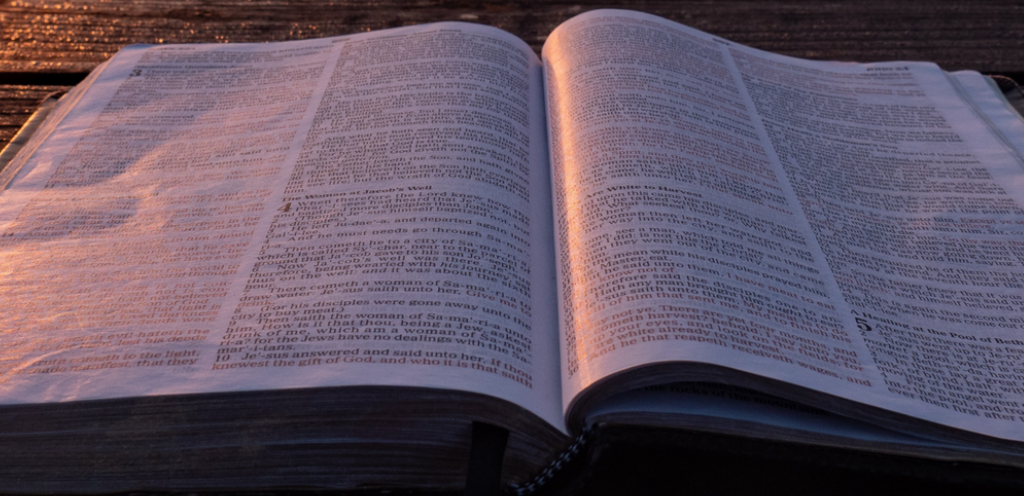


Out of Darkness

A journey from
Jesus to Justification

*For the Bible Student, the New
Christian, and for those who want to
know.*



Colleen McLean

“OUT OF DARKNESS”

**A journey from Jesus to justification to eternal
life!**

A Sequel to Fast Foundations From Genesis to Jesus

*“You are a chosen people. You are royal
priests, a holy nation, God’s very own
possession. As a result, you can show
others the goodness of God,
for he called you out of the darkness into
his wonderful light.” (1 Peter 2:9)*

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Many people are spooked by the word “theology.” They see it as a ploy to turn lovers of God into boring bible intellectuals.

However, I intend to show you how theology leads us to discover God’s character and His nature. It is not just absorbing Scripture; it is all about a relationship with a Living God; the Author of the Book.

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INTRODUCTION

The Bible is undoubtedly God's Word. It is the only book that reveals Jesus in His glory, and its goal is to bring us into a relationship with the Author and transform us into His likeness. So, if we are to be like Jesus, it makes excellent sense to know all about Him. Studying His Word reveals who He is and who we are in Him. Thus, the lens through which we interpret the Bible is the One whom the book is all about—Jesus. But, unfortunately, when we turn the Bible into a blueprint for life, we make it a moral instruction book instead of a picture that reveals the beauty of Jesus Christ. In Jesus' day, some people thought Scripture was a rulebook to guide their behaviour. They knew the Scriptures; however, according to Jesus, they missed who the Scriptures spoke of (John 5:39–40).

Why Study the Word of God?

Many people are spooked by the word “theology.” They see it as a ploy to turn lovers of God into boring bible intellectuals. However, I intend to show you how theology leads us to discover God’s character and nature. Therefore, we should all aspire to be theologians in the true sense of the word. Theological study is not only for professors because it is in knowing God and His ways that we get through the trials of life. It is not just about absorbing the Scriptures; it is all about a relationship with the Author of the Book.

Good Bible Study is a way of renewing our minds, which allows the Spirit of God to shape our perception of God. For example, in Mark 8:13–21, Jesus warned the disciples about the leaven of the Pharisees. Leaven subtly influences our minds, shaping how we perceive reality. For the Pharisees, it resulted in the deception of thinking that whatever they could accomplish in their strength had been directed by God. Instead, when we allow our minds to be permeated by Kingdom leaven, then kingdom realities will shine. Jesus said, "You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me." Therefore, if our study of the bible doesn't lead us to a deeper relationship (an encounter) with God, it adds to a tendency towards spiritual pride and intellectualism.

Jesus did not say, "My sheep will know my book." We are to know His voice (John 10:3). Anyone can learn the Bible as a book—the devil knows and quotes the Scriptures. When our lives depend on the Holy Spirit, we will recognise His voice, and Scripture will confirm it. So, I urge you to diligently study the Scriptures to know Him intimately. Remember, our ability to love God stems from our first tasting His love for us. Then we respond with our love for Him (1 John 4:19).

Therefore, when we study the Word of God, it is essential to understand that it is not about our love for God but His perfect love for us. So, as we encounter the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit within the pages, I encourage you to allow it to activate your faith and live out of that relationship.

1 John 4:10

"In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins."

Rightly Divide the Word of God

When we read the Bible, we need to follow the Apostle Paul's advice to Timothy, a young man pastoring the church at Ephesus. Paul told him, "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15 NKJV). To rightly divide the Word is to distinguish what occurred before the cross from what happened after the cross and understand the difference the cross made. Jesus did not come to condemn or destroy. Instead, he came to seek and save (John 3:17; Luke 19:10). By the way, the New Covenant began with the death of Jesus, even though the New Testament Scriptures start at the beginning of Matthew.

**The Bible says in Hebrews 8:13,
"When God speaks of a "new" covenant, it means
He has made the first one obsolete.**

Pay Attention to How You Hear

Jesus said in Luke 8:18a, "So pay attention to how you hear." Why? Because how we hear can influence the way we read the Bible. For example, we can read the Bible to validate what we already believe and make the Bible say something it does not say. So when we read the Bible, we understand that not all of it is addressed directly to us. So, how do we know which Scriptures apply to us personally? By recognising the dividing line between the Covenants (Hebrews 8:13), understanding the work of the Holy Spirit, and reading Scripture in its context.

Understand The Work of The Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is in us to remind us of the main clause of the New Covenant—that God will remember our sins no more (Hebrews 8:12). He is in us to point to Jesus, to guide and help, not to condemn. (God cannot forget our sins but chooses not to remember them).

Context

A fundamental Bible interpretation principle is to identify

- 1. Who is the author**
- 2. When it was written**
- 3. Who the verse is addressing**
- 4. Who the verse is talking about**
- 5. What was the intended meaning at the time (it has to make sense to the original hearers)**
- 6. What was the cultural setting**

Therefore, it is essential to read everything in context!

For example, Philippians 2:12 NKJV says, “Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling”—that sounds like we have work to do. Yet, the next verse, completing the sentence, reveals the source of the effort—verse 13, “for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.” His life in us does the work. He gives us the passion for bringing Him glory. In Colossians 2:6–7, Paul wrote, “And now, just as you accepted Christ Jesus as your Lord, you must continue to follow him. Let your roots grow down into him, and let your lives be built on him. Then your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught, and you will overflow with thankfulness.” We walk by grace through faith in the One who saved us.

The Bible student will find contradictions, and both cannot be right. However, they may be true in the cultural setting or a specific situation or context and should be investigated. However, verses that contradict the character of God are never true, no matter what the circumstances or context. If we hear a teaching that puts fear in our hearts, we should examine it to determine if it is a New Covenant truth or an Old Covenant teaching. We can learn from the Old Testament but do not live under that Covenant. Therefore, reading the Bible without knowing the heart of God and understanding the work of the Holy Spirit can lead to misinterpretation.

This volume is the result of many years of personal study of the Word of God, and it is by no means exhaustive. My qualification is the hours I spent alone doing online Bible Study—I have the transcript to show for it. However, most of my learning is accomplished by reading, listening to my Pastor’s sermons, and researching the Scriptures at home on my desktop. Why did I persist year after year? Because I passionately believe that knowing God and His ways (theology) gets us through the trials of life. It is not just about absorbing the Scriptures; it is all about a relationship with the Author of the Book.

Like the Bereans who searched the Scriptures daily to determine whether what they heard was true (Acts 17:10–12), I challenge you to search out what I teach for yourselves and diligently study the Scriptures with the view to know Him intimately.

I invite you to come on the journey; you will be challenged, and I hope and pray there will be light bulb moments for you. But above all, you learn to hear His voice as the Word opens to you.

SECTION ONE—QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

Q. What is the dictionary meaning of Theology?

Q. What is the problem with turning the Bible into a blueprint for life?

Q. Why did Jesus warn the disciples about the leaven of the Pharisees?

Q What does it mean to rightly divide the Word?

Q Why is it important to study a verse in its context?

Q How do we know which Scriptures apply to us personally?

THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

God is far too great for us to understand fully. He has no beginning, and He has no end. But what is God like?

First of all, let's establish who God is.

God is All-Powerful (Omnipotent)

God's power is unlimited (Matthew 19:26; Ephesians 3:26). The Scriptures tell us that everything in the universe, including you and me, everything seen and unseen, was created by God's hand (Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 11:3).

Psalm 139:13–14 NLT

"You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body and knit me together in my mother's womb. Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex! Your workmanship is marvellous—how well I know it."

God is Everywhere (Omnipresent)

God is everywhere. His presence is not just limited to a church. He is in us (Colossians 3:3) and will never leave us (John 14:16; Matthew 28:20; Hebrews 13:5).

He is All-Knowing (Omniscient)

He is all-knowing (Psalm 139:1–4, 1 John 3:20). He knows everything; His knowledge and power are unlimited (Hebrews 4:13).

God is Unseen

God is unseen (1 Timothy 1:17), but He has revealed Himself in His creation (Romans 1:20) and in His Son, Jesus (John 1:18, Colossians 1:15).

Romans 1:20 NLT

"For ever since the world was created, people have seen the earth and sky. Through everything God made, they can clearly see his invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature. So they have no excuse for not knowing God."

God is Sovereign

God is eternal and infinite. He has all authority, power, and wisdom; He is all good, and His love is perfect. "The LORD is good to those who depend on him, to those who search for him" (Lamentations 3:25). He is the Most High, Creator, Redeemer, and Sovereign over all Satanic power. Our God reigns!

So, If God is Sovereign, Is He in control?

God reigns over all; He is the Sovereign God, and everything belongs to Him. Therefore, nothing is outside of His reach or concern. So if God is in control, we have to credit Him with Hitler's genocide of 6 million people and every calamity, cancer, sickness, and disease known to humanity.

But God is good, so we could say that God is in charge, not in control. Jesus demonstrated the will of God in facing our problems. The Sovereign One Himself placed us in charge of planet Earth. Jesus gave us His Holy Spirit, authority, and presence to accomplish the great commission (Matthew 28:19).

Mark 16:17-18

"These miraculous signs will accompany those who believe: They will cast out demons in my name, and they will speak in new languages. They will be able to handle snakes with safety, and if they drink anything poisonous, it won't hurt them. They will be able to place their hands on the sick, and they will be healed."

So if God is absolute in knowledge, unlimited in power, and absolute in presence, then He knows every sin I have ever committed, and if He is everywhere, there is no place I can escape His loving gaze. So, if all we know are the attributes of God and don't know anything of His nature, we have every reason to fear Him. (A good reason for theological study is to discover the nature and character of God.)

THE NATURE OF GOD

The Bible does not give us a definition of God. However, Jesus said, "God is a spirit" (John 4:24; 1 Timothy 6:16). He is infinitely perfect (Psalm 147:5), yet He can be known personally (John 17:3; 1 John 5:20). There is none like Him (Exodus 15:11), yet we are made in His image (Genesis 1:26).

The love of God, the nature of God, and the character of God are all entirely good. There is not one example in the Gospels of Jesus excluding, punishing, condemning, or giving a disease to anyone.

God is a God of Love

It is important to see God's whole nature. In Jesus, we can see the nature of God expressed. He is the perfect image of God, an exact likeness. In Christ, we see God's great love, compassion, mercy, holiness, wisdom, and power. God is a God of love and longs to have an intimate relationship with us. This distinguishes Christianity from every other religion, along with the truth that we can do nothing to make God love us more or less.

Unlike other so-called gods, He is a Person we can know intimately. James 4:8 NLT says, "Come close to God, and God will come close to you." Moral codes and laws govern many belief systems. But Christianity is not about law. It is about having a relationship with Almighty God. God so loved us that He sent Jesus to reconcile/join us with a holy God.

God is Holy

According to the Bible, God is love; there is no one like Him (1 Samuel 2:2; Isaiah 6:1–5), but He is also a God of holiness. He is a God of compassion (John 3:16; 1 John 4:10, 16) and justice (read Jeremiah 9:23–24). Because of His great love for us, God sent Jesus to take our place in bearing the penalty of death that each of us deserved. He satisfied the requirements of the Law on our behalf. He then qualified us to receive the inheritance that only Jesus deserved.

Romans 5:8

"But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners."

God does not leave us wondering or doubting whether we are saved or not. Instead, he tells us that we belong to Him and that nothing can separate us from His love. Not even sin!

Romans 8:34-35 NLT

"Who then will condemn us? No one—for Christ Jesus died for us and was raised to life for us, and he is sitting in the place of honour at God's right hand, pleading for us. Can anything ever separate us from Christ's love? Does it mean he no longer loves us if we have trouble or calamity, or are persecuted, or hungry, or destitute, or in danger, or threatened with death?"

God is separate from evil and driven by love in every deed. God is the ultimate in perfect holiness and purity. He has never sinned. He is infinitely good, holy, powerful, beautiful, magnificent, and glorious. No one is more beautiful, more overwhelming, more majestic than Jesus. He is holy. He is delightful in every way and perfect from every viewpoint (Song of Songs 5:16). He is altogether lovely.

God is a God of Justice

When humanity sinned, God had a problem—How could He save a sinful people, the people He loved from His anger and wrath at sin? So God sent Jesus to die in our place instead of punishing us, as He had every right to; God took on Himself the punishment His holiness demanded. The Cross was where the love of God and the holiness of God met.

Romans 5:8 NLT

"But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners."

God Is So Good!

God is good, and He always has been. He has not changed. We have to choose to respond to His goodness. We celebrate His goodness because He cannot fail to inspire us. When Jesus was born, the angels announced peace and goodwill toward men!

Luke 2:14

"Glory to God in highest heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased."

At that time, the people were out of touch with God's will for their lives. The passion for knowing the one true God was gone. Jesus came to reveal His Father as a loving, forgiving, merciful, and good God.

As we study God's nature, we are confronted with the reality that God is good 100% of the time. His love for people is beyond comprehension and imagination. He is for us, not against us! The heart to love and seek after God is birthed in us by God Himself, and it grows as we "taste and see that the Lord is good" (Psalm 34:8).

God is Merciful

Psalm 107:1

"Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good! His faithful love endures forever."

Does God Cause or Allow Evil So That He Can Display His Mercy?

God can turn any situation around for His glory and our benefit. But this is a testimony to His greatness. It does not represent His design. So how can we re-present Jesus as the manifestation of God's goodwill toward men?

If God causes evil, then how can we discern the difference between God's discipline and a demonic attack?

Jesus gives us the answer in John 10:10–11

The thief's purpose is to steal kill and destroy. My purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life. "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd sacrifices his life for the sheep."

Jesus is the GOOD Shepherd who gives abundant life. Destruction and evil are bad; God is good!

The Apostle John wrote,

1 John 3:8b

"The Son of God came to destroy the works of the devil."

Jesus taught us how to recognise the devil's tactics and how to destroy them.

SECTION TWO—QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

Q Name the Attributes of God

Q Write down 1 John 3:20.

Q What does the Sovereignty of God mean?

Q Why is it important to see God's whole nature?

Q Describe God's Nature

Q What does James 4:8 tell us to do to get to know God?

Q According to 1 John 3:1, what are we called because of God's love?

Q What does "The Holiness of God" mean?

Q Write down Jeremiah 9:24 and comment on it.

Q: What may we be confronted with as we study God's Nature?

JESUS

John 1:1,14 NLT

"In the beginning the Word already existed. The Word was with God, and the Word was God."

14 "So the Word became human and made his home among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. And we have seen his glory, the glory of the Father's one and only Son."

Jesus is called "the Word of God" (John 1:1-4,14). He existed eternally before He took on human nature. (Philippians 2:6-7). As the Word, He communicated the heart of God to humanity. In Jesus, we see what God the Father is like.

John 14:7-11 NLT

"If you had really known me, you would know who my Father is. From now on, you do know him and have seen him!" Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied." Jesus replied, "Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and yet you still don't know who I am? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father! So why are you asking me to show him to you? Don't you believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words I speak are not my own, but my Father who lives in me does his work through me. Just believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me. Or at least believe because of the work you have seen me do."

Two thousand years ago, when the time was right (Galatians 4:4), Jesus came to earth. He was born into a patriarchal religious culture, but He was no ordinary man. He was called the "Son of God" (Luke 1:26-38), the "Word of God" (John 1:1), the Lamb of God (John 1:29), the Messiah (John 1:41), the Friend of Sinners (Matt 11:19), God our Savior (1 Timothy 2:3), the Great Shepherd of the Sheep (Hebrews 13:20), the Head of the Church (Ephesians 5:23), King of Kings (1 Timothy 6:15), the Mediator (1 Timothy 2:5) and many more.

Jesus identifies Himself as the Word, the I Am, the Bread of Life, the Good Shepherd, the Chief Cornerstone, the Sheep Gate, the Way, the Truth and the Life, the Light of the World, the Resurrection and the Life, the Messiah, and the True Grapevine. In other words, He says nothing apart from who He is. His Word reveals His nature.

God Became a Man. Why?

1. Jesus came to reveal His Father. He revealed God's love, holiness, wisdom, and power. But, most significantly, Jesus came to reveal His Father and redeem humanity. So the Holy Spirit will always bring us back to the life of Jesus so that God might be revealed as the Father who loves. John 1:18 NLT: "No one has ever seen God. But the unique One, who is himself God, is near to the Father's heart. He has revealed God to us."

2. To seek and save the lost, Luke 19:10 tells us, "For the Son of Man came to seek and save those who are lost."

3. To rescue us from the kingdom of darkness and transfer us into His Kingdom. Colossians 1:13–14: "For he has rescued us from the kingdom of darkness and transferred us into the Kingdom of his dear Son, who purchased our freedom and forgave our sins."

His Mission

- Was to give His life as a ransom for us (Matthew 20:28)**
- To destroy Satan's works (1 John 3:8)**
- To give us eternal life (1 John 5:11–12; John 3:15–17)**
- To give us birth into God's family (John 1:12; John 3:3)**
- To restore fellowship with God (2 Corinthians 5:18; Romans 5:1–2; 1 John 1:3).**

Jesus Paid the Penalty of Death on Our Behalf

Hebrews 2:9

"What we do see is Jesus, who for a little while was given a position "a little lower than the angels"; and because he suffered death for us, he is now "crowned with glory and honor." Yes, by God's grace, Jesus tasted death for everyone."

Jesus was nailed to a wooden cross like a common criminal (read Mark 15:16–39). He could have saved himself, but he did not, for it was through his death on the Cross that God was to save the world.

Jesus Rose From the Dead For Us and Ascended into Heaven

Ephesians 2:4-6

"But God is so rich in mercy, and he loved us so much, that even though we were dead because of our sins, he gave us life when he raised Christ from the dead. (It is only by God's grace that you have been saved!) For he raised us from the dead along with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms because we are united with Christ Jesus."

Before His resurrection, Jesus gave us His authority to accomplish our great commission. First, He ensured all followers were clothed with power—the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the resurrection power of Jesus. Then Jesus returned to the Father, saying that we would see greater works than He did (see John 14:12).

Jesus Opened Heaven

When His work was completed, Jesus returned to heaven to be seated at His Father's Right Hand. He opened the way to enter God's Presence.

Hebrews 10:19–22

"And so, dear brothers and sisters, we can boldly enter heaven's Most Holy Place because of the blood of Jesus. By his death, Jesus opened a new and life-giving way through the curtain into the Most Holy Place. And since we have a great High Priest who rules over God's house, let us go right into the presence of God with sincere hearts, fully trusting him. For our guilty consciences have been sprinkled with Christ's blood to make us clean, and our bodies have been washed with pure water."

SECTION THREE—QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

Q: How do we know what the Father is like?

Q Briefly explain why God became a man.

Q What was Jesus' Mission?

Q Write down Colossians 1:13–14 and comment on it

Q: How did Jesus destroy Satan's work?

Q: Why did Jesus open Heaven?

THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit has several names, for example, the Spirit of Promise (Ephesians 1:13), the Spirit of Glory and of God (1 Peter 4:14), the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead (Romans 8:11), The Spirit of Jesus (Acts 16:7, Romans 8:9; Philippians 1:19), the Spirit of Adoption (Romans 8:15), the Spirit of Truth (John 14:17), the Helper (John 14:16), the Comforter (John 14:18), the Advocate (John 16:5–7), and the Spirit of Life (Romans 8:2). Furthermore, in Hebrews 10:29 NKJV, He is referred to as the “Spirit of Grace,” which identifies Him as the One who enables us. Knowing that grace is God’s ability opens our understanding of the New Covenant. The Spirit of Grace and truth came to us through Jesus.

John 1:16–17 NKJV says

“And of His fullness, we have all received, and grace for grace. For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.”

The Trinity

The Holy Spirit is one of the three Persons of the Godhead (Matthew 28:19). Therefore, although the Holy Spirit is distinct from the Father and the Son, He is God. (Note Peter's words in Acts 5:3–4). All three Persons are actively involved in the process of our salvation.

Ephesians 2:18

"Now all of us can come to the Father through the same Holy Spirit because of what Christ has done for us."

Genesis 2:16 God says, "Let us make man in our image." In the Trinity, we see Father, Son, and Holy Spirit bestowing honour on the other. The Father commends the Son (see Matt 3:17) and works through the Spirit (see Luke 11:13, John 15:26). The Son yields to the Father (see Matt 26:39) and promotes the Spirit (see John 6:63, 7:37–39). The Spirit points to the Son (see John 14:26) and does what the Father says (see John 14:26, 15:26). The Trinity is the ultimate model, preferring one another in love and honour, always submitting in perfect unity. Therefore, there is no hierarchy in the Trinity.

The Holy Spirit in The Old Testament.

When the Old Testament prophets spoke, things happened because the Spirit of the Lord came upon them. God spoke through them and sometimes backed His word with signs and wonders. The Holy Spirit came upon these great men and women but did not remain on them.

Ezekiel 11:4–5

“Therefore prophesy against them, prophesy, O son of man!” “Then the Spirit of the LORD fell upon me, and said to me, “Speak! ‘Thus says the LORD: “Thus you have said, O house of Israel; for I know the things that come into your mind.””

The Holy Spirit in The New Testament

However, when John the Baptist baptised Jesus in the Jordan River, the Holy Spirit descended and remained on Him (John 1:32). This was the answer to Isaiah's prayer for God to “rend the heavens and come down” (Isaiah 64:1) and the response to the cries of the kings and prophets who looked for this day to come. John was baptised with water, but Jesus was baptised with the Holy Spirit. When Jesus went back to His Father, He did not abandon us. Instead, he sent the Holy Spirit. So, on the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came from Heaven to rest on people, live in them, and empower them to live the new and living way.

John 14:16–18

“And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, who will never leave you. He is the Holy Spirit, who leads into all truth. The world cannot receive him, because it isn't looking for him and doesn't recognize him. But you know him, because he lives with you now and later will be in you. No, I will not abandon you as orphans—I will come to you.”

John 16:5–7

"But now I am going away to the one who sent me, and not one of you is asking where I am going. Instead, you grieve because of what I've told you. But in fact, it is best for you that I go away because if I don't, the Advocate won't come. If I do go away, then I will send him to you."

Read Acts 2:1–4

The Work of The Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit came upon us and remained inside us. The work of the Holy Spirit is unfathomable. For the sake of simplicity, He has a twofold ministry. He dwells in and works through the lives of believers.

He Dwells in The Life of the Believer

The Holy Spirit

- Opens access to the Father (Ephesians 2:18)**
- Gives us new birth (Titus 3:5; John 3:3,6)**
- Testifies that we are God's children (Romans 8:16)**
- Teaches and guides us (John 14:26; Romans 8:14)**
- Gives us wisdom and revelation (1 Corinthians 2:9–10; Eph. 1:17)**
- Enables us to live a holy life (Galatians 5:16–25; Romans 8:1–2)**
- Helps us to pray (Romans 8:26; Ephesians 6:18)**
- Strengthens and imparts resurrection life (Romans 8:11)**
- Changes us into the image of Jesus (2 Corinthians 3:18).**

He Works Through the Believer

- By giving us the power to witness (Acts 1:8; 2:14–40)
- By testifying that Jesus is alive (Acts 5:30–32; 4:31–33)
- By releasing true worship (Ephesians 5:18–19; John 4:24)
- BY glorifying the Lord Jesus (John 16:13–15; 15:26)

The New Life in the Spirit

The old way of religion is to be accepted by God through self-effort. But God's standard is so high that no one can reach it in their strength. We need a Saviour and the Holy Spirit for that. The Gospel introduces us to "the new way of the Spirit." The Holy Spirit causes us to live a life pleasing to God because He changes us from the inside out.

2 Corinthians 3:17–18 says

"For the Lord is the Spirit, and wherever the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. So, all of us who have had that veil removed can see and reflect the glory of the Lord. And the Lord—who is the Spirit—makes us more and more like him as we are changed into his glorious image."

The Holy Spirit Sets Us Free to Worship God—Free From The Law!

Romans 8:1–3

"So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus. And because you belong to him, the power of the life-giving Spirit has freed you from the power of sin that leads to death. The law of Moses was unable to save us because of the weakness of our sinful nature. So God did what the law could not do. He sent his own Son in a body like the bodies we sinners have. And in that body God declared an end to sin's control over us by giving his Son as a sacrifice for our sins."

Worship Is A Vital Part of The Spirit-Filled Life.

John 4:24 says, "For God is Spirit, so those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth." Therefore, there must be no pretense or hypocrisy in our worship.; it is not an outward show. We can only worship what we know about God from the indwelling Spirit and His Word.

Ephesians 5:19

"Singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, and making music to the Lord in your hearts."

The Baptism in The Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit not only dwells in the life of the believer but empowers them to be effective witnesses.

Acts 1:8

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

The Bible calls this coming upon—being "baptised in the Holy Spirit." So the Holy Spirit comes upon us; He also fills or indwells us and will never leave. Just as water Baptism means to be immersed in water, so Baptism in the Holy Spirit means to be immersed inside and outside with the power of God's Spirit; this is God's promise to every believer.

The Outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost
Fifty days after Jerusalem crucified the Lord Jesus, they experienced a sound released from an open Heaven, which, I imagine, caused people to wonder if Jesus was who He claimed to be. As a result, when Peter stood before the crowds and proclaimed the good news, they understood, and 3,000 people were gloriously saved.

Act 2:38–39

“Peter replied, “Each of you must repent of your sins and turn to God, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. This promise is to you, to your children, and to those far away—all who have been called by the Lord our God.”

All who are called to salvation are in line to receive this promise of Baptism in the Holy Spirit. This profound encounter with God is given to us to demonstrate the life of Jesus to the world. It is to make us living witnesses and examples of the resurrection of Jesus. God’s ultimate provision is for us to be "filled with all the fullness of God" (Ephesians 3:19 NKJV).

The outpouring of the Holy Spirit is essential to the believer’s life, so much so that Jesus warned the disciples not to leave Jerusalem before they received it. On the Day of Pentecost, Peter declared that the promise of Joel 2 was fulfilled—

Acts 2:16–18)

“No, what you see was predicted long ago by the prophet Joel: ‘In the last days,’ God says, ‘I will pour out my Spirit upon all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy. Your young men will see visions, and your old men will dream dreams. In those days I will pour out my Spirit even on my servants—men and women alike—and they will prophesy.’”

We also find the disciples receiving another level of that outpouring in Acts 4:30.

The Gifts of The Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit comes with gifts to empower us to be the hand of Jesus, touching people's lives.

- 1. Word of Knowledge**
- 2. Word of Wisdom**
- 3. Prophecy**
- 4. Faith**
- 5. Healing**
- 6. Working of Miracles**
- 7. Discerning of Spirits**
- 8. Tongues**
- 9. Interpretation of Tongues**

These gifts of the Spirit are available to all believers, and we are encouraged to fan the gifts into a flame. Paul wrote to Timothy, a young pastor in Ephesus. Timothy was raised in the faith by his grandmother, Lois, and his mother, Eunice. He was endowed with spiritual gifts, and Paul urged him to stir them up or fan them into a flame.

2 Timothy 1:6

"This is why I remind you to fan into flames the spiritual gift God gave you when I laid my hands on you."

The Motivational or Ministry Gifts

Romans 12:4–8

"Just as our bodies have many parts and each part has a special function, so it is with Christ's body. We are many parts of one body, and we all belong to each other. In his grace, God has given us different gifts for doing certain things well. So if God has given you the ability to prophesy, speak out with as much faith as God has given you. If your gift is serving others, serve them well. If you are a teacher, teach well. If your gift is to encourage others, be encouraging. If it is giving, give generously. If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously. And if you have a gift for showing kindness to others, do it gladly."

These gifts equip believers to take a vital role in the Church. God has given us different gifts for doing certain things well.

- 1. Prophecy**
- 2. Service**
- 3. Teaching**
- 4. Encouragement**
- 5. Giving**
- 6. Leadership**
- 7. Mercy**

Working Together

The Holy Spirit gives different gifts to different people, but He brings us all together in the context of God's love. Therefore, Spiritual Gifts should always be administered in love. For example, in Romans chapter 12, from verses 3 to 8, Paul writes about the gifts, and then he wrote two verses concerning loving each other.

Rom 12:9

"Don't just pretend to love others. Really love them. Hate what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is good. Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honoring each other."

In First Corinthians 12, Paul writes about spiritual gifts, followed by the most significant chapter on love. When we truly love, we won't envy others' gifts and feel ashamed of our own, nor will we boast about our gifts and despise others. Instead, love motivates us to use our gifts to help others and be blessed by the contributions of others as they operate in their giftings.

1 Peter 4:8–11

"Most important of all, continue to show deep love for each other, for love covers a multitude of sins. Cheerfully share your home with those who need a meal or a place to stay. God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use

them well to serve one another. Do you have the gift of speaking? Then speak as though God himself were speaking through you. Do you have the gift of helping others? Do it with all the strength and energy that God supplies. Then everything you do will bring glory to God through Jesus Christ. All glory and power to him forever and ever! Amen."

We Have the Gift of The Mind of Christ

1 Corinthians 2:16

"For, "Who can know the LORD's thoughts? Who knows enough to teach him?" But we understand these things, for we have the mind of Christ."

Those with the mind of Christ and the Spirit of God are equipped to understand the profound truths of God and His perspective. The Bible calls this process the renewing of the mind, which allows the Holy Spirit to shape our opinions. When our minds are renewed, it results in intimacy with God, and our hearts understand life from Heaven's perspective.

Romans 12:2

"Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect."

The Holy Spirit inwardly transforms us in how we think; then, we will discern God's will for us, we will know the mind of Christ, and His peace comes!

Leadership Gifts Endowed By God

Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist, Pastor, and Teacher are leadership gifts endowed by God.

Ephesians 4:11–12

"Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ."

We are ministers of the New Covenant, which brings life through the Holy Spirit. The work of the Holy Spirit in us enables us to minister forgiveness and healing and smash the works of the devil.

SECTION FOUR—QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

Q What does the writer of Hebrews 10:29 describe the Holy Spirit as?

Q Are all members of the Trinity equal?

Q: Give an example of the Holy Spirit coming upon Ezekiel

Q: Why did Jesus return to the Father?

Q What did John the Baptist declare of Jesus (John 1:32)

Q: In your own words, what did Jesus say in John 14:26 about the Holy Spirit?

Q What does worshipping in Spirit and truth mean?

Q What does being Baptized in the Holy Spirit mean?

Q What is emphasised when the Bible teaches about the gifts of the Holy Spirit?

THE GOSPEL

The Gospel means "the good news." It differs from every other philosophy because it focuses on a single person, the Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 1:22-24 NLT

"It is foolish to the Jews, who ask for signs from heaven. And it is foolish to the Greeks, who seek human wisdom. So when we preach that Christ was crucified, the Jews are offended and the Gentiles say it's all nonsense."

To Appreciate the Good News, We Need to Know the Bad News.

The Bad News

When God created the first man and woman, He created them in His image with the astonishing ability to communicate with Him. Their whole lives—body, soul, and spirit depended on God. An angel that we now know as Satan (Revelation 12:9; Ezekiel 28:12–19) rebelled against God and tempted Adam and Eve to rebel in the same way he had (1 Timothy 3:6).

Genesis 3:4–5

"You won't die!" the serpent replied to the woman. "God knows that your eyes will be opened as soon as you eat it, and you will be like God, knowing both good and evil."

Satan's temptation was not just to eat the forbidden fruit. It was for Adam and Eve to set themselves up as the god of their lives. When they sinned, they became self-centered, self-conscious, and self-dependent. From that time on, the self became the centre of everything. The "knowledge of good and evil"—of rights and wrongs—became the basis of human life.

Romans 5:12 NLT

"When Adam sinned, sin entered the world. Adam's sin brought death, so death spread to everyone, for everyone sinned."

Therefore, the bad news is that all the generations following Adam have inherited Adam's self-centered nature (2 Timothy 3:2–5).

The Good News

Romans 5:6 NLT

"When we were utterly helpless, Christ came at just the right time and died for us sinners."

When Jesus hung on the cross some 2000 years ago, He paid the price for sin; the judgment we deserved was on Him, and God's anger toward sin was exhausted. Sin no longer hinders us from entering His presence. Our part now is to receive from Him the abundance of Grace and the gift of righteousness.

Romans 1:16–17

"For I am not ashamed of this Good News about Christ. It is the power of God at work, saving everyone who believes—the Jew first and also the Gentile. This Good News tells us how God makes us right in his sight. This is accomplished from start to finish by faith. As the Scriptures say, "It is through faith that a righteous person has life."

Righteousness and Grace is From God

The Gospel reveals righteousness, which is "from God." It is not from self-effort on our part. Therefore, we cannot earn our salvation or healing. Self-effort and self-centeredness will stop the flow of Grace. The Good News is that we are righteous apart from self-effort (works).

It is By Faith

When we partake of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, we become dependent on our efforts to get to heaven. However, when we partake of the Tree of Life, we depend on Jesus and His finished work to get us to heaven. Everything from God comes by grace through faith and not our works, self-effort, or performance. Grace is based on God's faithfulness and goodness towards us, not our popularity or self-dependency.

It is From First to Last

The Gospel, when received and believed, reveals two truths

- 1. It introduces us to Jesus (Ephesians 1:13) "from first."**
- 2. It establishes us in Jesus (Romans 16:25) "to last."**

SECTION FIVE—QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

Q: How is the Gospel different from every other philosophy?

Q What is the bad news?

Q Explain man's predicament since Adam and Eve's rebellion.

Q What is the Good News

Q. Why is it that none of us can help ourselves to be righteous before God? (Use Scripture to support your answer).

Q According to Paul's letter to the Romans 1:16–17, what does the Good News tell us?

Q: What stops flowing when we get into self-effort?

Q What two things does the Gospel do for us?

Q: What do you think "from first to last" means?

FROM JESUS TO ETERNAL LIFE

Salvation is found in no one else; there is no other way to be saved except through the Name of Jesus. This is because only the death and resurrection of Jesus deal with the barrier between us and God—sin. Jesus is the only way to God.

John 14:6

"Jesus told him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me."

When we received Jesus, we received everything—salvation, faith, mercy, forgiveness, acceptance, and eternal life. We are forever linked with Jesus—His righteousness, authority, and life (see Ephesians 2:6; Colossians 3:1–4).

Hebrews 6:19–20

"This hope is a strong and trustworthy anchor for our souls. It leads us through the curtain into God's inner sanctuary. Jesus has already gone in there for us. He has become our eternal High Priest in the order of Melchizedek."

Our hope is secure, unseen, yet holding and leading us to the Presence of The Lord Jesus.

The Cross

The cross of Jesus is the centre point of human history. The moment Adam sinned, it was pre-planned by God that Jesus would die on the cross. From then on, God worked to bring about the birth of the Saviour.

When Jesus was crucified, the authorities thought they were executing a man for disturbing their way of life. However, they did not know God planned and prophesied it in Scripture.

Isa 53:2–10

"My servant grew up in the LORD's presence like a tender green shoot, like a root in dry ground. There was nothing beautiful or majestic about his appearance, nothing to attract us to him. He was despised and rejected—a man of sorrows, acquainted with deepest grief. We turned our backs on him and looked the other way. He was despised, and we did not care. Yet it was our weaknesses he carried; it was our sorrows that weighed him down. And we thought his troubles were a punishment from God, a punishment for his own sins! But he was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our sins. He was beaten so we could be whole. He was whipped so we could be healed. All of us, like sheep, have strayed a

away. We have left God's paths to follow our own. Yet the LORD laid on him the sins of us all. He was oppressed and treated harshly, yet he never said a word. He was led like a lamb to the slaughter. And as a sheep is silent before the shearers, he did not open his mouth. Unjustly condemned, he was led away. No one cared that he died without descendants, that his life was cut short in midstream. But he was struck down for the rebellion of my people. He had done no wrong and had never deceived anyone. But he was buried like a criminal; he was put in a rich man's grave. But it was the LORD's good plan to crush him and cause him grief. Yet when his life is made an offering for sin, he will have many descendants. He will enjoy a long life, and the LORD's good plan will prosper in his hands."

The cross dealt with every person's sin, guilt, suffering, and sorrow. God's love, holiness, and justice demanded the death penalty for sin—only the cross fully satisfied God's righteousness requirements.

Salvation Is Not All About Getting Us to Heaven

To say that being a Christian is just having our sins forgiven does not have the power to transform us. Our salvation comes with so much more; Jesus came to give us His life.

John 10:10 NKJV Jesus said,

“The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.”

Salvation is not about getting us to heaven because our sins are forgiven. Instead, Jesus came to abide in us, enabling us to His life in us. So it is Jesus in us and us in Jesus.

John 17:21 Jesus prayed.

"I pray that they will all be one, just as you and I are one—as you are in me, Father, and I am in you. And may they be in us so that the world will believe you sent me."

The resurrection follows the death of Jesus on the cross. When He rose, we rose with Him to new life (Romans 6:4–5), which makes the life of God possible in us. When we received Jesus at our new birth, He equipped us to live the life He came to give us.

Colossians 2:13 says it all—

“You were dead because of your sins and because your sinful nature was not yet cut away. Then God made you alive with Christ, for he forgave all our sins.”

The Cross Demonstrates God's Power

The cross disarmed Satan's power over humanity.

Revelation 1:18

"I am the living one. I died, but look—I am alive forever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and the grave.

The Cross Demonstrates God's Great Love

Romans 5:8

"But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners."

The Cross Demonstrates God's Holiness

The cross fully satisfied God's holiness. With all its regulations, the Old Covenant of Law was the standard of God's holiness was cancelled at the cross by Jesus Himself. Now we have a new and living way.

Heb 10:19–20

"And so, dear brothers and sisters, we can boldly enter heaven's Most Holy Place because of the blood of Jesus. By his death, Jesus opened a new and life-giving way through the curtain into the Most Holy Place."

Romans 7:6

"But now we have been released from the law, for we died to it and are no longer captive to its power. Now we can serve God, not in the old way of obeying the letter of the law, but in the new way of living in the Spirit."

The Cross Broke the Barrier of Sin

When Jesus died on the cross, he received the punishment of sin due to us. He died in our place to satisfy God's judgment. Now, there is no barrier between God and us.

- We are accepted (2 Corinthians, Ephesians 1:4-6).**
- We are forgiven once and for all time (Colossians 1:13-14; Ephesians 1:7)**
- We are God's sons and daughters (John 1:12; Hebrews 2:11-12)**

The Victory of the Cross

The cross of Jesus won a great victory for us in the form of freedom.

Freedom from:-

- Satan's power (Colossians 1:13; 2:15)**
- Past, present and future sins (John 8:36; Colossians 2:13)**
- The old sin nature (Romans 6:6-7,14,17-18)**
- Sickness, disease, and infirmity (Matthew 8:17)**
- The curse of the law (Galatians 3:13)**
- Judgment (Hebrews 9:26-27)**
- Freedom from everlasting death (John 3:16)**

The Old Sin Nature Has Gone

God counted the death of Jesus as our death. Our old life was nailed to the cross with Jesus. The cross was the turning point of our lives. So we died with Christ, and now we live with Him in a new and living way.

2 Corinthians 5:17

"This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!"

Our old life, the life we lived before Jesus came to live in us, is gone. God killed it on the cross with Jesus. How good is this? When Jesus comes into our lives, we receive a new start with everything forgiven. All we have to do is accept it as a fact. We don't have to kill our old life off by doing good works, fasting, or beating ourselves up. Paul, the apostle, wrote—

Galatians 2:20

"My old self has been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So I live in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."

SECTION SIX—QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

Q What are the only things that deal with the barrier between God and us?

Q: What did the people responsible for executing Jesus not realise?

Q: When did God plan our salvation?

Q What did the death of Jesus on the cross deal with?

Q Why is Salvation not just about forgiveness of sin?

Q: How does the cross demonstrate God's love?

Q: How does the cross demonstrate God's holiness?

Q What does "the new and living way" mean?

Q What does God's righteousness judgment demand?

Q. What does Eph 4:1- 6 say about us?

Q Choose one of the "Freedom" Scriptures that best relates to you and briefly share your testimony.

Q What does the term "The old has gone" mean?

Q: How do you accept that God has dealt with your old life on the cross?

THE FINISHED WORK OF THE CROSS

THE CROSS IS THE CENTRE POINT OF HISTORY.

It is the centre of God's plan of salvation. It was in God's mind in Genesis and for you and me. The message of the Cross is powerful because it deals with us. God took away the barrier of sin between Him and us, and Jesus made the way on our behalf. Now, we are brought near by the blood of Jesus.

Ephesians 2:12–13

"In those days you were living apart from Christ. You were excluded from citizenship among the people of Israel, and you did not know the covenant promises God had made to them. You lived in this world without God and without hope. But now you have been united with Christ Jesus. Once you were far away from God, but now you have been brought near to him through the blood of Christ."

“It Is Finished”

The last words of Jesus on the Cross, "It is finished" (John 19:28–30), mean that there is nothing more to do or be done. The sacrifice of Jesus on the Cross was a "once for all" work (see Hebrews 9:26, 28). It is a finished work, so nothing could be added to the Cross to make us acceptable before God except to accept it by faith.

On the Cross, Jesus represented us before God. When He died, we died with Him (Romans 6:6–7). He was buried; we were buried with Him (Romans 6:3–4). He was raised from the dead; we were also raised in Him (Romans 6:4–5). When He ascended, we ascended with Him, and He seated us with Him in the heavenly realms (Ephesians 2:6).

Hebrews 12:2

"Fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."

The writer of Hebrews encourages us to run the race before us and look only to Jesus because He has set our path, and He alone birthed faith in us.

Jesus is the source of our faith. His death, resurrection, and ascension provide us with the grounds for our belief and qualify us to receive it freely. Jesus died on the cross to pay the penalty for our sins in our place; He also paid the price for our healing. It dishonours the Lord to disregard His work to justify our lack of faith or difficulty believing in the impossible. We are qualified to receive everything that Jesus accomplished for us at the cross. Jesus came to reconcile us with a holy God.

At our new birth, we were made holy and righteous by the Blood of Jesus, thus the way for us to enter boldly into God's Presence without guilt, condemnation, or expectation of punishment.

SIN

In writing to the First Century Church, the Apostle John wrote to refute the false teachings of the Gnostics, who held to the belief that living in carnal indulgence was acceptable and that the body didn't matter or have any effect on a person's spiritual life! The Gnostics professed to know the truth, so John set forth the reality of sin and salvation. He wrote—

1 John 3:4–5

“Everyone who sins is breaking God’s law, for all sin is contrary to the law of God. And you know that Jesus came to take away our sins, and there is no sin in him.”

Sin is a transgression of God’s Law. The Law shows us what sin is, and the Law is holy, just, and good (Romans 7:12). However, it has no power to save or cleanse us. We need a Savior for that.

The Cross is not just about forgiveness of sin; it is also about daily victory over sin and much more, as we learned in the previous section.

Romans 8:1 says,

"So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus."

The cross dealt with our sins, past, present, and future (Ephesians 1:7). That is why God does not condemn us. The profound truth is that God lives in each person who received Jesus through His work on the cross as the payment for sin.

God cannot ignore sin nor forget. However, He chooses not to remember our sins. Jesus loves the sinner and justifies the ungodly. The corrupt tax collectors, prostitutes, fishermen, the lame, the adulteress, the blind, the sick, the unclean, and the leper who encountered Jesus on the dusty roads were all forgiven, healed, and set free. He never condemned, humiliated, or made them feel guilty.

Sin Is A Choice

The truth is we don't have to sin; we choose to. However, God gives us grace that delivers us from yielding to sin. Therefore, sin under the New Covenant is more serious than sin under the Old Covenant of Law. Why? Because we are forgiven and delivered from sin with abundant grace, which makes sinning a choice.

Romans 6:14 NLT says,

“Sin is no longer your master, for you no longer live under the requirements of the law. Instead, you live under the freedom of God’s grace.”

So, we cannot use grace as an excuse to sin. Instead, we must accept responsibility and own up because grace strips us of all excuses. Personal responsibility says, “I will believe God and His righteousness in me, and depend on the Holy Spirit for victory.”

The Problem With Sin

Sin makes you feel guilty, gives the devil a foothold to accuse you, and opens the door to more sin (Ephesians 4:26–27). Everyone sins; Jesus is the only One who has never sinned. (Romans 3:23; Hebrews 4:15).

We do well to remember that confessing our sins does not bring forgiveness. The work of Jesus on the Cross did that! We confess our sins, take responsibility, and admit we got it wrong. Healing follows, and grace abounds!

The Bible Says to Count Ourselves Dead to Sin— Romans 6:10–11

"When he died, he died once to break the power of sin. But now that he lives, he lives for the glory of God. So you also should consider yourselves to be dead to the power of sin and alive to God through Christ Jesus."

We are dead to sin because we died with Christ, and God made us a new creation.

2 Corinthians 5:17

"This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!"

Our "old self" was the law of sin and death (Romans 8:2).

There is Confusion Around 1 John 1:9

"But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness."

John was writing to a church of believers and unbelievers. 1 John 2:26 says, "I am writing these things to warn you about those who want to lead you astray." Unfortunately, false teachers infiltrated the church and brought confusion. They were known as the Gnostics, who did not

believe that Jesus was the Son of God, which means that His Blood has no power to cleanse us from all sin. Paul was addressing the Gnostics, who did not believe in the existence of sin. That is why John wrote 1 John 1:8, “If we boast that we have no sin, we’re only fooling ourselves and are strangers to the truth.” John encouraged the Gnostics to acknowledge that they had sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. He told them that God would forgive and cleanse them if they confessed their sins. He was inviting them to fellowship with other believers in the church. If we believe that we have to ask God to forgive us continually, we contradict the New Covenant's foundation (Hebrews 8:10–13).

1 John 2:1–2 John addresses believers.

“You are my dear children, and I write these things to you so that you won’t sin. But if anyone does sin, we continually have a forgiving Redeemer who is face-to-face with the Father: Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.”

We have an Advocate with the Father, and there is no mention of confession of sins. Furthermore, in verse 1 John 2:12, John writes, “I am writing to you who are God’s children because your sins have been forgiven through Jesus.” The penalty for sin has been paid in full. Now, we confess our righteousness in Christ Jesus.

Repentance

Scripture tells us that godly sorrow leads to repentance (2 Corinthians 7:10). But being sorry is not repenting. Instead, we repent when our sorrow over sin leads us to the place where we receive power from God to change how we think. Only God can give us a new perspective on the reality of sin. This is why Jesus began His ministry with the declaration, "Repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand (Matthew 3:2). But the religious leaders He preached to remained blind to this revelation. The gift of repentance is available to everyone who would listen, and it is by His amazing Grace!

So, repentance is not being super sorry. Repentance means to change your mind and only works in an environment of grace. It is useless in a rule-driven, religious atmosphere that seeks punishment. It means to think differently after taking a closer look. It is the opportunity for intimacy with God, and peace is the outcome.

Hebrews 6:1 NKJV speaks of repenting from dead works

"Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God."

Dead works are works we perform to earn salvation. We cannot earn salvation or favour from God because it is all by faith.

Titus 3:5 NLT

"He saved us, not because of the righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He washed away our sins, giving us a new birth and new life through the Holy Spirit."

SECTION SEVEN—QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

Q What does "It is finished" mean?

Q Where is the believer seated and in your own words, share what that means to you

Q Why are we qualified to receive all that Jesus gained for us?

Q What is sin?

Q Why should we confess our sins?

Q What does dead to sin mean?

Q Who was Paul addressing when he wrote 1 John 1:8–9

Q What does repentance mean?

Q What are dead works?

THE NEW COVENANT.

The rituals and ceremonies of Israel in the Old Covenant became detestable to God because their heart was far from Him (see Isaiah 1:10–15; 29:13). So God decreed through the prophet Ezekiel that a day will come when God's people get a new heart, speaking of us who are born again into a living hope.

Ezekiel 36:26 NIV

"I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh."

Verse 27 says,

"And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws."

Under the New Covenant, people would worship in spirit and truth. Therefore, the temple sacrifices for atonement, which did not make the worshipper righteous, are obsolete. Instead, we worship God from our hearts as priests of the Most High God. Our praise is the offering—the fruit of our lips for the sacrifice of Jesus, the Great High Priest, on our behalf (see Hebrews 13:15).

John 4:23–24 Jesus said,

"But the time is coming—indeed it's here now—when true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth. The Father is looking for those who will worship him that way. For God is Spirit, so those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth."

Furthermore, the following is a quote from the prophet Jeremiah 31:31–34, which promises that a New Covenant will come. Notice the repetition of the words "I will!" The Ten Commandments stipulated what humanity was to do. Now, God tells us what He will do because the law cannot make us righteous. Only the blood of Jesus, the Son of God, can justify us and make us righteous in Christ. This is the New Covenant God made on the Cross of Jesus.

Hebrews 8:8–10, 12–13 NLT

"But when God found fault with the people, he said: "The day is coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and Judah. This covenant will not be like the one I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand and led them out of the land of Egypt. They did not remain faithful to my covenant, so I turned my back on them, says the LORD. But this is the

new covenant I will make with the people of Israel on that day, says the LORD: I will put my laws in their minds, and I will write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people."

"And I will forgive their wickedness, and I will never again remember their sins." When God speaks of a "new" covenant, he has made the first one obsolete. It is now out of date and will soon disappear."

God writes His law on our new hearts and in our minds; because the Old Covenant is obsolete or redundant, it is no longer relevant for the New Covenant believer in Christ. Why? Because God found fault with the Old Covenant of Law, it was based on man's promise to obey (Exodus 19:8; 24:7).

**Now We Have a New Commandment—
John 13:34 NLT**

"So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other."

In Romans 3:27, Paul mentions the law of faith. So, the laws God will put in our hearts are His royal law of love and faith. Thus, love is the fulfilment of the law.

The Great Exchange

Our salvation is based on the exchange of a life for a life—Jesus' life for our lives, our death sentence was exchanged for His life; our sin was exchanged for His righteousness, and our condemnation for His guiltlessness.

Under THE NEW COVENANT, We are No Longer Slaves to Sin

Romans 6:6

" We know that our old sinful selves were crucified with Christ so that sin might lose its power in our lives. We are no longer slaves to sin. For when we died with Christ we were set free from the power of sin. And since we died with Christ, we know we will also live with him."

Romans 6:6 tells us that we are no longer slaves to sin because our old sinful self was crucified, giving us freedom from the power of sin. So, the source that gave power to sin in our lives has been destroyed and will never come back to life again! The life we live now, we live to God.

Romans 6:22

" But now you are free from the power of sin and have become slaves of God. Now you do those things that lead to holiness and result in eternal life."

Now, we are slaves of righteousness and slaves to God!

Justification

Justification means that every record of sin we have ever committed or will commit has been rubbed out. Thus, there is no longer any judgment hanging over our heads. That's amazing grace!

Romans 5:1–2 NIV says,

"Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God."

Romans 5:1 NLT

"Therefore, since we have been made right in God's sight by faith, we have peace with God because of what Jesus Christ our Lord has done for us."

Our lives were once at war with God because of sin. But, through the Cross of Jesus, we have peace with God. Another way of saying it is that we have been justified.

We Are Free From Condemnation

Not only are we justified, but we are free from accusation.

Romans 8:1

"So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus."

We Have Peace With God and Access Into His Presence

Peace is a Person, the Presence of God. Jesus is called the Prince of Peace. We have immediate and personal access to the Throne of God because the Prince of Peace made the way for us. Therefore, we do not need anyone to pray to God on our behalf or mediate for us.

Hebrews 4:16

"So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it most."

Redemption

The shed blood of Jesus was the ransom price paid in full to buy us back from Satan's power. This is what it means to be "redeemed."

Ephesians 1:7

"He is so rich in kindness and grace that he purchased our freedom with the blood of his Son and forgave our sins."

Righteousness

Romans 3:22

"We are made right with God by placing our faith in Jesus Christ. And this is true for everyone who believes, no matter who we are."

This is the basis of God's salvation. God gives us the righteousness of Jesus as a gift. This righteousness comes by faith in Jesus and the finished work of Jesus on the Cross. The gift of Righteousness sets us right in God's eyes. It is the life of Jesus in us.

The way of legalism, or a "religion", is to work hard to get and keep our salvation or to receive favour from God. It would be like God paying wages according to ability. But God's way is to credit us with the righteousness of Jesus without any work.

God chose this way and, in so doing, eliminated our desire to boast of our efforts to be righteous. The apostle Paul had been a religious man. Before He met the Lord Jesus, he tried to obey God's Law through effort, study, and extreme enthusiasm. To a large degree, he succeeded according to the Pharisaical standards, but when Paul discovered the true Gospel, all this changed. He considered his former ways garbage and worthless in the light of grace.

Philippians 3:7–9

"I once thought these things were valuable, but now I consider them worthless because of what Christ has done. Yes, everything else is worthless when compared with the infinite value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have discarded everything else, counting it all as garbage, so that I could gain Christ and become one with him. I no longer count on my own righteousness through obeying the law; rather, I become righteous through faith in Christ. For God's way of making us right with himself depends on faith."

Rest

The Christian faith is different from every other religion because the work of salvation is complete. Therefore, Christians are in a position of rest because we have everything concerning our salvation in Christ.

The Wonder of God's Grace

Grace is free! It is the enabling power of God and His mercy in action. It is undeserved favor. However, it is more than unmerited favour; all that the people of God had up to the giving of the Law at Sinai was Grace. They did not have the righteousness of God, nor the Law, so all they could hope for was unmerited favour, and their

actions did not justify them (Romans 3:20). God has freely given us the Spirit of Grace to make us able to live a powerful, godly, victorious life. He is the Helper (John 14:16) and the Comforter (John 14:18).

Romans 5:1–2 NIV says,

"Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God."

Our faith transfers God's righteousness and grace to us, and His great love enables us to be saved by grace through faith.

Ephesians 2:4–5 NLT

"But God is so rich in mercy, and he loved us so much, that even though we were dead because of our sins, he gave us life when he raised Christ from the dead. (It is only by God's grace that you have been saved!)."

If it is by grace, it cannot be by our works. Therefore, it cannot be to gain acceptance from God because we are already accepted.

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Romans 11:6 says,

"And since it is through God's kindness, then it is not by their good works. For in that case, God's grace would not be what it really is—free and undeserved."

Instead, we are recreated to do good works, the works God has prepared for us to do.

Ephesians 2:8–10 NLT

"God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it. For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago."

The wonder of God's grace is that God did not just save us, justify and make us holy and righteous, and He didn't just bring us into His Kingdom. He made us His sons and daughters, His heirs. As a result, we have an inheritance that can never perish (see 1 Peter 1:3–4).

Heirs of The Promise

What does that mean?

The promise was the Saviour and a New Covenant with God (Hebrews 1:2; 9:15). It is eternal, and the Holy Spirit is our guarantee (Ephesians 1:14).

Galatians 4:7

"Therefore, you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ."

Faith

Faith has always been the mark of a disciple of Jesus; it places the believer in a position of dependence on God.

Hebrews 11:1 says,

"Now faith brings our hopes into reality and becomes the foundation needed to acquire the things we long for. It is all the evidence required to prove what is still unseen."

Faith means having trust, assurance, or confidence in God. Faith requires that we exchange our trust in and reliance on ourselves and place it voluntarily in God.

Our Faith is Based on Three Realities

- 1. God's nature and His Promises**
- 2. The Finished Work of the Cross**
- 3. The Word of God**

God's Nature and His Promises

Abraham's faith was strong because he knew God's nature

- He knew God's promise (Romans 4:20)**
- His character (Hebrews 11:10–11)**
- And His power (Romans 4:21)**

Abraham was convinced God would do what He promised—

Romans 4:21

" being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised."

God chose Abraham to build a nation, and Abraham believed it, even though he and Sarah were past child-bearing, and it was accounted to him for righteousness (Romans 4:2–3). In an act of radical obedience, Abraham left his father's country and stepped into a journey of total dependence on God. His response to God's invitation for relationship qualified him to be the father of many nations. Abraham lived over 400 years before the Law, so God related to him based on His grace.

The Word of God

Faith Comes by Hearing the Word of Christ!

Romans 10:17

"So faith comes from hearing, that is, hearing the Good News about Christ."

Faith does not come by simply hearing the Word of God because the Word of God encompasses everything in the Bible, including the Law of Moses. However, faith comes by hearing the New Covenant of Grace and the finished work of Jesus on the cross.

The Bible reveals the Lord Jesus Christ; Jesus revealed His Father and sent the Holy Spirit to testify of the Lord Jesus Himself.

Jesus is concealed in the Old Testament and revealed in the New Testament. You will find shadows of Jesus in the five Levitical offerings and the Tabernacle of Moses, but it takes a New Covenant to impart faith.

Faith Is Active

James 2:17 says,

"So you see, faith by itself isn't enough. Unless it produces good deeds, it is dead and useless."

God is looking for faith to respond to every trial we face. Therefore, faith is the foundation for our Christian life (Romans 1:17; Galatians 2:20).

Galatians 2:20 Paul wrote of himself—

"My old self has been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So I live in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me

SECTION EIGHT—QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

Q Why did the Old Testament rituals and ceremonies become detestable to God?

Q: Explain what Ezekiel 36:26–27 means.

Q: Why is the Old Covenant obsolete?

Q: Explain what John 13:34 means

Q What was exchanged at the cross of Jesus?

Q: Explain how we are no longer slaves to sin

Q: In your own words, explain what justification means and use Scripture to support your answer.

Q Why do we not need anyone to mediate to God on our behalf?

Q What does “ransom” mean?

Q What is righteousness?

Q: Explain “religion” and how it works against us.

Q: Explain how we are in a position of rest?

Q What is grace?

Q What does “Heirs of Promise” mean?

Q What is our faith based on?

Q Explain Romans 10:17

HEAVEN

We do not know what Heaven is like, but the Bible does reveal that

- Heaven is the dwelling place of God (Job 22:12; Deut 26:15)**
- The Throne Room of God (Psalms 103:19; Isaiah 66:1)**
- The place of God's full glory (Daniel 7:9–10; Acts 7:55)**
- The home of believers who have died (2 Corinthians 5:1)**
- The future home of all believers (Revelation 7:9–10).**

We also learn from 1 Corinthians 2:9 and 13:12 that Heaven is beyond what we can conceive. However, the Bible does give us some clues as to its nature.

Heaven is a Place of Glory

Jesus said, in Matthew 13:43

Then the righteous will shine like the sun in their Father's Kingdom. Anyone with ears to hear should listen and understand!

A Place of Continual Worship

Revelation 19:1 ff

"After this, I heard what sounded like a vast crowd in heaven shouting, "Praise the LORD! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God."

A Place That Will Never End

2 Peter 1:11 NKJV (see also 1 Peter 1:4)

"An entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

A Place Untainted By Evil

Revelation 21:27

"But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life."

Furthermore, the book of Revelation describes the New Jerusalem coming out of Heaven as a place without night (22:5), without curse (22:3), without pain, crying or sorrow, and death (21:4). Thus the nature of Heaven is a product of the nature of God, the manifestation of His Presence. Heaven is full of holiness, glory, and without end.

There is No Book in Heaven With a Record of Our Sins

All record of our sins was destroyed by the blood of Jesus when He cried out, "It is finished!" God has rewritten your history by taking away the sins of your past, present, and future and gave you the history of the Lord Jesus. Our names are written in His Book of Life forever, never to be erased (Revelation 3:5).

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Look at the parable of the prodigal son in Luke 15:11–24. We see a loving father who runs toward his wayward son to embrace him. Instead of condemnation, judgment, and punishment, which the son deserved, he received the robe of righteousness, the ring of authority, and the sandals to signify he was no longer a slave but in right standing with his father. The parable is a picture of Father God. Jesus was giving an eyewitness account of what His Father was like.

Therefore, when God looks at us today, He sees us as righteous.

- We belong to Heaven (Hebrews 22–23; Philippians 3:20)**
- We are seated in heaven**
- We have our source of life in heaven (Ephesians 1:3).**
- We have our names written in heaven (Luke 10:20).**
- We have our eyes fixed on heaven (Colossians 3:1–4; 2 Corinthians 4:17–18; Hebrews 11:9–10, 14–16).**
- We have our treasure in heaven (Matthew 6:19–20).**

Paul, the great Apostle, wrote in Philippians 3:12–14

"I don't mean to say that I have already achieved these things or that I have already reached perfection. But I press on to possess that perfection for which Christ Jesus first possessed me. No, dear brothers and sisters, I have not achieved it, but I focus on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us."

Paul left the past behind him, all his mistakes and failures, and he pressed on to reach the end. We must remember that salvation is not a prize but a gift. Jesus became everything for Paul! In his letter to the Galatians, Paul declared of himself—"My old self has been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So I live in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me "(Galatians 2:20 NKJV). Now, he lives in Christ by faith.

In 1 Timothy 4:8, Paul wrote,

"And now the prize awaits me—the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me on the day of his return. And the prize is not just for me but for all who eagerly look forward to his appearing."

The prize is the crown of righteousness we cannot attain in our strength.

Book of Life

Hebrews 12:22–23

"You have come to Mount Zion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to countless thousands of angels in a joyful gathering. You have come to the assembly of God's firstborn children, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God himself, who is the judge over all things. You have come to the spirits of the righteous ones in heaven who have now been made perfect."

God wrote your name in His Book of Life; you are a citizen of Heaven, and it is irreversible.

Life Has Meaning in The One Who Created It

Every person came from God, and we will return to God and face judgment.

Hebrews 9:27–28 says,

"And just as each person is destined to die once and after that comes judgment, so also Christ was offered once for all time as a sacrifice to take away the sins of many people. He will come again, not to deal with our sins, but to bring salvation to all who are eagerly waiting for him."

Our destiny is to spend eternity in Heaven with our glorious Saviour. When Jesus returns, it will not be to deal with the problem of sin; He finished that work on the cross. Instead, he will come to take us home to heaven, and those who refuse will find themselves in hell. Ouch, I hate to say this! The Gospel is not pleasant to our ears. But whether we believe it or not, it is the power of God unto salvation provided for us by a loving Father who is rich in mercy (see Ephesians 2:4–6, Matthew 7:11)

HELL

So let's talk about hell. God did not design hell for people; it was made for Satan and his dark angels (Matthew 25:41). We may not like to think about hell as the destiny for all who refuse God's offer of Salvation, but it is reality. Why? Because if we don't believe God exists, how can we spend eternity in His wonderful Presence? (see John 3:17-21). We all deserve hell, but Jesus gave Himself as a ransom for our redemption. The good news of the Gospel is that Jesus became the escape route from eternal judgment in hell (see John 14:6).

John 3:16

"For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life."

1 John 5:11

"And this is what God has testified: He has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son."

WATER BAPTISM

To be baptised means to be totally immersed. Therefore, understanding water baptism is the key to a victorious life. The act of going under the water and rising up from it is a picture of the new life we have received at our new birth.

Jesus Died—We Died With Him

Romans 6:6 says,

"We know that our old sinful selves were crucified with Christ so that sin might lose its power in our lives. We are no longer slaves to sin."

Jesus Was Buried—We Were Buried With Him

Romans 6:4

"For we died and were buried with Christ by baptism. And just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glorious power of the Father, now we also may live new lives."

Jesus Rose—We Rose With Him Victorious

Romans 6:5

"Since we have been united with him in his death, we will also be raised to life as he was."

He Ascended—We Ascended With Him

Ephesians 2:6

"For he raised us from the dead along with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms because we are united with Christ Jesus."

The Old Sin Nature is Dead And Buried.

Water baptism is a declaration to God, the world, the forces of darkness, and ourselves that the old life is dead and buried. Gone for good, now we are no longer slaves to sin and fear. Instead, we are free and empowered to walk in the freshness of new life.

2 Corinthians 5:17–18a

“This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun! And all of this is a gift from God, who brought us back to himself through Christ.”

Sowing And Reaping

Galatians 6:7 NLT

"Don't be misled—you cannot mock the justice of God. You will always harvest what you plant.

There is a law of sowing and reaping. You might have heard at some time that if we sow sin, we will reap judgment and death, and if we sow righteousness, we reap favor from God. But on the Cross, God reversed this law. Jesus sowed what He did not reap and reaped what He did not sow (see Isaiah 53:5–6).

Jesus did not deserve to die. He had not sown sin and therefore did not need to reap judgment and death. But when Jesus went to the Cross, God made the Great Exchange. Jesus reaped what we sowed, and we reaped what He sowed! Jesus took the punishment we deserve, and now we receive all the blessings that Christ deserved.

2 Corinthians 8:9

"You know the generous grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that by his poverty he could make you rich."

So to answer the question about God sending unsaved people to hell.

He doesn't! People end up in hell because they choose to. If we reject the finished work of Jesus' sacrificial death on the Cross, we must reap the judgment we have sown. But, if we choose to rely on God's way of exchange, our judgment has already been taken by Jesus.

1 Peter 2:24

"He personally carried our sins in his body on the Cross so that we can be dead to sin and live for what is right. By his wounds you are healed."

SECTION NINE—QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

Q What does the Bible tell us about Heaven?

Q Explain why there is no book in Heaven containing a list of our sins

Q What is the prize Paul wrote about in 1 Timothy 4:8?

Q Comment on Hebrews 9:27–28

Q Who did God design hell for?

Q What does it mean to be water baptized?

Q Does God send unsaved people to hell?

THE NEW BIRTH—THE NEW AND LIVING WAY

The way we begin our Christian life is important. We cannot just enter God's kingdom by works because we are born of the Holy Spirit. We are born into a living hope.

1 Peter 1:3 NLT

"All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is by his great mercy that we have been born again, because God raised Jesus Christ from the dead. Now we live with great expectation."

Salvation is Not a Reward For the Good Things We Have Done.

It is by His grace, through faith, that we came to believe. We were dead in sin, and God saved us and raised us to heavenly places in His Son Jesus, and none of this depends on us. It is all by God's amazing grace. We are gloriously saved.

John 10:28–29 NLT Jesus said,

"I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one can snatch them away from me, for my Father has given them to me, and he is more powerful than anyone else. No one can snatch them from the Father's hand."

When the Good Shepherd gives us eternal life, we don't have to earn it. Eternal life is forever! His sheep may be in danger, but the Good Shepherd will protect them. They may backslide but will not perish.

The Plan—New Birth

What happens in the new birth is not getting a new religion but getting a new life—a new life so we can experience the supernatural in God's kingdom.

The first three verses of John 3 go like this:

John 3:1–4

"There was a man named Nicodemus, a Jewish religious leader who was a Pharisee. After dark one evening, he came to speak with Jesus. "Rabbi," he said, "we all know that God has sent you to teach us. Your miraculous signs are evidence that God is with you." Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, unless you are born again, you cannot see the Kingdom of God." "What do you mean?" exclaimed Nicodemus. "How can an old man go back into his mother's womb and be born again?"

What do you mean is a good question! Nicodemus is alive. He is breathing, thinking, feeling, acting. He is a human created in God's image. But evidently, Jesus thinks he's dead. There is no spiritual life in Nicodemus. Spiritually, he is unborn. He needs life, not more religious activities or more religious zeal. He has plenty of that.

**John 3:5–6 Jesus replied,
"I assure you, no one can enter the Kingdom of
God without being born of water and the Spirit.
Humans can reproduce only human life, but the
Holy Spirit gives birth to spiritual life."**

**In verse 7, Jesus says to Nicodemus,
"So don't be surprised when I say, 'You must be
born again.'**

**We know that Nicodemus was a Pharisee and a
ruler of the Jews. The Pharisees were the most
rigorously religious of all the Jewish groups.
Nicodemus' religion, impressive Pharisaic study
and discipline, and law-keeping cannot replace
the need for the new birth. What Nicodemus
needs, and what you and I need, is not a religion
but life. Nicodemus did not need religion; he
needed life—spiritual life. What happens in the
new birth is that life comes into being.**

**In the parable of the Prodigal Son, the Father said,
"For this son of mine was dead and has now
returned to life. He was lost, but now he is found."
So the party began" (Luke 15:24).**

**New life happens at new birth. This is not a
religious activity or discipline. It is an act of God.**

Colossians 1:13 says that we change kingdoms, all by God's doing.

"For he has rescued us from the kingdom of darkness and transferred us into the Kingdom of his dear Son."

And there is only one way this transfer could occur—the new birth.

Colossians 3:3 NLT

"For you died to this life, and your real life is hidden with Christ in God."

"Died To This Life!" What does that mean?

When Jesus died for you, God counted His death as your death, and this is the only way God could rescue you from the dominion of darkness.

2 Timothy 2:11 NLT

"This is a trustworthy saying: If we die with him, we will also live with him."

We become children of God and new creations in our new birth. We have a living hope (see 1 Peter 1:3–4) and are co-heirs with Jesus (see Romans 8:17).

2 Corinthians 5:17

"This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun."

John 1:12-13 NLT

"But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God. They are reborn—not with a physical birth resulting from human passion or plan, but a birth that comes from God."

When God invites us into a relationship with Him, He invites us into becoming like Him. Jesus dwells inside us, so we have a good model of who we are becoming.

Romans 4:20–22 NLT

"Abraham never wavered in believing God's promise. In fact, his faith grew stronger, and in this he brought glory to God. He was fully convinced that God is able to do whatever he promises. And because of Abraham's faith, God counted him as righteous."

God promised Abraham, and Abraham was thoroughly convinced God would keep His promise. Therefore, God counted him righteous. God declared Abraham righteous for his faith in the promise to raise a son out of the tomb of death, that is, Sarah's womb. As Christians, we are called children of Abraham, and God promises eternal life to those who believe He raised Jesus from the dead (see Romans 4 23–24). Jesus said in John 8:56, "Your father Abraham rejoiced as he

looked forward to my coming. He saw it and was glad." In Christ, we are heirs of Abraham's same promise.

We receive righteousness not by keeping the law but through faith in God's promise—just like Abraham.

THE RESURRECTION

We cannot separate the resurrection of Jesus from the cross. God raised Jesus back to life, making the Gospel complete. The resurrection proved that sin had been dealt with once and for all who would accept it. It opened the way for every believer to have a new life in Jesus.

Romans 4:25 NLT

"He was handed over to die because of our sins, and he was raised to life to make us right with God."

Now we have

- A new life (Romans 6:4; 1 Peter 1:3)**
- A new focus (Colossians 3:1–4)**
- A new confidence (Romans 8:34,37; Ephesians 3:12)**
- A new position of authority (Eph.2:6; 1 Peter 3:21–22)**
- A new hope for the future (2 Timothy 1:10)**

The Power of the Resurrection in Our Lives

Eph 1:19-23

"I also pray that you will understand the incredible greatness of God's power for us who believe him. This is the same mighty power that raised Christ from the dead and seated him in the place of honor at God's right hand in the heavenly realms.

Now he is far above any ruler or authority or power or leader or anything else—not only in this world but also in the world to come. God has put all things under the authority of Christ and has made him head over all things for the benefit of the church. And the church is his body; it is made full and complete by Christ, who fills all things everywhere with himself."

We study the Scriptures to see Jesus in everything from Genesis to Revelation. After His resurrection, Jesus expounded all the Scripture concerning Himself to two disciples on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:27), from Genesis to Malachi. Jesus opened their eyes to see Him in Scripture, not what we need to do or how to behave. I love this narrative. The more we see Him, the more we “will understand the incredible greatness of God's power for us.”

From Genesis to Malachi. Jesus Opened Their Eyes To See Him in Scripture

Isaac, a Type of Jesus

Jesus is concealed in the Old Testament and revealed in the New Testament. Jesus would have told them about how He was typified in Isaac. God told Abraham to take his son, Isaac, whom he loved, and sacrifice him as a burnt offering. As a

mature son, Isaac carried the wood and willingly submitted to being bound and placed on the altar, just as Jesus willingly bore the cross and was bound and sacrificed. However, when Abraham was about to kill his son, God stopped him and provided a ram for the sacrifice. God stopped Abraham from sacrificing Isaac. In Jesus' case, not one spared God's heart and stopped the sacrifice. Jesus is the "ram" that allowed Himself to be sacrificed.

Joseph a Type of Jesus

We also see Jesus revealed in Joseph's character. His brothers rejected him, but he would become the bread of life to the Gentile world and marry a Gentile bride. (We are His Gentile Bride).

The Bronze Serpent

The bronze serpent on the pole (John 3:14; Numbers 21:9) is a picture of Jesus on the cross who knew no sin but became sin for us. Bronze in the bible speaks of judgment, so the bronze serpent is a picture of God's judgment falling upon Jesus, and just one look at Jesus bearing our sins gives us life. Moses raised the bronze serpent on a pole and lifted it up for the Israelites to see, and as the narrative reads, anyone bitten by the snake could look at the bronze snake and be healed (See Numbers 21:4–9). (The lifting up refers to the death of Jesus by crucifixion).

John 8:28

"So Jesus said, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man on the cross, then you will understand that I AM he. I do nothing on my own but say only what the Father taught me."

John 12:32 Jesus said,

"And when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw everyone to myself." He said this to indicate how he was going to die."

Reading the Bible to find out what to do or not to do is missing the point. We are to study the Bible to see Jesus and all the scriptures concerning Him. You will find shadows of Jesus in the five Levitical offerings and the Tabernacle of Moses, but it takes a New Covenant to impart faith.

We are Born Again to Rule

The same mighty power that raised Jesus from the dead was released to us. From the throne of triumph, Jesus declared, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go, therefore" (Matt 28:18). Jesus got the keys back and fulfilled the promise He made to the disciples when He said, "I will give you the keys of the kingdom" (Matthew 16:9).

Jesus defeated the devil by living a sinless life; He paid the penalty for our sins with His blood and rose triumphant with the keys of authority over death, hell, and the grave, resulting in our restoration to His plan of ruling as a people made in His image. And as such, we would enforce the victory obtained at Calvary. We are born to rule over creation and darkness, to plunder hell, to rescue those from hell's clutches, and to establish the rule of Jesus. We expose the devil and undo his evil works.

SECTION TEN—QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

Q Why can't salvation be a reward for the good we have done?

Q Explain what happens when we are born-again.

Q What does "died to this life" mean?

Q How do we become righteous?

Q Why can't we separate the resurrection of Jesus from the cross?

Q Comment on Isaac as a type of Jesus

Q Comment on Joseph as a type of Jesus.

Q Comment on the bronze serpent of John 3:14 and Numbers 21:9

Q Why are we to study the Bible?

Q What are we born-again to rule over?

THE KINGDOM OF GOD

Colossians 1:13–14 NLT

"For he has rescued us from the kingdom of darkness and transferred us into the Kingdom of his dear Son, who purchased our freedom and forgave our sins."

We have been rescued from the tyrannical rule of darkness and translated into God's Kingdom. We now live under the authority of the Lord Jesus, and nothing can change it. So, the key to living in His Kingdom is a son/daughter relationship with the King.

Ephesians 1:5-7 says,

"God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure. So we praise God for the glorious grace he has poured out on us who belong to his dear Son. He is so rich in kindness and grace that he purchased our freedom with the blood of his Son and forgave our sins."

King Jesus

Colossians 2:6–7

"And now, just as you accepted Christ Jesus as your Lord, you must continue to follow him. Let your roots grow down into him, and let your lives be built on him. Then your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught, and you will overflow with thankfulness."

Knowing Jesus as Saviour allows us to see God's Kingdom (John 3:3), where we have new citizenship. Every day, Jesus demonstrated the lifestyle of the Kingdom. Our King set the example for us—

John 13:13–15

"You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and you are right because that's what I am. And since I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash each other's feet. I have given you an example to follow. Do as I have done to you."

Each one of us has the opportunity to increase by faithfully using what we've been given. In the Kingdom of God, faithfulness is high on the list. We are to fulfil the commission Jesus gave us and destroy the devil's works, and this commission makes us representative of His Kingdom. Jesus said—

Matthew 10:7-8

"Go and announce to them that the Kingdom of Heaven is near. Heal the sick, raise the dead, cure those with leprosy, and cast out demons. Give as freely as you have received!"

If Jesus the King said it, He thinks we can do it. So, this has to be the most incredible privilege and opportunity for us to represent Him. It requires that we pursue Him to find ways to fulfil His commands.

The Kingdom of God is Not Literal.

1 Corinthians 4:20

"For the Kingdom of God is not just a lot of talk; it is living by God's power."

Romans 14:17 NIV

"For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit,"

The Kingdom of God is in the Holy Spirit. Paul discusses the spiritual realm—Christ's dominion over His redeemed people. It is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.

1 Peter 2:9

"For you are a chosen people. You are royal priests, a holy nation, God's very own possession. As a result, you can show others the goodness of God, for he called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light."

We are a kingdom of priests. It is God's heart to give everyone access to Him. He brought the Israelites out of the bondage of Egypt to worship Him, but they failed. So now we are His chosen people; He claims us as His own. Jesus is the head cornerstone.

Ephesians 2:19–22

"So now you Gentiles are no longer strangers and foreigners. You are citizens along with all of God's holy people. You are members of God's family. Together, we are his house, built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets. And the cornerstone is Christ Jesus himself. We are carefully joined together in him, becoming a holy temple for the Lord. Through him you Gentiles are also being made part of this dwelling where God lives by his Spirit."

The purpose of our salvation was to put us right with God. Thus creating a people who would co-labour with Him to bring Heaven on earth.

Fellowship

We are called into fellowship with God; He lives inside us for this purpose. The heart of God is birthed in us by God Himself, and it grows within us as we "tasted and see that the Lord is good." (Psalm 34:7)

An essential part of being a Christian is getting along with people. Therefore, we are encouraged to meet together regularly.

Hebrews 10:24–25

"Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. And let us not neglect

our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near."

It is by fellowship with other Christians that we grow in Christ. Sometimes, it is easy to get so preoccupied with God's plan for our lives that we miss the process entirely. We are to grow into the maturity of Jesus, and we need a relationship with the Lord Jesus and each other to succeed in the assignment the Lord gives us.

Ephesians 4:16

"He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love."

Our fellowship embraces the need to be honest with each other (James 5:16); however, it is not a prerequisite. We can only know people to the extent they are prepared to open up to us. As we remove the mask and open up to each other, the love of God is expressed (1 Peter 1:22; 1 John 4:7, 11–12).

1 John 4:7

"Dear friends, let us continue to love one another, for love comes from God. Anyone who loves is a child of God and knows God."

Forgive Each Other

Colossians 3:13–14 says it all—

"Make allowance for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony."

Why should we forgive each other? Because God first forgave us!

Love and Encourage Each Other

Hebrews 10:24

"Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works."

In the New Testament sense, love is an act of will. This is because we are commanded to love. Therefore, it is something we can do because God loved us first. Jesus said in

1 John 3:11

"This is the message you have heard from the beginning: We should love one another."

1 John 4:19

"We love each other because he loved us first."

John 15:12–13

"This is my commandment: Love each other in the same way I have loved you. There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends."

Acts 4:32

"All the believers were united in heart and mind. And they felt that what they owned was not their own, so they shared everything they had."

This was a description of the first Century church—one heart (love), one mind (purpose), and all things in common (concern). It was never meant to be a list of regulations; instead, it was the outworking of true fellowship.

John 17:21 Jesus prayed.

"I pray that they will all be one, just as you and I are one—as you are in me, Father, and I am in you. And may they be in us so that the world will believe you sent me."

SECTION ELEVEN—QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

Q What have we been rescued from?

Q In your own words, comment on Colossians 1:13–14

Q Comment on Colossians 2:6–7

Q What does following King Jesus mean to you?

Q Comment on 1 Corinthians 4:20

Q It is God's heart to give everyone access to Him. How is this possible

Q What is an essential part of being a Christian?

Q Comment on 1 John 4:7

Q Why should we forgive each other?

Q Why should we love and encourage each other?

Q Comment on 1 John 4:19

THE RETURN OF JESUS

The Bible tells us clearly how Jesus will return

It will be Unexpected, But We Will Not Be Surprised.

1 Thessalonians 5:1–3

“Now concerning how and when all this will happen, dear brothers and sisters, we don’t really need to write you. For you know quite well that the day of the Lord’s return will come unexpectedly, like a thief in the night. When people are saying, “Everything is peaceful and secure,” then disaster will fall on them as suddenly as a pregnant woman’s labor pains begin. And there will be no escape. But you aren’t in the dark about these things, dear brothers and sisters, and you won’t be surprised when the day of the Lord comes like a thief.”

Jesus Will Appear Like Lightning

Matthew 24:27 Jesus said,

“For as the lightning flashes in the east and shines to the west, so it will be when the Son of Man comes.”

In The Same Way He Left

Acts 1:10–11

“As they strained to see him rising into heaven, two white-robed men suddenly stood among

them. “Men of Galilee,” they said, “why are you standing here staring into heaven? Jesus has been taken from you into heaven, but someday he will return from heaven in the same way you saw him go!”

It Will Be With Great Power and Glory

In Luke 21:27, Jesus said,

“Then everyone will see the Son of Man coming on a cloud with power and great glory.”

Every Eye Will See!

Revelation 1:7

“Look! He comes with the clouds of heaven. And everyone will see him—even those who pierced him. And all the nations of the world will mourn for him. Yes! Amen!”

Events That Will Take Place

The return of the Lord Jesus Christ will mark the end of this "present age" and the commencement of a new age (1 Timothy 6:19). At the Second Coming, several dramatic events will take place:

- The mystery of the ages will be completed (Revelation 10:6–7; Romans 16:25–26).
- The Bride of Christ will be revealed to the world (Revelation 19:7; 21:2–11).
- We will enter our full glory (Romans 8:19–21; 1 Corinthians 15:35–53).
- The dead in Christ will be raised (2 Corinthians 4:14; John 6:40; 11:25).

- Living believers will be caught up (Matthew 24:31; 1 Thessalonians 4:17).
- Creation will be set free (Romans 8:19–22; Isaiah 35:1–7).
- Every enemy will be destroyed (1 Corinthians 15:24–25; 2 Thessalonians 1:7–10; 2:8).
- Satan will be bound (Revelation 20:1–3, 7–10).
- Judgment will be meted out (2 Thessalonians 1:6–9)

Signs of The Second Coming of Jesus

Jesus gave His disciples clear signs of His return:

- Worldwide war, earthquakes, and famines (Mark 13:8).
- False Christs and false prophets (Matthew 24:23–24).
- Ecological disasters (Luke 21:25)
- Signs in the sky (Luke 21:25–26; Matthew 24:29–30).
- The return of Jerusalem to Jewish hands (Luke 21:24).
- The rise of the "man of sin" (2 Thessalonians 2:3–4).
- An abomination in the temple of God (Matthew 24:15–16).
- The Gospel is preached to every tribe and nation (Matthew 24:14; Mark 13:10).

We Are To Be Alert and Ready

In Luke 21:25–28, Jesus said to His disciples

“And there will be strange signs in the sun, moon, and stars. And here on earth the nations will be in turmoil, perplexed by the roaring seas and strange tides. People will be terrified at what they see coming upon the earth, for the powers in the heavens will be shaken. Then everyone will see the Son of Man coming on a cloud with power and great glory. So when all these things begin to happen, stand and look up, for your salvation is near!”

The Rapture

According to the Bible, the rapture will be part of something noisy enough for all to hear and prominent enough for all to see. For example, in 1 Thessalonians 4:16–17, Paul writes—

“For the Lord himself will come down from heaven with a commanding shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet call of God. First, the believers who have died will rise from their graves. Then, together with them, we who are still alive and remain on the earth will be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Then we will be with the Lord forever.”

Every Bible translation I researched does not use the word rapture, which means “caught up,” the Greek word harpazo, meaning “to snatch away.” The Rapture does not appear in the Old Testament.

Sequence of Events According to 2 Thessalonians Chapter 1 and 2

Persecution of Believers and God's Provision

2 Thessalonians 1:3–7

“Dear brothers and sisters, we can’t help but thank God for you, because your faith is flourishing and your love for one another is growing. We proudly tell God’s other churches about your endurance and faithfulness in all the persecutions and hardships you are suffering. And God will use this persecution to show his justice and to make you worthy of his Kingdom, for which you are suffering. In his justice he will pay back those who persecute you. And God will provide rest for you who are being persecuted and also for us when the Lord Jesus appears from heaven. He will come with his mighty angels.”

Judgment of Wicked at Christ's Coming and Encouragement For the Believers

2 Thessalonians 1:8–12

“In flaming fire, bringing judgment on those who don’t know God and on those who refuse to obey the Good News of our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with eternal destruction, forever separated from the Lord and from his glorious power. When he comes on that day, he will receive glory from his holy people—praise from all who

believe. And this includes you, for you believed what we told you about him. So we keep on praying for you, asking our God to enable you to live a life worthy of his call. May he give you the power to accomplish all the good things your faith prompts you to do. Then the name of our Lord Jesus will be honored because of the way you live, and you will be honored along with him. This is all made possible because of the grace of our God and Lord, Jesus Christ.”

Rapture

2 Thessalonians 2:1

“Now, dear brothers and sisters, let us clarify some things about the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and how we will be gathered to meet him.”

The Day of the Lord Comes With Two Conditions—

- 1. A great rebellion or falling away**
- 2. The man of lawlessness is revealed**

2 Thessalonians 2:2–4

“Don’t be so easily shaken or alarmed by those who say that the day of the Lord has already begun. Don’t believe them, even if they claim to have had a spiritual vision, a revelation, or a letter supposedly from us. Don’t be fooled by what they say. For that day will not come until there is a great rebellion against God and the man of lawlessness is revealed—the one who brings destruction. He

will exalt himself and defy everything that people call god and every object of worship. He will even sit in the temple of God, claiming that he himself is God.”

Mystery of Lawlessness at Work And Yet Restrained by the Holy Spirit

2 Thessalonians 2:6–8

“And you know what is holding him back, for he can be revealed only when his time comes. For this lawlessness is already at work secretly, and it will remain secret until the one who is holding it back steps out of the way. Then the man of lawlessness will be revealed, but the Lord Jesus will slay him with the breath of his mouth and destroy him by the splendor of his coming.”

Lawless One to Appear in Tribulation Period,

2 Thessalonians 2:9–12

“This man will come to do the work of Satan with counterfeit power and signs and miracles. He will use every kind of evil deception to fool those on their way to destruction, because they refuse to love and accept the truth that would save them. So God will cause them to be greatly deceived, and they will believe these lies. Then they will be condemned for enjoying evil rather than believing the truth.”

Believers Established in Salvation and The Word of God

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2 Thessalonians 2:13–17

“As for us, we can’t help but thank God for you, dear brothers and sisters loved by the Lord. We are always thankful that God chose you to be among the first to experience salvation—a salvation that came through the Spirit who makes you holy and through your belief in the truth. He called you to salvation when we told you the Good News; now you can share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. With all these things in mind, dear brothers and sisters, stand firm and keep a strong grip on the teaching we passed on to you both in person and by letter. Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal comfort and a wonderful hope, comfort you and strengthen you in every good thing you do and say.”

Believers Established in Prayer and The Love of God.

2 Thessalonians 3:1–7

“Finally, dear brothers and sisters, we ask you to pray for us. Pray that the Lord’s message will spread rapidly and be honored wherever it goes, just as when it came to you. Pray, too, that we will

be rescued from wicked and evil people, for not everyone is a believer. But the Lord is faithful; he will strengthen you and guard you from the evil one. And we are confident in the Lord that you are doing and will continue to do the things we commanded you. May the Lord lead your hearts into a full understanding and expression of the love of God and the patient endurance that comes from Christ. And now, dear brothers and sisters, we give you this command in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ: Stay away from all believers who live idle lives and don't follow the tradition they received from us. For you know that you ought to imitate us. We were not idle when we were with you."

Believers Not Idle and Willing to Work

2 Thessalonians 3:8–15

"We never accepted food from anyone without paying for it. We worked hard day and night so we would not be a burden to any of you. We certainly had the right to ask you to feed us, but we wanted to give you an example to follow. Even while we were with you, we gave you this command: "Those unwilling to work will not get to eat." Yet we hear that some of you are living idle lives, refusing to work and meddling in other people's business. We command such people and urge them in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down and work to earn their own living. As for the rest of you, dear brothers and sisters, never get tired of doing good.

Take note of those who refuse to obey what we say in this letter. Stay away from them so they will be ashamed. Don't think of them as enemies, but warn them as you would a brother or sister."

Looking Forward

2 Peter 3:13–15

"But we are looking forward to the new heavens and new earth he has promised, a world filled with God's righteousness. And so, dear friends, while you are waiting for these things to happen, make every effort to be found living peaceful lives that are pure and blameless in his sight. And remember, our Lord's patience gives people time to be saved. This is what our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you with the wisdom God gave him."

BORN FOR MORE!

We are born again to become like Jesus, which was God's plan from the beginning when He created Adam and Eve. We are being transformed into His likeness; we are His workmanship, His new creation, and God seated us in heavenly places in His Son (Ephesians 2:6). Jesus, the Living Word, who existed at the beginning—before ink was ever invented, created us with a desire to be like our maker. King David said, “My steps have stayed on your path; I have not wavered from following you.” The Holy Spirit is at work in us to accomplish it. Our work is to allow His grace to change us! It is a journey of the highest order!

1 Peter 1:23–24

“Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart, since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God.”

At every corner, I return to the Word of God 1 Peter:23–24 says that we are all born again of imperishable seed; the same seed in you is in me, which levels the playing field. We are all one in Christ Jesus, and it is through the living and abiding Word of God that we are partakers of His divine nature (2 Peter 1:4). Therefore, we can be like Jesus and fervently love one another because He first loved us (1 John 4:19).

We are born for more—the new life that Jesus promised us is more than a ticket to heaven. God made the way in Jesus for every person to be transformed, and He did not leave us wondering what it all meant. He sent Jesus to show us what the Father is like, and all that Jesus did, He did as a man full of grace which was God’s ability at work in Him. So we have no excuse!

CONCLUSION

When we see Jesus revealed in the Scriptures, our hearts will burn with His love, and His unconditional love will ignite hope and faith in our hearts. The Word of God comes alive for us and blossoms into an exciting adventure to discover Jesus Christ inside us.

Our theology has a lot to do with running the race set before us. God has a plan, and we are a part of His incredible plan. He has invested in us with gifts for a reason. Paul's theology kept him strong through imprisonment and physical and mental hardships. He knew the truth and, by faith, persevered.

Hebrews 12:2 NLT says,

“We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith. Because of the joy awaiting him, he endured the cross, disregarding its shame. Now he is seated in the place of honor beside God's throne.”

Amid trouble, we can focus on Jesus. We do well to study to understand God's character and nature. King David's theology allowed him to write of God's omnipresence.

Psalm 139:8–10

“If I go up to heaven, you are there; if I go down to the grave, you are there. If I ride the wings of the morning, if I dwell by the farthest oceans. Even there your hand will guide me, and your strength will support me.”

Hebrews 5:11–14

“There is much more we would like to say about this, but it is difficult to explain, especially since you are spiritually dull and don’t seem to listen. You have been believers so long now that you ought to be teaching others. Instead, you need someone to teach you again the basic things about God’s word. You are like babies who need milk and cannot eat solid food. For someone who lives on milk is still an infant and doesn’t know how to do what is right. Solid food is for those who are mature, who through training have the skill to recognise the difference between right and wrong.”

The author of Hebrews urges us to tackle the meat of the Word because our spiritual development is at stake and thus our effectiveness in the world of unbelievers and our great commission.

Thank you for taking an active part in this study of Scripture. My greatest wish is that you find Jesus on every page of the Bible and that you know Him and experience the fullness of God.

**Much love
Colleen**

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Colleen McLean is a resident of the Central Coast of NSW, Australia. She and her husband, Peter, have five children. At this point, they have eight grandchildren with the expectation of more. Colleen served as Assistant Pastor for ten years and Senior Pastor for seven years. She is a religious marriage celebrant, an author, and an experienced netball coach, and she has contributed to the netball community in leadership roles over the past 35 years. Colleen travels to the remote hills of North East India to support an Orphanage of 28 children financially and pastorally. She attends Daybreak Church in Wyoming, NSW, Australia, and serves in a leadership role.



Other ebooks freely available by Colleen McLean

**Knowing God is Essential to Understanding Who
You Are in Him.**

I invite you to discover who you are in God and allow the words of the Bible to get past your head and into your heart, where the Holy Spirit can transform you.

Why Should I Forgive?

I give many reasons why you can sincerely forgive and experience the healing Hand of God upon your life. God's dealings with us are always perfectly kind and gentle, and He has our best interest at heart. Trust Him as you read, and allow Him to love you better.

Neither Possessed nor Cursed

Can a demon possess a born-again believer?

I encourage you to complete reading this little book; I imagine there may be many who will stop after the first chapter. I hope that you will know your position in Him by the end of this ebook and His great love for you. The Gospel is the Greatest Love Story Ever Told.

The Greatest Love Story Ever Told

It is about a man who practised what He Preach. He was a show-and-tell teacher whose ministry reached multitudes with acts of compassion.

Fast Foundations.

From Genesis to Jesus

This fast review reveals God's plans for you and me. You need this!

Out of Darkness

A Sequel to Fast Foundations

A Journey from Jesus to Justification to eternal life.

My Answers to Questions About God.

These questions are among the most popular questions in every age. Unfortunately, there are no easy answers. However, I aim to bring the interested reader's understanding to a light bulb moment through my down-to-earth and straightforward solutions.

Books

What Has God Ever Done For Me?

Exactly what you and I could never do!

Discover Your Determination

In this book, I have provided simple biblical wisdom and advice to help leaders focus on their relationship with God. I feature simple one-liners and truisms, which I have tested and tried in my journey in leadership roles and as a parent. I hope you will enjoy reading this reflection of my life and that you, too, will find the answers to your problem questions.

