever!

c. The flesh

Rom.6:6-7, Gal.2:20, Gal.5:24, Rom.6:12 AMP, Gal.6:14 PHILLIPS, MACE, GNB, TLB, MSG, AUV, Eph.4:22 AMP. The flesh and its old order of things have passed away. Remember that *who* we were before we met the Lord Jesus is the flesh. This old 'I' died so that a new man, recreated in the image of God can arise in me. When a man comes to Christ to be saved, his old life comes to an end at that point [Rom.6:3],

i. What the Bible means by the flesh being put to death

Jn.3:6, Rom.6:3-7, Gal.2:20.

The flesh or our old nature, cannot be upgraded, repaired, trained

d. The World System

Gal.6:14 NLT,

LESSON THREE

ELEMENTARY DOCTRINES (Part One)

INTRODUCTION

When we become born again, we enter into a new life. However, like new born babies, there are a lot of things for us to learn. There are some things that we **must of necessity learn first for if we don't, it will be very difficult** to have a healthy spiritual growth. What these things are will be the focus of our study in this lesson. May the Lord grant you understanding. Amen.

Main Text: Heb.6:1-3

What are Elementary Doctrines?

Heb.6:1-3 [AMP, MSG, ERV, CJB, AUV], Heb.5:12, 1 Pet.2:2. These are the primary teachings that every new believer ought to know as they are prerequisites for a healthy spiritual growth. They are listed below according to their appearance in the Book of Hebrews 6:1-3:

- i. Repentance from dead works
- ii. Faith in God
- iii. The doctrine of baptisms
- iv. Laying on of hands

v. Resurrection from the dead

vi. Eternal Judgments

1. REPENTANCE FROM DEAD WORKS

Heb.6:1, Matt.4:17 [amp], Mk.1:15, Matt.3:1-2, Hosea 14:1-3.

This primarily means repentance from a life of sin. Repentance is a change of mind and purpose and life, accompanied with regret and sorrow for something done, and an earnest wish to become a better person. Two requisites of repentance are: "to turn from evil, and to turn to the good."

The true gospel repentance, or "repentance unto life," is sorrow for sin, grief and shame for having committed it, and a turning away from it with abhorrence, accompanied with sincere endeavours, in reliance on God's grace and the influences of the Holy Spirit, to live in humble and holy obedience to the commands and will of God. This is that repentance which always accompanies true faith, and to which is promised the free forgiveness of sin through the merits of Jesus Christ [see Mt 4:17; Ac 3:19; 11:18; 20:12.]

i. True repentance consists of the following:

(a) A true sense of one's own guilt and sinfulness- Ps.51:1-2

(b) An apprehension of God's mercy in Christ. Ps.51:1

(c) An actual hatred of sin- Ps. 119:128; Job 42:5, Job 42:6; 2Cor.7:10 and turning from it to God; and

(d) A persistent endeavour after a holy life in walking with God in the way of his commandments.

ii. The true penitent [or repentant person] is conscious of the following:

a. Guilt- Ps.51:4, Ps. 51:9,

b. Pollution- Ps. 51:5, Ps. 51:7, Ps. 51:10, and

c. Helplessness- Ps. 51:11; Ps. 109:21, Ps. 109:22

Thus he views himself to be just what God has always seen him to be and declares him to be. But repentance includes not only such a sense of sin, but also knowing the availability of divine mercy and the sufficiency of Christ's sacrifice without which there can be no true repentance [please see Ps.51:1; Ps. 130:4.]

2. FAITH IN GOD

Heb.11:6, Rom.10:17 [tlb, nasb, amp]

Faith is agreement and cooperation with God, based on His word and acting on His Word because a man is personally convinced of His integrity, of His ability, of His wisdom and His affection.

Faith is agreement with God

Heb.11:11, Rom.4:21, Numbers 13:30-33

You cannot walk in faith when you disagree with God.

To agree means having the same opinion, view or perspective with another person in any given issue.

The Bible says “ ... Because of faith also Sarah herself received physical power to conceive a child, even when she was long past the age for it, because she considered [God] Who had given her the promise to be reliable and trustworthy and true to His word.” Heb 11:11 [amp]

There is nothing God can do for you that does not require your agreement. Agreement with God is the first step into belief and faith in God. Anyone who **does not agree with God’s word does not believe Him** [please see Heb.3: 18-19, Heb.4:1-3, Gen.15:1-6 amp]

Why men often find it difficult to agree with God

1. God always speaks from his own view

Isa.14:24, 27; Isa.55:8-11 [nlt, msg], Num.11:23 [tlb, gw, amp], Isa.40:15-18, Jer.32:27

2. Humanly speaking, looking away from physical impossibilities is always like embracing insanity

2 Kings 7:1-2, Gen.18:12-14, Num.11:21-23[amp], 2 Tim.2:13 [amp]

3. Man's limitations always demands attention even after God has spoken

Num.11:18-22, John 6: 5-9, Gen.17:15-17, Luke 1:5 -18, Ex.4:10-13

4. Ignorance of Who God is and what He is able to do

Ps.90:2, 4, Jer.10:10, Jer.9:23-24, Hosea 6:6, John 17:2-3, 2 Pet.1:2-3, 1 Jn.2:25

Faith is cooperation with God

Gen.15:1-6, John 3:16, Num.13:1-9, 1 Pet.5:7.

To cooperate means to work or act together in order to achieve a common goal. **The promises of God will be useless to you and me as long as we don't cooperate with God.**

Whenever God makes you a promise, there is what God has to do but there is also what you have to do as a person. God will not do for man what man is supposed to do.

Faith is based on God's Word

The foundation of our faith must be based on what God said to us. This is very important because God is not committed to doing what we think. He is only committed to doing what He says.

Why our faith and hope must be based on God's word

- a. There is nothing better in this life than what God offers us in His word- 1Jn.2:25
- b. Each of us has been predestined according to the word of God-Eph.1:5
- c. We can trust God to keep his word- Rom.4:21
- d. The only person that can really help us and is really willing to help us in every situation is God- Isa.41:10,13

Faith is acting on God's Word

John 2:5, Heb.11:8, Lk.5:5

Doing what God says is faith. Most people mentally assent to the Word but find it difficult to act on it. Just like a person who is suffering from hunger will die from it unless he eats, our situations will remain the same except we act on the word of God. James 2:15-17 [amp]

Faith is based on absolute conviction

Rom.4:20-21

Conviction in this context means having an absolute confidence and assurance **in the attributes of God such that one stands by God's word in faith** because he is sure these attributes are unchanging.

Divine attributes that inspires faith

i. God's integrity

1 Sam.2:2, Heb.6:17-18, Lev.19:2, 2 Tim.2:13

God is the Holiest of all, thus the Bible says it is IMPOSSIBLE for Him to lie. Integrity is the quality of possessing and steadfastly adhering to high moral principles. Integrity means being constant. It is being unchangeable. It means to remain the same.

ii. God's ability [Eph.3:20]

For better understanding, it is better to divide this into three:

a. He is omnipresent

Ps.139:7-10, Jer.23:24, Prov.15:3, Acts 17:27. God is present everywhere at every time. He may not make His presence known but he is always everywhere.

b. He is omniscient

Heb.4:13, Job 26:6, Job 34:21, Ps.33:13-14, Ps.90:8, Ps.139:11-12, Prov.15:11, John 2:23-25. God knows everything about everything. No one can hide from God. He knows you and me. He sees our secret lives and every other thing else.

c. He is Omnipotent

Job 42:2, Ps.135:6, Isa.14:27, 2 Chron.20:6, Lk.1:37.

God has power to do everything. Nothing is impossible or too difficult for Him.

iii. God's wisdom

Rom.11:33[Rotherham, Moffat, igt], Job 26:14 [bbe, tlb, ncv, niv], Ps.77:19[njb, nlt]. The wisdom of God are the methods and ways by which God carries out His purposes, promises and threatenings which no living creature knows.

Who could have thought that the way God will provide meat for six million people in the wilderness was by sending hundreds of millions of quails [see Num.11:31-33]? Who could ever think that the way God will defend Jerusalem is by wiping out the entire army of Sennacherib of Assyria in one night [See 2 chron.32:21]? Who among the fallen angels or even the angels in heaven could have thought that the way God will redeem man from the devil is through the same humiliating execution on the cross, planned by the devil himself [1Cor.2:8]?

When God speaks a word, whether it is a promise or a threat, don't worry if what He said sounds impossible neither should you imagine how achievable is the word of God, for no one knows how He will do whatever He promises or threatens to do—not even satan.

iv. God's Affection

1 Jn.4:9-10, 19; Rom.8:31-32, Gal.2:20, Eph.2:4, Jer.31:3, Jn.3:16.

Out of all the reasons why God responds to our faith, this is the greatest reason—God immensely, intensely and eternally loves us and He is always looking for opportunities to prove this love to us...

Imagine it, the person who could give us the greatest, most difficult thing to give—His own life; what else will He be unwilling to give us [Rom.8:32]?

He wants to shower us with all he is and all He owns—but He is expecting our response to His love and pursuit of our hearts...and we respond by having faith in Him. Trusting Him in all things and taking all things to Him [Rom.11:6].

Will you?

How faith comes

By Understanding. Rom.10:17 [GW, MSG]

The ground and foundation of our faith is Jesus Christ [see 1 Cor.3:11, gw]. The way we can have quality faith is by understanding the essence of the coming of Jesus Christ. When we fully understand why He came, we will rise in understanding to embrace all what He represents.

The Ultimate level of faith-Trust

Psalm 62:8 [amp, msg, cev], Isa.26:4, Prov.3:5, 1 Tim.4:10, 2 Tim.1:12.

Faith can fail. Trust does not fail. Trust means Confidence; a reliance or resting of the mind on the integrity, veracity, justice, friendship or other sound principle of another person-especially God. Faith believes God will do something, trust says God can do the same thing but even if He refuses to do it or He chooses not to do it for some unknown reasons, He is still my God; He is still the ground of my confidence and hope.

3. THE DOCTRINE OF BAPTISMS

Basically, there are three types of baptism: Baptism into Christ, Baptism into water and Baptism into the Holy Spirit.

i. Baptism into Christ

Baptism into Christ or into His body at repentance and the new birth. Called "one baptism" (Ephes. 4:5), because it is the only baptism that saves the soul and brings into the body of Christ.

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit...” [v.19, see also in an understandable version New Testament.]

‘Name’ according to the Bible means the authority, character, rank, majesty, power, or excellence of a person or thing. Thus, to baptize new disciples in the

name [not names as in plural but name as in singular] of the Father and of the son and of the Holy Spirit means immersing and soaking the converts into the authority, character, rank, majesty, power, or excellence found in the person of Jesus Christ since He is the exact image of God and His Spirit.

To further understand what the Lord is asking us to do, we need to **comprehend the meaning of each of these words that defines 'name'**.

Authority- [Mk.16:17-18]. This is the legal right to exercise power and enforce compliance from the people ruled. Thus when one is converted to Christ and baptized [that is, being soaked, buried and completely immersed] into His name via discipleship, he is then able to act with the delegated legal authority to first of all be able to personally live above sin, self, satan and the world system and also to set people free from satan and his kingdom.

Character- [Eph.4:13-15 amp, 1 Jn.2:6 tlb, msg, nlt; 1 Pet.2:21 msg, jmnt]. This is a set of qualities that makes a person or a thing distinctive. It is also the personality, behaviour and intrinsic nature of a person. Thus every genuine Christian ought to be soaked in the character of Jesus-becoming like Him in every way and in everything.

Rank- [1 Pet.3:22, Eph.1:20-21, Eph.2:6]. An official title or category that **shows the holder's relative importance or seniority within an organization or a**

kingdom. Jesus is presently sitting at the right hand of God. It is the place of highest position, dignity, honour and influence – **what's more interesting is** that since Christ is the head of His body the church, it is impossible for the head to be somewhere and the body somewhere else, thus, we too are seated in Christ at the right hand of God!

The Lord expects every convert to be disciplined and experience this same rank personally as we are constantly and repeatedly threshed and pruned and baptized into the name of Jesus to the end that we become like Him in all things. Each Christian is expected by heaven to become everything the name represents.

Majesty- [2Pet.1:16-17, 2Cor.3:18] This means splendour, dignity and power. The more we learn of the Lord in order to become like Him, the more we are changed into His image from glory to glory.

ii. Baptism into water

Matthew 3:6, 11; Lk.3:3

Water baptism takes place only after one is saved. This is the physical **representation of Baptism into Christ. It doesn't save us but it helps us to** further understand what happened to us in the Spirit. When we are briefly submerged into water, our bodies are covered completely, signifying death to our old man [or fallen nature]; but when we are pulled out of the water, it

symbolizes resurrection into a new type of life, a life lived for God and completely freed from sin!

iii. Baptism into the Spirit

Spirit baptism, the enduement of power for service. It can take place before water baptism (Acts 10:44-48) or after it (Acts 1:4-8; Acts 2:1-11; Acts 8:12-21; Acts 19:1-7).

The Holy Spirit is the agent to baptize into Christ and into His body (1 Cor. 12:13); Christ is the agent to baptize in the Holy Spirit (Matthew 3:11; John 1:31-33); and the minister is the agent to baptize into water (Matthew 28:19).

How to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit

- 1. Know first of all that He is a gift. You don't have to be afraid or doubtful as to whether or not you will receive. Nobody begs for a gift -Acts 2:38, Lk.24:49.**
- 2. When hands are laid on you, you will first be filled with the Spirit, then you will be baptized in the Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues- Acts 2:4, Acts 19:6.**
- 3. It is your responsibility to open your mouth to speak. It is the Holy Spirit's responsibility to give you what to say. He can only do His part if you will do yours-Acts 2:4, Ps.81:10**

CONCLUSION

We have been able to see the first three topics under the elementary doctrines that a Christian must know and understand before moving on to maturity. Be very sure that these topics are clear to you before progressing. Your consistent spiritual growth depends on them.

PERSONAL ASSESSMENT

1. List and explain the first three topics under the six elementary topics.
2. In your own opinion, why do people find it very difficult to take God at His Word?
3. What is the importance of these six elementary doctrines?
4. According to this study, what does it mean to be baptized in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit?

LESSON FOUR

ELEMENTARY DOCTRINES (Part Two)

INTRODUCTION

Continuing from where we stopped in the last lesson, we need to look more closely at the other teachings that the Bible considers as Elementary Doctrines. As we are not qualified for more advanced and matured teachings until we have understood what these doctrines are in full ...

Main Text: Heb.6:1-3

4. LAYING ON OF HANDS

One of the symbolic actions we meet a number of times in the Bible is the laying on of hands. It contained within it a wide range of meanings. In all indications, the person laying the hands has more spiritual authority than the person or thing the hand is being laid on.

We Lay on Hands when:

- (1) Blessing men. Genesis 48:14
- (2) Making offerings. Numbers 8:10
- (3) Ordaining. Numbers 27:18,23
- (4) Imparting Spirit. Deut. 34:9

- (5) Blessing children. Matthew 19:15
- (6) Healing sick. Mark 6:2, 5; Mark 16:18; Luke 4:40; Luke 13:13; Acts 5:12; Acts 28:8
- (7) Performing miracles. Acts 19:11
- (8) Imparting gifts. 1 Tim. 4:14; 2 Tim. 1:6; Hebrews 6:2
- (9) Imparting the Spirit baptism. Acts 8:17-24; Acts 9:17; Acts 19:6

5. RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

1 Cor. 15:12-22; Acts 24:15, 1Thes. 4:13-18; 2Thes. 2:7

The resurrection is an essential foundational doctrine because without one's faith in it, salvation is impossible, for the Bible says "...if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved."

This implies that without believing in our hearts [i.e. becoming personally convinced that God raised Christ from the dead, one cannot be saved.] Thus, the doctrine of resurrection from the dead exceeds the concept of coming back from the dead physically.

While there will be a first resurrection [i.e. the coming back to life of the bodies of the righteous dead in Christ at the rapture to join their immortal spirits and souls which are presently with the Lord in heaven [see Acts 7:59, 2 Cor.5:8, Phil.1:21-24, Heb.12:23, James 2:26]]. It is also known as the

resurrection of eternal life-see Dan.12:2, Matt.25:46]; There will also be a second resurrection- the resurrection of damnation, of all the bodies of the wicked dead to also join their immortal spirits and souls presently in hell [2 Pet.2:9] to be judged and sent into the eternal place of torment-the Lake of Fire [Rev.20:10-15].

The mystery of the resurrection gives us hope that everything doesn't end here. Whether righteous or unrighteous, we will all give account. Besides this, the resurrection proves to us one of the most important realities of Christianity- Jesus came back from the dead and He is alive even today! He is alive especially because of me for He has become my High Priest, the person who pleads my case before God [Heb.4:14-16]!

What the resurrection of the bodies of the righteous souls lead to: Glorified Bodies like that of Jesus when He rose from the dead!

[Study more of this in our Bible study Companion: Eternal Rewards!]

6. ETERNAL JUDGMENTS

Matthew 25:41, 46; Rev. 14:9-11; Rev. 20:11-15; Isaiah 66:22-24

These judgments are eternal because they will become the basis for the eternal position of every created being. Rebellious angels, spirits and men will be confined to the lake of fire forever while elect angels and obedient men will enter into the eternal kingdom of God and their status and importance will be

according to how much they lived for God and become like Christ while they are on planet earth.

There are seven types of judgment revealed in scriptures:

- i. Judgment of the believer's sin
- ii. Judgment of himself [the believer]
- iii. Judgment of the believer's works
- iv. Judgment of Israel
- v. Judgment of the nations
- vi. Judgment of angels
- vii. Judgment of sinners

There will be three major types of judgment related to man:

- i. The judgment of believers' works [or the judgment seat of Christ]
- ii. The judgment of unbelievers [or the white throne judgment]
- iii. The judgment of Israel during the tribulation
- iv. The judgment of the human nations after the battle of Armageddon (that ends the tribulation period).

1. The judgment of the righteous [The judgment seat of Christ]

2 Cor.5:9-10[amp], 1 Cor.3:9-15[amp], 1 Cor.4:5.

The judgment seat of Christ is not about judgment for sin or unrighteousness because those who are not free from the power of sin but call themselves '*Christians*' will not even make the rapture. Since this judgment immediately follows the rapture of the church, then we ought to understand what it is all about.

A judgment for REWARDS- 1 Cor.3:15

While salvation is free, rewards in the eternal kingdom are not. They are EARNED. No Christian will be rewarded for what he does not deserve [Matt.16:27].

THE JUDGMENT OF BELIEVERS' WORKS:

1. Who are the subjects of this judgment? The Subjects are believers- Ephes. 6:8; Col. 3:23-24; Romans 14:10; 2 Cor. 5:10.

2. When will it be? The Time is between the rapture and the second coming- Luke 14:14

3. Where will it be? The Place is in heaven- 1 Cor. 9:24-27; Romans 14:10; 2 Cor. 5:10

4. On what basis shall we be judged? The Basis are works, both good and bad- 1 Cor. 3:11-15, 2 Cor. 5:9-10, Romans 14, Col. 3, Matthew 16:27; Romans 2:6, 2 Tim. 4:14, Ps.28:4.

5. What will the result of this judgment be? The Result will be reward or loss of reward, but never the loss of one's soul for any wrongdoings properly confessed and forgiven- 1 Cor. 3:11-15. This judgment deals with the believer as a servant. Romans 14:8, 10; 2 Cor. 5:10, 11.

What will a Believer's judgment be based upon?

1. It will be based on doctrines preached and practiced -Romans 2:14-16; Romans 14. We will not only be judged for the doctrines we preach, we will also be judged by the doctrines we believe and practice.

2. It will be based on conduct to others- Matthew 18, Romans 14

3. It will be based on carnal, worldly traits- Col. 3: 5-10, Romans 1:29-31, Romans 8:1-13, Romans 14:1-23

4. It will be based on use of words- Matthew 12:32-37, Romans 14

5. It will be based on things that affect others: slander, quarrels, idle words, foolishness (folly), dishonesty, broken promises, wrong dealings, etc. [Romans 1:29-32; 1 Cor. 6:9-11; Galatians 5:19-21; Col. 3; Ephes. 4:1-32; Ephes. 5:1-33; Romans 12:1-21; Romans 14:1-23]

6. It will be based on things that affect they themselves: Neglected opportunities, talents wasted, loose living, lack of spirituality, etc. [Romans 2:14-16; Hebrews 2:1-4; Galatians 5:1-26; Galatians 6:1-10; Col. 3]

7. It will be based on things that affect God: Refusal to walk in the light, disobedience, rejection, failure to cooperate and yield to the Spirit, etc. [1 Cor. 12; Romans 12; Ephes. 4:1-32; Ephes. 5:1-33]

2. The Judgment of the nations

Matt.25:31-46, Matt.13:49, Ps.96:13, Acts 17:30-31.

It is not every person in all nations that will be judged here. The antichrist and his armies and the confederate heads of governments with him would have been destroyed at the Battle of Armageddon [see Rev.19:19-21].

Many remote peoples will not know Christ has even landed on the planet earth until later [Isaiah 2; Isaiah 66:19-21; Zech. 8:23].

It will be an individual judgment of all involved with Israel and the tribulation saints when Christ comes to set up His kingdom, not a judgment of the wicked dead.

NOTE: The Tribulation saints are the people who will give their lives to Christ in the course of the seven years of tribulation and majority of them will be killed for their faith in Christ while others will flee and be in hiding or imprisoned and in

*torture as they will not receive the mark of the Beast nor the number of his name
[Please see Matt.25:31-46, Rev.6:9-11].*

Contrast between the Judgment of the Nations and the White Throne judgment

a. Judgment of the nations

(Matthew 25:31-46)

1. Living nations are the subjects of this judgment [Matt.25:31-32, Dan.7:13-14]
2. It takes place just before the beginning of the Millennial reign of Christ.
[Ps.96:13 amp, Ps.98:9 amp]
3. Jesus Christ will be the Judge [Rom.2:16, Acts 17:31]
4. The judgment will take place on earth [Ps.96:13, Matt.25:31-32]
5. There will be two classes of people (The Lord called them goats and sheep).
[Matt.13:49, Matt.25:32]
6. Some of them will be saved and enter into the Millennial Kingdom
[Matt.25:34, 1 Cor.2:9]
7. Some of them will be condemned to eternal misery in the Lake of Fire.
[Matt.25:41, 46; Matt.13:40]

8. No resurrections required as they are all the living nations and peoples of the earth [Matt.25:31-33, Ps.98:9]

9. No books will be opened, just a separation into two huge groups, regardless of social status, nationality, race, age or sex. [Matt.25:31-33]

10. The basis of their judgment will be the persecution of Jews [Israelis] and the Tribulation Saints during the previous seven years of tribulation under the antichrist. [Matt.25:34-46]

11. Only one generation will be judged as they will be the present generation alive and on earth at this time. [Matt.25:31-32, Matt.13:49]

12. Gentile nations only will be judged. [NOTE: Gentile nations mean all the nations of the world excluding Israel and the church of Jesus Christ.

Remember that the church in the original language is ekklesia which means a called out assembly.]

We must remember that the Church was called out of both the Gentile nations and Israel. The Bible recognized only three classes of people- The Jews, the Gentile and the Church [Please see 1Cor.10:32].

13. **Angels will assist in separating the 'sheep' from the 'goats'.** We are to bear in mind that angels came with the Lord Jesus and His glorified saints at the Battle of Armageddon. [Rev.19:11-14, Zech.14:5 amp, 2 Thes.1:7, Matt.25:31, Matt.16:27]

14. **Some (the 'goats')** will be condemned to everlasting hell. [Matt.25:41, 46; Rev.14:10-11]

15. Some (the 'sheep') will be justified to enter the millennial kingdom
[Matt.25: 34, 46]

16. Separation of the good from the bad. [Matt.25:32-33, Ezek.20:38]

17. The purpose is to determine who continues to live on earth. [Matt.25:34, Ps.96:13, Ps.98:9].

b. Judgment of the wicked

(Rev. 20:11-15)

1. The subjects are the wicked dead. [Rev.20:11-15, Dan.12:2]

2. The time is after the Millennium reign of Christ. [Rev.20:4-6, 11-15]

3. God the Father is the Judge [Rev.20:11-15, Heb.13:4]

4. The place of the judgment is in front of God's great white throne in heaven
[Rev.20:11].

5. Only one class of people are to be judged. The Bible calls them the 'dead'.
[Rev.20:12]

6. Not a single person that appears before this judgment will be saved. All will
be eternally lost. [Rev.20:15, Heb.12:25]

7. All are to be condemned into the Lake of Fire forever, where they will
remain in torment day and night, forever and ever. [Rev.20:15, Heb.2:2-3,
Rev.14:10-11]

8. A resurrection is required as the souls and spirits of the dead sinners will be joined to their resurrected bodies from their different graves. [Rev.20:13, Dan.12:2]

9. **Several books where people's acts and lives of sin** are written will be opened. [Rev.20:12, Dan.7:10]

10. All the sins of all men who died in their sins will be the basis of this **judgment. Each man's conscience and memory bearing him witness that he** indeed deserves the sentence of his sins. [Heb.10:26-27 amp, Lk.16:25]

11. All the sinful dead in all generations from Adam till the last rebellious attempt of Satan after the Millennium will be part of this judgment. [Rev.20:11-13, Dan.12:2]

12. Jews and Gentiles will be part of this judgment. [Rev.20:11-13, Dan.12:2]

13. No angel is mentioned as assisting in the gathering of the souls. [Rev.20:11-15]

14. All go to one final destination: the eternal Lake of Fire. [Rev.20:15, Matt.7:13]

15. None will ever enter the kingdom of God. All hope for that is lost and gone forever. [Heb.2:2-3, Rev.20:11-15]

16. No separation will be made. All the subjects are evil and doomed. [Rev.14:10-11, Matt.25:41]

17. None who appear before this White throne judgment will live on earth ever again [Matt.25:46, Matt.7:13]

3. The judgment of the wicked [The white throne judgment]

Rev. 20:11-15

i. Who are the subjects of this judgment?

The wicked dead [Rev. 20:5-6,12-15] who are not judged at the judgment of the nations 1,000 years before [Matthew 13:30,39-50; Matthew 24:51; Matthew 25:3-46; Rev. 14:9-11; Rev. 19:20]. These include all wicked people from the time of Adam to end of Millennium.

ii. When is the Time of this judgment?

(a) End of the Millennium [Rev. 20:7-15]

(b) When heavens and earth are renovated by fire [Rev. 20:11; 2 Peter 3:7-13; Hebrews 1:10-12; Hebrews 12:25-28; Romans 1:21-23]

iii. Where is the Place of this judgment?

At the great white throne of God [Rev. 20:11; Psalm 9:7-8].

iv. What is the Basis of this judgment?

- (a) Law of conscience [Romans 2:12-16]
- (b) Law of memory [Luke 16:25]
- (c) Law of Moses [Romans 2:12-16]
- (d) Law of character [Hebrews 3:8-10; Ephes. 4:19]
- (e) The Gospel [Romans 2:12-16]
- (f) Records of personal acts [Matthew 12:36; Luke 12:2-9; John 3:18; Rev. 20:12]
- (g) The book of life [Rev. 3:5; Rev. 13:8; Rev. 17:8; Rev. 20:12,15; Rev. 21:27; Rev. 22:18-19; Exodus 32:32-33; Psalm 69:28; Daniel 12:1; Luke 10:20; Phil. 4:3]
- (h) The Word of God [John 12:48]

v. Who are the Judges of this judgment?

- (a) God the Father [Rev. 20:12; Hebrews 12:23-24; Hebrews 13:4; Rev. 6:10; Romans 2:12-16]
- (b) God the son [John 5:19-27; Acts 10:42; 2 Tim. 4:8; Rev. 19:11]. God will judge by Jesus Christ. The Father will decree, the son will execute [Acts 10:42; Acts 17:31; Romans 2:16].

vi. What will this judgment be like?

It will not be a spiritual, invisible, endless process but a definite, literal, visible, and personal trial in God's court similar to a trial on earth [Rev. 20:11-15; Psalm 9:8; Matthew 7:2,21; Acts 17:31; Romans 2:12-16; Hebrews 9:27]

vii. What is the Universality of this judgment?

(a) The sea gave up the dead in it. This could only refer to bodies, for souls and spirits of the wicked dead do not remain in the sea at physical death. They go to hell and await the resurrection of their bodies [Rev. 20:13; Luke 16:19-31; Isaiah 14:9].

(b) Death gave up the dead that are in it. This could only refer to bodies, for the body only dies at physical death [James 2:26]. Souls are dead in trespasses and in sins while yet in the body [Matthew 8:22; Ephes. 2:1-9; 1 Tim. 5:6]. Physical death only, therefore, could be the reference

(c) Hades delivered up the souls that are in it [Rev. 20:13]. Souls and spirits and not the bodies of the wicked go to Hades [Luke 16:19-31]

viii. What is the Purpose of this judgment?

(a) To give every man a fair trial before his eternal punishment is determined [Acts 17:31; Psalm 9:8]

(b) To judge the secrets of people [Romans 2:16]

(c) To judge idle words [Matthew 12:36]

(d) To judge all the works, thoughts, actions, and sins of men [1 Tim. 5:24; 1 Peter 1:17; Rev. 20:12-13; Rev. 22:12; Romans 2:5-6,12-16]

(e) To mete out degrees of punishment according to deeds [Matthew 7:2; Matthew 10:15; Matthew 11:22-24; Matthew 12:41-45; Matthew 23:12-14,33; Mark 6:11; Luke 10:14; Luke 11:31-32; Rev. 20:11-15; Rev. 22:12]

ix. What is the Length of this judgment?

Time in judging all the wicked is not known, but the length of the sentence for all will be eternal [Matthew 5:29-30; Matthew 10:28; Matthew 13:42-50; Matthew 18:9; Matthew 23:15,33; Matthew 24:51; Matthew 25:41,46; Mark 9:42-48; Luke 12:5; Hebrews 6:2; Hebrews 10:26-31; Rev. 2:11; Rev. 14:9-11; Rev. 19:20; Rev. 20:10-15; Rev. 21:8; Rev. 22:15; Isaiah 66:22-24]

x. What is the Result of this judgment?

All are condemned to the eternal Lake of Fire and will be tormented forever and ever [Rev. 20:14-15, Rev.14:10-11, Matt.25:46]

CONCLUSION

“Since all these things are thus in the process of being dissolved, what kind of person ought [each of] you to be [in the meanwhile] in consecrated and holy behavior and devout and godly qualities, while you wait and earnestly long for (expect and hasten) the coming of the day of God by reason of which the flaming heavens will be dissolved, and the [material] elements [of the universe] will flare and melt with fire?

But we look for new heavens and a new earth according to His promise, in which righteousness (uprightness, freedom from sin, and right standing with God) is to abide.

So, beloved, since you are expecting these things, be eager to be found by Him [at His coming] without spot or blemish and at peace [in serene **confidence, free from fears and agitating passions and moral conflicts**].”

2 Peter 3:11-14 [AMP]

PERSONAL ASSESSMENT

1. What new thing have you learnt about Laying on of hands, Resurrection from the dead and eternal judgments?
2. In the light of these teachings, what personal decisions are you making?
3. Which point strikes you the most under eternal judgments?

4. Which particular judgment are you planning to appear before God, based on your life today?

LESSON FIVE

SPIRITUAL REALITIES (Part One)

INTRODUCTION

There are some basic realities we need to know once we are born again. Lack of the knowledge of these realities is what had hampered the healthy spiritual growth and progress of most Christians today. As we study together, may the Lord open your eyes of understanding. [Amen]

Main Text: 2Cor.13:8

1. THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

Gen.1:1-3, Ps.90:2 [NCV, TLB], Ps.93:2 [NIRV], Isa.57:15, Rom.11:35-36 [AMP].

The Bible never for once tried to prove that God is in existence. The Bible stated it as a fact that cannot be questioned in literally thousands of verses in the Bible. Rather, the Bible treated atheists, sceptics and others who question His existence as demented fools lacking in reason or even common sense (see Ps.14:1 [amp], Ps.53:1).

God has always existed since the dateless past. The scriptures confirm this and neither unbelief nor vain speculation can change the reality that there is a Supreme Being. Believing the clear, simple biblical portrayal of God as the author of all things is simpler than believing the scientists and their 'Big-Bang'

theory or Darwin with his evolution theory because when you look at it, the Bible did not give us hypothesis or theories speculating the existence of God.

It just stated it as a reality. Now, when you look at the arguments of the evolutionists and speculators, you will see them for what they really are: mere theories that demand more faith in believing there is no God than the faith the Bible requires in believing that God has always been and will always be...

The Unity of the Godhead: Understanding the Biblical stand on the Holy Trinity

Gen.1:1-3, 26-28 [amp, tlb]; 2Cor.13:14, 1 Jn.5:7, Matt.3:16-17, Jn.1:1-3, Matt.28:19, Jn.14:26, Jn.15:26, 1 Pet.1:2.

The Bible has never been silent that there are three persons in the Godhead, namely:

God the Father, God the Word and God the Holy Spirit. Right from the first chapter of the first book of the Bible, we see the Trinity in the very first three verses. Genesis 1:1-3 reads as this: **“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.”** [KJV]

Verse one was clearly talking about God the Father when it says **“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth...”**

Verse Two was clearly talking about the person of the Holy Spirit when it says “**...And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.**” Verse three was talking about God the Word, who we now know as the Lord Jesus Christ when it says “**...And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.**”

In simplifying the explanation of the Trinity, we believe according to the Bible that what the Father is planning and thinking is what the Word is saying and that is what the Spirit is doing. Three in one does not mean three personalities inside one body; instead, it means three persons in perfect unity.

NOTE: Here are some other verses that proves without any doubt, the Holy Trinity; two or three Members of the Godhead are mentioned: Gen.1:26-27, Gen.3:22, Gen.19:24, Hosea 1:7, Isa.63:9-10].

a. God the Father

Ps.90:2, Ex.20:2, Neh.9:6, Ps.8:3, Rom.1:20, Ex.20:11, Jer.10:10, Jn.17:3. He is the Head of the Godhead. He is called God the Father because He is the Father of all creation and He desires that man should see Him as He actually wants to be seen, as a Father!

b. God the Word

Jn.1:1-3, 14; 1 Jn.1:1, Rev.19:13, 16; Jn.10:30-33, Jn.20:28, Isa.7:14, Isa.9:6, Matt.1:23, Tit.2:13, 1 Tim.6:14-15. As the Second Person of the Trinity, He is responsible for speaking the mind of the father and watching over the Word of

God. Jesus is the son of God by humanity (i.e. by becoming a human being, in order to save us from our sins-Jn.1:14), but He is God by divinity. Just like the Father and the Spirit, He too created all things.

c. God the Holy Spirit

Gen.1:2, Lk.1:35, Gen.41:38, 1 Cor.2:11-14 [amp], Judg.3:10, Jug.6:34 [amp], 1 Cor.2:10 [amp], Matt.1:18-20, Acts 1:8, acts 10:38. He is the Spirit that is at work in the heart and life of every human being who belongs to God. The Third Person of the Trinity, He inspired the Bible [2 Tim.3:16, 2 Pet.1:20-21] and is also the Creator of all things [Gen.1:2, Ps.104:30, Job 33:4].

2. THE EXISTENCE OF SATAN

Gen.3:1-7 [amp], Job 1:6-7, Job 2:1, 2 Cor.11:2, Rev.12:9-10, Rev.20:2, Matt.25:41.

Another fact the Bible did not try to prove is the existence of Archangel Lucifer (now known as Satan the Devil). The Bible presents the devil as a real, defeated fallen angel with an army of other fallen angels and demons on rampage on the earth.

a. A Brief Origin, history and fall of Lucifer

Job 38:7, Isa.14:12-15, Lk.10:18, Ezek.28:11-17, Col.2:15 [amp], Rev.12:7-9.

Satan had not always been Satan. He was a mighty archangel, one of the three highest ranking archangels the Bible identified by name (the others are Michael and Gabriel), if not the highest. He was full of wisdom and was the perfection of beauty [see Ezek.28:11-17].

He planned to overthrow God so that he can sit enthroned as God over the whole universe. He convinced one-third of the numberless hosts of angels and they followed him. Two-third remained loyal to God and a fierce battle ensued.

He lost this battle and he and his army of angels were thrown out of heaven (see Rev.12:7-12 for another battle that will take place in the future that is like this battle). He and his army settled in the second heavens (the space in the air between our atmospheric heavens and the third heaven where God dwells). That is where they are now [Eph.2:2, Eph.6:12], but a future battle will be fought in the Tribulation period and they will lose this same base [see Rev.12:7-12].

b. The complete defeat of the Devil

col.2:15 [amp, nirv], Gen.3:15, Jn.12:31-33, Jn.3: 14-15, Heb.2:14, Lk.10:18-19.

Jesus soundly defeated the devil through the same means the devil thought he could use to bring a brutal end to the Lord: the Cross. On that Cross the Lord died in our place- the just for the unjust, the devil lost control because he killed the man whom he had no power over and he lost all of us descendants of Adam, whom he had legal, spiritual power over since the fall of Adam...all we

need is to accept His sacrifice of the Cross as the payment for our sin and we are completely free from the devil!

c. His present work among men

i. Tempting to Disobedience [Gen.3:4, 5; 1Chron.21:1]

ii. Slandering Saints [Job 1:9, 10, 11]

iii. Inflicting Disease [Job 2:7]

iv. Opposing the Righteous [Zech.3:1]

v. Removing the Good Seed [Matt. 13:19]

vi. Sowing the Tares [Matt. 13:38, 39]

vii. Ruining the Soul and Body [Lk.9:42, Lk.13:16]

viii. Lying [Jn. 8:44]

ix. Instigating Men to Sin [Jn.13:2, Acts 5:3, 2Co 12:7, Eph 2:2, 1Thes. 2:18]

x. Preying upon Men [1Pe 5:8, Re 2:10]

d. His final doom

Matt.25:41, Rev.12: 7-12, Rev.20:1-3, 7-10. The devil, his angels and all the demons that have been a part of his army since his fall will be eternally confined to the lake of fire forever and ever. Jesus always talks about the devil as a condemned criminal awaiting his death sentence [Jn.12:31, Jn.16:11].

While we should never be afraid of the devil nor his threatening and malice, it is wisdom to respect him as he had been waging war against God's people for thousands of years and the only way we can safely oppose him is by being constantly watchful [see 1 Pet.5:8].

3. THE KINGDOM OF GOD

1 Tim.1:17, Jer.10:10, Matt.4:17, Lk.1:32-33, Ps.10:16, Ps.93:2, Ps.145:13, Dan.4:3, 34; Dan.7:14, Ex.15:18, Rev.15:3 [amp], Rev.19:6.

The kingdom of God is His universal dominion and rulership over all creation. Every created thing, living or non-living is a subject of this vast kingdom. In several scriptures in both Testaments, God is addressed as a King.

At present, there are rebels in this kingdom (in the person of Satan and his own followers); however, this present rebellion will be forcefully put down in a future battle called the Battle of Armageddon [see 1 Cor.15:24, Isa.24:21-22, Rev.19:11-21, Dan.7:27].

After that, the Kingdom will rule over all creation once again as the rebels would have been defeated and confined forever and ever into their eternal place of punishment and torment-the lake of fire [see Rev.14:9-11, Rev.19:20, Rev.20:7-15, Matt.25:41, 46]. It is referred to in Bible Prophecy as The Age of Ages or Eternal Future [see Rev.21-22].

NOTE: *For a comprehensive study on what Eternity with God in His Kingdom will be and look like, please request our Bible study Companion, Eschatology.*

CONCLUSION

We have been able to see that although unknown to millions of people living on earth today, several church goers included; there are several spiritual realities that are even more real than any physical thing we can see, touch, taste, smell or hear. God exists, so does the devil and God the Father, God the Word and God the Spirit are Kings, ruling over a vast spiritual kingdom that includes everything in the universe—including our little planet earth.

PERSONAL ASSESSMENT

1. Before this study, what was your understanding of the Holy Trinity?
2. **The Bible says the devil is our adversary. Do you think if you don't trouble the devil, he will leave you alone? Please explain.**
3. Explain how the devil was defeated and how you can apply his defeat for your own daily victory.
4. **When do we become members of God's kingdom? Explain with scriptures.**

LESSON SIX

SPIRITUAL REALITIES (Part Two)

INTRODUCTION

As we continue further in this study, we will see even clearer realities that entrenches our freedom in the redemption that Jesus gave to us. Proper Biblical understanding of these realities is all we need as we plunge deeper into a genuine walk with God...

Main Text: 2Cor.13:8

4. THE KINGDOM OF SATAN

Lk.4:5-6, Mk.3:22-26, Eph.2:2, Eph.6:12, Dan.10:12-13, Acts 26:18, Jn.12:31, 2 Cor.4:4.

Satan is a also king with his own rebellious kingdom. He rules over this present fallen world, and his kingdom is divided into Principalities, powers, Rulers of the darkness of this present world and wicked spirits in the heavenlies.

He rules over most of man's economic, social, political and religious activities of man [Lk.5:4-5, Eph.2:2]. The members of this kingdom are fallen angels, fallen men and demons. Every human being you see, as long as they have not received Jesus, they are hopeless subjects of this kingdom, whether they know it or not [see Eph.2:12, Eph.2:2].

Men are subjects of this kingdom by birth [Ps.51:5, Job 14:4, Eph.2:3, Rom.3:23, Jn.8:34] and they can only be freed from this kingdom by death to their old self at the moment they receive Jesus [Rom.6:6-7]. **If one doesn't receive Jesus while on earth, then such person is doomed as the destination of every subject of Satan's kingdom is the lake of fire [Matt.25:41, Matt.7:13].**

How Satan's kingdom rule this present world

i. Politics [or Influence]

Every nation of the world has a government-whether democratic, autocratic or a monarchy. Over every nation, Satan has trusted fallen angels who do his **bidding and constantly seek to advance Satan's kingdom.**

Satan and his angels are very much interested in issues like who gets elected or who comes to power in every nation. Such political appointments includes all levels of government- President, his vice, heads of senate and house of Reps, governors, ministers, commissioners, local government chairmen, even heads of landlord associations [Lk.4:5-6, 1 Jn.5:19, Dan.10:13, 20, Eph.2:2]

It should equally be noted that God also has great angels who watch over and work on expanding the kingdom of God among men in each nation, hence there is always heavy spiritual battles raging in the heavenlies [see Dan.12:1, Rev.12:7-9]. The victory or defeat of the holy angels is directly proportional to **the prayers and faithfulness of Christians to expanding God's kingdom per time [see Matt.16:19, Matt.18:18]**

ii. Money

One of the greatest forces that the devil uses to rule this world is money. Apart from the devil, it is the only other thing that the Lord Jesus calls a 'master' [Matt.6:24]. Men have been known to sell their souls for money. Most of the music and movies peddled by the entertainment industry all over the world is for money. Worldly fashion and the glamour of wealth and affluence are praised and rated high. This present world is a paradise for rich people.

Most girls prostituting or even sleeping around with their boyfriends mainly do it for money, not that they love the act that much; same goes for robbers, internet scammers, assassins and so on. Equally included are people who want more and more university or college degrees because it gives them an opportunity to earn more and more money. Why are you doing what you are doing?

However, the Lord Jesus clearly taught us not to run after money, saying it is pagans that run primarily after food, clothing and shelter [see Matt.6:31-33]. He said whatever we need will be provided for us by God as we live for Him and do His will.

The rule for the Christian then is contentment. The Bible advised us not to seek more than what we can eat or wear and whatever we can give to someone else in need [see 1 Tim.6:6-11].

iii. Sex

The number of human beings that are in bondage to sex is fearful...long is the list of young people and teenagers who are fornicators. Several men and women have abandoned the sacredness of marriage and are actively looking for new sex partners.

This is not to mention sexual perverts like homosexuals, lesbians, violent sex or those who engage in group sex. The very things the world calls entertainment (movies and musical videos) are tainted with immoral sex. Top on the list on sins that gives a person an express admission into hell are sexual sins.

[Please see 1 Cor.6:9, Eph.5:4-5, Rev.21:8, Gal.5:19-21, Rev.22:15, Rom.1:26-27, Rom.13:13, 1 Cor.5:11, Heb.13:4, Lev.18:22, Deut.23:17, Judg.19:22, Mk.7:21]

iv. Religion

There had never been an age like ours with so many religions claiming to be the right path to God. Please let it be clear in your mind and heart that Christianity is NOT a religion- instead it is the relationship that man lost in Eden that God Almighty has restored through the person of the Lord Jesus Christ [please see Jn.14:6, 2 Cor.5:18-21, Jn.17:2-3].

If Jesus is the only way to God (and we believe He is because the Bible says so; please see Acts 4:12, 1 Tim.2:5, Mk.16:16, Jn.3:36, 1 Cor.3:11, Heb.2:3, 1

Jn.5:11-12, Rev.20:15), then who is the source of all the religions of this world? And where do they lead to? Who had always been counterfeiting the true worship of God by always giving every tongue, tribe and nation of men in every age a religion and an object of worship? Who had always wanted to be like God and had been coveting and is still coveting the worship and praise due to God alone?

The answer is this: Satan the devil [Isa.14:13-14]

And the Bible confirms this truth. [Please see Matt.4:9-10, Josh.24:14, Deut.32:17, 2 Cor.4:4, 1 Kgs.18:21- 39, Ps.106:37, 1 Cor.10:20 [amp], Rev. 9:20, Rev.13:4, Rev.19:20, 1Kgs.11:5, 7-8].

v. Occultism

Occultism is also one of the major ways by which the devil's kingdom controls this world. Occultism is simply communicating or traffic with demons. While those who are religious may never even know that who they are worshipping is the devil, the occultist on the other hand knows that he or she is asking for help and assistance from spiritual powers different from God [Please see 1 Sam.28:1-8, 1Chron.10:13, Deut.18:10-11, Isa.8:19, Isa.19:3, Acts 16:16, Lev.19:31].

Getting and using all manner of charms to become rich, harm or put a spell on somebody and so on, joining secret societies, relating with witch doctors and herbalists are some of the surest ways of being initiated into occultism.

The occultist believes that Satan's power is supreme but he is deluded for Satan's power was broken at the Cross when Jesus died and defeated the devil for us. Every time you are confronted by occult powers, either physically or in the dream, know that it is a lower power and as long as you stay in union with the Lord Jesus, their charms and amulets or even spiritual attacks against you are useless. This is the truth and the Word of God confirms this. [Please see Lk.10:18-19, Ps.91:13, Mk.16:18, Ezek.2:6, Rom.16:20, Lk.21:17-18, Heb.13:6, Ps.118:6]

5. HELL

The Word Hell means she'ol in Hebrew and Hades in Greek. In both languages it means the world of departed spirits, the unseen world or the abode of the dead in the depth of the earth [Lk.16:23, Matt.11:23, Matt.16:18]. Geheena is another word and it is taken from the valley of Hinnom in the south of the city of Jerusalem where the refuse and rubbish of the entire city was constantly burning. The Lord Jesus used geheena to explain the eternal punishment awaiting those who will choose to go to hell. Geheena was mentioned twelve times in the New Testament and eleven of those times, the Lord Jesus Himself warned us about the eternal horror and doom of hell [please see Matt.5:22, 29-30, Matt.10:28, Matt.18:9, Matt.23:15, 33; Mk.9:43, 45, 47, Lk.12:5]. Hell is divided into five compartments, namely:

i. Tartarus

2 Pet.2:4, Jude 1:6, 2 Pet.2:9, 1 Pet.3:19-20.

This is the prison where some of Satan's fallen angels that had sex with human women before and after the flood of Noah are kept till the judgment day [see Gen.6:1-4]. It is a dark abysmal pit in the depth of the earth. Only the fallen angels that sinned with human women are recorded by the Bible as being imprisoned here. No demon spirit or lost human being is here.

ii. Paradise

Lk.16:19-31, Lk.23:43, Matt.12:40.

This was the abode of all the righteous souls from the time of Abel till Jesus Christ after physical death on earth. Here, they were held against their will by Satan until the Lord Jesus arose from the dead and freed them.

The Bible attests to this fact. [Please see Eph.4:8, Matt.27:50-53] Now when the righteous die, they go to heaven to be with the Lord, awaiting the resurrection of their bodies at the time of the rapture of the church [1 Thes.4:13-18, 1 Cor.15:51-52].

The Paradise in sheol is now empty. Paul mentioned another paradise in the third heavens where God dwells [2 Cor.12:1-4], so also Apostle John records that the Lord Jesus spoke of probably this same heavenly paradise [Rev.2:7].

NOTE: For more understanding on the resurrection of the body, please see Lesson Five of this same book, Elementary Doctrines; subsection 5 — Resurrection of the Dead.

iii. Bottomless pit or Abyss

Lk.8: 26-31, Rom.10:7, Rev.9:1-3, 11; Rev.11:7, Rev.17:8, Rev.20:1-10.

This is the abode of some fallen angels and demons. It will be a prison where Satan will be locked up for one thousand years just before the millennial reign of Christ. It is also from this prison that he will be released to go and deceive the nations of the world for one more time before he is seized and thrown into the lake of fire forever.

iv. Hell fire

Lk.16:19-31, 2 Pet.2:9, Ps.9:17, prov.7:27, Prov.9:18, Prov.15:24, Isa.14:15, Lk.16:28.

This is the present place of torment. It is the confinement of every wicked human being that had lived from Adam till now. Sadly, millions more will go into this place till after the millennial reign of Christ when they will all be brought out to face their final judgment [please see 2 Pet.2:9, Rev.20:10-15] Human spirits and souls are confined here while their bodies remain in the grave until the second resurrection —the resurrection of damnation when they will be sent to their eternal ruin, the Lake of Fire [Dan.12:2, Rev.20:12-15].

v. Lake of Fire

Rev.20:10-15, Rev.14:10-11, Rev.19:20, Matt.25:41, 46; Matt.3:12, Isa.66:24.

This is the eternal place of torment. Presently, it is empty but it will be the final confinement and eternal doom for everyone who refuses the Lordship of Jesus after the judgment of all the wicked just before the beginning of the Age of Ages or eternal future; starting with the devil, his angels, demon and every rebellious human being, it will be an eternal, infernal prison of unending, indescribable torture, pain and undiluted anguish for every occupant day and night forever and ever ... [See Rev.14:11, Rev.20:10].

6. HEAVEN

Deut.26:15, Mk.16:19, Gen.22:11, Matt.6:9, Gen.1:1.

There are three places the Bible called heaven. They are explained below:

i. The Third Heavens

Mk.16:19, Acts 1:11, Acts 7:55-56, 2 Cor.12:1-3, Isa.53:16, Matt.6:9, 1 Kgs.8:30, 43, 49; Matt.5:45. This is the place where God dwells with cherubims, archangels, angels of different types and other heavenly beings. It is not visible to the physical eyes, like God and other spirit beings, this place or realm is spiritual.

ii. The Second Heavens

Gen.1:15-20, Rev.12:7-9, Isa.14:12-14, Lk.10:18, Ps.8:3, Ps.19:1, Ps.33:6, Isa.45:12.

This is the starry space that contains all the known and unknown galaxies of our universe. It is actually the space or distance between Earth and Heaven. **This is also the ‘heavens’ where Satan and his fallen angels have set up their kingdom ‘in heavenly places’.**[Eph.6:12, Eph.2:2, Isa.22:25].

iii. Atmospheric Heavens

Gen.1:8, 20; Gen.8:2, Isa.14:14, 2 Sam.21:10, Jer.4:25, Matt.8:20.

This is the clouds or the skies. It is the visible atmospheric heavens of our world where birds, insects and aeroplanes fly and from where rain falls. It is physical and literal.

7. RAPTURE

Acts 1:9-11, Jn.14:1-3, Jn.12:26, Jn.17:24, 1 Thes.4:16-18, 1 Cor.15:51-52.

This is the sudden and supernatural removal of saints from this world by the Lord Jesus Christ when He appears in the skies to receive us unto Himself.

According to Acts 1:9-11 & John 14:1-3, the Lord Jesus will return to this world the same way He left—in the air (This is the event we call the rapture;

the second time the Lord Jesus comes to this earth personally, He is coming to put down all rebellion and set up a Millennial kingdom on earth- see 1 Cor.15:25, Rev.20:1-4).

The essence of the rapture is for the Lord to remove the saints [i.e. His true church] from the earth before the rise of the antichrist and the tribulation (this is the gross misfortune, trouble and global crisis that will take place in the last seven years that will be the conclusion of this age). The essence or the purpose of the rapture is briefly given below:

The Purpose of the Rapture

1. The Lord comes back for the saints: To receive saints to Himself as promised [1 Thes. 4:17; John 14:1-3; Ephes. 5:27]
2. Resurrection of the Righteous: To resurrect the bodies of those who died in Christ from among the wicked dead. [1 Thes. 4:14,16-17; Philip.3:11; Rev. 20:4-6]

The souls of those who died in Christ are now in heaven while the ones who died in sin are in hell [see Heb.12:23, Lk.16:19-31]. The bodies of both classes are in the grave [Eccl.12:7, Gen.3:19]. The bodies of the wicked dead will be resurrected at a later date [see Rev.20:12-13]

3. Collection of Rewards: To take saints to heaven to live in the New Jerusalem, the heavenly city and receive rewards for how they lived and served

God while on earth [1Thes.4:17, 1Thes.3:13; John 14:1-3; 2 Cor. 5:10; Hebrews 12:22-23; Rev. 19:1-10; Rev. 21:9-10]

4. Glorified Bodies: To change bodies of saints to immortality [1Thes. 4:16-17; 1 Cor. 15:35-58; Philip.3:21]

5. Presentation of the true Church: To present saints before God [1Thes. 4:17; 1Thes. 3:13; John 14:1-3; Jude 1:24; Rev. 19:1-10]

6. To impart wholeness: To make saints whole in body, soul, and spirit [1Thes. 4:16-17; 1 Thes.5:23; Philip.3:21]

7. To Remove the church before the Tribulation: Saints will escape the tribulation foretold in Rev. 6:1 to 19:21. [1Thes. 4:16-17; 1Thes. 5:9; Luke 21:36]

8. Give way to the beginning of the end: To remove the hinderer of lawlessness [2Thes. 2:7]

9. Allow the rise of the Man of Sin: To permit the revelation of the Antichrist [2Thes. 2:7]

CONCLUSION

A lot has been said about Satan's kingdom, heaven, hell and the rapture. Carefully studying these truths and meditating on them until they become a part of us is all we need to do so that we will never again doubt God about the reality of hell, the certainty of the occurrence of the rapture and so on.

PERSONAL ASSESSMENT

1. How many compartments or divisions are in sheol [or hell]? Explain with scriptures.
2. What are the five major ways by which Satan's kingdom rules this world? List and discuss.
3. What is the rapture and how can you explain its importance?
4. According to this study, how does a person become a member of Satan's kingdom and what is the way out?

LESSON SEVEN

OTHER IMPORTANT CHRISTIAN DOCTRINES AND TERMINOLOGIES (Part One)

INTRODUCTION

As we grow in the faith, there are several terminologies (definitions) and doctrines (teachings) that we will be coming across. Numerous people bypassed these prerequisites and their growth is now stunted...the need for us to have a healthy spiritual life is why we are going to be looking at these doctrines and terminologies. May God grant us understanding.

Main Text:

1. Salvation

Acts 4:12, Matt.1:21, 1 Cor.3:11, Acts 10:43.

This is deliverance or freedom from Sin, self, Satan and the world system based on the finished, substitutionary work of the Lord Jesus on the Cross of Calvary [2 Cor.5:15, Jn.19:30, Col.2:14-15]. It is the spiritual and eternal release from sin and its consequences granted immediately by God to those who accept His conditions of repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus, in whom alone it is to be obtained.

Thus, two very important factors are required for a person to be saved:

- i. Faith in the message of the Cross [Rom.10:9-10].
- ii. **Repentance from one's former life of sin** [Acts 17:30].

Quick Facts to know about Salvation:

- a. Only Through Christ [Lu 1:69, 2:30] because He is—
 - i. The only Door [Jn.10:9]
 - ii. The only Saviour [Acts 4:12]
 - iii. The only Way [Jn.14:6]
 - iv. The only Foundation [1 Cor.3:11]
 - v. The only Truth [Jn.14:6]
 - vi. The only Light [Jn.9:5]
 - vii. The only Life [Jn. 14:6]

Salvation is a three-fold work of grace.

We were saved. This talks about when we gave our lives to the Lord Jesus when we believed in Him for the salvation of our souls [see Jn.1:12, Rom.10:9-10].

We are being saved. This explains the continuous work of grace upon our lives in daily delivering us from the power of sin and all manner of temptations [see Rom.5:10 amp, Jude 1:24] and

We will be saved. This talk about either our death or the rapture of the church when the Lord Jesus will save us from every possibility of falling and give us glorified bodies [see Rom.13:11, 2Pet.3:13-15].

2. The Gospel

Matt.4:23, Matt.9:35, Matt.24:14, Mark 1:14, Gal.3:8, Mark 13:10, Mk. 1:15.

This is the good news that salvation (or freedom from bondage) has come to all men and we can now be citizens of the Kingdom of God through our faith in the substitutionary sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

Those who accept this good news will be saved, those who reject it will be damned and they will have the Lake of Fire as their eternal portion [Rom.10:9-10, Mk.16:16, Jn.3:18, 36; Jn.12:48, Acts 16:30-32].

This is why, even though we all claim to be Born Again, we need to be sure that we genuinely believe the gospel. We need to search ourselves again and again and ask, **“Do I truly believe in the death, burial, resurrection and ascension of the Lord Jesus as the sacrifice for my sins?”**

3. The Cross

1 Cor.2:2 amp, Gal.6:14 nlt, Col.1:20 amp, Col.2:14-15 amp.

The Cross is the means God used to eternally defeat the devil and conquer his kingdom [Col.2:15 amp, 1 Cor.2:6-8]. It is the instrument of death that puts

an end to our natural or old life, so that we can be raised as New Men in Christ [Rom.6:1-6].

The devil and his angels and demons hate the preaching of the Cross because that is the only doctrine that exposes them as they are—weak, impotent, defeated and doomed [Col.2:15 NCV, PHILLIPS, MSG, TEV, NLT, AMP, ICB]

4. The Blood of Jesus

Zech.13:1 amp, Matt.26:28, Mk.14:24, Acts 20:28, Rom.5:9, 1 Cor.11:25, Eph.1:7, Col.1:14, Col.1:20 amp, Heb.9:12, 14; Heb.12:19, Rev.1:5, Rev.5:9.

The Blood of Jesus generally symbolizes how our salvation was procured. The Lord Jesus was born by Mary but He had no physical father—for Joseph had not yet had sexual intercourse with Mary before the pregnancy and birth of the Lord Jesus [see Matt.1:18-20 nlt]; it is a proven medical fact that the blood of the mother and child do not mix during pregnancy and that the blood of the child is the same blood of the Father of the child.

Thus, since is the scripturally proven that Jesus had no physical father [Lk.1:26-35 msg, Matt.1:18-20], then whose blood flowed and is still flowing in His veins? THE BLOOD OF GOD! [Please see Lk.1:35, Jn.20:31]. Thus, when He was born, He became the second Adam—or the second original Man whose father was God [see Lk.3:38]. Since He was not from Adam's cursed and sin-infested lineage [Gen.5:1-3, Lk.1:35], the devil and his cronies

had no power over Him and everywhere He sees them, He always puts them to shame [Mk.3:11].

When they finally put Him to death, they were happy that they have finally gotten rid of Him. However, there was a major complication. Satan's legal authority was only over all of sinful Adam's descendants—that is, every human being [Ps.51:5, Job 14:4, Rom.3:23]; not over Jesus—who is clearly not a descendant of Adam.

The implication of this is that the devil had put to death someone he had neither power nor authority over. Plainly speaking, he had committed a capital spiritual crime and lost legal ownership and right over mankind whose sins it is now revealed, was the reason why Jesus surrendered Himself to be killed [Heb.2:14-15, 1 Cor.2:8].

Thus, by the shedding of the Blood of the Lord Jesus for our sins and our faith in that blood, we are completely cleansed from every form of sin, guilt and condemnation—by the same blood of Christ [Matt.26:28, Rom.3:25, Heb.9:22, Lk.24:47, Acts 10:43]. Now, regardless of the ferocity of the evil all around us, dark angels and demons must exempt us as they attack the rest of unsaved humanity because of the seal and invocation of the blood of Jesus [Ex.12:13, Ps.91:7].

5. Restitution

Lk.19:8, Ex.22:12, Lev.6:4, Num.5:7, 2 Sam.12:1-7, Neh.5:11, Ezek.33:15.

This is the act of returning or restoring to a person something or right of which he has been unjustly deprived. Genuine Christians return back whatever it is they have wrongly deprived their fellow man while a sinner.

However, wisdom must be applied in certain issues—for instance, in the case of a man involved in a hit and run vehicle accident, in making confession and restitution; **it is wise to go to the victim's house with elders of the community** so that the issue can be amicably resolved.

6. Adoption

Rom.8:14-19,

7. Sanctification John 17:17, 1 Thess. 4:3, 2 Cor. 6:17-18

8. Reconciliation

2Cor.5:18-19, Rom.5:10-11, Col.1:21.

This is the end of hostility or enmity and the restoration of a friendly relationship between God and man through the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. Mankind had been cut off from God because of sin and under the anger and judgment of God since the fall of Adam [see Isa.59:1-2, Gen.6:5-7, Rom.1:18, Rom.8:7-8, Col.1:21, Eph.2:3].

Man has to be reconciled back to God if he will be able to overcome the enmity between him and God and become a friend of God once more. Through the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus, this had been made possible. Mankind is now restored to God and every human being who believes and accepts the sacrifice of Jesus can enjoy intimacy with God [2Cor.13:14]!

9. Redemption

Matt.20:28, Rom.3:24-25, Gal.3:13, Eph.1:7, Col.1:14, 1 Tim.2:6, Rev.1:5.

Mankind was totally in slavery to sin and under the sentence of death and there was no way of escape or freedom from bondage [Jn.8:34, Rom.6:17, 23; 1 Jn.5:19]. For man to be free, a ransom has to be paid—the ransom that was paid was the very life of the Lord Jesus Christ for you and I and the rest of humanity.

He died for our sins that we may die to them no more—instead, we should be free, free to serve Him and freed from the dominion of sin and death and all this is possible because Jesus bought us back—with His own blood [Rom.8:1-2, Acts 20:28]

CONCLUSION

Having carefully gone through these definitions and doctrines, it is certain that we have gone deeper in our understanding of what the Lord Jesus Christ is calling us to—an intimate relationship with Him! Hearing terminologies

like consecration, Adoption, the blood and others should not give us any more problems. We have been called of God and we have come to Him and now, we know the extent of what He has prepared and achieved on our behalf!

PERSONAL ASSESSMENT

1. With scriptures, explain in details what you understand by adoption.
2. Why is the Blood of Jesus a very important doctrine for the believer? Share your understanding of the reasons with us.
3. According to Col.2:15, what did God use in defeating the devil and his kingdom?
4. What did Jesus use to redeem us back to God?

LESSON EIGHT

OTHER IMPORTANT CHRISTIAN DOCTRINES AND TERMINOLOGIES (Part Two)

INTRODUCTION

Comprehending and being able to fully explain doctrines that constantly turn up in scriptures, not having an academic knowledge which is after the flesh and does not glorify the Lord—instead having a revelation and an experiential knowledge that saves our souls and draws us closer to the Lord is what we need as we progress on this pilgrimage with the Lord.

Most men just learn terminologies and religious language that does nobody any good. As we progress with the Lord in this lesson, we will trust Him to unveil to us the true meaning of these terms and teachings. May our eyes of understanding be enlightened in Jesus name. Amen.

Main Text:

1. Justification

Gen.15:6, Lk.18:14, Acts 13:39, Rom.3:28, Rom.4:5, Rom.5:1, 9; Rom.8:30.

To be justified is to be declared ‘not guilty’ in the court room of heaven. It means to acquit and declare righteous [see Rom.4:2, 5; Rom.5:1] by God because of our faith in the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus for our sins.

Anyone who has not believed Jesus stands and remains condemned—with their sins hanging on their necks [see Jn.3:18, Jn.5:24]. No one can be righteous in observance to the Law of God [Gal.2:16]. We cannot in ourselves please God or be pleasing to Him...this is the reason why God made another way—the Only Way, available. Through the life, death, burial, resurrection **and ascension of the Lord Jesus, we now stand justified or declared ‘not guilty’** by God. We need to accept this sacrifice and begin walking in Him so that we can become all that the Lord has ordained us to be!

2. Condemnation

Mk.16:16 amp, jmnt, erv; Jn.3:36 amp, Matt.23:14 amp, Jn.3:18-19 amp, Jn.8:24 amp, Jn.12:47-48, Acts 13:46, 2Thes.1:8, 2Thes.2:12, Rev.20:15, Rev.21:8.

Condemnation is to be adjudged guilty. This means anyone who does not accept or receive Jesus is already condemned and on his way towards eternal damnation and torment. Several come to church today but stand condemned. They are church people but they are not born again—they have not believed Jesus to save their souls. Do you believe in the Lord Jesus for the salvation of your own soul [Rom.10:9-10]?

People do not go to hell because they are sinners...people go to hell because they refuse to accept the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus as the payment for their sins [Mk.16:16, Jn.3:36].

What about you?

Do you believe?

3. Righteousness

Gen.6:9, Gen.15:6, Rom.3:21-22, Rom.1:17, Rom.9:30, Rom.5:19, 21 amp, Rom.10:3-4 amp.

This means right standing or right relationship with God. Righteousness cannot be attained by the Law [Rom.3:21-22, Gal.2:16], it is a gift of God through faith—faith in the person and sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. Many think that the way God will accept them is if they try harder at being good or **struggle to obey each of God’s laws by paying different sacrificial offering or ‘working for God’ in their churches**—but the Bible says that for no person will be acquitted in his sight on the ground of obedience to the law of Moses (or the struggle to please God through self-effort. See Gal.2:16). What the Law imparts is the consciousness of sin. There are two types of righteousness—imputed righteousness and imparted righteousness.

i. Imputed Righteousness- Gen.15:6, Rom.4:3-6, Rom.4:11, 22; Gal.2:16, Acts 13:39, Gal.3:6-9, 11; James 2:23, Rom.9:30, Philip.3:9.

This is the righteousness (or right standing with God) that is credited to our account when we believe the Lord Jesus as our Lord and Saviour and we accept that He suffered for our sins. The simpler way to explain this is, God considers us as saints, holy and washed of our sins immediately we receive the

Lord Jesus (this is what we mean by righteousness being credited to our account). The basis for that consideration is not what we do or don't do, it is based on our faith in the person of the Lord Jesus and His sacrifice for our sins [see Gal.2:16].

ii. Imparted Righteousness- Philip.2:13 amp, Heb.13:21, Jn.3:27, 1Pet.5:10, Col.1:9-11 [amp], Col.4:12 [amp, tlb, msg], 1Thes.5:23, 1 pet.5:10 amp.

This is the ability that comes to us through salvation where we are filled with both the willingness and the enablement (or strength) to live a life pleasing to God and separate from the ways of the Lord. The Bible says that the person who belongs to Christ does not practice sinning [1 Jn.3:9 amp], because he is born of God. When believers struggle with sins and divers sinful habits, it is because they have not yet come to the Cross where their old lives of sin will be completely crushed and they receive an impartation as new creatures in Christ Jesus, zealous unto nothing else but good works that will be pleasing and acceptable to God.

4. Holiness

1Pet.2:21-25 PHILLIPS, MSG; Rom.6:1-23 AMP, WUEST; Jn.8:34, Rom.8:4, 12 amp, 1Cor.3:16-17 amp, 1Cor.6:19-20.

Holiness is living by the examples of Jesus in all things by following in the footsteps (or lifestyle) of Him who did not commit a single sin [Jn.8:46 bbe,

amp; 2Cor.5:21, Heb.4:15, Heb.7:26, Heb.9:14, 1Pet.1:19, 1Jn.3:5 tlb, auv]. Nobody holier than Jesus ever lived in this world. More so, the only type of life God will look at and accept as the pattern we ought to follow and who we ought to be like in our thoughts, speech and action, yea, in all things, is the man Jesus—this is confirmed by God Himself [Matt.17:5, Isa.42:1, Matt.3:17, 2Pet.1:16-17, Lk.9:35 amp, Heb.12:2].

To struggle to be holy by self efforts and rigorous self discipline is useless for it is not acceptable to God as all our righteousness is like filthy rags before God. The righteousness that is acceptable in heaven is that which is based on faith in Christ [Phil.3:9]. Saying what the Master said, thinking what He thought and doing what He did in every circumstance is the New Testament conception and definition of holiness—for nothing pleases God in every situation like the life of Jesus and there is no how we will be pleasing to Him except we conform to the life of this same Jesus [Rom.8:29, 1Cor.15:49 amp].

5. Atonement

Gal.1:4, 2Cor.5:18-19, Rom.5:8-11, Rom.3:25.

This is the expiation of (or sacrifice paid for) sin made by the obedience and personal suffering of Jesus Christ on the Cross of Calvary. By dying for the sin of mankind, the Lord Jesus paid the death penalty hanging on the head of every human being.

The only person that could possibly have atoned for the sin of mankind is the Man, Jesus Christ [see Jn.1:29, 36; Acts 4:10, 12; 1Thes.1:10,]. In the Old

Testament, several examples points to the coming of the Lord Jesus, who will come and take away our sins [see Lev.1:4 amp, Lev.5:16-18 amp, Lev.17:11 amp]. In all the aforementioned passages, the truth is established that the guilt is transferred from the sinful upon the innocent substitute [which is Jesus Christ], in order to make amends to violated justice, and to cover (atone) or put out of sight the guilt (compare Mic.7:19), and to save the sinner from the wages of sin which is death.

6. Propitiation

Rom.3:24-25 amp, 1Jn.2:1-2 amp, 1Jn.4:10 amp

This is the sacrifice by which atonement and reconciliation is obtained. When Jesus took our place, He became the sacrificial lamb killed in order to take away our sins. He is a sacrificial offering offered once and for all [Heb.7:26-27, Heb.9:12, 26, 28; Heb.10:10, 1Pet.3:18]. The central idea is that God is made loving, kind, and forgiving to the sinner by the shedding of blood—the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, and that the sacrificial blood substantiates the sinner's acceptance of the righteous sentence of God's holy law, so that He could be favourable to the sinner. Thus, God covers, overlooks, and pardons the sinner.

Propitiation is the basis on which God sets forth His own righteousness, and yet pardons men without compromising His own justice and righteousness. God can through the propitiation of Christ forgive and be just in justifying

every sinner who believes and becomes reconciled to Him through Jesus Christ.

7. Regeneration

1Pet.1:23 amp, Tit.3:5

This means being born anew, or being born again and it happens the moment we humbly submit our lives to the lordship of Jesus and we believe in His sacrifice for our sins [Jn.1:12-13, Jn.3:3-6, Eph.2:1, 5; Tit.3:5]. It is not something we can do by or for ourselves. It is simply the work of God. We can only accept the offer to give our lives to the Lord but it is the Holy Spirit that regenerates us.

Without it, we will remain hopelessly in our sins and will be unable to taste or experience a spiritual life [Tit.3:3-7, James 1:18, Ps.51:10, Ezek.11:19]. It is the gateway into the kingdom of God and adoption into the family of God [Jn.3:3, 6; Jn.1:12, 13].

Once we are regenerated or born again, we become new people with a new inward life that begins to renew our minds to think anew and shape our attitudes. Hatred for sin and a loving attitude towards others [see 1Pet.2:2, Gal.6:15, Eph.4:23-24, Col.3:10, 12-13].

8. The Law

Jn.1:17, Jn.5:45, Rom.3:19-21, Gal.2:16,

This is the revelation of God to Moses [Ex.24:12]. It includes all the books of Moses [Genesis to Deuteronomy], the Judges and Kings, the Major and Minor Prophets [Isaiah, Daniel, Jeremiah and others] and the Poetic books [Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Songs of Solomon etc.]. We know this as the Old Testament. It is on these Law that Judaism—the religion of the Jews is based. It is **this same law that the Pharisees and Sadducees of Jesus' time were** custodians of [Matt.23:2].

The Bible is clear on the fact that man cannot by himself obtain victory over sin by obedience to the law of Moses—for the purpose of the law itself is to prove that man cannot be righteous by self-effort but by accepting the righteousness that God offers through the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ... [Rom.3:20, 22].

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