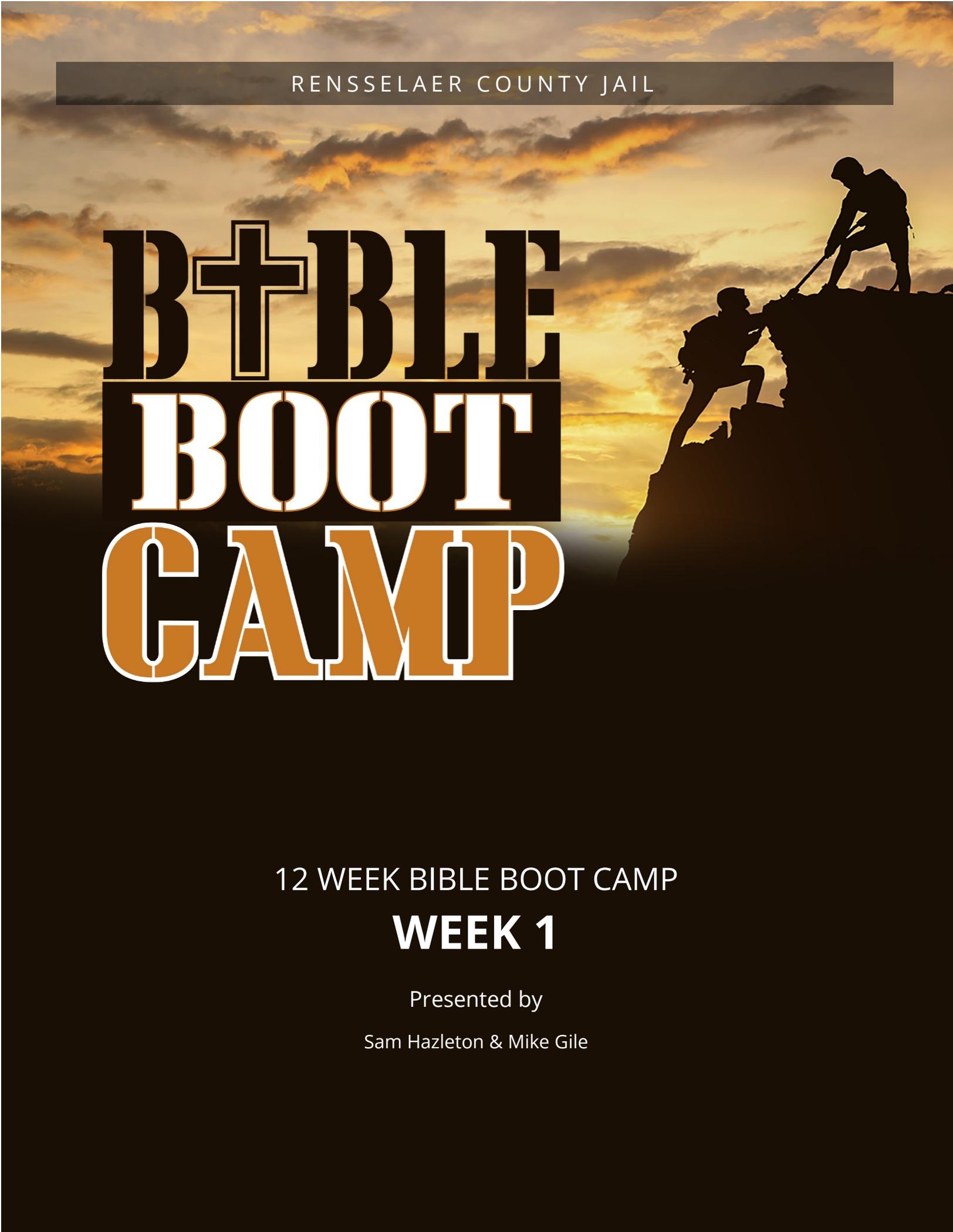


RENSSELAER COUNTY JAIL



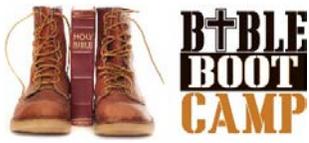
B+BLE BOOT CAMP

12 WEEK BIBLE BOOT CAMP

WEEK 1

Presented by

Sam Hazleton & Mike Gile



WORD OF GOD: DOCTRINE OF THE BIBLE

WHAT THE BIBLE TEACHES ABOUT ITSELF

AUTHORITY AND ACCURACY OF SCRIPTURE

1. **Genesis 3:1** "Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?'" Satan's very first ploy was to twist God's word and question its authority. The authority and integrity of God's Word, the Bible, is the most foundational battleground for every Christian in our fight against evil.
2. **Psalms 138:2** "for you have exalted above all things your name and your word". God ranks the integrity of His word equally with the integrity of His name (character).
3. **2Tim 3:16-17** "All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work." The Holy Spirit – who is the "breath" or "wind" of God, is the true author of all Scripture. While the pen and the personalities of the human authors was in play, these men were literally "carried along" by the Spirit as they wrote, as Peter testifies...
4. **2Peter 1:21** "No prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit."
5. **John 10:35** "Scripture cannot be broken". There are not many things that Jesus said were impossible, but He did say that it is impossible for scripture to not come true.
6. **Proverbs 30:5** "Every word of God proves true; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him". It is not merely the "main ideas" of scripture that are inspired and unbreakable, but literally every single word!
7. **Matthew 5:18** "For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished." Jesus said that not even a "jot" (smallest letter) or a "tittle" (tiny swoosh distinguishing one similar Hebrew letter from another. So not only is every word inspired, but every letter as well!
8. **John 5:46-47** "if you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote of me. But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe my words?" Jesus continually put His stamp of approval and authenticity on the Old Testament, which was the only Bible that existed in His day.

The Bible is 100%
accurate
historically,
scientifically and
theologically!

SUFFICIENCY OF SCRIPTURE

1. **Jude 1:3** "I found it necessary to write appealing to you to contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints." Here Jude, the brother of Jesus, affirms the completeness of the apostolic and prophetic testimony preserved within the Old and New Testament Scriptures. There were no new doctrines of the faith to be established in the future!
2. **1Cor 4:6** "I have applied all these things to myself and Apollos for your benefit, brothers, that you may learn by us not to go beyond what is written." Here Paul exhorts the believers in Corinth to follow his and Apollos' example by restricting their beliefs to what is in harmony with the Scripture.

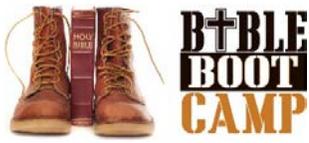
3. **Proverbs 30:6** "Do not add to his words, lest he rebuke you and you be found a liar." When we venture out on our own authority, or rely upon the wisdom of men instead of God's revealed truth, we will eventually be rebuked as liars.
4. **Gal 1:8** "But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed." Paul pronounces a curse on the one who would presume to preach a message that is not based upon, or disagrees with, biblical truth.
5. **Revelation 22:18-19** "I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book, and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book." As if to affix a seal upon the completed Bible, God gives a solemn warning not to add or subtract from His finished book!
6. **Psalms 119:160** "The sum of your word is truth, and every one of your righteous rules endures forever." Pilate asked Jesus "what is truth?" This is one of the Bible's two clearest and most succinct answers to that question, the other one being **John 14:6**, where Jesus said simply "I am... the truth". The entirety of scripture constitutes the truth. It is both irreducible and complete – do not add to it or take away from it.
7. **2Tim 3:16-17** "All scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work." Verse 17 indicates that the Scripture is sufficient for the man of God to be complete. This means that he needs nothing else – no other book, no other wisdom.

"All scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work."

-2Tim 3:16-17

POWER OF SCRIPTURE FOR OUR EVERYDAY USE

1. **Hebrews 4:12** "For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart." What does it mean that the word of God is "living" and "active?" The Spirit accentuates its truths to our hearts at just the right time. And though the Bible itself defies "systematization", its individual passages and verses are each interconnected with many others by means of language, concepts, people, places and ideas, creating a multidimensional universe of truth which is so vast as to utterly defy exhaustive exploration within the framework of a single lifetime.
2. **Ephesians 6:17** "and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God". The quickened word (rhema) of God is our offensive weapon against the enemy. A Christian without a wealth of memorized Scripture at the ready is like a soldier without a weapon.
3. **2Timothy 3:15** "and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus." Scripture is the foundation of our salvation.
4. **Matthew 4:4** "But he answered, "It is written, "'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'
5. **Romans 10:17** "So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ."



SCRIPTURE IS SELF-INTERPRETING AND SPIRIT-INTERPRETED – EVERY FACT ESTABLISHED BY TWO OR THREE WITNESSES

1. **2Peter 1:20** “knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation.”
2. **John 16:13** “When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.”

HISTORY AND AUTHORSHIP OF THE BIBLE

1. 40 authors over 1500 years
2. Authors were OT & NT Prophets and Apostles with authority from and through Christ Himself

PRESERVATION OF THE BIBLE TEXTS

1. Dead Sea Scrolls, Septuagint
2. 5,000+ Greek manuscripts of NT + endless quotations in other

HOW WE RECEIVED THE CANON OF 66 BOOKS

1. OT Canon received from Jews (**Romans 3:2**) “Much in every way. To begin with, the Jews were entrusted with the oracles of God.”
2. NT Canon not decided by men but verified by men. Known authorship and date, universal acceptance. All NT books written before close of first century AD. NT Canon rounded out and generally agreed by 200AD.
3. Internal confirmation by Isaiah parallel (66 chapters in two sections, 39 and 27, matching Bible)
4. Catholic Canon corrupted in late middle ages (1546 Council of Trent, as a means of counteracting the reformation) with additions of dubious OT “deuterocanonical” books that were never canonized by the Jews, to whom the Old Testament oracles were entrusted by God.

BIBLE TRANSLATIONS

1. Translation vs. Paraphrase: “Thought for thought” vs. “Word for word”
2. History and “family tree” of English translations
3. Importance of being anchored in original languages

EVIDENCES FOR THE BIBLE

1. Prophetic (2,000+ OT prophecies fulfilled, 365 in Jesus alone)
2. Scientific (Flood, Dinosaurs, Dietary, Hygienic, Purification laws, 8th Day Circumcision, Spherical earth hung upon nothing)
3. Archaeological/Historical. Well over fifty Bible characters archeologically confirmed outside of scripture, along with a significant number of Biblical events. No Biblical history has ever been disproven, only confirmed, by archaeological discovery.

BIBLE STUDY AIDS

1. Concordance (Strong's, BlueLetterBible.org, ESV Exhaustive)
2. Maps
3. Study Bibles
4. Apostolic Polyglot (Greek/English interlinear Bible)
5. Hebrew interlinear Bible, Hebrew concordance

UNDERSTANDING THE NATURE OF GOD, THE NATURE OF MAN, AND OUR ENEMY SATAN GOD'S ETERNAL NATURE AND UNLIMITED POWER

1. **Genesis 1:1-3** "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. 2 The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. 3 And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light." The first verses of the Bible show the eternal power and triune nature of God. All three persons of the trinity are identified or alluded to in the first three verses of the Bible – God the Father in verse one, the Holy Spirit in verse two, and the Son "i.e. the Light" in verse three.
2. **Romans 1:20** "For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse." Everyone instinctively knows that there is an all-powerful God of the Universe. It is unrighteous, not so-called "science" that causes people to deny God.
3. **John 1:1** "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

**"In the beginning
was the Word, and
the Word was with
God, and the Word
was God."**

-John 1:1

THE TRIUNE GODHEAD (MYSTERY OF DIVINITY/DEITY):

FATHER, SON, HOLY SPIRIT

1. **Genesis 1:1-3** 'In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light.' Just in the first three verses of the Bible, all three persons of the trinity are mentioned: The Father (verse 1), the Spirit (verse 2) and the Son (the "light" verse 3). The first three words of our Bible "In the beginning" is only one word in Hebrew (Beresheit). Three in one from the very beginning! All three persons of the trinity are identified or alluded to in the first three verses of the Bible – God the Father in verse one, the Holy Spirit in verse two, and the Son "i.e. the Light" in verse three.
2. **Mark 1:10-11** 'And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.'" Notice we have all three persons of the Trinity involved in Jesus' baptism. The Father's voice from heaven, the Spirit descending like a dove, and the Son of God being baptized.

Man, who is made in God's own image, is himself a trinity consisting of body, soul and spirit. God has so masterfully woven these elements of our being together, that we can't tell where one begins and the other ends, yet we know from Scripture that these are distinct aspects of our being.

3. **Acts 1:7-8** 'He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.'" Again, all three persons of the Trinity are referenced in Jesus' answer.
4. **1Peter 1:2** "according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in the sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood: May grace and peace be multiplied to you." Some object that the Bible never explicitly states that the God is three persons in one, and never uses the word "trinity". While these statements may be true, the reality of the Trinity is implicit throughout the Scriptures, and the Scripture makes no sense apart from this basic understanding.
5. **Genesis 1:26** 'Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.'" The very first page of the Bible declares that God is not only "one", but is "us" (i.e. three). This is explicit in the Hebrew language.
6. The concept of three-in-one Deity can be illustrated by an egg. An egg has a shell, a yoke and an egg white. Any one of these three components could be properly called "egg". In the same way, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are each directly and individually called "God" in the Scripture, yet Scripture never identifies these three persons as separate "gods", but rather as inseparable, unified members of a singular Godhead.
7. In a similar fashion, man, who is made in God's own image, is himself a trinity consisting of body, soul and spirit. God has so masterfully woven these elements of our being together, that we can't tell where one begins and the other ends, yet we know from Scripture that these are distinct aspects of our being. Likewise with the Godhead, the three persons of the Trinity each have their individual roles yet together blend into an inseparable oneness.'

FATHER - NO MAN HAS EVER SEEN OR CAN SEE – DWELLS IN UNAPPROACHABLE LIGHT

(**1Tim 6:16**) "who alone has immortality, who dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see. To him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen."

SON – JESUS IS THE IMAGE (EXPRESSION) OF THE INVISIBLE GOD

(**Col 1:15**) "He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation." All visible manifestations of God throughout the Bible are really the Lord Jesus!

HOLY SPIRIT – HE IS A PERSON (HE), NOT A FORCE (IT). HE HAS FORCE/EFFECTS BUT IS A PERSON.

1. He can be grieved (**Eph 4:30**) "And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption."
2. He speaks through prophets
 - a. **Acts 21:11** And coming to us, he took Paul's belt and bound his own feet and hands and said, "Thus says the Holy Spirit, 'This is how the Jews at Jerusalem will bind the man who owns this belt and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.'"
 - b. **Acts 13:1-2** Now there were in the church at Antioch prophets and teachers, Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen a lifelong friend of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. While they were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."
3. He communicates the things of God to our spirit
 - a. **John 16:14** "He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you."
 - b. **1Cor 2:10** "these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God.").
 - c. His is the "still small voice" (**1Kings 19:12** "And after the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the fire the sound of a low whisper.") from behind that says "this is the way, walk ye in it" (**Isaiah 30:21** "And your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, "This is the way, walk in it," when you turn to the right or when you turn to the left.")

SATAN

Satan's origin **Ezekiel 28:12-15** "Son of man, raise a lamentation over the king of Tyre, and say to him, Thus says the Lord GOD: "You were the signet of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering, sardius, topaz, and diamond, beryl, onyx, and jasper, sapphire, emerald, and carbuncle; and crafted in gold were your settings and your engravings. On the day that you were created they were prepared. You were an anointed guardian cherub. I placed you; you were on the holy mountain of God; in the midst of the stones of fire you walked. You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created"

SATAN'S FALL

1. **Ezekiel 28:15-19** "till unrighteousness was found in you. In the abundance of your trade you were filled with violence in your midst, and you sinned; so I cast you as a profane thing from the mountain of God, and I destroyed you, O guardian cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. Your heart was proud because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor. I cast you to the ground; I exposed you before kings, to feast their eyes on you. By the multitude of your iniquities, in the unrighteousness of your trade you profaned your sanctuaries; so I brought fire out from your midst; it consumed you, and I turned you to ashes on the earth in the sight of all who saw you. All who know you among the peoples are appalled at you; you have come to a dreadful end and shall be no more forever."

"And he said to them, 'I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.'"

-Luke 10:18

2. **Isaiah 14:9-17** "How you are fallen from heaven, O Day Star, son of Dawn! How you are cut down to the ground, you who laid the nations low! You said in your heart, 'I will ascend to heaven; above the stars of God I will set my throne on high; I will sit on the mount of assembly in the far reaches of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.' But you are brought down to Sheol, to the far reaches of the pit. Those who see you will stare at you and ponder over you: 'Is this the man who made the earth tremble, who shook kingdoms, who made the world like a desert and overthrew its cities, who did not let his prisoners go home?'"
3. **Luke 10:18** "And he said to them, 'I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.'"

SATAN'S PRESENT USEFULNESS TO GOD

1. **1Kings 22:22** And the LORD said to him, 'By what means?' And he said, 'I will go out, and will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.' And he said, 'You are to entice him, and you shall succeed; go out and do so.'
2. **Job 1:12** And the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has is in your hand. Only against him do not stretch out your hand." So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD.
3. **Job 2:6** And the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, he is in your hand; only spare his life."

SATAN'S PRESENT POWER AND LIMITATIONS

1. **2Cor 4:4** In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.
2. **Eph 6:12** For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.
3. **Job 1:12** And the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has is in your hand. Only against him do not stretch out your hand." So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD.
4. While Satan is God's (and our) enemy, we must not think that his power or position is worthy to be compared with God's. God is always way ahead of Satan's schemes, and always gets the ultimate victory over Satan in our lives **2Corinthians 2:14** "But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession, and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of him everywhere." **Romans 8:28** "And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to his purpose." **1John 4:4** "he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world."

FUTURE DESTINY – SATAN WILL NOT BE A PART OF OUR LIVES IN ETERNITY!

1. **2Thess 2:9** "The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders". Satan is destined to rule the earth for a short period, 42 months, through a man, the antichrist, by whom the unsaved will be deceived, and who will be destroyed upon Jesus' return.
2. **Revelation 20:2,7-10** "And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, ... And when the thousand years are ended, Satan will be released from his prison and will come out to deceive the nations that are at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them for battle; their number is like the sand of the sea. And they marched up over the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, but fire came down from heaven and consumed them, and the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever."

MAN'S ORIGIN (GENESIS 1:26-28, GEN 2:7, 21-25)

1. Formation
 - a. **Genesis 1:26-28** "Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth."
 - b. **Genesis 2:7,21-25** "then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature. ... So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed."
2. Triune nature **1Thess 5:23** "Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ"
3. Eternal existence **Daniel 12:2** "And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."
4. Fall
 - a. **Genesis 3:4-7** "But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked."
 - b. **Genesis 3:23-24** "therefore the LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken. He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life."
 - c. **Romans 5:12** "Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned"
5. Depravity (**Gal 5:19-21, Romans 7:18, Galatians 5:19-21** "Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God." **Romans 7:18** "For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out." **Mark**

"For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out."

-Romans 7:18

7:21-23 "For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness."

6. Redemption **John 3:16** "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."
7. Judgment **Hebrews 9:28** "so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him."
8. Destiny
 - a. **Daniel 12:1-3** "At that time shall arise Michael, the great prince who has charge of your people. And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never has been since there was a nation till that time. But at that time your people shall be delivered, everyone whose name shall be found written in the book. And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky above; and those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever."
 - b. **Revelation 21:3-8** "And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away." And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true." And he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment. The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son. But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death"
 - c. **Revelation 20:15** "And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire."
 - d. **Revelation 22:14-15** "Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life and that they may enter the city by the gates. Outside are the dogs and sorcerers and the sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood."
 - e. **1Cor 15:49** "Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven"

UNDERSTANDING SALVATION THROUGH THE GOD-MAN, JESUS THE MESSIAH

1. Redemption preplanned from before the creation of the world **Revelation 13:8** (NKJV) "All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.", **Romans 11:32-33** "For God has consigned all to disobedience, that he may have mercy on all. Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!"

The Entire Old Testament testifies to the coming Messiah

“And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.”

-Luke 24:27

2. Redemption prophesied immediately after the fall of man – “the seed of the woman” indicating the virgin birth of the Messiah **Genesis 3:15** “I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel”, **Isaiah 7:14** “Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.”
3. First blood sacrifice pointed to salvation through shed blood of the spotless lamb **Genesis 3:21** “And the LORD God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them”, **Hebrews 9:22** “Indeed, under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.”
4. The call of Abraham. Prophecy of salvation by faith **Genesis 15:6** “And he believed the LORD, and he counted it to him as righteousness”, through a Messiah **Genesis 21:12** “But God said to Abraham, “Be not displeased because of the boy and because of your slave woman. Whatever Sarah says to you, do as she tells you, for through Isaac shall your offspring be named.”, **Galatians 3:16** “Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say, ‘And to offsprings,’ referring to many, but referring to one, ‘And to your offspring,’ who is Christ.”
5. Israel’s exodus from Egypt -- a picture of the salvation experience
 - a. Bondage/slavery in Egypt a perfect picture of an unsaved person in bondage to sin **Exodus 2:23-25** “During those many days the king of Egypt died, and the people of Israel groaned because of their slavery and cried out for help. Their cry for rescue from slavery came up to God. And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. God saw the people of Israel--and God knew.” **Romans 7:14** “For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am of the flesh, sold under sin.”
 - b. Passover in which all first-born sons died except those whose doorposts were covered by the blood of the lamb. This is a picture of salvation by faith in the shed blood of the spotless Lamb of God on the cross of Calvary **Exodus 12:23** “For the LORD will pass through to strike the Egyptians, and when he sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, the LORD will pass over the door and will not allow the destroyer to enter your houses to strike you.”, **Revelation 12:11** “And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death.”, **Romans 3:25** “whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God’s righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins.”, **Romans 6:6** “We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin.” Israel passing through the Red Sea while the Egyptians were drowned is a picture of water baptism, in which the believer’s old self, which has been crucified with Christ by faith, is given a proper burial, never to be seen again **Exodus 14:23** “The Egyptians pursued and went in after them

into the midst of the sea, all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen.", **Romans 6:3-6** "Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his."

- c. The everpresent cloud and fire is a picture of the indwelling and empowering Holy Spirit in the life of a believer, which is the promise of Abraham and the great mystery of the Christian faith – Christ in you! **Exodus 13:22** "The pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night did not depart from before the people.", **Numbers 9:16** "So it was always: the cloud covered it by day and the appearance of fire by night.", **Isaiah 30:21** "And your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, "This is the way, walk in it," when you turn to the right or when you turn to the left.", **1Cor 10:2** "and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea", **Gal 3:14** "so that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith", **Col 1:27** "To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.", **Ephesians 5:18** "And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit"
6. The promised son of David would sit on the throne forever. The Messiah would be both a descendant of David and the Son of God – even God Himself! **2Sam 7:12** "When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom.", **Psalms 2:2, 12** "The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD and against his Anointed, saying, ... Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and you perish in the way, for his wrath is quickly kindled. Blessed are all who take refuge in him.", **Romans 1:3-4** "concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord", **Isaiah 9:6** "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."
7. Satan did his best to destroy the seed line of the Messiah through Abraham and David (**2Kings 11:1-3** "Now when Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah saw that her son was dead, she arose and destroyed all the royal family. But Jehosheba, the daughter of King Joram, sister of Ahaziah, took Joash the son of Ahaziah and stole him away from among the king's sons who were being put to death, and she put him and his nurse in a bedroom. Thus they hid him from Athaliah, so that he was not put to death. And he remained with her six years, hidden in the house of

"Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

-Romans 6:3-6

the LORD, while Athaliah reigned over the land.”, **Matt 2:16-20** “Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, became furious, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had ascertained from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah: “A voice was heard in Ramah, weeping and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be comforted, because they are no more.” But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, “Rise, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the child’s life are dead.”

8. The coming Messiah was the unifying theme of the entire Old Testament, with pictures, shadows, prophecies and hidden parallels in every book. (**Genesis 22, Psalm 22, Isaiah 53**)
9. Only a virgin born Messiah with no earthly father could be free from the fallen sin nature inherited from Adam. Only one whose Father was God Himself could claim Deity. **Revelation 5:5** “And one of the elders said to me, “Weep no more; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals.”, **Romans 5:17-19** “For if, because of one man’s trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ. Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. For as by the one man’s disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man’s obedience the many will be made righteous.” **Psalm 51:5** “Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.”
10. Jesus never committed a single sin, yet suffered unjustly in the hands of sinful men, and died as a sacrifice for all of sinful mankind, the innocent for the guilty **1Peter 2:22-25** “He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.”
11. Jesus was buried and descended into the depths of the earth, where He preached to the spirits in prison from before the flood. **1Peter 3:18-20** “For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit, in which he went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison, because they formerly did not obey, when God’s patience waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through water.”, and where He reclaimed the keys of death and Hades from Satan. **Revelation 1:18** “and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades.”

“For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit, in which he went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison, because they formerly did not obey...”

-1Peter 3:18-20

There is no other way for a person to gain heaven other than through faith and the forgiveness that Jesus' death, burial and resurrection secured.

"Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father, except through Me'"

-John 14:6

12. On the third day, as predicted and foreshadowed a number of times in the Old Testament, Jesus rose with great power from the dead. Death was unable to hold Him, since He never sinned and was in fact the author of life! **Hosea 6:2** "After two days he will revive us; on the third day he will raise us up, that we may live before him.", **Acts 2:24** "God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it.", **Acts 3:15** "and you killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead. To this we are witnesses."
13. Without the resurrection, Jesus' death on the cross was insufficient to save us, since it was necessary for Him to present His blood in heaven's holy of holies to pay for our sins. **Heb 9:11-12** "But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) he entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption.", **1Cor 15:17** "And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins." Without the resurrection, Jesus could not live inside of us by His Spirit! **Gal 2:20** "I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."
14. Since Jesus rose, according to His promise, He will also return according to His promise. And our bodies, dead or alive, will be transformed in an instant to be like His glorious resurrected body. **Philippians 3:21** "who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself." **1Cor 15:52** "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed."
15. There is no other way for a person to gain heaven other than through faith and the forgiveness that Jesus' death, burial and resurrection secured. **John 14:6** "Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father, except through Me'", **Acts 4:12** "And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." If there was any other way to be saved, it would not have been necessary for Jesus to go to the cross. **Matt 26:39** "And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, saying, 'My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will.'", **Acts 17:3** "explaining and proving that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead, and saying, 'This Jesus, whom I proclaim to you, is the Christ'", **Gal 2:21** "I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness were through the law, then Christ died for no purpose."

UNDERSTANDING BAPTISMS AND THE LAYING ON OF HANDS.

“and of instruction about baptisms, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment.”

- **Hebrews 6:2**

WATER BAPTISM

MANDATORY

1. **Matt 3:15** “But Jesus answered him, ‘Let it be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.’ Then he consented.”
2. **Acts 2:38** “And Peter said to them, ‘Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.’”
3. **1Peter 3:21** “Baptism, which corresponds to this, now save you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ”
4. **Acts 8:12** “But when they believed Philip as he preached good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.”
5. **Acts 8:35-38** “Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this Scripture he told him the good news about Jesus. And as they were going along the road they came to some water, and the eunuch said, ‘See, here is water! What prevents me from being baptized?’ And he commanded the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him.”
6. **Acts 19:5-6** “On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking in tongues and prophesying.”

MEANING:

1. Funeral
 - a. **Romans 6:3-6** “Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin”
 - b. **Col 2:12** “having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead”
 - c. **Exodus 14:13** “And Moses said to the people, “Fear not, stand firm, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will work for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall never see again”
2. Resurrection
 - a. **Romans 6:4** “We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.”

- b. **Col 2:12** "having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead."
3. Wedding **1Cor 12:13** "For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body--Jews or Greeks, slaves or free-- and all were made to drink of one Spirit."
4. Cleansing from our former way of life **Acts 22:16** "And now why do you wait? Rise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on his name."

METHOD:

1. Believers only – not infants or unbelievers **Mark 16:16** "Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned."
2. Full immersion – not sprinkling (meaning of Greek word, concept of burial),
3. Public -- like funeral & wedding **Mark 1:5** "And all the country of Judea and all Jerusalem were going out to him and were being baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins."
4. in Jesus' name
 - a. **Acts 10:48** "And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to remain for some days."
 - b. **Acts 19:5** "On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus."
 - A. **Acts 4:12** "And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved"
 - B. Not merely "symbolic" or "religious act". Every act of obedience releases the grace of God into your life, even as it did for Jesus in **Mark 1:10!** "And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove."

"Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned."

Mark 16:16

BAPTISM IN THE SPIRIT

Baptism in the Holy Spirit promised by John the Baptist **Luke 3:16** "John answered them all, saying, 'I baptize you with water, but he who is mightier than I is coming, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.'"

It is important to understand that the baptism in the Holy Spirit is not primarily something you learn about, but rather something you EXPERIENCE.

At what point does this occur in the life of a believer? **The Holy Spirit is involved in every step of a believer's life.**

We receive the indwelling Holy Spirit at moment of our regeneration – Emphasis INWARD

1. **John 20:22** "And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit.'"
2. **Luke 24:45** "Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures". These two verses, **John 20:22** and **Luke 24:45**, actually provide two complementary descriptions of the same moment in history!

3. **Gal 4:6** "And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, 'Abba! Father!'"
4. **Revelation 3:20** "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me").

When one first expresses saving faith in Christ, the Holy Spirit is within you. He begins to rearrange the furniture and change you from the inside out. He gives you understanding of the Word and of your salvation. Most importantly He witnesses to your newly alive spirit that you are a child of God, allowing you to cry out "Abba, Father"!

5. However, this receiving of the indwelling Spirit should not be confused with the Baptism in the Holy Spirit, although the two may happen at the same time in certain circumstances. **Acts 10:44** "While Peter was still saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word."
6. Baptism in the Holy Spirit (being clothed with power) – Emphasis OUTWARD
7. This is typically received through prayer and the laying on of hands after a believer has made their profession of faith and has been baptized in water, and is typically accompanied by prophecy and speaking in tongues.
8. **Acts 8:15-16** "who came down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit, for he had not yet fallen on any of them, but they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus."
9. **Acts 9:17** "So Ananias departed and entered the house. And laying his hands on him he said, 'Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus who appeared to you on the road by which you came
10. **Acts 19:6** "And when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking in tongues and prophesying", with some notable exceptions for special circumstances (**Mark 1:10** "And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove.", **Acts 2:4** "And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance", **Acts 10:44** "While Peter was still saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word."), Jesus told the disciples – all of them -- to WAIT until they were clothed with power from on high (**Luke 24:49** "And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high", **Acts 1:4-5** "And while staying with them he ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, "you heard from me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.") – emphasis OUTWARD. The baptism of the Holy Spirit gives power to be effective witnesses for Christ (**Acts 1:8** "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth"), and power to minister to the body of Christ (**1Cor 12:7** "To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good."). When you are baptized in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit comes upon you. He brings outward manifestations of spiritual gifts and spiritual power. In every case of this recorded in scripture, the baptism of the Holy Spirit was accompanied by people prophesying and speaking in tongues (**Numbers 11:25** "Then the LORD came down in the cloud and spoke to him, and took some of the Spirit that was on him and put it

on the seventy elders. And as soon as the Spirit rested on them, they prophesied. But they did not continue doing it.", **1Sam 10:6** "Then the Spirit of the LORD will rush upon you, and you will prophesy with them and be turned into another man", **1Sam 16:13** "Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers. And the Spirit of the LORD rushed upon David from that day forward. And Samuel rose up and went to Ramah", **Acts 2:4** "And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance", **Acts 2:11** "both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians--we hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God", **Acts 10:46** "For they were hearing them speaking in tongues and extolling God", **Acts 19:6** "And when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking in tongues and prophesying.", **1Sam 19:20-24** "Then Saul sent messengers to take David, and when they saw the company of the prophets prophesying, and Samuel standing as head over them, the Spirit of God came upon the messengers of Saul, and they also prophesied. When it was told Saul, he sent other messengers, and they also prophesied. And Saul sent messengers again the third time, and they also prophesied. Then he himself went to Ramah and came to the great well that is in Secu. And he asked, "Where are Samuel and David?" And one said, "Behold, they are at Naioth in Ramah." And he went there to Naioth in Ramah. And the Spirit of God came upon him also, and as he went he prophesied until he came to Naioth in Ramah. And he too stripped off his clothes, and he too prophesied before Samuel and lay naked all that day and all that night. Thus it is said, "Is Saul also among the prophets?"). This gift is not for a "special few" but is the promise of God for every single believer that the Lord calls to Himself (**Acts 2:38-39** "And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself.", **1Cor 14:5** "Now I want you all to speak in tongues, but even more to prophesy. The one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues, unless someone interprets, so that the church may be built up.", **1Cor 12:7** "To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.", **Gal 3:14** "so that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith.")

This gift is not for a "special few" but is the promise of God for every single believer that the Lord calls to Himself

"And Peter said to them, 'Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself.'"

- Acts 2:38-39

11. The scripture encourages believers to desire and seek spiritual gifts and manifestations of the Holy Spirit, because through these we can not only build up our own faith (**1Cor 14:4** "The one who speaks in a tongue builds up himself, but the one who prophesies builds up the church", **Jude 1:20** "But you, beloved, building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit", **1Cor 14:15** "What am I to do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will pray with my mind also; I will sing praise with my spirit, but I will sing with my mind also."), but more importantly encourage and bless the body of Christ as well as reach the lost (**1Cor 14:3** "On the other hand, the one who prophesies speaks to people for their upbuilding and encouragement and consolation", **1Cor 14:24-25** "But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or outsider enters, he is convicted by all, he is called to account by all, the secrets of his heart are disclosed, and so, falling on his face, he will worship

The presence and power of the Holy Spirit both within us and upon us is a permanent reality that should be renewed and fanned into flames daily!

God and declare that God is really among you."). Spiritual gifts are the one thing that we are actually encouraged in scripture to covet! (**1Cor 14:1** "Pursue love, and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts, especially that you may prophesy.", **Luke 11:9-13** "And I tell you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. What father among you, if his son asks for a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent; or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!", **1Cor 14:12** "So with yourselves, since you are eager for manifestations of the Spirit, strive to excel in building up the church.")

12. The presence and power of the Holy Spirit both within us and upon us is a permanent reality that should be renewed and fanned into flames daily! (**John 14:16** "And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever", **2Tim 1:6** "For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands", **Eph 5:18** "And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit", **1Tim 4:14** "Do not neglect the gift you have, which was given you by prophecy when the council of elders laid their hands on you")

THE PREEMINENCE, PURPOSE, POWER AND PRIVILEGE OF PRAYER

PRAYER POWERED THE EARTHLY LIFE AND MINISTRY OF THE LORD JESUS

(**Mark 1:12** "The Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness", **Luke 4:14** "And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and a report about him went out through all the surrounding country.", **Luke 5:16** "But he would withdraw to desolate places and pray", **Mark 1:35** "And rising very early in the morning, while it was still dark, he departed and went out to a desolate place, and there he prayed.", **Matthew 14:23** "And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up on the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone", **Luke 6:12** "In these days he went out to the mountain to pray, and all night he continued in prayer to God", **Luke 9:29** "And as he was praying, the appearance of his face was altered, and his clothing became dazzling white.") – who says the transfiguration only happened once? (**Exodus 34:35** "the people of Israel would see the face of Moses, that the skin of Moses' face was shining. And Moses would put the veil over his face again, until he went in to speak with him.")

Jesus as the great intercessor is STILL PRAYING for us! (**Heb 7:25** "Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.", **John 17:20-21** "I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me"). We need to dig our own well in prayer as Jesus did (**Genesis 26:18** "And Isaac dug again the wells of water that had been dug in the days of Abraham his father, which the Philistines had stopped after the death of Abraham. And he gave them the names that his father had given them.")

THE PICTURE OF ESTHER -- COMING INTO THE COURTS OF THE KING

(**Psalms 100:4** "Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise! Give thanks to him; bless his name!", **John 5:15** "And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him.", **Esther 5:3** 'And the king said to her, "What is it, Queen Esther? What is your request? It shall be given you, even to the half of my kingdom.", **Esther 8:10** "And he wrote in the name of King Ahasuerus and sealed it with the king's signet ring. Then he sent the letters by mounted couriers riding on swift horses that were used in the king's service, bred from the royal stud", **Luke 18:7** "And will not God give justice to his elect, who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long over them?") – Confidence in prayer comes when we know we're in His courts and hearing Him ask "what is your request? Up to half my kingdom!"

PRAYER AS TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION - FACE TO FACE

(**Exodus 33:7,9,11** "Now Moses used to take the tent and pitch it outside the camp, far off from the camp, and he called it the tent of meeting. And everyone who sought the LORD would go out to the tent of meeting, which was outside the camp. ... When Moses entered the tent, the pillar of cloud would descend and stand at the entrance of the tent, and the LORD would speak with Moses. ... Thus the LORD used to speak to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend. When Moses turned again into the camp, his assistant Joshua the son of Nun, a young man, would not depart from the tent.", **Psalms 119:147** "I rise before dawn and cry for help; I hope in your words.", **John 10:27** "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.", **Psalms 45:1** "To the choirmaster: according to Lilies. A Maskil of the Sons of Korah; a love song. My heart overflows with a pleasing theme; I address my verses to the king; my tongue is like the pen of a ready scribe.", **Habbakuk 2:1-2** "I will take my stand at my watchpost and station myself on the tower, and look out to see what he will say to me, and what I will answer concerning my complaint. And the LORD answered me: 'Write the vision; make it plain on tablets, so he may run who reads it.", **Hebrews 11:6** "And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.", **Matthew 6:6** "But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.")

**EXPECT to hear
His voice!**

**"Go into your
room and shut the
door and pray to
your Father who is
in secret. And
your Father who
sees in secret will
reward you."**

-Psalm 100:4

THY WILL BE DONE - FOCUSING ON GOD'S WANTS

Focus on God's wants

"Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."

-Matt 6:10

(James 4:2-3 "You do not have, because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions", **1John 5:21** "Little children, keep yourselves from idols", **Col 3:5** "Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry", **Matt 26:39** "And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, saying, 'My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will'", **Eph 5:10** "and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord") - when we focus on what we can get from God rather than upon being satisfied with God's presence, we are practicing a subtle form of idolatry. **Psalm 103:7** "He made known his ways to Moses, his acts to the people of Israel". He wants us to know His heart, not just His hand. God's will is evident in scripture (**1Thess 4:3** "For this is the will of God, your sanctification", **1Thess 5:16-18** "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.", **2Peter 3:9** "not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.", **Romans 8:29** "those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son", **Habakkuk 2:14** "For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD as the waters cover the sea", **Eph 3:10** "so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places", **John 17:10** "All mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them.", **Eph 3:17** "that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith - that you, being rooted and grounded in faith", **1Cor 3:16** "Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you?") - most of all He wants to be our God, our everything! Let the Spirit pray through you! He always prays according to the will of God! (**1John 5:14** "And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us.")

PRAYER IS MOST HOLY - THE TABERNACLE'S INCENSE ALTAR IS THE PICTURE OF PRAYER

(Heb 8:5 "They serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things. For when Moses was about to erect the tent, he was instructed by God, saying, 'See that you make everything according to the pattern that was shown you on the mountain.'", **Exodus 30:1,10** "You shall make an altar on which to burn incense; you shall make it of acacia wood... It is most holy to the LORD", **Luke 1:9-11** "according to the custom of the priesthood he was chosen by lot to enter the temple of the Lord and burn incense. And the whole multitude of the people were praying outside at the hour of incense. And there appeared to him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense." **Psalm 141:2** "Let my prayer be counted as incense before you, and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice!" **Revelation 5:8** "And

"The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD, but the prayer of the upright is acceptable to him."

-Proverbs 15:8

when he had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each holding a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.”) Where was the incense altar located? (**Exodus 30:6** “And you shall put it in front of the veil that is above the ark of the testimony, in front of the mercy seat that is above the testimony, where I will meet with you.”, **Exodus 40:26** “He put the golden altar in the tent of meeting before the veil”, **Hebrews 9:2-4** “For a tent was prepared, the first section, in which were the lampstand and the table and the bread of the Presence”) – was it in the holy place or the most holy place??? YOU DECIDE – Is prayer holy or MOST holy in your life? Our prayer is God’s delight! (**Proverbs 15:8** “The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD, but the prayer of the upright is acceptable to him.” any version but ESV)

PRAYER IS THE BATTLE!

(**Romans 15:4** “For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.”, **Deut 20:1-8** “When you go out to war against your enemies, and see horses and chariots and an army larger than your own you shall not be afraid of them, for the LORD your God is with you, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt. And when you draw near to the battle, the priest shall come forward and speak to the people and shall say to them, ‘Hear, O Israel, today you are drawing near for battle against your enemies let not your heart faint. Do not fear or panic or be in dread of them, for the LORD your God is he who goes with you to fight for you against your enemies, to give you the victory. Then the officers shall speak to the people, saying ‘Is there any man who has built a new house and has not dedicated it? Let him go back to his house, lest he die in the battle and another man dedicate it. And is there any man who has planted a vineyard and has not enjoyed its fruit? Let him go back to his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man enjoy its fruit. And is there any man who has betrothed a wife and has not taken her? Let him go back to his house, lest he die in the battle and another man take her. And the officers shall speak further to the people, and say ‘Is there any man who is fearful and fainthearted? Let him go back to his house, lest he make the heart of his fellows melt like his own.”, **1Cor 15:46** “But it is not the spiritual that is first but the natural, and then the spiritual.”, **Eph 6:12** “For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places”, **2Cor 10:3-5** “For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ”, **Eph 6:13-18** “Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all

God’s armor is designed for battle. Prayer is the only battlefield where we can wage war in the spiritual realm. Any attempt to use natural weapons to fight a spiritual battle is futile.

“It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all”

-John 6:63

perseverance, making supplication for all the saints”, **1Tim 1:18** “This charge I entrust to you, Timothy, my child, in accordance with the prophecies previously made about you, that by them you may wage the good warfare”, **1Tim 2:1,8** “First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people... I desire then that in every place the men should pray, lifting holy hands without anger or quarreling”, **Daniel 10:2-3** “In those days I, Daniel, was mourning for three weeks. I ate no delicacies, no meat or wine entered my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, for the full three weeks... Then he said to me, ‘Fear no, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand and humbled yourself before your God, your words have been heard, and I have come because of your words.’) – God’s armor is designed for battle. Prayer is the only battlefield where we can wage war in the spiritual realm. Any attempt to use natural weapons to fight a spiritual battle is futile. (**John 6:63** “It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all”)

WALKING IN THE SPIRIT

LAW VS. SPIRIT

1. Law corresponds to the tree of the knowledge of good & evil in the garden. Spirit corresponds to the tree of life in the garden. (**Gen 2:9,17** “And out of the ground the LORD God made to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food... ‘but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.’”). We can only eat of one tree. One produces life, the

Written codes are counterproductive. They actually have the reverse effect of inciting our flesh to sin.

“For while we were living in the flesh, our sinful passions, aroused by the law, were at work in our members to bear fruit for death. But now we are released from the law, having died to that which held us captive so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit and not in the old way of the written code. What shall we say? That the law is sin? By no means! Yet if it had not been for the law, I would not have known sin. For I would not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said, ‘You shall not covet.’ But sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, produced in me all kinds of covetousness. For apart from the law, sin lies dead.”

- Romans 7:5-8

other produces death. (**2Cor 3:6** “who has made us sufficient to be ministers of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit. For the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.”)

2. We cannot mix adherence to the written code with being led by the Spirit. (**Col 2:20-23** "If with Christ you died to the elemental spirits of the world, why, as if you were still alive in the world, do you submit to regulation—"Do not handle, Do not taste, Do not touch" (referring to things that all perish as they are used)—according to human precepts and teachings? These have indeed an appearance of wisdom in promoting self-made religion and asceticism and severity to the body, but they are of no value in stopping the indulgence of the flesh", **Gal 3:3** "Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?", **Gal 3:10** "For all who rely on works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, 'Cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them.'"). If we attempt to "supplement" God's grace and the power of His Spirit with law and written codes, we will only FRUSTRATE the grace of God (**Gal 2:21** "I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness were through the law, then Christ died for no purpose.").
3. Our problem is not a lack of knowledge, but a carnal, fallen nature that is spiritually dead and at enmity with God (**Romans 7:17-18** "So now it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out.", **Eph 2:1-3** "And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.").
4. There is only one remedy for the carnal, sinful nature. It cannot be trained, it cannot be rehabilitated. It must be crucified! (**Gal 2:20** "I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me", **Romans 6:6** "We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin.")
5. Only by walking in the Spirit can we be free from the lusts of the flesh (**Gal 5:16-18** "But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.", **Romans 8:13** "For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.")
6. Even if we stumble, we can be restored to victory and purity through confession and repentance! (**1John 1:9** "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness", **Proverbs 24:16** "for the righteous falls seven times and rises again, but the wicked stumble in times of calamity.", **Matt 18:21-22** "Then Peter came up and said to him 'Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?' Jesus said to him, 'I do not say to you seven times, but seventy-seven times.'")

There is only one remedy for the carnal, sinful nature. It must be crucified!

"I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me"."

- Gal 2:20

SO HOW DO WE WALK IN THE SPIRIT?

1. Set our minds (**Romans 8:5-6** "For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace.", **Col 3:2** "Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.", **Romans 12:2** "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.", **2Cor 10:5** "We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ")
2. Become an expert at surrendering! (**Romans 6:13, 16** "Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness.")
3. Word of God and prayer – learn to fight like an apostle! (**Acts 6:4** "But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word")
4. The grace of God is available through the Spirit to train us to say NO! to ungodliness (**Titus 2:11-14** "For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.")

"Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth."

- Col 3:2

Listen attentively at every moment for His voice

"And your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, 'This is the way, walk in it, when you turn to the right or when you turn to the left.'"

- Isaiah 30:21

5. Asking God for direction, and listening attentively at every moment for His voice (**Proverbs 2:1-11** "My son, if you receive my words and treasure up my commandments with you, making your ear attentive to wisdom and inclining your heart to understanding; yes if you call out for insight and raise your voice for understanding, if you seek it like silver and search for it as for hidden treasures, then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God. For the LORD gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding; he stores up sound wisdom for the upright; he is a shield to those who walk in integrity, guarding the paths of justice and watching over the way of his saints. Then you will understand righteousness and justice and equity, every good path; for wisdom will come into your heart, and knowledge

will be pleasant to your soul; discretion will watch over you, understanding will guard you”, **Isaiah 30:21** “And your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, ‘This is the way, walk in it, when you turn to the right or when you turn to the left.’”)

FLESH VS. SPIRIT

1. (**Gal 5:19-24** “Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.”, **1Cor 6:9-10** “Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.”, **Romans 3:31** “Do we then overthrow the law by this faith? By no means! On the contrary, we uphold the law”, **Romans 8:13** “For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.”)
2. Though the old covenant has been replaced with the new, God’s moral absolutes have not been relaxed or changed in any way (**Luke 16:17** “But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one dot of the Law to become void.”).
3. Our behavior is a manifestation of what or who is controlling us.

OLD SELF VS. NEW SELF

1. (**Romans 6:6** We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin.”, **Eph 4:22-24** “to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desire, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.”, **Col 3:9-10** “Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices and have put on the new self which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator.”)
2. We are truly a new creation if we have been born again.
3. Signs of the new birth
4. Conviction of sin
5. Peace, joy
6. Desire for fellowship with God and the saints
7. Spiritual hunger for the Word of God
8. Abba Father – the Spirit of God’s Son in our hearts

UNDERSTANDING THE CHURCH

THE CHURCH IS GOD’S PLAN A, AND THERE’S NO PLAN B

(**Eph 3:9-10** “and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for the ages in God who created all things, so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made know to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places.”, **Matt 16:18** “And I tell you, you are Peter (pebble), and upon this rock

(boulder) – namely, the understanding that Jesus Christ is the Son of the Living God -- I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it")

WHAT IS THE CHURCH?

THE CHURCH IS THE WORLDWIDE (MYSTICAL) AND LOCAL (ACTUAL) ASSEMBLY OF TRUE "CALLED OUT" BELIEVERS IN CHRIST

THE CHURCH IS JESUS' BRIDE

(**Eph 5:31-32** "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh' This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.", **Revelation 19:7** "Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready", **2Cor 11:2** "For I feel a divine jealousy for you, since I betrothed you to one husband, to present you as a pure virgin to Christ.", **Genesis 24**). Isaac picture of Christ, Rebekah picture of the church. "It is not good for the man to be alone" (**Genesis 2:18**). As a deep sleep fell upon Adam, so a "deep sleep" of temporary death fell upon Christ. As Eve was taken out of Adam's side, so the church was birthed out of Christ's side, when blood (salvation) and water (baptism) flowed from His side. The church is now bone of His bone and flesh of His flesh.

THE CHURCH IS THE BODY OF CHRIST

(**1Cor 12:27** "Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it", **Eph 4:12** "to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ", **Eph 1:23** "which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all") – as Eve became one flesh with Adam, so the church is literally one flesh with Christ and is His body.

THE CHURCH IS THE FAMILY OF GOD, HIS HOUSEHOLD, AND HIS HOUSE!

"So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith."

- Gal 6:10

Eph 2:19 "So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God", **1Tim 3:15** "if I delay, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth.", **1John 5:1** "Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the Father loves whoever has been born of him.", **1Peter 2:5** "you yourselves like living stones are being built up a spiritual house, to be a holy priest hood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ")

THE CHURCH IS AN ORGANISM, NOT AN ORGANIZATION

(**1Cor 12:18** "But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose.", **Eph 4:13**, 16 "until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood... from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly,

makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love", **1Kings 6:7** "And he said, 'Take it up.' So he reached out his hand and took it.")

LOCAL VS. UNIVERSAL – IS THERE A DIFFERENCE?

Scripture doesn't appear to make a distinction between the local and the universal church. The only separation acknowledged by scripture is geographical! (**Romans 16:5** "Greet also the church in their house. Greet my beloved Epaenetus, who was the first convert to Christ in Asia", **1Cor 1:2** "To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints together with all those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours", **Eph 1:22-23** "And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all") What can we conclude from this?

1. Every believer is my brother, regardless of where he fellowships. Spiritually speaking, he is "bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh". (**1Cor 12:13** "For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free-- and all were made to drink of one Spirit", **Eph 4:4** "There is one body and one Spirit— just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call", **1John 5:1** "Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the Father loves whoever has been born of him")
2. We cannot promote or tolerate division or factions or partiality within God's church. Even the seemingly impenetrable wall of separation dividing Jew from Gentile is broken down in Christ. (**1Cor 1:10,13** "I appeal to you, brothers, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment... Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?", **James 2:1** "My brothers, show no partiality as you hold the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory.", **Eph 2:15** "by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace"). We do not have the luxury of separating ourselves from other faithful believers on the basis of some vaunted theological litmus test or other preferential considerations (**3John 1:9-10** "I have written something to the church, but Diotrephes, who likes to put himself first, does not acknowledge our authority. So if I come, I will bring up what he is doing, talking wicked nonsense against us."). Divisions within the body are carnal (**1Cor 3:3** "for you are still of the flesh. For while there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not of the flesh and behaving only in a human way?").

We must seek and offer unity and fellowship with every believer or group of believers that hold to the doctrine of Christ.

"And your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, 'This is the way, walk in it, when you turn to the right or when you turn to the left.'"

- Isaiah 30:21

3. A baptized believer in Christ who bears the fruits of repentance is instantly of a member of the one and only universal church. He should therefore be welcome for fellowship and communion within any local assembly. (**John 17:11** "And I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one.").
4. It is within the framework of a local, actual, practical, physical assembly of believers that the church can actually function as a church, with each member caring, fellowshiping, sharing their gifts, and speaking with one another for mutual edification. In general, we should "belong" to a local assembly as ones who have a role and participate in the mutual upbuilding of the body of Christ (**Eph 4:12-16** "to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes", **Col 3:16** "And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him"). If we have no consistent (daily, weekly) connection with a local assembly of believers, we have been cut off from the life-giving flow of the body of Christ (**Heb 10:25** "not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near", **1John 1:7** "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin", **Proverbs 18:1** "Whoever isolates himself seeks his own desire")

BIBLICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

LEADERSHIP IS AN ESSENTIAL ROLE WITHIN BOTH THE CHURCH AT LARGE AND WITHIN THE LOCAL ASSEMBLY.

(**Romans 12:8** "the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness")

1. Leaders are set in place primarily to care for people and their first responsibility is to see that those they care for reach maturity (**Colossians 1:28** "Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ")
2. Leaders lead primarily and most powerfully by example (**1Thess 3:7,9** "for this reason, brothers, in all our distress and affliction we have been comforted about you through your faith... For what thanksgiving can we return to God for you, for all the joy that we feel for your sake before our God", **1Tim 4:12** "Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers and an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity", **Titus 2:7** "Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, dignity, and sound speech that cannot be censured", **1Peter 5:2,3** "shepherd the flock of God that is among you... not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock")
3. Leaders are set in place to protect from wolves sent in by Satan to scatter and maul the flock, and to seek out and restore lost or straying sheep (believers) (**Acts 20:29** "I know that after my departure

"Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, dignity, and sound speech that cannot be censured"

- Titus 2:7

fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock”, **Luke 15:4** “What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open country, and go after the one that is lost, until he finds it?”)

Leaders are set in place to render judgments and decide disputes.

“Or do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world is to be judged by you, are you incompetent to try trivial cases? I say this to your shame. Can it be that there is no one among you wise enough to settle a dispute between the brothers?”

- **Isaiah 30:21**

4. Leaders are set in place to enforce order and discipline in the household of God, without quenching the life of the Spirit flowing in and among the assembly (**1Cor 14:26-40** “What then, brothers? When you come together, each one has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up. If any speak in a tongue, let there be only two or at most three, and each in turn, and let someone interpret. But if there is not one to interpret, let each of them keep silent in the church and speak to himself and to God. Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others weigh what is said. If a revelation is made to another sitting there, let the first be silent. For you can all prophesy one by one, so that all may learn and all be encouraged, and the spirits of prophets are subject to prophets. For God is not a God of confusion but of peace... If anyone thinks that he is a prophet, or spiritual, he should acknowledge that the things I am writing to you are a command of the Lord. If anyone does not recognize this, he is not recognized. So, my brothers, earnestly desire to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking tongues. But all things should be done decently and in order”)
5. Leaders are charged with the management and allocation of church resources (**Acts 11:30** “And they did so, sending it to the elders by the hand of Barnabas and Saul”)

CHURCH LEADERSHIP IS FOUND IN SEVERAL FORMS

1. There are brothers who have a motivational gift of leadership who are gifted to inspire, organize and direct (**Romans 12:8** “the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness”).
2. There are ministry gift offices of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers (pastors and teachers likely refer to elders – see below) who hold authority both locally and within the church at large on the basis of their gifts and callings (**Eph 4:11-13** “And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ”, **Acts 13:1** “Now there were in the church at Antioch prophets and teachers, Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen a lifelong friend of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul”).

3. There are “elders” which carries forward from the Jewish idea of town elders (older men of good character) (**Titus 1:5-7** “This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order, and appoint elders in every town as I directed you—if anyone is above reproach, the husband of one wife, and his children are believers and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination. For an overseer, as God’s steward, must be above reproach. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain”, **1Tim 3:1-5** “The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task. Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God’s church?”).

There are four words used somewhat interchangeably in the New Testament to fully express this role of elder.

- a. Poimen G4166 (shepherd caring for a flock) “shepherd” or “pastor” (**Eph 4:11** “And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers”)
 - b. Episkopos G1985 (steward, guardian, as over the precious possession of another) “overseer” or “bishop” (**Acts 20:28** “Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers”)
 - c. Proestame G4291 (caretaker, as one who is set in place to manage a household or a garden) “superintendent” (**1Tim 3:5** “for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God’s church?”)
 - d. Presbuteros G4245 (elder, respected older men of proven character) “elder” (**Titus 1:5-7** “This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order, and appoint elders in every town as I directed you—if anyone is above reproach, the husband of one wife, and his children are believers and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination. For an overseer, as God’s steward, must be above reproach. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain”)
4. Deacons are servants of the church who are nominated by the congregation and appointed by the elders to take responsibility for the fulfillment of a specific role of practical service within the church (**Acts 6:3-6** “Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty. But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.’ And what they said pleased the whole gathering, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philp, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch. These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands

“The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task. Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money.”

- **1Tim 3:1-5**

on them”, **Philippians 1:1** “Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the overseers and deacons”). It is noteworthy that two of the original “deacons”, Stephen and Philip, used their service ministries as a springboard to quickly catapult from delivering groceries to turning the world upside down!

ALL BELIEVERS ARE CALLED TO A LIFE OF HUMILITY, GIVING PREFERENCE TO OTHERS

(**Gal 5:13** “For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.” **Romans 12:10** “Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor.”). Jesus said that the one who would be first must be last of all and servant of all (**Mark 9:35** “And he sat down and called the twelve. And he said to them, ‘if anyone would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all’”). All believers should recognize and appreciate anyone in the body of Christ who bears the burden of oversight and leadership in this way, and should seek to make their service a joy and not a burden. Leaders should be trusted and preferentially yielded to, since they are fulfilling a stewardship for your benefit and will have to give an account of how well they do it (**1Thess 5:12** “We ask you, brothers, to respect those who labor among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you”, **Heb 13:17** “Have confidence in your leaders and submit to their authority, because they keep watch over you as those who must give an account. Do this so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no benefit to you.”).

LEADERS MUST EXEMPLIFY CHRIST.

All men are subject to falling into various temptations, and the Bible has many examples of ungodly leaders who were unfit for their office (Hophni & Phineas, Saul, Ahab), as well as examples of godly leaders who did ungodly things and yet were restored (David, Paul, Peter).

As believers we must be able to discern the difference and respond accordingly, always seeking restoration and forgiveness but yet never surrendering our liberty and submitting to a yoke of bondage. Godly leaders will seek to empower us and build us up to our full potential.

“Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ.”

- Col 1:28

Luke 10:1 “After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them on ahead of him, two by two, into every town and place where he himself was about to go”). Ungodly leaders will exalt themselves and seek to keep us out of their way or under their thumb (**3John 1:9-10** “I have written something to the church, but Diotrephes, who likes to put himself first, does not acknowledge our authority.”). Note David’s patience in waiting for God’s timing even when suffering unjustly under ungodly leadership!

HIERARCHY OF LEADERSHIP POSITION WITHIN THE CHURCH, BOTH LOCAL AND UNIVERSAL, IS MARKEDLY ABSENT FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT, BOTH IN TEACHING AND IN EXAMPLE.

The Catholic pattern of Pope-Cardinal-Archbishop-Bishop-Priest-Deacon-Layman is not represented anywhere within the New Testament pattern. Jesus is alive and present within the church by His Spirit, and thus requires no "chain of command" to exert His authority in His absence (**1Cor 11:3** "But I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ, the head of a wife is her husband, and the head of Christ is God.", **Eph 5:23** "For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior."). The church "org chart" is quite flat, if not inverted. (**1Cor 4:9** "For I think that God has exhibited us apostles as last of all, like men sentenced to death, because we have become a spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men.").

THE NEW TESTAMENT MAKES NO DISTINCTION BETWEEN SO-CALLED "CLERGY" AND "LAITY".

There is no "professional class" of believers (**Revelation 2:6** "Yet this you have: you hate the works of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.", **15-16** "So also you have some who hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans. Therefore repent. If not, I will come to you soon and war against them with the sword of my mouth."). While the New Testament secures ample financial provision for those who are called into a place of ministry that precludes other employment (**1Cor 9:14-15** "In the same way, the Lord commanded that those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the gospel. But I have made no use of any of these rights, nor am I writing these things to secure any such provision. For I would rather die than have anyone deprive me of my ground for boasting", **1Tim 5:17-18** "Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, 'You shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain,' and, 'The laborer deserves his wages.'"), the vocational status of a man of God is neither a qualifier nor a disqualifier for any leadership role or ministry in the church.

UNDERSTANDING PROPHECY**THE CENTRAL ROLE OF PROPHECY IN GOD'S PLAN**

The creation of the world was a prophetic event. God says it, then He does it.

"And God said, 'Let there be light,' and there was light."

- Genesis 1:3

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1. **Heb 11:3** "By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible")
 2. The seed has everything already in it. God declares the end "out of" the beginning (**Isaiah 46:10-11** "declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying 'My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose,' calling a bird of prey from the east, the man of my counsel from a far county. I have spoken, and I will bring it to pass; I have purposed, and I will do it", **Ecccl 1:9** "What has been is what will be, and what has been done is what will be done, and there is nothing new under the sun.", **Matt 13:31-32** "He put another parable before them, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is like a grain of

mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his field. It is the smallest of all seeds, but when it has grown it is larger than all the garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.”)

3. The human head proclaims the significance of prophecy – all of its members are prophetic instruments (**Isaiah 29:10** “For the LORD has poured out upon you a spirit of deep sleep, and has closed your eyes (the prophets), and covered your heads (the seers)”)
 - a. Eyes: see (dreams & visions) (**Joel 2:28** “And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions.”, **Numbers 12:6** “And he said, ‘Hear my words: If there is a prophet among you, I the LORD make myself known to him in a vision; I speak with him in a dream.”)
 - b. Ears: hear (still small voice of Spirit) (**Isaiah 30:21** “And your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, ‘This is the way, walk in it,’ when you turn to the right or when you turn to the left.”, **1Kings 19:12** “And after the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the fire the sound of a low whisper”)
 - c. Nose: smell (discernment of spirits) (**1Cor 12:9-10** “to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.”)
 - d. Mouth: speak, tell (prophesying) (**1Cor 14:1** “Pursue love, and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts, especially that you may prophesy.”, **31** “For you can all prophesy one by one, so that all may learn and all be encouraged”)
4. God does NOTHING without first revealing His secrets to His prophets (**Amos 3:7** “For the Lord GOD does nothing without revealing his secret to his servants the prophets.”)

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- Amos 3:7

THE INTERCESSION/PROPHECY CONNECTION

1. Definition of intercession: “this will happen over my dead body”
2. God revealed his plan for Sodom to Abraham. Why? (**Genesis 18:17** “The LORD said, ‘Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do’”, **23** “Then Abraham drew near and said, ‘Will you indeed sweep away the righteous with the wicked?’”) – to draw him into intercession! Note same with Moses (**Exodus 32:9-12, 32** “And the LORD said to Moses, ‘I have seen this people, and behold, it is a stiff-necked people. Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them, in order that I may make a great nation of you.’” But Moses implored the LORD his God and said, “O LORD, why does your wrath burn hot against your people whom you have brought out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand? Why should the Egyptians say, ‘With evil intent did he bring them out, to kill them in the mountains and to consume them from the face of the earth? Turn from your burning anger and relent from this disaster against your people... But now, if you will forgive their sin—but if not, please blot me out

of your book that you have written"). Both men were intercessors, first in the natural (**Genesis 14** – Abraham intervened and rescued Lot, **Exodus 2** – Moses intervened and rescued his fellow Hebrews) and then in the spirit (**1Cor 15:46** "But it is not the spiritual that is first but the natural, and then the spiritual."), both men were called God's friends, both men were called prophets!

3. God desires to draw us into intercession so that we can have intimate communion with Him. He reveals His secrets to us because He wants to draw us into that place of intercession, to stop Him from doing what He doesn't want to do, and to compel Him to do what He longs to do. The prayer of the upright is His delight (**Proverbs 15:8**!)
4. In intercession, we bear the image of the ultimate intercessor, Jesus the Son of God, who, when the law of God said, "the soul that sins will die", stretched out His arms and declared, "over my dead body"
5. It is the Spirit of God who intercedes through us. He reveals the mind of God to us and intercedes for us. (**Romans 8:26** "Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words.", **Romans 11:36** "For from him and through him and to him are all things.", **1Cor 2:10, 16** "These things God has revealed to us through the Spirit...we have the mind of Christ")
6. If you want to be a prophet, you must become an intercessor. We don't hear God's voice because we don't tarry in His council (**Jeremiah 23:22** "But if they had stood in my council, then they would have proclaimed my words to my people, and they would have turned them from their evil way, and from the evil of their deeds.")

GOD DESIRES TO REVEAL HIMSELF

1. Two things God desires: a) to reveal Himself (**Revelation 1:1** "The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to his servants the things that must soon take place.", **John 16:12** "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now."), and b) to be believed (**Hebrews 11:6** "And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.")
2. God conceals, man seeks, God reveals (**Proverbs 25:2** "It is the glory of God to conceal things, but the glory of kings is to search things out." **Luke 11:9** "And I tell you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened.", **Luke 10:21** "In that same hour he rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said, 'I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will'.")
3. God is almost giddy about concealing and then revealing things to us! (**Luke 24:28-32** "So they drew near to the village to which they were going. He acted as if he were going farther, but they urged him strongly, saying, 'Stay with us, for it is toward evening and the day is now far spent.' So he went in to stay with them. When he was at table with them, he took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them. And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, 'Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?")

PROPHECY IN THE BIBLE

1. Prophecy gives faith something to sink its teeth into (**Hebrews 11:1** "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.")

2. All of God's promises in the Bible exist for our present benefit (**Romans 15:4** "For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.", **1Cor 10:11** "Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come"). Q: Which of the promises in the Bible apply to me? A: Which ones do you want?
3. There are well over 2,000 Old Testament prophecies that have already been fulfilled, and at least 365 just in the earthly ministry of Jesus alone! (**Ezek 26** – the destruction of Tyre, **Daniel 11** – precise prediction of intertestamental history, **Isaiah 66:8** – re-formation of nation of Israel in a single day)
4. Biblical prophecies are not merely for one single specific time and place, but are often fulfilled twice or even repeatedly – cyclical patterns (**Matthew 24: 70AD and future, Daniel 2:44** "And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed...It shall break in pieces all these kingdoms and bring them to an end", son fulfilling fathers dreams (Abraham/Isaac, David/Solomon, Father/Jesus, latter greater than former, etc.) – near peaks, far away peaks look the same height and distance. Abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel: fulfilled by Antiochus Epiphanes yet spoken of by Jesus as to be fulfilled in the future. Gog/Magog, Armageddon prophetic conflicts also play out more than once.
5. Prophecies are often hidden, concealed in scripture. Contrary to the oft-quoted adage, context is NOT everything. (**Isaiah 7:14** "Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel", **Jeremiah 31:15** "Thus says the LORD: 'A voice is heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping. Rachel is weeping for her children; she refuses to be comforted for her children, because they are no more.'")
6. The Old Testament is God's picture book: patterns, pictures and shadows of what is to come, some more obvious than others. These gave OT saints hope for what was coming (**Luke 2:29-30** "Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation"), and give NT saints faith (from knowledge of God's past proven faithfulness), and hope (for the prophecies that are yet unfulfilled).
7. God responds when we remind Him of His promises, especially in times when it looks like they are just about to fail! (**Genesis 18:25** "Far be it from you to do such a thing, to put the righteous to death with the wicked, so that the righteous fare as the wicked! Far be that from you! Shall not the judge of all the earth do what is just?", **Exodus 32:13** "Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, your servants, to whom you swore by your own self, and said to them, 'I will multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have promised I will give to your offspring, and they shall inherit it forever.'", **Daniel 9:2,19** "I, Daniel, perceived in the books the number of years that, according to the word of the LORD to Jeremiah the prophet, must pass before the end of the desolations of Jerusalem, namely, seventy years...O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, pay attention and act. Delay not, for your own sake, O my God, because your city and your people are called by your name")
8. Prophecy is an opportunity for God to demonstrate His faithfulness. 17 times in the Old Testament, God says what He is going to do, and follows it up with, "Then they/you shall know that I am the LORD".

Biblical prophecies are not merely for one single specific time and place, but are often fulfilled twice or even repeatedly.

PROPHECY IN THE CHURCH

GOD WANTS ALL OF HIS CHILDREN TO PROPHECY!

Numbers 11:29 "But Moses said to him, 'Are you jealous for my sake? Would that all the LORD's people were prophets, that the LORD would put his Spirit on them!'", **1Cor 14:5** "Now I want you all to speak in tongues, but even more to prophesy.", **1Cor 14:31** "For you can all prophesy one by one, so that all may learn and all be encouraged", **1Cor 14:1** "Pursue love, and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts, especially that you may prophesy.") – God is always speaking, because God is always working! (**John 5:17** "But Jesus answered them, 'My Father is working until now, and I am working.'", **Amos 3:8** "The lion has roared; who will not fear? The Lord GOD has spoken; who can but prophesy?"

NOT ALL PROPHECY IS INTENDED TO BE PART OF SCRIPTURE.

There have been countless thousands of prophets who prophesied truly in the name of the Lord whose names we do not even know! God also speaks through His prophets in the moment. (**1Sam 19:20** "Then Saul sent messengers to take David, and when they saw the company of the prophets prophesying, and Samuel standing as head over them, the Spirit of God came upon the messengers of Saul, and they also prophesied.", **Acts 11:28** "And one of them named Agabus stood up and foretold by the Spirit that there would be a great famine over all the world (this took place in the days of Claudius).", **Acts 21:9-11** "He had four unmarried daughters, who prophesied. While we were staying for many days, a prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. And coming to us, he took Paul's belt and bound his own feet and hands and said, 'Thus says the Holy Spirit: This is how the Jews at Jerusalem will bind the man who owns this belt and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.'") We are encouraged by scripture to take advantage of specific personal prophetic promises as well as promises from scripture (**1Tim 1:18** "This charge I entrust to you, Timothy, my child, in accordance with the prophecies previously made about you, that by them you may wage the good warfare", **2Peter 1:4** "by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.")

God is always speaking, because God is always working!

"But Jesus answered them, 'My Father is working until now, and I am working.'"

- John 5:17

PROPHECY IN THE CHURCH HAS NOT CEASED

1. (**1Cor 14:3** "On the other hand, the one who prophesies speaks to people for their upbuilding and encouragement and consolation.", **1Cor 13:8-10** "Love never ends. As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away.", **Revelation 11:3** "And I will grant authority to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth.")
2. Demystifying prophetic utterance
 - a. Starts out small (**Zech 4:10** "For whoever has despised the day of small things shall rejoice", **1Sam 3:7,19-20** "Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD, and the word of the LORD had not yet been revealed to him...And Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him and let none of his words fall to the ground. And all Israel from Dan to Beersheba knew that Samuel was established as a prophet of the

- LORD.) – there is a difference between one who prophesies, and someone who is recognized in the office of a prophet (**Acts 21:9-10** “He had four unmarried daughters, who prophesied. While we were staying for many days, a prophet named Agabus came down from Judea”)
- b. Balancing trepidation with confidence -- never exaggerate, never quench (**Matt 12:20** “A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not quench”, **Ezek 22:28** “And her prophets have smeared whitewash for them, seeing false visions and divining lies for them, saying, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD,’ when the LORD has not spoken”)
 - c. Requires learning (**1Cor 14:31** “For you may all prophesy, one by one, so that all may learn, and all may be encouraged”, **1Sam 19:20** “And when they saw the company of the prophets prophesying, and Samuel standing as head over them...”) – the school that Samuel started spread throughout Israel and lasted throughout the kingdom age!
 - d. Through time, one who fans his gift into flames and prophesies faithfully may come to be recognized as a prophet in the church (**1Sam 3:19-20** “And Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him and let none of his words fall to the ground. And all Israel from Dan to Beersheba knew that Samuel was established as a prophet of the LORD.”), while many New Testament saints “prophesied”, there were some such as Barnabas, Silas and Agabus who were recognized as “prophets” – men who through consistent development and maturity of their prophetic gift came to be relied upon for consistent prophetic insight and direction.
 - e. Recognize that the gift of prophecy is nuanced, just like every other spiritual gift. God speaks to prophets through visions, dreams, the still small voice in the spirit, etc. God may speak to you in a manner that is different from how he speaks to another believer. **Hebrews 1:1** “Long ago God spoke to the fathers by the prophets at different times and in different ways.”
3. It is through prophets and prophecy that Jesus directs His church. Seven times in **Revelation 2-3** Jesus says, “he who has an ear to hear, let him hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches”. The Holy Spirit doesn’t have an audible voice. He speaks through His prophets (**Acts 13:1-2** “Now there were in the church at Antioch prophets and teachers, Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen a lifelong friend of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, ‘Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.’”, **Acts 21:11** “And coming to us, he took Paul’s belt and bound his own feet and hands and said, ‘Thus says the Holy Spirit: this is how the Jews at Jerusalem will bind the man who owns this belt and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles’”, **Acts 16:6**). Prophets rank above even teachers in the body of Christ! (**1Cor 12:28** “And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, helping, administrating, and various kinds of tongues”). Whether Barnabas or Silas, Paul always had a prophet as part of his apostolic team!

Prophets rank above even teachers in the body of Christ!

“And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, helping, administrating, and various kinds of tongues”

- **1Cor 12:28**

4. Prophecy is important not only for the church but for the lost in evangelism as well! (**Jonah 3:3-5** "So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly great city, three days' journey in breadth. Jonah began to go into the city, going a day's journey. And he called out, 'Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!' And the people of Nineveh believed God. They called for a fast and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them to the least of them.", **1Cor 14:24-25** "But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or outsider enters, he is convicted by all, he is called to account by all, the secrets of his heart are disclosed, and so, falling on his face, he will worship God and declare that God is really among you")

SHARING YOUR FAITH: EVANGELISM AND MAKING DISCIPLES – A MOST EXCITING AND REWARDING ENDEAVOR!

THE CALL

Luke 10:2 "And he said to them, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest'", **Isaiah 6:8** "And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, 'Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?'" , **Matt 28:18-19** "And Jesus came and said to them, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.'" , **2Cor 5:19** "that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation." , **Romans 10:14-15** "How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, 'How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!'"

THE QUALIFICATION

1Cor 9:27 "But I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified." , **2Tim 2:21** "Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from what is dishonorable, he will be a vessel for honorable use, set apart as holy, useful to the master of the house, ready for every good work" , **2Tim 2:15** "Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth."

THE MESSAGE

1Cor 15:3-4 "For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures" , **Gal 2:20** "I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." , **Eph 2:1-10** "And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been

saved through faith. And this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.", **Romans 10:9** "because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved."

THE EVIDENCE

Acts 1:3 "He presented himself alive to them after his suffering by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God.", **Luke 16:31** "He said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead.'", **John 5:46** "For if you believed Moses, you would believe me; for he wrote of me."

THE PREPARATION

prayer: **Acts 16:13** "And on the Sabbath day we went outside the gate to the riverside, where we supposed there was a place of prayer, and we sat down and spoke to the women who had come together.") – note that the enemy was willing to trade free publicity in exchange for distracting the saints from prayer (**Acts: 16:16-18** "As we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners much gain by fortune-telling. She followed Paul and us, crying out, 'These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to you the way of salvation.' And this she kept doing for many days. Paul, having become greatly annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, 'I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her.' And it came out that very hour.")

THE OPPORTUNITY

Be watchful and alert for the Spirit's prompting (**Acts 8:26, 29** "Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, 'Rise and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.' This is a desert place... And the Spirit said to Philip, 'Go over and join this chariot.'")

THE OPPOSITION

1. Expect opposition any time you preach or share the gospel, and especially when you are being effective. The devil will vigorously defend his "territory" (i.e. the souls of unbelievers). (**Philippians 1:27-30** "Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel, and not frightened in anything by your opponents. This is a clear sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation, and that from God. For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake, engaged in the same conflict that you saw I had and now hear that I still have."). He will exploit every possible advantage against you. **1Cor 16:8-9** "But I will stay in Ephesus until Pentecost, for a wide door for effective work has opened to me, and there are many adversaries."
2. Recognize that the opposition, though expressed through people, has a spiritual origin. Never consider people the enemy, but rather the devil who blinds their minds. (**Eph 6:12** "For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.", **2Cor 4:4** "In their case the god of this

"For if you believed Moses, you would believe me; for he wrote of me."

- John 5:46

world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.”)

3. Opposition will take many forms

- a. Individuals’ defense mechanisms – resistance to the encounter itself – stay persistent and try find some common ground upon which to build a relationship (**Acts 26:27-29** “‘King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know that you believe.’ And Agrippa said to Paul, ‘In a short time would you persuade me to be a Christian?’ And Paul said, ‘Whether short or long, I would to God that not only you but also all who hear me this day might become such as I am—except for these chains’”)
- b. Religious objections – the enemy will use counterfeit religion to combat true faith (**John 4:20** “Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you say that in Jerusalem is the place where people ought to worship.”)
- c. Mocking – intimidation is a prime tactic of the adversary – it can only succeed if you let it get to you (**Acts 17:18** “Some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers also conversed with him. And some said, ‘What does this babblers wish to say?’”)
- d. Authorities – people in authority (whom the devil loves to use because it gives him leverage) will try to prevent you from speaking or discredit you. Remember you are obeying God and that no rule of man that contradicts the commandment of God is valid or applicable to you. (**Acts 4:19** “But Peter and John answered them, ‘Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge, for we cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard.’”, **5:29** “But Peter and the apostles answered, ‘We must obey God rather than men.’”, **Acts 13:45-50** “But when the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy and began to contradict what was spoken by Paul, reviling him. And Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly, saying, ‘It was necessary that the word of God be spoken first to you. Since you thrust it aside and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles. For so the Lord has commanded us, saying, ‘I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth.’ And when the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord, and as many as were appointed to eternal life believed. And the word of the Lord was spreading throughout the whole region. But the Jews incited the devout women of high standing and the leading men of the city, stirred up persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and drove them out of their district.”). If you stand strong you cannot fail.

Expect opposition any time you preach or share the gospel, and especially when you are being effective. The devil will vigorously defend his “territory.”

THE PRESENTATION

1. There is no formula. Always tailor the message to the individual and the moment. This requires patience and wisdom (**Proverbs 20:5** “The purpose in a man’s heart is like deep water, but a man of understanding will draw it out.”, **Mark 10:17-22** “And as he was setting out on his journey, a man ran up and knelt before him and asked him, ‘Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?’ And Jesus said to him, ‘What do you call me good? No one is good except God alone. You know the commandments: ‘Do not murder, Do not commit adultery, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Do not defraud, Honor your father and mother.’ And he said to him, ‘Teacher, all these I have kept from my youth.’ And Jesus, looking at him, loved

him, and said to him, 'You lack one thing: go, sell all that you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.' Disheartened by the saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.'). Ask lots of questions! This is what Jesus did. He asks 307 questions total in the four gospels.

2. Establish common ground rather than being adversarial (**1Cor 9:22** "To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people that by all means I might save some.")
3. Get to the main thing. We preach Christ and him crucified (**1Cor 1:23** "But we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles").
 - a. Only solution for indwelling sin – death (**Romans 3:23** "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God", **Romans 6:6** "We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin.", **Romans 7:17** "So now it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me.")
 - b. Only offering acceptable for sin – blood of the spotless Lamb of God (**Heb 9:22** "Indeed, under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.")
 - c. The one for the many (**Romans 5:18** "Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men.")
 - d. Death forever abolished through His resurrection (**2Tim 1:10** "our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel", **1Cor 15:55** "The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law.")
 - e. There's no other way (**John 14:6** "Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'")
 - f. Received through faith and repentance (**Romans 3:25** "whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins.", **Heb 6:1** "Therefore let us leave the elementary doctrine of Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God", **Acts 20:21** "Testifying both to Jews and to Greeks of repentance toward God and of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.")

Establish common ground rather than being adversarial.

"To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people that by all means I might save some."

- 1Cor 9:22

THE "CLOSE" – THE SALVATION PRAYER

Exact wording not specified in scripture, but should include...

4. Confession of their own disobedience and inability to save themselves

5. Confession aloud with their own mouth the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus is God and Savior!
6. Confession of faith in the death (cleansing sacrifice) and resurrection of Jesus
7. Expression of thankfulness for forgiveness and salvation
8. Profession of determination to forsake all sin and obey Christ as Lord forever

THE FOLLOW-THROUGH ASAP

9. Water baptism
10. Spirit baptism
11. Spiritual Disciplines (word & prayer)
12. Fellowship
13. Evangelism
14. Boot camp!

MULTIPLICATION VS. ADDITION

All of us should be making disciples, and they too should make disciples (**2Tim 2:2** "and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful people who will be able to teach others also")

GIVING/SERVING/EXERCISING SPIRITUAL GIFTS

THE GRACE OF GIVING

2Cor 8:7 "But as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all earnestness, and in our love for you—see that you excel in this act of grace also."

THE TITHE -- FIRSTFRUITS

1. **Exodus 23:19** "The best of the firstfruits of your ground you shall bring into the house of the LORD your God.", **Genesis 4:3-5** "In the course of time Cain brought to the LORD an offering of the fruit of the ground, and Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat portions. And the LORD had regard for Abel and his offering, but for Cain and his offering he had no regard.", **Genesis 14:20** "And Abram gave him a tenth of everything", **Deut 14:22** "You shall tithe all the yield of your seed that comes from the field year by year."
2. Tithe means tenth. God made the math easy, just move the decimal point!
3. Predated the Law of Moses, therefore not merely part of "old covenant". (**Gen 14:20** "And Abram gave him a tenth of everything", **Gen 28:20-22** "Then Jacob made a vow, saying, 'If God will be with me and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat and clothing to wear, so that I come again to my father's house in peace, then the LORD shall be my God, and this stone, which I have set up for a pillar, shall be God's house. And of all that you give me I will give a full tenth to you.'")
4. However, never mentioned by the apostles in New Testament as "law of the church". But as with every other OT principle, we serve not in the old way of the written code, but in the new way of the Spirit! (**Romans 7:6**) Thus our righteousness will not fall below, but rather exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees! (**Matt 5:20**)

5. God wants our first and our best! (**Exodus 23:19**) – He promises to bless the rest (**Romans 11:16** “If the dough offered as firstfruits is holy, so is the whole lump, and if the root is holy, so are the branches”)

THE FREEWILL OFFERING - FOR WHEN OUR HEARTS MOVE US

Exodus 35:29 “All the men and women, the people of Israel, whose hearts moved them to bring anything for the work that the LORD had commanded by Moses to be done brought it as a freewill offering to the LORD”, **Heb 13:16** “Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God”

THE GLEANINGS – MAKING A HABIT OUT OF PROVIDING FOR THE NEEDY

Leviticus 23:22 “And when you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap your field right up to its edge, nor shall you gather the gleanings after your harvest. You shall leave them for the poor and for the sojourner: I am the LORD your God”, **Gal 2:10** “Only, they asked us to remember the poor, the very thing I was eager to do.”, **James 2:15-16** “If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, ‘God in peace, be warmed and filled,’ without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that?”

SHARING WITH THE BRETHREN

Heb 13:16 “Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God”, **1John 3:17** “But if anyone has the world’s goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God’s love abide in him?”, **Acts 2:45** “And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need.”, **Acts 4:32** “Now the full number of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own, but they had everything in common.”

PROVIDING FOR FAMILY MEMBERS – SECOND RESPONSIBILITY AFTER TITHE

1Tim 5:8 “But if anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.”

THE PROMISE OF GIVING

1. Test me in this – can you outgive God? (**Malachi 3:8-12** “Will man rob God? Yet you are robbing me. But you say ‘How have we robbed you?’ In your tithes and offerings.”)
2. God will be no man’s debtor (**Proverbs 19:17** “Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the LORD, and he will repay him for his deed.”)
3. Sacrificial giving is a direct, tangible expression of faith, as it takes resources that we will need later and gives them away, implicitly trusting that God will supply our every need as we obey Him.
4. Giving makes God happy on three levels at the same time (**1Kings 17:13-14** “And Elijah said to her, ‘Do not fear: go and do as you have said. But first make me a little cake of it and bring it to me, and afterward make something for yourself and your son. For thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: The jar of flour shall not be spent, and the jug of oil shall not be empty, until the day that the LORD sends rain upon the earth.’”)
 - a. It expresses Christ’s love for others
 - b. It expresses our trust in Him to provide our own needs
 - c. It enables Him to pour out a special blessing upon us!

God will be no man’s debtor.

“Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the LORD, and he will repay him for his deed.”

- Proverbs 19:17

5. To be acceptable, giving should be from a cheerful willing heart (**Philemon 1:14** "But I preferred to do nothing without your consent in order that your goodness might not be by compulsion but of your own accord.", **2Cor 9:7-8** "Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.")

SERVING

1. He who would be first among you must be last of all and servant of all (**Mark 9:35**)
2. Stephen/Philip – from delivering groceries to reaching the world! (**Acts 6:5, 8** "And what they said pleased the whole gathering, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch... And Stephen, full of grace and power, was doing great wonders and signs among the people." **Acts 8:5-8** "Philip went down to the city of Samaria and proclaimed to them the Christ. And the crowds with one accord paid attention to what was being said by Philip when they heard him and saw the signs that he did. For unclean spirits, crying out with a loud voice, came out of many who had them, and many who were paralyzed or lame were healed. So there was much joy in that city.")
3. The heart of the servant
 - a. Doesn't care who gets the credit – just wants to see God glorified
 - b. Considers others more important than himself
 - c. Only wants to hear his master say well done

EXERCISING SPIRITUAL GIFTS

RECEIVING THE GIVER – YOU MUST FIRST BE CLOTHED WITH POWER FROM ON HIGH

Lk 24:49 "And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high", **Acts 2:38-39** "And Peter said to them, 'Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself.'"

NEVER STOP ASKING – COVET SPIRITUAL GIFTS!

Lk 11:13 "If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!", **1Cor 14:1** "Pursue love, and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts, especially that you may prophesy."

BUILD YOURSELF UP

1Cor 14:4 "The one who speaks in a tongue builds up himself, but the one who prophesies builds up the church.", **Jude 20** "But you beloved, building yourselves up in your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit"

BUILD OTHERS UP

(**1Cor 12:7** "To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good", **1Cor 14:4** "The one who speaks in a tongue builds up himself, but the one who prophesies builds up the church.", **Eph 4:11-12** "And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.")

THE IMPORTANCE OF WALKING IN REPENTANCE AND FORGIVENESS: UNFORGIVENESS IS UNFORGIVABLE!

1. The objective – going after the one (**Matt 18:10-14**)
2. The procedure (**Matt 18:15-20**)
3. The persistence/perseverance/promise of forgiveness (**Matt 18:21-22**)
4. The necessity of forgiveness (**Matt 18:23-35, 2Cor 2:5-11**)

THE RETURN OF CHRIST AND THE END OF THE AGE

THE SIGNS OF THE END (1THESS 5:4)

1. Israel as God's timepiece 1917 (Israel wrested back from Turks), 1948 (Nation formed in a day – **Isaiah 66:8**), 1967 (Jerusalem recaptured), 2017 (US recognizes Jerusalem capitol)
2. 6 days = 6,000 years right on schedule! (**2Peter 3:8**)
3. Gog/Magog nations aligned (**Ezek 38-39**)
4. Days of Lot (homosexuality)
5. Days of Noah (wickedness multiplied, genetic perversion, "buying and selling, marrying and giving in marriage, peace and security")
6. **Matt 24/Rev 6** – perfect parallel
7. **Revelation 13** – One world gov't, one world religion, mark of the Beast
8. **Revelation 17:16** – Islam vs. the West – the beast and the harlot

THE MYSTERY OF THE RAPTURE (1COR15:51-53, 1THESS 4:15-18)

1. Timing of the rapture
 - a. Pre-tribulation
 - i. Scriptures supporting (**Isaiah 26:20, Luke 21:36, Rev 3:10, Lk 12:36, Matt 24:44**)
 - ii. Conceptual support
 1. Feast of trumpets (rapture) precedes day of atonement (judgment)
 2. Training in heaven + wedding supper of the Lamb
 3. Lot being removed out of Sodom
 4. Lack of references to church in book of Revelation after chapter 3
 - b. Mid-tribulation
 - i. Scriptures supporting (**2Thess 2:2-4, Rev 11:12, Rev 11:15, 1Cor 15:52, Matt 24:15**)
 - ii. Conceptual support
 1. Need to endure emphasized in gospels, parables (**Mark 13:13, Luke 21:36**)
 2. How will we see **2Thess 2:1-4** occur if we are not here for it?
 3. How many "last trumps" are there? (**1Cor 15:52, Revelation 11:15**)
 - c. Post-tribulation
- d. Scriptures supporting (**Matt 24:29-31, Luke 12:35, Revelation 20:5**)
- e. Conceptual support:

- i. Israel protected in Egypt during 10 plagues
 - ii. How many “first” resurrections are there?
 - iii. Scriptures questioning (**Rev 19:14, Zech 14:5**) – who are these? U-turn makes no sense.
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THE TRIBULATION AND KINGDOM OF THE ANTICHRIST

1. Trouble: famines, pestilence, warfare, wild beasts (**Rev 6, Matt 24**)
 2. “Peace & Security” (**1Thess 5:4**)
 3. Gog/Magog war – peace treaty with the Antichrist (**Ezek 38-39, Daniel 9:27**)
 4. 144,000, two witnesses (**Rev 11:1-11**)
 5. Deception, compromise, surrender (**2Thess 2:9-12, Rev 13**)
 6. Antichrist taking seat in the temple (**2Thess 2:4, Rev 13:6,7**)
 7. Judgment seat of Christ for believers in heaven – after rapture (**1Cor 3:13-15, 2Cor 5:10, Luke 19:15-19**)
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THE RETURN OF CHRIST

1. Armageddon (**Rev 16:14-16**)
 2. Marching from Jordan (Petra?) (**Isaiah 63:1-6, Rev 14:14-20, Rev 19:11-16**)
 3. Mount of Olives split in two (**Zech 14:3-5**)
 4. Triumphal entry into Jerusalem (**Psalms 24**)
 5. Beast and false prophet captured and eliminated (**Rev 19:20**)
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THE MILLENNIAL KINGDOM

1. Incarceration of Satan (**Rev 20:1-3**)
 2. First resurrection (**Rev 20:4-6**)
 3. Return of long life as at the beginning (**Isaiah 65:20**)
 4. All nations come to Jerusalem to worship at the feasts (**Zechariah 14:16, Isaiah 11**)
 5. The earth ruled in justice as it should be – King Jesus showing how it should be done! (**Psalms 72**)
 6. Harmony among men and beasts (**Isaiah 11**)
 7. Glorified saints ruling nations as Christ’s deputies (**Psalms 149:6-9, Luke 19:15-19**)
 8. Final battle when Satan is loosed to deceive people born during millennium but not born again (**Rev 20:7-10**)
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THE NEW JERUSALEM, NEW HEAVENS AND NEW EARTH

1. The great white throne judgment – unrighteous dead (**Rev 20:12**)
2. Destruction of former heavens and earth by fire (**Rev 21:1, 2Peter 3:7,10-NASB**)
3. New heavens and new earth (**Rev 21:1-4, 2Peter 3:13, Isaiah 65:17**)
4. New Jerusalem (**Rev 21:10-27**)
5. The ultimate reward and goal – being with the Lord (**Rev 21:7**)