

**IT'S A MATTER**

**OF**

**LIFE**

**&**

**Death**

**by**

**Robert Collin Whitfield**

**“I have set before you life and death”**

**Deuteronomy 30:19**

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

This book has only been written because of the continuous prompting of a very close friend.

His encouragement and enlightenment have been invaluable to me while writing this book.

**He is the HOLY SPIRIT.**

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# CONTENTS

Chapter 1 ... The Source Of Life.

Chapter 2 ... Life Or Death? .... You Choose.

Chapter 3 ... Born Again ....How Is This Possible?

Chapter 4 ... How On Earth Do I Live This Eternal Life?

Chapter 5 ... Getting To Know Who We Are.

Chapter 6 ... The Purpose Of Eternal Life.

Chapter 7 ... The Written Word Of God.

Chapter 8 ... Righteousness.

Chapter 9 ... Law And Grace.

Chapter 10 .. Conclusion.

All scriptures quoted in this book are from the King James version of the Bible.

It is important to ask the Holy Spirit to reveal the truth from scripture as you read.

It can be helpful to compare Bible verses and passages with other Bible translations.

# INTRODUCTION

**LIFE** ..... Can be defined as living in the presence of God.

**DEATH** ..... Can be defined as separation from God.

This book aims to show what God has to say about life and death, and then to go on to show how we can live the life that God wants to give us.

When a baby is born into this world it begins to grow physically, and then before long the child soon realises that sometime in the future death will occur.

Nothing is more certain than death to a human being, it is only a matter of time.

Some people reason that after death there is nothing; that the person is annihilated and no longer exists.

Others may reason that the dead person is reincarnated as another person or creature.

Many people have many other theories as to what actually happens after a person dies.

This book seeks to examine what the Bible has to say about life and death, and all that is available to mankind in this world, and any future worlds to come.

This book is extremely timely because it is clear to anyone reading and understanding the Bible, that we are fast approaching the end of this present age. A time when the choice we make regarding life and death takes on an importance like never before.

So, let's forget all the theories, and with an open mind, see what the Bible has to say about Life and Death.

# Chapter 1

## THE SOURCE OF LIFE

### **Genesis ... The Book of Beginnings**

In the Bible, in the book of Genesis, the first book of the Old Testament, we find that God (Elohim, plural) created the heavens (the sky and outer space) and the earth. He then created creatures on the earth; in the sea and in the sky and then finally he created a man whom He named Adam.

The Bible makes it clear that the vegetation, the creatures and the man, Adam, were created in six days.

### **Genesis 2:7**

*And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.*

We find that God breathed into Adam's nostril's, the breath of life. So where about in man do we find that life?

According to the Bible, that life, the life that exists in our flesh (our body and soul), that kind of life that everyone and every animal has ... God has placed in the blood.

### **Leviticus 17:11**

*For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.*

This life is the life that all created human beings have been given, although is not the only life that God now offers to us, and invites us to choose.

Today, God offers us a special kind of life, Eternal life, which can only be obtained through Jesus Christ, His son.

God placed Adam in the Garden of Eden and then He created a woman, named Eve, to be his help and his companion. He told Adam that all of the trees in the garden were available to him for food except for one; The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. God said that if he ate from this tree he would surely die. If he ate from this tree, sin would be introduced into the earth and death would surely follow.

At this point, life on earth was perfect with Adam and Eve trusting God for everything. If they needed anything or needed to know anything, they would go to God for it. They were both totally innocent not knowing anything about good or evil. They spent every day enjoying each other and having fellowship with God.

There was, however, another tree in the garden of Eden called the Tree of Life which would provide Eternal Life (The God kind of life). It appears that if Adam had eaten from this tree, he would have been like God, having this Eternal Life.

God did not make robots when He created Adam and Eve, He gave them a free will. This free will meant they were able to make choices and so decide on their destiny.

Today, we too have been given free will to choose our destiny, and God who loves us, advises us to choose life.

However, Adam and Eve chose, unwisely, to eat from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, thus giving them the knowledge of good and evil.

At this point, Adam and Eve lost their innocence and they found that they now had a conscience that convicted them when they did wrong. This conscience now became their moral sense of right and wrong, rather than God.

God did not want them to be independent of Him and trust in their own conscience (the knowledge of good and evil) but when they disobeyed His advice, their eyes were opened to their conscience.

God wanted their eyes opened to life; His Son Jesus. God wanted them to see how much they were loved by Him.

When Adam and Eve discovered that they had a conscience, they found that they now had a fear of God and so they hid from Him – they expected judgement and punishment.

The Latin word “conscientia” means “with knowledge”. Your conscience gives you knowledge which makes you aware of yourself and your sin.

The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil represents the Law given to the Israel by Moses. The Law makes you conscious of sin.

The Tree of Life, however, represents Jesus, God’s Grace, a gift to all who would receive Him.

Under the Law, a person was required to keep every part of it to be blessed by God, whereas under Grace a person is blessed by

trusting and believing God, as was the situation with Adam and Eve at the very beginning.

Every human being is made up of three parts: a spirit, a soul and a body and the conscience is a part of the soul of a person. We are spirits that have a soul and live in a body.

God doesn't want us to be independent of Him and to trust our own conscience (our own knowledge of good and evil). Just look around the world and see where that has brought us!

Today people hide from God by their pursuit of fame, wealth and pleasure, instead of seeking fellowship with God who still promises to supply our every need, if we are willing to trust Him.

If we would live our lives trusting and believing what God tells us, everything we need would then follow.

Faith (believing and trusting God) will make us conscious of God's love for us while our own conscience makes us conscious of ourselves and of our sin.

This sin of Adam and Eve, eating from tree of the knowledge of good and evil, resulted in the separation of mankind from God, and resulted in death, as God had warned (spiritual separation from God and gradual physical death).

From that point on, the whole of mankind became sinners (having a sin nature), and were only able to become right again with God through a blood sacrifice system. Animals were sacrificed with their blood covering man's sin.

The Bible tells us that without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sin. This "blood sacrifice of animals" system,

continued until the ultimate sacrifice was made, the blood of Jesus, God's Son.

This unique sacrifice of Jesus at the cross, 2000 years ago, now makes it possible for mankind to again receive the gift of Eternal Life (spiritual union with God and life with Him forever).

Because God has given mankind a free will, the choice of whether we choose or reject God's offer of Eternal Life is up to each one of us. The next chapter deals with this.

Before we look at the choice before us, let us look at the results of this choice that we all have to make. The Bible tells us that there are two destinations available to us after physical death. One is living in God's presence, the other is separation from God.

Our choice over whether we accept or reject God's offer of Eternal Life will determine our destination after death. Most people refer to these destinations as either Heaven or Hell.

The world has many theories and assumptions about Heaven and Hell based upon very little evidence, but it seems essential to me that we find out the truth. The Bible says that Jesus is the truth. So, with that in mind, let us now find out what the Bible has to say about both Heaven and Hell.

## **Hell**

It seems right to begin with the place that most people would believe needed to be avoided at all costs.

First of all, we need to make clear exactly what we mean by Hell.

The King James Version of the Bible mistranslates the Greek word “Hades”, or the Hebrew word “Sheol”, as Hell, but they are not the same place.

### **Hades (or Sheol)**

Hades (or Sheol) is the place of the dead in the earth’s centre (down from any part on the earth’s circumference). This is not Hell or the ‘Lake of Fire’ in outer darkness where men will suffer in flames at a later time.

Until Jesus’s resurrection all the dead went to Hades, a place divided into compartments: those counted righteous into Abraham’s bosom and the unrighteous across the chasm into Torments, as the story told by Jesus below explains.

At Jesus’ resurrection, all those in Abraham’s bosom were taken into heaven with Jesus, who Himself had gone to Hades (after His death on the cross) for three days and three nights.

A third compartment in Hades called “Tartarus”, is the place where the angels that sinned in Noah’s days, are kept in chains of darkness until they are to be judged at a future time. This is spoken of in Peter’s second letter to the Church.

Some Bible translations claim that Tartarus may be in Hell (Gehenna).

### **2 Peter 2:4**

*For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell (Hades / Tartarus), and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment.*

Hell (the Lake of Fire) is the final destination of all who are in the compartment of Hades known as Torments, and also the angels who rebelled against God.

At the coming back to earth of Jesus to catch away His righteous saints, all those who have died in Christ will be raised and receive immortal bodies. The unrighteous dead remain in Hades (Torments) until the second resurrection, when they too are raised and brought before the Great White Throne and then they are destined for Hell, or the Lake of Fire.

Jesus (The Truth), Himself, spoke about Hades in the book of Luke:

### **Luke 16: 19-31**

*There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.*

*And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried. And in hell (Hades) he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.*

*And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my*

tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.

*And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence.*

*Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house. For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.*

*Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.*

*And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.*

Here, in these verses, we find Jesus speaking to the Pharisees (Jewish religious leaders) who were listening to Him. He told the Pharisees about two men who had died. One was a rich man and the other was a beggar, named Lazarus.

When the beggar died, he was taken by angels to Hades, to a place called Abraham's Bosom. (The people in this place were later taken to Heaven after the resurrection of Jesus).

The rich man, having died, finds himself in Hades in a place called Torments. He was able to see both Abraham and Lazarus in the far distance, but was unable to travel there. He was tormented in a flame and extremely thirsty.

Abraham explained to him that it was impossible for him to leave Hades, and so the rich man pleaded with him to send Lazarus back to earth, to warn his brothers about how bad things were in Torments. He was told that they would not listen, even if someone went back from the dead.

This story that Jesus told is not a parable .... Parables of Jesus don't have names in them.

Jesus was warning the Jewish leaders about where they would end up, if they continued in the way that they were living.

### **What else do we know about Hades/Sheol or Hell (Lake of Fire)?**

We find in Proverbs 27:20 that Sheol and destruction are never full. There is always room for one more.

Sheol/Hades is always referred to as down or beneath. (Proverbs 15:24; Isaiah 14:9 & 15; Ezekiel 31:16-17; Matthew 11:23; Luke 10:15)

Sheol is a place of pain (Psalm 116:3)

The fire in Hell (Lake of Fire) is never quenched and worms (maggots) that feed on flesh never die there. (Mark 9:43-48).

Both the body and soul can be destroyed in Hades. (Matthew 10:28).

### **To Summarise:**

Hades is a place to be avoided at all costs, and yet many are heading there, oblivious to the warnings all around.

From reading the Bible, it appears that Hades has three

compartments.

The first one, “Abraham’s Bosom”, was the place that believers were taken to after death. This is where Lazarus was taken by angels after he had died.

The second one, “Torments”, was the place unbelievers found themselves when they died. This is where the rich man ended up. These two compartments are separated by a great chasm.

A third compartment, “Tartarus”, is the place where the angels that sinned in Noah’s days, are kept in chains of darkness until they are judged.

Hades has now two occupied compartments; Torments for unbelievers and Tartarus for angels that have sinned. Those who were in Abraham’s Bosom were taken by Jesus to Heaven, at His resurrection.

### **God Prepared the Earth for Mankind.**

Hades was prepared by God for the devil and his angels. It was not intended for man. God prepared the earth for man.

We are told in the Bible that: “Every good and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down (to earth) from the Father of lights (God).” (James 1:17).

God has filled the earth with good and perfect gifts for us to enjoy and He has also filled it with His attributes; Love, Peace, Joy, Light, Life, Mercy, strength, etc.

After God prepared Hades, He withdrew all His gifts and attributes from that place, creating a place for those who wanted nothing to do with Him.

In Hades you will find no Love, Peace, joy, Light, Life, Mercy, Strength or even Water.

## **Heaven**

The other option available to us is Heaven. This destination is available to all who have put their trust in Jesus Christ and His finished work at the cross, two thousand years ago. This is their destination after death.

Heaven, for these believers, is their home until Jesus returns to earth to reign for a thousand years.

Those believers who remain alive on earth until Jesus comes to collect them (in the air at the rapture), will return to Heaven with Jesus for a very short period of time.

I would suggest that we do not get too excited about going to Heaven because it will not be our home for too long (if we are alive until Jesus comes to collect us).

I believe that the time span will be only forty two months, although some say seven years .... depending upon your interpretation of scripture!

When Jesus returns to the earth, all believers will return with Him and reign with Him on the earth for one thousand years. After the thousand year period is ended, there will be a new Heaven and a new Earth.

At this point in time, Hades and its inhabitants will be thrown into Hell (the Lake of Fire) to remain there for eternity. Not a pleasant thought!

So where is Heaven and what is it like?

The Bible tells us that Heaven is “above” and is the place where God, (The Father) and Jesus (His Son), now reside. It is also the temporary residence of the saints (the righteous dead) until they return to the earth to reign with Jesus for a thousand years.

The Bible tells us in 2 Corinthians chapter 5 verse 2 that we are waiting for our new house (our new body) to be given to us when Jesus returns.

In fact, very little is known about Heaven.

Paul writing to the Corinthians says that when he was taken up to Heaven, he heard words that he was not allowed to speak.

It is sure, however, that wherever God resides it will be perfect and that when we arrive in Heaven, we will not be disappointed!

As for receiving several virgins, etc, as some religions teach .... That is to be found nowhere in the Word of God.

Reports that the streets of Heaven are paved with gold are not Bible based .... even though they may be ... it is just speculation.

Revelation chapter 21 verse 21 does talk of a street of gold, but in this passage of scripture, it is referring to the street of the New Jerusalem, which comes down from the New Heaven which is at least 1000 years from now.

## **The New Heaven and The New Earth**

### **Rev 21:1-4**

*And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God*

*himself shall be with them, and be their God.*

*And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.*

## **The New Jerusalem which comes down from Heaven**

### **Rev 21:10-25**

*And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal; And had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: On the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates. And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.*

*And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof.*

*And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal. And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four*

cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel. And the building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass.

And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald; The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysopterus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst.

And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass.

And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.

And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there.

The future looks wonderful for those who will choose correctly.

Now let's move on to chapter 2 to see more about the choice we have to make

.....

## Chapter 2

### LIFE OR DEATH? ..... YOU CHOOSE

#### **Deuteronomy 30:19**

*I call heaven and earth to record this day against you that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life that both thou and thy seed may live.*

In this passage, written about 3500 years ago, God is talking to the Israelites about being obedient in order that they may live and be blessed. The result of not obeying God's law would be cursing and death.

God gave "The Law" to the Israelites, who because of their proudness of heart, thought they would be able to obey these commandments. They were to find out that they were unable to do anything that God asked of them.

#### **Exodus 19:8**

*And all the people answered together, and said, All that the LORD hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the LORD.*

Receiving blessings and life was now dependent upon those people obeying God's laws, which they found impossible to keep.

God was showing the Israelites that they could not, in their own strength, live the kind of life He required of them and that they

needed to put their trust in the one He would send to save them; Jesus the Messiah.

The Law was given only to the Israelites. The Gentiles were never asked to keep God's Commandments, but they are today invited to share in God's Eternal Life.

### **Today God still sets before us life and death**

### **He advises us to CHOOSE LIFE!**

God has given us **free will** to choose life or death ... to live in His presence or to choose separation from Him. **His advice - choose life.**

### **Here is our choice:**

- a) Ignore God or deny His existence; or try to be blessed and obtain life and reconciliation to Him by trying to obeying God's Laws. (The 10 Commandments, plus over 600 other laws found in the Old Testament) .... Which will ultimately result in your failure to do so, and your separation from God.
- b) Accept His plan: **The free gift** of Eternal Life through Jesus Christ. (Which we have to receive - the choice is ours)

### **Romans 6:23:**

*For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is Eternal Life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

## **In other words we have a free choice:**

- a) To choose to go through life doing our own thing, ignoring or denying God's existence or .... try our best to live correctly, and inevitably manage to sin (break God's Laws) along the way.
- b) Choose God's way.... Receive the gift of Eternal Life through Jesus Christ, His son.

Those who refuse God's way will receive their wages, which is death.

Those people, who choose to receive the free gift of Eternal Life from God, will receive their wages, which is Eternal Life.

Whilst preparing to write this book, God told me to write down the words '**LIFE**' and '**DEATH**'

He then told to rearrange these letters into two more words.

The result was '**DEAL**' and '**THIEF**'

Then God told me that His free offer of Eternal Life was the best **deal** anyone could possibly receive, but to be aware that the **thief** (the devil) will do his very best to stop mankind receiving and living in this free gift of Eternal Life.

### **John 10:10**

*The thief (the devil) cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.*

The devil will do his best to try and steal your free gift of Eternal Life and try to destroy you.

**The Bible tells us this Eternal life is through His Son, Jesus.**

**John 1:4**

*“In Him (Jesus) was life and the life was the light of men.”*

**John 14:6**

*“I am the way, the truth and the life.”*

**John 5:40**

*“And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.”*

**John 10:10**

*“...I am come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.”*

**Our Answer:**

Stop trying to obey God’s laws to gain approval from Him. You were never asked to, and you cannot keep them anyway.

**God wants to give us His gift of Eternal Life and He has provided a way for us to receive this:**

- a) Choose to believe (put your trust) in God and Jesus, His Son.
- b) Confess that Jesus is your Lord.
- c) Believe in your heart that God raised Jesus from the dead.

**The following scriptures show us God's way:**

**John 5:24**

*Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.*

**Romans 10:9-10**

*That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*

**John 3:16**

*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

The Bible tells us clearly that God loves us and wants to give us His Eternal Life, but because He has given us free will, we have to make the choice ourselves: Life or Death.

The reason we find it impossible to keep God's law is that we all have a sin nature which we received when we were conceived. This sin nature has been passed throughout every generation since the day Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden.

When God created Adam and Eve, He did not want them to sin and to suffer old age, sickness and disease and die, but because they did sin, death now reigns on the earth.

God provided His answer to the problem in Jesus:

### **Romans 5:17**

*For if by one man's offence death reigned by one (Adam); much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.*

This verse tells us that death reigns in the earth today because of Adam's sin. Those people who will receive God's grace (His unmerited, unearned favour) and His free gift of righteousness, by accepting Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour, will reign in life.

### **Two Deaths:**

The Bible talks about two deaths. The first we are all very aware of. When a person grows old or becomes sick or diseased, ultimately death results.

A second death is talked about in the Bible, this death occurs to those who reject God's offer of Eternal life.

The Bible tells us that this will occur after Jesus has returned to earth and reigned for one thousand years. Then, all who have not received Eternal life will suffer the second death in the Lake of Fire.

It is clear that God sees death as an enemy and that it should be avoided at all costs. His question to you is: Are you allowing death to reign in your life or are you reigning in life?

It is imperative that the right choice is made without delay if death is to be avoided. We do not know how much time we have left to live on this earth. For some people, this is their last day!

### **Receiving Jesus is the only way to avoid death.**

“We are all going to die”, I can hear you say. You are correct and you are wrong.

Our bodies will die but we will not die ... we are all spirits with souls that live in bodies. Our body may die but our soul and spirit move on.

After the body dies, those who have received Jesus have passed from death to life, and they go to live in heaven. Those who refuse Him, go to death (separation from God) in Hades (Torments) until the appointed time to be thrown in to the Lake of Fire, the second death.

So, what happens to a person who receives Jesus as their Lord and Saviour? ..... They are born again spiritually and pass from death to life.

### **John 5:24**

*Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth*

*on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.*

We need to be conceived again (born again) without a sin nature if we are to be in a right relationship with God our creator.

We are all born into the Kingdom of Darkness in which Satan rules, but we need to be born again into the Kingdom of Light, where Jesus rules.

We need to die and be conceived again without this sin nature if we are to be in a right relationship with God our creator and belong to His Kingdom of Light.

How? I hear you ask.

The next chapter deals with this question.

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## Chapter 3

### **BORN AGAIN! ... HOW IS THIS POSSIBLE?**

#### **Let's see what the Bible says:**

One night, about 2000 years ago, a religious man came to Jesus and said: "No man can perform these miracles that you are doing unless God be with him." Jesus gave a very strange reply: He said "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Jesus went on to explain that every person is born physically into this world, and that allows them to understand the physical realm, but in order to understand the spiritual realm a person needs to be "Born Again" by the Spirit of God (The Holy Spirit).

#### **John 3:1-10**

*There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.*

*Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*

*Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born*

*of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of The Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.*

*Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be?*

*Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?*

**You are Born Again (without the sin nature) when you choose to receive Eternal Life. You receive this Eternal Life when you receive Jesus as your Lord and Saviour.**

Receiving Jesus means that you must turn to God by faith, and ask Jesus to be your Lord. Receiving Jesus means allowing Him to be Lord of your life.

Before we are born again, we are the lord of our own lives and Jesus is outside of our life. Anything we wish to do we can, because Jesus is not our Lord, we are. We must, therefore, make Jesus the Lord of our lives and desire to do the will of our Heavenly Father. Jesus must become our one and only Master. He must become our King!

**Jesus said:**

**Matthew 16:25**

*For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.*

**John 17:3**

*And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.*

Jesus said these things so that we can come to Him and ask Him to be Lord of our lives. We submit to Him so that He can take away all that separates us from God and to give us a new abundant life – Life Eternal.

**You choose to receive this Eternal Life by praying this prayer to God:**

*Father God, I desire to be born again and receive from you Eternal Life. I place my trust in you and your Son, Jesus Christ, and confess Him as my Lord. I believe in my heart that you raised Him from the dead and I receive from you now, by faith, Eternal Life. Thank you, Father.*

**This is the starting point of your New Eternal life.**

Both the apostle John and Paul in their letters, confirm to us that when we have Jesus as our Lord, we have Eternal Life.

God wants to assure you that now you have Jesus, you have LIFE!

### **Colossians 2:6**

*As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him.*

### **1John 5:10-13**

*He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.*

*And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.*

*These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.*

When we are born again, God puts a new heart and a new spirit within us and He removes our heart of stone from our flesh and gives us a new heart of flesh. He then puts His Spirit within us to cause us to walk in His ways and to be able to walk in His commandments.

### **Ezekiel 36:26-27**

*A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and*

*cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.*

If you have made a decision in your heart to receive Jesus as the Lord of your life by praying this prayer, then there is so much that has changed in your life by this one decision and prayer, that it will take you a lifetime to fully grasp it.

God's Spirit, the Holy Spirit, has come to live in you and has caused your spirit to be born again without the sin nature and has caused you to come alive spiritually. He will comfort you and will teach you the truth about God.

Jesus said to his disciples:

**John 14:16-17:**

*And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you."*

Your spirit has not been "fixed", but it has been created anew and your new spirit is now in a right relationship with God for ever. You are now a Son/Daughter of God and entitled to all the blessings that God supplies, and you are redeemed from all of the curses mentioned in His Word.

As previously stated, it will take a lifetime to fully comprehend the changes that have occurred in your life by accepting God's free gift of Eternal Life. You may not look any different on the outside but the real you, inside, is different.

You are not your body; you are a spirit that lives within your body. You live in the same body as before but you are a new person living in that body. You will receive a new body later when Jesus returns to the earth. This “new you” has new parents who do not have that sin nature that separated the old you from God.

In God’s words: “You are now a New Creation.”

### **2Corinthians 5:17**

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

### **1Peter 1:23**

*Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.*

### **Jesus is The Word of God**

#### **John 1:1-12**

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that*

*Light. That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.*

*He was in the world, and the world was made by Him and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.*

*And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.*

## **The Spirit is the Holy Spirit**

### **John 3:5-6**

*Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.*

You are now a new creation and your parent is God himself (Father, Son and Holy Spirit). You are now living in the Kingdom of Light.

## **Start this new life by realising:**

### **1. You are a new creation.**

#### **2Corinthians 5:17**

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

### **2. Now that you are in Christ Jesus, your sins have all been forgiven. (Past, Present and Future sins).**

#### **Colossians 1:14**

*In whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins.*

### **3. You have Eternal Life.**

#### **John 3:36**

*He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.*

Those who have chosen Eternal Life are now at the start of the most amazing journey. They have a lot of baggage to dump and a lot to learn about their new life. They have been given everything needed to live this Eternal Life.

The Bible is like a car handbook. It tells you everything about yourself and how to keep yourself in tip top condition. You also have the Holy Spirit to teach you all things.

Now we move on to discover how to live this new Eternal Life

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## Chapter 4

### HOW ON EARTH DO I LIVE THIS ETERNAL LIFE?

Firstly, we need to understand that when we received Eternal Life at the point of inviting Jesus to be our Lord and Saviour, we are baptised by the Holy Spirit into the Body of Christ. This occurred when we were born again.

I believe that this is what Jesus was talking about in the following verse:

#### **Mark 16:16**

*He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.*

This is a done deal and no person or no demon can ever take you out of God's Family or His love.

Paul puts it this way:

#### **Romans 8:38-39**

*For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Scripture talks about two other baptisms available for born again believers and we shall now go on to discuss them.

The first baptism is described as the Holy Spirit coming upon us. The second baptism is described as water baptism.

First of all, let's see what the Bible says about the Holy Spirit coming upon us.

We are told to live this new life in the power of the Holy Spirit who came to live within us when we received this Eternal Life, when we were born again.

The power to live this Eternal Life is given to us when the Holy Spirit comes "upon us with power".

### **So how do we receive this power to enable us to live this new life?**

The following scriptures show what will happen when you ask God to fill you with power through His Holy Spirit.

One of Jesus' disciples asked Him how to pray and Jesus concluded His reply with the following statement:

#### **Luke 11: 9-13**

*I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion?*

*If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?*

Before Jesus ascended back into Heaven, He told his disciples:

### **Acts 1:8**

*But you shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*

God, the Father will delight in giving you His Holy Spirit and power. All He is waiting for is you to ask Him.

Again, before Jesus went back to Heaven, He spoke these words to His disciples:

### **Luke 24: 49**

*And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.*

The disciples were told to wait in Jerusalem until they were given power from on high.

Then on the day of Pentecost (several weeks after Jesus had been raised from the dead) the following incident occurred:

## **Acts 2:1-4**

*And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.*

These people were all filled with the Holy Ghost (Holy Spirit) and power, and began to speak in other tongues (languages). They then went out into the street and demonstrated the power that they had received.

The disciples went down into the street, where Peter boldly preached a sermon about Jesus and the result was as follows:

## **Acts 2:37-39**

*Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?*

*Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptised every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.*

Peter told the people to repent (change their way of thinking) .... from trying to do things their way - and now to put their trust in the risen Jesus. He also told them to be baptised in water in the name of Jesus (a sign of being born again) and then they would receive the Holy Ghost.

It appears, therefore, that the next steps after being born again, is to be baptised in water in the name of Jesus Christ and receive the Gift of the Holy Ghost and power.

Later in the book of Acts we are told that Peter was preaching in the house of Cornelius where both Jews and Gentiles (non-Jews) were gathered. While he was speaking, he told them that if they believed in Jesus, their sins would be forgiven.

The account is given to us in the tenth chapter of the book of Acts:

### **Acts 10:43-48**

*..... whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins. While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.*

*And they of the circumcision (the Jews) which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles (the non-Jews) also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptised, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?*

*And he commanded them to be baptised in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.*

The Holy Ghost fell upon these non-Jews and they began to speak in other tongues. Peter then told them to be baptised in water in the name of the Lord. This time it happened in reverse. They received the Holy Ghost and then they were baptised in water. Presumably they “turned” to Jesus while Peter was speaking!

Later in the book of Acts, Paul arrived at Ephesus and found around a dozen followers of Jesus:

**Acts 19:2-7**

*He said unto them, have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, we have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.*

*And he said unto them, unto what then were ye baptised? And they said, Unto John's baptism.*

*Then said Paul, John verily baptised with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.*

*When they heard this, they were baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus.*

*And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.*

*And all the men were about twelve.*

Paul asked them if they had received the Holy Ghost but they answered that they did not know anything about the Holy Ghost. Paul then asked them about being baptised and they told him that they had received John's baptism (John the Baptist -- water baptism).

Paul explained that they should believe on Jesus and they were then all baptised (water baptism) in the name of the Lord Jesus. Paul then laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came upon them, and they spoke in other tongues and prophesied. Many Christians fail to recognise the need to wait for the empowerment of the Holy Ghost before trying to live their new life.

After you are born again there is a need to be baptised in water in the name of Jesus and receive the Holy Ghost for power to live your new life.

Ask a Christian who has been baptised and has received the Holy Ghost to baptise you in water in the name of Jesus and lay hands upon you to receive the Holy Ghost.

You can now expect to speak in other tongues as the Holy Spirit gives you utterance. The evidence that you have received the Holy Spirit will be your ability to speak in other tongues.

When you ask God, your Heavenly Father, to give you His Holy Spirit, He is more than willing to do so.

You ask and believe that you have received.

Do not be discouraged if you seem to be unable to speak in tongues immediately. Personally, it was several months before I spoke in tongues and as a “baby” Christian wondered what was wrong with me.

I was encouraged to keep believing and to remember that I had to do the speaking. Eventually, as I spoke the words that were forming in my head, a new language came forth.

I find that when I ask the Holy Spirit to pray through me in “other tongues”, whatever I ask Him to pray about seems to get answered.

Many Christians want nothing to do with this Holy Spirit baptism and believe it is “not for today”.

The reality for others is that that the Holy Spirit baptism is something that has changed their lives amazingly.

I believe you will not be able to avail yourself of all that Eternal Life has to offer, unless you receive the power that only comes through the Holy Spirit baptism. The choice is yours!

Paul and the other disciples, in the book of Acts, encouraged all they met to receive Eternal Life and be baptised in the Holy Spirit and to be baptised in water.

We have looked at Holy Spirit baptism, now let’s look at water baptism.

## **Water Baptism**

Jesus told His disciples to baptise his followers in water.

### **Matt 28:19**

*Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:*

Some say that water baptism is not important and is not necessary. I would suggest that if Jesus recommends it, it is not something I would want to argue with Him about.

So, what is water baptism all about?

### **Romans 6:3-4**

*Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptised into Jesus Christ were baptised into his death?*

*Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.*

I believe baptism is a demonstration to the world and to all spiritual beings, the good and the evil ones; that we have by faith, died with Jesus Christ; that we have been buried with Him, and have been raised from the dead with Him, and are now seated in heavenly places with Him.

We are declaring by faith, to all creation, that we are now a New Creation who has received Eternal Life and that we have been declared righteous.

Jesus, at the beginning of His ministry on earth, went to see John the Baptist at the river Jordan. Jesus asked John to baptize Him and John was very reluctant. John's baptism was for the forgiveness of sins and Jesus had never sinned, so why would Jesus need to be baptised?

### **Matthew 3:13-16**

*Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptised of him.*

*But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptised of thee, and comest thou to me?*

*And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptised, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:*

Jesus told John that His (Jesus) baptism was to fulfil all righteousness, and not for the forgiveness of sins.

Today Christians are baptised, not because they are sinners, but because they are righteous. We are made righteous (justified) because we believe on Jesus and His finished work at the cross. We have been given the gift of righteousness.

### **Romans 5:1**

*Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:*

We have been declared righteous (justified) by the resurrection of Jesus.

**Romans 4:24-25**

*But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.*

In the next chapter we shall move on and discover more about this new creation and who we really are.

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# Chapter 5

## GETTING TO KNOW WHO WE ARE

Once we are born again, we are just babies and need to be fed with milk. The Bible lets us know that we grow by the milk of the Word.

### **1 Peter 2:2**

*As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:*

As we read and study the scriptures, the Holy Spirit who is living within us, can now begin to teach us.

### **John 14:26**

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

In our new life, our priority should be to find out as much as we can about our new selves and about God, our Heavenly Father. All this information can be found in the Bible. It will be taught to us by the Holy Spirit as we read the Bible and meditate on what we have been reading.

In this chapter we will take a look at what the Bible says about the Christian and how they are different from an unbeliever.

The new creation (spirit) that we have now become, is completely different from who we were before. So, let's begin to find out:

## **God's Word teaches us that we are a three part being:**

### **1Thessalonians 5:23**

*And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

The Bible tells us that we are spirit, soul and body.

We shall now look at these three parts in reverse order, spending most of our time on the new creation, the spirit that has been born anew.

## **The Body and the Soul: (The Bible calls this the flesh).**

### **1. BODY (Our physical house).**

This is our physical part that can be seen. It is the part of us that we tend to give most attention. Our body (our outer man) carries our inner man (our spirit). It is our temporary house.

If someone were to touch our body, we would feel it. We know when our body is hot or cold, tired or sick. We feel pain in our body.

When we are born again, our body doesn't change at all.

Our new body was fully purchased by Jesus; payment was made by Him at the cross, but we are waiting for the manifestation of it. That is something we are eagerly looking forward to. We are told by Paul that our present corrupt body will be replaced by an immortal one.

We shall all be changed, in the twinkling of an eye and receive our new body when Jesus returns to meet us in the air.

### **1 Corinthians 15:51-53**

*Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall be changed,*

*In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.*

*For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.*

Jesus has paid the total price required for our redemption. This can be clearly seen in Paul's letter to the Corinthian Church:

### **1 Corinthians 6:20**

*For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.*

### **1 Corinthians 1:30**

*But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom,*

*and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:*

## **2. SOUL (Our personality).**

This is the mental and emotional part of us. Our mind, will, emotions and conscience.

We can feel both our soul and our body (our flesh):

We can tell how we feel in our soul and our body because we are constantly in touch with them. We know if our soul feels happy or sad or hurt or angry. We would even know if our soul was depressed.

Our soul wasn't changed either when we were born again, it is changed supernaturally when we start believing God's Word. The Bible calls this "the renewing of your mind" .... It happens as we read and believe God's Word. We, ourselves, have to renew our mind.

### **Romans 12:2**

*And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*

### **Ephesians 4:23**

*And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;*

Our souls are transformed as we change the way we think and align our thoughts with God's Word.

## **1 Corinthians 13:9-10**

*For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come (Our new body), then that which is in part shall be done away.*

## **1 Corinthians 13:12**

*For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.*

As we continue to believe the Word of God, the condition of our soul changes and we will find that we shall begin to experience peace where there was turmoil and joy where there was sadness.

Our mind is being transformed as we spend time in the Word. When Jesus returns for us, we will receive our new body and at that point our mind will know all things.

### **3. SPIRIT. (Our born again spirit)**

The innermost part of us .... The part of us that cannot die.

Now that we are born again, we become aware of our spirit and that our spirit can now commune with God. God has also put His Spirit within us to teach us all things.

We now find that the scriptures become alive to us. We can now begin to really understand them.

We can now begin to grow as we read the scriptures, which are the Words of God and which were written by men who were moved by the Holy Spirit to do so.

The only way to accurately perceive spiritual truth is through the Bible. God's Word reveals the reality of the spirit realm. God's Words are spirit and they are life.

### **Jesus said:**

#### **John 3:1-7**

*There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.*

*Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, how can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.*

## **John 6:63**

*It is the spirit that quickeneth (makes alive); the flesh (soul & body) profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.*

Once you understand the truth about your spirit, your soul and your body, you will be able to begin to understand the spirit realm and begin to understand who you really are and what you have in Jesus Christ.

## **You are a spirit, who lives in a body and you have a soul.**

Every person that has existed on earth since the day that Adam sinned, has been born with a spirit that is separated from God.

Jesus said: “you must be born again” .... That is spiritually .... In order to be reconciled to God and to be able to see His Kingdom.

Only when you are “Born Again”, will you be able to understand spiritual reality. Those who are not born again have no true understanding of the spiritual realm.

## **Only when you understand spiritual reality can you understand Paul’s prayer for those who are Christians:**

### **Eph 1:18-20**

*I pray also that the eyes of your heart (understanding) may be enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and*

*what are the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints,  
And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who  
believe according to the working of his mighty power,  
Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and  
set Him at his own right hand in the heavenly places,*

### **Seeing Your Spirit.**

To see if your face is clean or your hair is combed, you look in a mirror and trust what you see. To see who you are in the spirit realm you look in the spiritual mirror, the Bible, and you trust what you see there.

You may look and feel the same but you are now a new creation, completely different from the old you. For the truth about you to become evident, you must begin to find out what the Bible says about the new you and start to believe it.

What the Bible says often seems contrary to what you are seeing and feeling in your life, but as you search the Bible and discover and believe what it says, then you will find that your life will begin to line up with God's Word.

So, what has changed?

### **When we become a Christian we receive a new spirit.**

#### **2 Cor 5:17**

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

This verse is talking about our spirit. God has replaced our spirit with a new spirit. This occurred when Jesus came into our life.

As we read the Bible and begin to have our mind renewed, we will find that we are able to understand spiritual truths.

The following verse means nothing to someone without Jesus but to a new creation it fills them with hope and expectation. We start to believe that all things are possible now that Jesus is our Lord.

### **John 14:12**

*Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.*

As we renew our mind with God's Word, we are able to begin to access all that is in our spirit.

The amazing thing about our new spirit is that it is just the same, now, here, in this world as Jesus is. The following scripture lets us know this:

### **1 John 4:17**

*Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world.*

This verse can only be speaking about our spirit. Our body is not like Jesus' body yet (we cannot walk through doors), and our soul

isn't like His either (we don't know all things yet).

Our spirit is now perfect, as Jesus is.

Everything we need for our life in this world is available in our spirits.

All our sins were paid for at the cross and when we receive Jesus as our Lord and Saviour, we receive total forgiveness.

God declares that you are righteous (You have a right standing with God).

Because your sins have been forgiven, you are now able to enjoy a relationship with God as a son would with his father. You are now family.

### **Romans 3:21-26**

*But now the righteousness of God without the Law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe for there is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified (made righteous) freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that He might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.*

Our soul is being renewed daily as we spend time in the Word of God and meditate on what we read, while we wait for the day

when Jesus returns, when we shall know all things.

Our new body will be brought to us by Jesus at his return.

Now that we are beginning to grasp who we really are, how does that benefit us?

We have learned that it is our task to renew our mind and believe the Word of God. As we read the Bible and believe what God says about us, our soul lines up with the Word. When our soul agrees with God's Word, we find that both our soul and our spirit are in agreement.

This renewing of our mind ensures that two thirds of our being are aligning with God.

As our souls and spirits become united, we are able to access all that is in our spirits and all our needs can be met.

We are now beginning to grasp who we really are as a new creation. Because, our spirit is as Jesus is, in this world, we have available to us the same power that raised Jesus from the dead. It is no wonder that Jesus said that we would do the works that He did and even greater works than Him.

### **Ephesians 1:15-20**

*Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: The eyes of your understanding*

*being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places,*

Paul prays this prayer for us, that we might grasp who Jesus is and all that we have in Him.

We have the resurrection life of God available to us in our spirit, but it will not be of any use to us unless we renew our mind with God's Word and align our soul with our spirit, that the Eternal Life of God can overflow into our body and mind.

Our soul is critical if we are to experience the God kind of Life.

If we align our soul with our spirit, we can experience the love, peace, joy, power, success, healing, etc - all that is in our spirit.

If we ignore the renewing of our mind, we can expect the hate, turmoil, anger, bitterness, failure, defeat, sickness, etc to continue to dominate our lives.

God calls us to repent – that means to change our mind and believe correctly about who we really are now that we are in Christ.

Repentance is not a change of behaviour it is a change of mind.

Your behaviour is the fruit that will spring forth from who you believe you are – good or bad.

Our attention must be focused upon who we are now not who we were in the past.

Paul puts it this way as he writes to the Colossian church:

### **Colossians 1:27-28**

*To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus:*

Paul says that God wants His Church to know the glorious riches they have now that Christ is in them, and he is teaching them so that they will realise that they are perfect in Jesus.

In the following verse, Paul tells the Corinthian Church that we are being changed by the Holy Spirit, into the image of Jesus, as we behold Him in the Word of God.

### **2 Corinthians 3:18**

*But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.*

If we do not renew our mind and change our belief about who we now are, we will find that the devil will continually attack us and

we will always respond in the same old way as we always have done.

When the devil reminds you of your sins; remind him that you are now the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus.

When the devil attacks you with sickness; tell him that by the stripes of Jesus you were healed.

When the devil tells you that you are useless; remind him that you are now a son of God and that you can do all things through Christ who strengthens you.

When the apostle Paul found the believers struggling, he would remind them who they were, now that they are in Christ. He didn't condemn them and get upset with them. He told them who they were now!

The devil will always attack your identity and try to get you thinking that you haven't changed. Our task is to believe what God says about us.

The same principle of seeing ourselves in Christ Jesus also applies to how we are supposed to now see other believers. Paul explains this to the believers in Corinth:

### **2 Corinthians 5:16-17**

*Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more. Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*

We are now to relate to other Christians in the same way as we now see ourselves .... Not in the flesh, but in the spirit.

Jesus is a good example of how we are to see each other.

We can see what Jesus was like as we read through the four gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. This is the Jesus most people would recognise, but Jesus' physical body was a hinderance to seeing who Jesus actually was when He was on the earth.

Now, look over to the book of Revelation and we find a different Jesus as John sees Him, as He really is, in the spirit realm.

John falls at Jesus' feet in worship when He looks at the King of kings and the Lord of lords.

He sees Jesus as we are to see each other - in the Spirit.

Paul explains to the Christians at Rome that they are to walk after the Spirit not after the flesh, because those that walk after the flesh cannot please God.

### **Romans 8:6-8**

*For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.*

Carnally minded means 'of the senses'.

I realise that some readers will be questioning and saying: "but don't we still continue to sin?"

You are correct, in our present “state” we may continue to sin, but this sinning is overcome as we walk after the Spirit, not after the flesh.

Before we move on, we will take a look at our “Position” in Jesus, and then contrast this with our “Walk” (how we may actually act), in order to see what God has completed and how we are to live.

## **Our Position and Our Walk.**

It is important that we understand our position in Christ Jesus and how our possible walk as a Christian may differ.

### **Our Position in Christ Jesus.**

Our position in Christ Jesus is entirely due to the work of Jesus himself and nothing of us.

We are referring here to our position before God, which is given to us when we receive Jesus as our Lord and Saviour.

This position is conferred to every Christian, regardless of who they are or what they have done.

None of the following blessings are available by anything we can do, and can only come to us as “gifts of God”, through Jesus Christ.

### **Here are some of the blessings of our new position:**

We are the sons of God and we shall be like Jesus.  
(see John 1:12 and 1 John 3:2)

We are heirs of God and Joint heirs with Christ Jesus.  
(see Romans 8:17)

We have an incorruptible and undefiled inheritance and we are kept by the power of God. (see 1Peter 1:4-5 and Ephesians 1:11)

We are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood and an holy nation. We are loved, and washed from our sins, and are kings and priests. (see 1 Peter 2:9 and Revelation 1:5-6)

We are complete in Jesus who is the head of all principality and power. (see Colossians 2:10)

We are justified (made righteous), we have peace, we have access into Grace and a sure hope of glory. (see Romans 5:1-2)

We will not perish, but we shall know that we have everlasting life. (see John 3:16 and 1John 5:13)

We have boldness to enter the Holy Place by the blood of Jesus. (see Hebrews 10:19)

We have been blessed with all spiritual blessings and are accepted in the beloved Jesus. (see Ephesians 1:3 and Ephesians 1:6)

We are made alive with Jesus Christ, raised us up together with Him and made to sit in heavenly places in Him. (see Ephesians 2:5-6)

We have been brought close to God by the blood of Jesus. (see Ephesians 2:13)

We have been sealed by the Holy Spirit and baptised into one body. (see Ephesians 1:13 and 1Corinthians 12:13)

We are members of Jesus' body, and we are temples of the Holy Ghost. (see Ephesians 5:30 and 1Corinthians 6:19)

We are the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus. We are sanctified (made holy) and justified (made righteous) in the name of Jesus and by the Holy Spirit. (see 1Corinthians 6:11, Romans 3:22, 1Corinthians 1:30 and Hebrews 10:14)

We are able to receive revelation from our heavenly Father. (see Matthew 16:17)

We have been delivered by the Father from the power of darkness and have been translated into the Kingdom of His dear Son. (see Colossians 1:12-13)

Our old sinful self has been crucified with Christ so that sin might lose its power in our lives. (see Romans 6:6)

We have light and we are the light of the world. (see Matthew 5:14, Ephesians 5:8 and 1 Thessalonians 5:5)

God has saved us and has called us to a holy (separated) life. (see 2Timothy 1:9)

We are not appointed to wrath. (see 1 Thessalonians 5:9-10)

These blessings are all gifted to us by God, now that we are in Christ.

We are now in a place where we can give thanks and praise to God for all the things that He has given to us and done in our lives.

We shall now take a look at our walk in the Spirit and how it differs from our position in Christ Jesus.

### **Our Walk in the Spirit**

Our walk can be very different from our standing before God and it is up to each one of us to learn to walk in the Spirit.

Our walk will only be transformed as we renew our mind with the Word of God. As we look into the mirror of the Word of God, we will be gradually changed by the Holy Spirit. (see 2 Corinthians 3:18)

### **Here are some verses that show that our walk as Christians is sometimes very different from the position we have before God:**

We can be contentious and arrogant. (see 1 Corinthians 1:11, 1 Corinthians 4:18 and 1 Corinthians 5:2)

We can be carnal (of the senses) .... Envy, strife, divisive. (see 1 Corinthians 3:1-3)

We can take other Christians to Court with lawsuits. (see 1 Corinthians 6:7)

We can be involved with sexual immorality. (see 1 Corinthians 6:18)

We are instructed to get rid of anger, rage, bad feelings towards others, curses and slander, and foulmouthed abuse, and not to lie to one another. (see Colossians 3:8-9)

We are instructed to walk as children of the light. (see Ephesians 5:8)

We are instructed to walk as Jesus walked. (see 1 John 2:6)

We are instructed to leave the elementary teachings behind and move on to spiritual maturity. (see Hebrews 6:1)

**We have a new, born again spirit; but our minds are in need of renewal.**

Daily, we may now benefit from our new Eternal Life, while we await the return of our Lord Jesus.

**So, how do we now see each other and ourselves:**

In the flesh which is death or in the Spirit which is life and peace.

The choice again is ours!

Enough about us for the moment. Now let us go on to discover God and get to know Him.

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## Chapter 6

### THE PURPOSE OF ETERNAL LIFE.

Getting to know God will enable us to access all that is available to us in our new Eternal Life, although that is not the main purpose for which God has given us Eternal Life.

Jesus came to restore our relationship with God so that we may know Him as Father. For us to be able to know God, and have an intimate relationship with Him, was the prime purpose of Jesus coming to earth, and dying for us on the cross.

Being saved from hell and having all God's blessings available to us is wonderful, but these things are secondary to knowing God and come to us as a benefit of knowing Him.

#### **John 3:14-16**

*And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.*

*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

#### **John 17:3**

*And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.*

We are clearly told that Eternal Life is knowing Father God and

Jesus Christ.

God's whole purpose in creating us, was so that we could have a close, intimate, personal relationship with Him.

How the majority of the people in this world have missed the purpose of their creation!

The Bible tells us that we were all created for His pleasure:

**Revelation 4:11**

*Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.*

When we believe in Jesus and are born again, our new spirit is created in the likeness of God and we do know God. That is already a done deal.

John tells us that, even as little children (in the Lord), we know God is our Father.

**1 John 2:13**

*I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one. I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father.*

However, Peter tells us to grow in the knowledge of Jesus:

**2 Peter 3:18**

*But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.*

A young child is aware that he has a dad, but as he grows, he gets to know him intimately. He learns what pleases him and what disappoints him. He gets to know his personality and soon begins to want to spend time with his father. As the relationship grows, the child learns to trust his father and realises how much he is loved.

It is the same in the spiritual realm. When we spend time with our Father God and as our relationship develops and matures, we learn to trust Him and realise that He has loved us from the very beginning.

Paul says that he counts all things loss for the knowledge of Jesus:

### **Philippians 3:8**

*Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,*

The New Testament writers knew the purpose of their life. So, how do we get to know The Father and Jesus His Son?

We get to know God through His Word and by spending time in His presence talking to Him and listening to Him.

If we want to see God the Father, we are to look at Jesus.

We are told that Jesus is the express image of The Father and that He is the brightness of The Father's glory.

### **Hebrews 1:2-3**

*Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;*

Jesus told Philip, one of His disciples, that if they had seen Him, they had seen The Father.

### **John 14:9**

*..... he that hath seen me hath seen the Father;*

So, if we want to get to know God, we have to get to know Jesus and the best way to get to know Jesus is through the Word, because He is The Word.

### **John 1:1-3**

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made.*

### **John 1:14**

*And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his*

*glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth.*

Jesus was there with the Father in the beginning, and He was responsible for creating all things. There is nothing He doesn't know about The Father.

The written Word, the Bible, is all about Jesus, from the beginning to the end. It is the history of the world from God's point of view from the start to the finish..... It is HIS STORY!

As we spend time in the Bible, asking the Holy Spirit to explain everything to us, and as we meditate on what we are reading, we will begin to start to get to know God.

You will be amazed at what the Holy Spirit will show you when you spend time with Him.

As you spend time getting to know Jesus in the Word, you will find it easier to believe and trust what you are reading. That believing and trusting will manifest in the way you live.

This is just the same as any relationship with any person; as you get to know them, so you can begin to trust them.

As you get to know someone it is more difficult to be deceived. For example; if someone said to me "there's your wife driving a taxi". You might look, but I wouldn't bother because I know her ... she can't drive!

As you get to know God, you will know that He loves you and that He will never judge you because His Word says so, and you have learned to trust whatever He says.

A personal relationship with God makes all things available to us.

A wrong impression of God on the other hand, will stop us receiving all that He has for us.

Many Christians neglect to get to know God and so miss out on much of that which is available to them now.

Many believe that God sends them sickness. Many believe that God is judging them with disasters. They just don't know God! Many know about God, but they just don't know Him.

Do you imagine that God put Adam and Eve on the earth so they could learn about what they should do or shouldn't do? Of course not, He wanted them to enjoy life to the full and so that He could have fellowship with them!

The following scripture seems so appropriate:

**Matthew 9:29**

*Then touched he their eyes, saying, According to your faith be it unto you.*

If you don't know God you will not be able to trust Him and believe for what He has promised you in His Word

My personal observation is that many in the Church have spent their time doing "Christian things" without getting to know God. God calls this dead works.

As well as knowing God from the Word, it is important that we develop a personal relationship with Him. We need to talk to Him and listen to Him also.

I find this easier if I go for a walk in the countryside and begin by thanking Him for His wonderful creation and all that He has done for me.

It is a time when I can minister to Him, praising Him, thanking Him and telling Him how good He has been to me and how much I appreciate Him.

I can talk to Him and tell Him of my concerns, and ask Him for advice and help over anything in my life. Out of my time spent talking to Him usually flows my prayer time. I find that my most effective prayer time is when I ask the Holy Spirit to pray through me to the Father, in the Spirit (in tongues).

As mentioned in chapter 4, speaking in an unknown tongue is a gift that we receive when we are baptised in the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit manifests Himself in various ways and Paul talks about these spiritual gifts in chapter 12 of his first letter to the Corinthian Church:

*Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant. (Verse 1)*

*Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit (Verse 4)*

*But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. (Verse 7)*

*For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; (Verse 8)*

*To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by*

*the same Spirit; (Verse 9)*

*To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: (Verse 10)*

Paul speaks specifically about praying in the spirit (in tongues) for other believers (saints) towards the end of his letter to the Church at Ephesus:

### **Ephesians 6:18**

*Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, (in tongues) and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;*

As the David Ingles song says:

***“For the Spirit knows the Father’s will, and thus He prays”.***

We are able to pray the perfect will of God when we allow the Holy Spirit to pray through us.

You will need to find the most suitable way for you to spend time with Him. It won't necessarily be the same way as I do. Out of this relationship will flow guidance and leading for everything in your life. We need both the Word of God in our lives and a Word from God in our lives. These come from spending time in the Word and spending time with the Word.

Here in this next scripture, Paul is praying that the Church may know how much Jesus loves them. He says that this love cannot be understood by knowing about Christ, but by knowing Him in a

personal, intimate way. This will result in them being filled with the fulness of God.

### **Ephesians 3:19**

*And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.*

Peter lets us know what is available to Christians as they gain an intimate knowledge of God:

### **2 Peter 1:2-3**

*Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:*

He tells us that both grace and peace will be multiplied to us through knowing God. We all need more grace and peace in our lives. He then goes on to tell us that as we gain knowledge of Him, we will be able to see that through His divine power He has given to us **all things** that have to do with life and living a godly life.

All things include love, faith, righteousness, healing, deliverance, joy, prosperity, peace, grace, wisdom, holiness, sanctification, redemption, sonship, as well as being an heir of the world, etc.

He has also given us the Holy Spirit to live within us and Jesus as our High Priest and mediator ..... There is nothing we lack; we only need to recognise it and believe it!

Our priority is to seek to know God and His ways and all we need will come our way. Not only the things we need, but God has

much more in store for those who love Him. We can even find them out as we seek to walk in the spirit.

**1 Corinthians 2:9-10**

*But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.*

*But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.*

We are not to pursue after these blessings, we are to seek after knowing Him, and everything we require will be added to us.

**Matthew 6:33**

*But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.*

What a promise!

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## Chapter 7.

### THE WRITTEN WORD OF GOD.

Everything that we have dealt with in this book has been based upon the Bible, the Word of God, but how do we know the Bible is true? How do we know it is not just another book of opinions? Why should we believe the Bible over the book of Mormon or the Koran?

I have found that the answers to many questions and doubts have evaporated as I have read the Bible, and have meditated on what I have been reading.

Before starting to read, I have found it most helpful to ask the Holy Spirit to teach me as I read, and as I meditate on what I have been reading, revelation comes.

Great insight can also be gleaned from the teaching of Spirit filled Bible teachers, especially from those who have a knowledge of the Hebrew and Greek languages.

Although God has provided teachers amongst men, "The Teacher" is the Holy Spirit. We need to be aware that there are also false teachers, so it is important to filter all we read and hear by the Holy Spirit within, as He reveals truth to our hearts.

#### **Ephesians 4:11-12**

*And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:*

The apostle Paul praised the Bereans for their attitude towards the scriptures. They happily received the Word of God but they also searched the scriptures daily, to check that what they were reading in them was true.

### **Acts 17:11**

*These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.*

It is right that we don't just accept what we read. We ought to search out the truth and check that what we read makes sense. If there is any discrepancy, we need to know why.

I once asked God why there was so much in the Bible that didn't make sense or that I couldn't understand. He said that I was looking from a carnal (senses) viewpoint, and that the Bible has been written from God's spiritual viewpoint.

It cannot be understood without the help of the Holy Spirit. It is written primarily to our spirits and not to our brains, although we do need to use our God given brains when we read it.

Only when we accept that the Word of God is the truth and that our thoughts need to align with the Word, will we begin to make sense of what we are reading.

There appears to be many discrepancies in the Bible, so I would suggest that anything that doesn't make sense to you be written down and prayed about.

Remind the Holy Spirit that Jesus said that He would ask the Father to send the Holy Spirit, who would teach us all things and

that this is something that you don't understand and you would like Him to make it clear.

### **John 14:2**

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

The Holy Spirit won't necessarily answer your query immediately, but the answer to your question will arrive before too long, and often when you don't expect it. It will happen as you continue to expect Him to answer you.

The Bible, the written Word of God, is God's handbook for our new life in Jesus and it contains all the truth we will need to live this new life .... But it is much more than a handbook.

### **What does the Bible say about itself and what can it do?**

Let's take a look at one or two verses:

#### **2 Timothy 3:16-17**

*All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*

#### **It is given to benefit all Christians.**

Another translation puts it this way: "All scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God (you and I) may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."

As we expose ourselves to the Word, God through the Word, will be able to teach us, rebuke us, correct and train us and bring us to a point where we will be ready to do whatever He calls us to do.

The Word is given that we may live by it. If, we want to truly live, we need the Word of God.

### **Matthew 4:4**

*But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.*

### **The Word of God is amazingly working in us as we receive it:**

### **1 Thessalonians 2:13**

*For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.*

### **The Word is able to make us holy, heal us and deliver us:**

### **John 17:17**

*Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.*

### **Psalms 107:20**

*He sent his word, and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions.*

**There is a very interesting verse in the letter to the Hebrews.  
It is quite amazing:**

**Hebrews 4:12**

*For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

This verse tells us that as we read and meditate on God's Word, it is able to divide between our spirit and our soul, the godly and the ungodly. That means we will be able to know if it is God speaking to us or whether it is just the thoughts in our mind.

The Word is also able to divide between our joints and our marrow. The joints are where our bones meet, and the marrow is where our new blood cells are produced in our bones. These are places which are unseen as we look at our bodies.

This verse is telling us that the Word can penetrate accurately, the deep, hidden things of men and goes on to tell us that it is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of our hearts.

**We know that the Word heals:**

**Psalms 107:20**

*He sent his word, and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions.*

**And we know from the Bible that our physical life is in our blood:**

**Leviticus 17:11**

*For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon*

*the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.*

If the point where our blood is produced (the marrow) can be reached by the Word and healed, then there is no area of our body that cannot be healed as we meditate on the Word of God.

### **The Word can discern the thoughts and the intents of our hearts.**

The Word can reveal to us when we are not believing or thinking correctly. It will also renew our mind as we spend our time meditating on what we have been reading.

### **The Word changes us:**

I once tried for several months to find a reputable roofer to replace quite a number of ridge tiles on my roof. Everyone I approached to do the job, either didn't want to do it, or let me down by not turning up.

Eventually, I found a roofer who did turn up and made an excellent job of replacing the ridge tiles. When he presented me with the bill, which was considerably less than his original quote, I paid him and I gave him a little extra.

Once home, I questioned myself as to why I had given extra.

The Lord spoke to me about this incident and He said: "My Word is changing you."

### **The following two verses came to my mind:**

#### **Romans 2:4**

*..... not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?*  
(repentance means to change one's mind).

## **Acts 1:8**

*But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*

I realised that because God had been good to me by reducing the bill, I had, without realising it, changed my mind and had become generous to the roofer.

I had also, without knowing it, been a witness to the man by blessing him.

As the song goes: "The Word is working mightily in me!"

Among many other things, the Bible is the story of Jesus, and we should look to find Him throughout every page. He may not be mentioned by name but He can be found in types and shadows throughout the Word.

## **Examples of this can be found in the story of Joseph:**

Joseph was greatly loved by his father Jacob.  
Jesus is greatly loved by His Father God.

Joseph was hated by his brothers who sold him into slavery.  
Jesus was hated by His brothers, the Jews, who rejected Him and demanded His crucifixion.

Joseph was delivered into the hands of the Egyptians as a slave.  
Jesus was delivered into the hands of the Romans by the Jews for crucifixion.

Joseph became the saviour of the Egyptians during a time of great famine. Jesus became the bread of life to the whole world.

God hides many secrets and truths in types and shadows in the Bible, particularly in the Old Testament, and it is our privilege to discover them.

### **Proverbs 25:2**

*It is the glory of God to conceal a thing: but the honour of kings is to search out a matter.*

We know that we are the kings chosen to search out God's secrets because as Christians, we are the kings and priests mentioned in the following scripture:

### **Revelation 5:9-10**

*And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.*

Paul shows us the use of types or pictures from the Old Testament in his teachings and his letters in the New Testament.

He shows us that Sarah is a picture of Grace, while Hagar is a picture of the Law. Abraham, however, is a picture of righteousness by faith.

### **Jesus confirms twice that He is hidden throughout the Old Testament when He talks to His disciples after His resurrection:**

## **Luke 24:13-27**

*And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem about threescore furlongs. And they talked together of all these things which had happened. And it came to pass, that, while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them. But their eyes were holden that they should not know him. And he said unto them, What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad? And the one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answering said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?*

*And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people: And how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him. But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, today is the third day since these things were done. Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre; And when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive. And certain of them which were with us went to the sepulchre, and found it even so as the women had said: but him they saw not.*

*Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning Himself.*

Jesus, in an unrecognisable form, came along side two disciples who were sad and depressed because their friend Jesus, had recently been crucified. He started walking and talking with them and eventually showed them everything about Himself that was written in the Books of Moses (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy), and also in all of the Prophets. That accounts for a very large part of the Old Testament.

They all travelled to the village of Emmaus where He shared communion with them before vanishing out of their sight. The two disciples then realised that they had encountered Jesus.

The two immediately returned the seven miles from Emmaus to Jerusalem, where they met up with several other disciples and confirmed that they had met with Jesus and that He was indeed alive.

Suddenly Jesus appeared among them, showed them His nail pierced hands and feet, and then asked if they had any food. While eating with them He began to reveal Himself in the scriptures again.

This time He revealed Himself not only in the books of Moses and the Prophets but also in the Psalms.

### **Luke 24:44-45**

*And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you,*

*while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures*

That must have been a very interesting Bible study.

### **It is interesting to note Jesus' comment to the two disciples in verse 25:**

#### **Luke 24:35**

*Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken:*

Jesus called them “fools” or more correctly translated “ignorant”.

He was saying that they did not know the Word.

He then went on to tell them that they were slow of heart to believe.

He was telling them that they did not even believe the Word that they did know. What would Jesus say to us today, I wonder?

Let's take this precious gift of God and get to know and understand it, and its author and believe what He is saying to us.

### **What does the Bible say about itself?**

#### **2 Timothy 3:16-17**

*All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for*

*doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*

Paul, writing to Timothy, tells us that the origin of scripture is the inspiration of God and that it is given to benefit us. It is indeed God's handbook to us, that enables us to live life as He intended. Paul tells the Thessalonians that the Word is at work in them, and not only them, but all who are believers:

### **1 Thessalonians 2:13**

*For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.*

When Paul had occasion to correct the Church at Corinth, he used an interesting way to do it. He simply used the Bible to remind them of who they were.

### **In 1 Corinthians, Paul identifies many problems:**

#### **In Chapter 1:**

Paul points out their faults .... divisions and contentions (verses 10-11). Paul ends this chapter by reminding them that they are now in Christ Jesus, whom God has made unto them wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption.

#### **In Chapter 3:**

Paul points out their .... envying, strife and divisions (verse 3). In verse 16, Paul says: "know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?"

## **In Chapter 6:**

Paul challenges them for bringing lawsuits against each other (verse 1). In verses 2-3, Paul reminds them that they shall judge not only the world but also angels. He then goes on to tell them that sorting out their own disputes should, therefore, not be a problem.

The Galatian Church had started in the Spirit but had returned to the works of the Law. In Galatians chapter 3 verse 1, Paul called them “Foolish Galatians” and then throughout the rest of the chapter, corrects them and reminds them of who they now are:

Verse 7: “You are the children of Abraham.”

Verse 25: “You are no longer under the Law.”

Verse 26: “You are the children of God.”

Verse 28: “You are all one in Christ Jesus.”

Verse 29: “You are all Abraham’s seed and therefore heirs.”

Paul goes on in chapters 4 and 5 to remind them that they are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free. He tells them to stand fast in the liberty!

The Word of God reminds us of our true identity in Christ Jesus, and as we believe it, the fruit of right living, which we all desire, will spring forth without us striving for it.

There has been great impact of scripture in the lives of men throughout the centuries. Here are interesting quotes regarding the Bible from these three famous men:

## **George Washington (President of the USA):**

“It is impossible to rightly govern the world without God and the Bible.”

## **Abraham Lincoln (President of the USA):**

“I believe the Bible is the best gift God has ever given to man. All the good from the Saviour of the world is communicated to us through this book.”

## **Napoleon Bonaparte:**

“The Bible is no mere book, but is a living creature, with a power that conquers all that oppose it.”

## **The Bible is God’s special gift to all who would receive it.**

It is not only Bible knowledge that is important to us as Christians, but so is the word “for us”, contained in the Word of God. The voice within the Bible will speak directly to you and address your daily needs and concerns as you look to God for your answers.

God will speak to you personally through His Word, if you will spend time with it and meditate on what you are reading, as I have found to my benefit.

## **What is in the Bible?**

The Bible is a treasure which consists of 66 books (39 Old Testament and 27 New Testament). They were written by over 40 writers who were all inspired by the Holy Spirit, over a period of about 4,000 years.

## **The Old Testament is broadly the story of a nation and comprises of:**

- 5 Books of Moses (The Law ... The Torah).
- 12 History books.
- 5 Poetry books.
- 17 Prophetic books.

The Old Testament covers a 4,000 year period, from God's creation to the exile of the Jews in Babylon. It includes the fall of man, Noah's flood, the life of Abraham and the Nation of Israel and its many dramatic events. These events include the battle between a giant and a young boy, the parting of a sea and the tumbling down of the huge walls of a city at the sound of trumpets and a shout.

## **The New Testament is the story of God's Beloved Son and of His followers:**

- 4 Books called the Gospels (Jesus's life on the earth).
- 1 Book on the acts of the early believers.
- 21 Books of letters to the Church.
- 1 Book ... The prophetic Revelation of Jesus Christ.

The New Testament covers a 3,000 year period, from the birth of Jesus to the revealing of a New Heaven and a New Earth. In it, Jesus and His followers are revealed, a terrible time of judgement, and the 1,000 year reign, of Jesus as the King of kings and the Lord of lords on the earth. This culminates with the creation of a New Heaven and a New Earth and with the devil and his angels being cast into Hell.

We have already stated that the Bible is our maker's handbook on how we should live, but as we are beginning to see it is much, much, more than that alone.

The Bible, from start to finish, explains God's plan for His creation. It explains how His creation fell and His plan of redemption. It describes the spiritual war that is taking place and our part in that warfare.

It is God's love story between Him and His creation and pictures His beloved Son in every book. It covers world history, and is a mystery, a drama and a romance. It depicts good but also depicts evil.

This is just a glimpse of what you can expect when you open this treasure.

### **God's Word to you:**

You will also find that this is the main way that God uses to speak to His people.

I remember God speaking to me through His Word last year: It had been reported in the news that the actress, Barbara Windsor, had been diagnosed with dementia.

I asked God how I could avoid this kind of attack on my mind, and I left the question with Him. The next day, whilst listening to a Bible study, the Bible teacher suggested that maybe God had placed thirty-one chapters in the book of Proverbs, in order that we might read one chapter a day, throughout the month.

It was the tenth of May, so I read through chapter ten of the book of Proverbs. To my surprise this is what I found:

## **Proverbs 10:7**

*The memory of the just (righteous) is blessed: but the name of the wicked shall rot.*

I realised that God had just spoken to me and so I believed His Word and began to confess it: “Because I am the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus, my memory is blessed. I, therefore, shall not be cursed with dementia or any other kind of memory or brain disease. I declare this in the Mighty Name of Jesus and in the Power of the Holy Spirit.”

What we believe, we need to confess, therefore:  
What we believe, we need to speak:

## **2 Corinthians 4:14**

*We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak;*

This “believing and speaking” is one of the ways we can walk in the healing that Jesus has provided for those who will believe.

Bible knowledge is fine but there is always a “word” for each of us in the Bible when we need it.

God uses His Word to speak to each one of us personally.

We should read the Word in small portions and meditate on what we have read. The word “meditate” means to “mutter”, and so we are to speak quietly to ourselves and consider what we are saying until we begin to believe it and receive revelation.

**Jesus used the Word of God to resist the devil.**  
**We can do the same as His beloved children.**

**Matthew 3:16-17**

*And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*

After Jesus was baptised in water by John the Baptist, He was baptised with the Holy Spirit. Then God the Father spoke aloud about Jesus, calling Him "My beloved Son."

**Then Jesus was led into the wilderness by the Holy Spirit:**

**Matthew 4:1-11**

*Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.*

*And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred.*

*And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple,*

*And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.*

*Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.*

*Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.*

*Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him.*

Here in the wilderness, the devil began to attack Jesus' identity by saying: "if you are the Son of God", and then asking Him to prove it.

The devil questioned Jesus' Sonship twice. On both occasions he left out the word "beloved" .... the word that The Father had called Jesus.

God the Father had just announced that Jesus was His beloved Son, and Jesus believed it.

Jesus then used the Word of God to resist the devil during the three times the devil tempted Him.

## **We can do the same.**

When the devil attacks our thoughts with doubts, we need to find a scripture that affirms who we are and remind the devil and rebuke him.

We shall now take an overview of the Bible in order to help us understand God's overall plan for mankind and so understand what the scriptures are saying to us.

### **2 Timothy 2:15**

*Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*

Paul when writing to Timothy, tells him to study the Word. He then tells him to "rightly divide the Word of Truth." What does that mean?

It means that the Word of God needs to be correctly discerned. This means that first of all we need to pray and ask the Holy Spirit for wisdom so that we may be able to grasp the full picture what God is saying to us in His Word .... His overall plan.

We also need to ask for knowledge to be able to understand the specific details of what God is saying to us, and to be able to apply what God reveals to us.

When we read the Bible, we need to understand the context. We can see from the following scripture that God deals with three categories of people: The Jews, The Gentiles and The Church.

## **1 Corinthians 10:32**

*Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God:*

We should recognise who is being spoken to, whether it be the Jews or whether it be to the Church, or both when we are reading the scriptures.

For example, when God gave the Ten Commandments to Moses in Exodus chapter 20, He was giving it specifically to Israel to show them their need for a Saviour and He was not speaking specifically to the Gentiles at that point.

When God told Adam in Genesis chapter 1 that the fruit and vegetables were for food, it did not mean that today we were all meant to be vegetarians. At a later point, after the flood in Genesis chapter 9, God said that meat was now allowed for food.

We know that the first eleven chapters of the Bible are dealing with the Gentiles because at that point in time, neither the Jewish nation (Israel) nor the Church existed.

From Genesis chapter eleven through to Acts chapter seven, God is predominately dealing with the Jews who He raised up as a testimony to the world. From Acts chapter seven the Church comes into focus.

It is interesting to note that the four gospels were written to different groups, although they are still relevant to all Christians:

Matthew was written for the Jews.

Mark was written for the Romans.

Luke was written for the Greeks.

John was written for the World.

God's plan was to deal with the Jews first and then the Gentiles. Jesus was sent to the Jews and that fact needs to be borne in mind as you read about His ministry on the earth:

**Matthew 10:5-6**

*These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.*

**Matthew 15:24**

*But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.*

Jesus was sent to the Jews and that was His focus until they rejected Him. God then turned to the Gentiles in Acts chapter 8. However, God is not yet finished with the Jews, as Paul reminds us:

**Romans 11:11**

*I say then, Have they (the Jews) stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy.*

**Romans 11:25-26**

*For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of*

*Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:*

God has great plans for the Jews when the times of the Gentiles are over.

We can see, as we read, that much of what Jesus said in the gospels was directed to the Jews. At that point in time He was ministering under the Law, which was in operation until His death and resurrection.

Part of what we call the Lord's Prayer says: "forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." That was true before Jesus died. Now that we are under a new covenant, in a new dispensation, we forgive others because we have been forgiven by God; and not to be forgiven.

### **Ephesians 4:32**

*And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.*

### **New Testament writers**

It helps to understand the group that is being addressed in the New Testament letters. We are told that Paul was an apostle to the Gentiles and that Peter, James and John were apostles to the Jewish Christians:

### **Galatians 2:7-9**

*But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision (Gentiles) was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision (Jews) was unto Peter; (For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles:)*

*And when James, Cephas (Peter), and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen (Gentiles), and they unto the circumcision (Jews).*

**Paul wrote his letters to the Churches which were mainly comprised of Gentiles:**

Romans – 1 Corinthians – 2 Corinthians - Galatians - Ephesians  
- Philippians - Colossians – 1 Thessalonians – 2 Thessalonians

**Paul also wrote four pastoral letters to individual Christians:**

1 Timothy – 2 Timothy - Titus – Philemon  
These letters from Paul were written with Gentiles in mind as Paul's ministry was to the Gentiles.

**The other letters in the New Testament were written by disciples who were mainly addressing Christians who had a Jewish background:**

Hebrews - James – 1 Peter – 2 Peter – 1 John – 2 John – 3 John  
- Jude - Revelation

I am not saying that the content of these letters, are specifically written to one group or another, just that it has helped me to know that the letters are written with a particular group in mind.

All the books in the Bible are written to all Christians whether from a Jewish or Gentile background, but it does help to

understand the text, if we know to whom the writers are aiming their ministry.

It can also be helpful to understand what the writer is trying to achieve in his letter. Paul's letters, for example, are mainly written to teach, to correct wrong doctrine or to correct wrong conduct.

**You may find the following list helpful:**

<u>Romans</u> .....	Doctrine (Teaching)
<u>1 Corinthians – 2 Corinthians</u> .....	Reproof (Wrong Conduct)
<u>Galatians</u> .....	Correction (Wrong Doctrine)
<u>Ephesians</u> .....	Doctrine (Teaching)
<u>Philippians</u> .....	Reproof (Wrong Conduct)
<u>Colossians</u> .....	Correction (Wrong Doctrine)
<u>1 Thessalonians / 2 Thessalonians</u> ..	Doctrine (Teaching)

**It is important to understand context when we read the Bible.**

It is not wise to take a single verse alone and quote that verse without reading the verses before and the verses after it. Many people have taken a verse out of context and built a doctrine around that verse.

People have quoted a verse to me during a discussion, trying to prove a point, only to find that the point is lost when I have asked them to look at the surrounding verses.

Before moving on to chapter 8, let's look at a final area where we can find ourselves a little confused by what we are reading.

**Dispensations.**

Although God never changes, He see things from a different perspective at different times or ages. These times are called dispensations. These are times or ages when God deals with His

creation in different ways.

**For example:**

We would treat a baby differently from the way we would a child and we would treat a child differently from a teenager.

So, it is with God, some things are done differently in different ages.

This same principle applies in national government. A leader would not run a country the same way during war as he would in peacetime.

The Greek word for dispensations is “Oikonemia”, which means: “The way you run your house.” In the Bible you could say that it’s the way God runs the earth.

Let’s see where the word dispensation is used in the Bible.

**Ephesians 3:2**

*If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward:*

Paul talks of a dispensation that he calls “the grace of God.”

**Colossians 1:25**

*Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God;*

From the surrounding verses we can see that Paul is referring to the time period when God is dealing with the Church.

**Hebrews 1:1-2**

*God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past*

*unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;*

Paul states that in previous times God spoke to the leaders by the prophets but now He speaks by His Son.

We find that God has put markers in history to mark the ages or dispensations. When we read the Bible, we need to know what part of history the verse speaks about. We need a framework of Bible history.

The early Church reasoned that history could be sectioned into 7,000 years based on the following verse:

## **2 Peter 3:8**

*But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.*

Creation was complete in six days and God rested on the seventh day.

## **With this in mind, this seems an easy way to view history:**

From Creation to Abraham ..... Approx 2000 years.

From Abraham to Jesus ..... Approx 2000 years

From Jesus to His Return ..... Approx 2000 years

Jesus' Millennial Reign ..... Approx 1000 years.

Many theologians make many more divisions than this, usually seven. I want to keep to four for the sake of simplicity.

Some people would say there is just the Old Testament and the New Testament and that is sufficient.

Still others say we shouldn't divide the Bible at all.

However, as I have stated, God does deal with His creation differently during different dispensations.

**Some things do not differ or change from one age to another:**

God's character never changes.

Since the fall, man's condition has remained the same. (Always in need of a Saviour). The way of salvation is constant: through faith in Jesus Christ. There is a Cosmic spiritual war taking place throughout all the ages. Throughout all the ages we will all have to give an account one day. In every age there is always a final destiny .... Heaven or Hell.

Now let's move on and see how God manages His house (His Creation) throughout the different ages.

**Here are the four basic Dispensations or Ages we are about to look at:**

1. **CREATION TO ABRAHAM.** (Approx 2,000 Years)

This is from the Creation until the call of Abraham by God.

It is the time before the nation of Israel existed.

2. **ABRAHAM TO JESUS.** (Approx 2,000 Years)

This is from the call of Abraham to the Coming of Jesus.

It is the time that God's dealings were mainly with Israel.

3. **THE CHURCH.** (Approx 2,000 Years)

This is from the Resurrection of Jesus until His Return to Earth.

It is the time when the Jews and the Gentiles are brought together as one in Christ Jesus.

4. **CHRIST'S REIGN ON EARTH.** (Approx 1,000 Years)

This is from Jesus' Return to Earth until the Creation of a New Heaven and a New Earth.

It is the time when Jesus rules on earth with His Church from Jerusalem.

## **Creation to Abraham**

During this age there was only one race with one language and one culture. God's revelation to man came verbally and believers in every family would preach to the unbelievers around them. The heads or leaders (usually by age) of the families or clans were the priests.

Salvation was by faith in Jesus Christ as had been revealed when God spoke to the serpent, Adam and Eve.

Speaking to the serpent, God said:

### **Genesis 3:15**

*And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*

Believing in the seed (Jesus) of the woman (Eve) who was to

come later, was how people in this age were saved.

The people in this age could worship God anywhere they wanted by building an altar and worshipping Him.

### **Abraham to Jesus**

During this second age the people on the earth are divided into nations with many languages and cultures. God achieved this at the Tower of Babel. God now began to give revelation through the written word through Moses. During this period, God used Israel to be His missionary base to preach the gospel to the whole world.

The world was to look at Israel and see how God treats those who will follow after His ways. In this age, God had planned for Israel to be a whole nation of priests if they would obey Him.

### **Exodus 19:5-6**

*Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.;*

They failed and so God raised up the tribe of Levi as priests. Salvation was still through faith in Jesus and in this period of time Jesus was being revealed in the tabernacle, the sacrifices and the priests. During this period God gave the Law to show that man was a sinner and was not able to save himself. It pointed man to Jesus, the only Saviour.

John the Baptist preached and baptised and pointed the people to the one who was to come .... Jesus.

## **Acts 19:4**

*Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.*

During this dispensation, the worship of God took place in the tabernacle or the Temple.

## **The Church**

This is the age in which we now live, and it will end when Jesus returns.

The Church age was not known about in the Old Testament and began when Jesus was resurrected from the dead. Paul calls the Church a “Mystery” and refers to it as “the age of grace”, although grace has been available to all men throughout all the ages.

Jesus told Peter that He (Jesus) would build His Church.

## **Matthew 16:18**

*And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*

The mystery is that both Jew and Gentile can now become heirs together in Christ Jesus.

## **Ephesians 3:1-10**

*For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me*

to you-ward: How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; That the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel; Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power, unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God,

In this age the people are still separated into nations, languages and cultures; but God uses the Church as His missionary base. Salvation is still by faith in the risen Jesus and all members of the Church are now priests.

### **1Peter 2:9**

*But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:*

As far as worship is concerned .... We can worship anywhere that we are, because our bodies are now our temples.

Paul confirms this in his letter to the Corinthian Church:

**1Corinthians 6:19**

*What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?*

**Christ's Reign on Earth**

This is the age which commences with Jesus returning to earth and setting up His Kingdom and reigning from Jerusalem.

During this age, nations will still exist with many languages and cultures and the written Word of God will still be around. The Word (Jesus) will also be speaking from Jerusalem.

The Church will reign with Christ.

**1Corinthians 6:2-3**

*Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?*

Israel will be restored as the chief among the nations and the Levitical priests will minister again in the new temple.

**Malachi 3:2-3**

*But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap: And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness.*

### **Ezekiel 40:46**

*And the chamber whose prospect is toward the north is for the priests, the keepers of the charge of the altar: these are the sons of Zadok among the sons of Levi, which come near to the LORD to minister unto him.*

Salvation during this age, as usual, is through faith in Jesus Christ who is now fully revealed.

All the nations who came up against Jerusalem during the tribulation period will be required to worship Jesus, and attend the feast of tabernacles annually, with the promise of punishment if they don't attend.

### **Zechariah 14:16**

*And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles.*

This has just been a brief outline of God's Dispensations or Ages.

As you begin understand how God manages His creation in different ways, at different times; you will learn to divide the Word correctly. The question to ask is: "What age is this passage referring to?"

It seems fitting to end this chapter by reminding ourselves that Jesus is the Word of God. This book, the Bible, is really all about Jesus and about Him being revealed to us.

He is hidden throughout the whole book and it is our privilege to find Him there.

**John 1:1-5**

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

*The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made.*

*In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.*

.....

# Chapter 8

## RIGHTEOUSNESS.

The choice of life or death confronts us again, as we take a look at righteousness.

### **Proverbs 11:19**

*As righteousness tendeth to life: so he that pursueth evil pursueth it to his own death.*

The Book of Proverbs clearly tells us that if we pursue after righteousness then we are heading towards life. Of course, the opposite is true: if we pursue after evil (sin) we are heading in the direction of death.

The writer, in his letter to the Hebrews, makes an interesting comment about righteousness:

### **Hebrews 5:12-13**

*For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.*

If a Christian is unskilled in the word of righteousness, Paul refers to him as a babe.

In other words, Paul is saying that you cannot grow into Christian maturity, until you understand righteousness. It is so important that we understand what righteousness is all about in order to be

able to grow as a Christian and to move on into the maturity of sons and daughters of God.

**The dictionary tells us that righteousness is:**

**Acting in accord with divine or moral law, free from guilt or sin.**

In Paul's letter to the Romans, he talks about righteousness as being the none imputation of sins.

**Righteousness is a position of being able to stand before God with no sin accounted against us.**

One renowned Bible scholar describes righteousness as:

**“The ability to stand before the Father with no sense of inferiority and to stand in the presence of Satan as his master”.**

It is obvious that not one person (other than Jesus) has been able to live in total accordance with divine or moral law and be free from guilt or sin. Not one of us has even managed to keep the ten commandments, let alone all the other laws that God has placed in His Word. So where does that leave us?

**There are two types of righteousness we need to consider:**

The first one is self-righteousness .... Trying by our own efforts to be good enough to stand before God, sin-free.

We have seen that it is impossible for any person to keep all of God's commandments, so trying to achieve our own self-righteousness to meet God's standards is a complete waste of time.

It is amazing how many people think that their good deeds will somehow qualify them to be able to stand before God and be accepted by Him. They just haven't read and understood the Bible.

It is sin that separates us from God, and no amount of good deeds will take away our sin.

Since Adam sinned in the Garden of Eden, 6000 years ago, every person has been born into this world in a state of sin (except Jesus), and only by becoming righteous can we get into a right relationship with God.

Without righteousness we are living in death but with righteousness we can enjoy Eternal life. So, how do we become righteous?

What do we do to become righteous?

The truth is that it is not about what we do, but It is all about our state of being.

**Righteousness is a state of right being ..... not about what we do.**

So, what is the answer?

How do we get into a state that is acceptable to God?

The answer is to be found in the Bible.

This is the second type of righteousness that we shall now look at.

## **What does the Bible say?**

### **Romans 4:2-8**

*For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth (makes righteous) the ungodly, his faith (believing) is counted for righteousness. Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying 'Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.'*

In this passage of Scripture, we are told that Abraham believed God and God said that because of his faith (trusting God), he was counted as being righteous.

It also says that God makes righteous those who are ungodly, if they believe on Him, not those who work to become righteous.

In other words; if we put our trust in the Lord God, all our sins will be forgiven and our sins will not be imputed to us. God will count us righteous. This righteousness is given, by God, as a gift to all who put their trust in the Lord Jesus Christ.

A person is either righteous or unrighteous, there is no in between with God. Eventually every person will stand before God as a righteous believer or stand before God as an unrighteous sinner. There will be no in between.

## **Sin is a state of wrong being.**

We were all born into the state of sin. We could not avoid it. That is just the way we were born.

God's will for us is that we all accept His gift of righteousness and His gift of Eternal life. God offers this to all but, we have to choose it.

As I have said before .... The choice is ours.

The Bible tells us how we can become righteous in Paul's second letter to the Corinthians:

### **2 Corinthians 5:21**

*For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.*

We become righteous by trusting in the work of Jesus at the cross when He became sin for us, in order that we could become righteous.

A "Born Again" believer cannot lose their state of righteousness, just as a non-believer cannot lose their state of sin. A new state of being is required.

We are transferred from the state of sin to the state of righteousness when we are born again, never to lose it.

A "Born Again" believer (a Christian) is now secure in their righteous state.... This security brings joy and peace.

All sin was put on Jesus at the cross. Those who put their trust in Jesus and His finished work at the cross are given His righteousness as a gift. They are now in an everlasting state of righteousness.

The majority of the world, like the Jewish people in the Old Testament, are trying to be “right” with God by “doing good”.

This trying has never been, and never will be successful. God has provided the only way; through His Son, Jesus.

### **Romans 9: 30-33**

*What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith. But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone; As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.*

Paul tells us that the Gentiles (the non-Jews) have attained to righteousness by faith (by believing). The Jews, however, have not attained to righteousness by pursuing the Law of Moses (By keeping the Ten Commandments plus all the other laws).

Jesus was their stumbling stone because they did not believe on Him, but trusted in their own good works.

Faith however (Believing God and trusting Jesus) causes God to see you as the Righteousness of God in Christ Jesus.

Faith .... Right believing in God and His Word, is the root from which will grow the fruit of right living.

In other words, if we believe God’s Word and receive His righteousness then, as we have seen in the previous chapter, the

Word will begin to change us from the inside out and we will begin to live right.

Righteousness is revealed to us in the Gospel of Jesus Christ (The good news of Jesus Christ).

We are told this in Paul's letter to the Romans:

### **Romans 1:16-17**

*For I am not ashamed of the gospel (good news) of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.*

*For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, the just shall live by faith.*

“The just shall live by faith” can be translated ... “the righteous shall live by believing.”

What is this gospel (good news) of Christ that reveals righteousness?

It is the gospel of grace.

### **What is grace?**

Grace is unearned, undeserved favour. It is God freely giving you all of His blessings without you earning or deserving them.

Jamieson, Fausset & Brown Bible Commentary describes grace as being:

“The chosen New Testament word for the whole fullness of the New Covenant; all that dwells in Christ for men.”

God's grace enables all people to be saved from their state of sin and its consequences by believing God; not by their good works.

**Galatians 1:6**

*I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel.*

**Acts 20:24**

*But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.*

The Gospel of the grace of Christ is the good news that God's grace is freely available to all who would receive it.

**We find that righteousness and grace and much, much more, are available to us in Jesus, when we make Him our Lord?**

**John 1:17**

*For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.*

We find this grace in Jesus Christ.

How do we receive this righteousness?

We receive it when we make Jesus our Lord and Saviour.

## **We receive it by faith.**

### **Romans 5:17**

*For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.)*

## **Once we receive Jesus as our Lord, we have His grace and we have His righteousness available to enable us to reign in life!**

We now need to become established in righteousness, and not just understand about it as head knowledge. We need to believe that we are the righteous children of God.

We now continue to read and meditate in the Word of God, and we understand that we are now the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus.

We have ceased trying to keep our God given righteousness by “doing”, and are learning to be led by the Holy Spirit as we believe God’s Word. Now our correct believing in God and His Word, will result in us living correctly, as righteous children of God.

### **To recap:**

Many Christians, after receiving the gift of righteousness at salvation, try to maintain it by their “good works”.

They have returned from their position of grace, back to the law .... trying to maintain their righteousness by doing their good works.

Paul refers to this as “Falling from grace”.

### **Galatians 5:4**

*Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified (made righteous) by the law; ye are fallen from grace.*

We become established in righteousness by believing correctly, not by acting correctly.

Being righteous is all about believing what God has done, not about us doing anything. Under the Law, we do; but under Grace, it is done .... Therefore, we believe.

We cannot lose the gift of righteousness because it is not dependent upon us keeping it, as many believe. Sin was dealt with once and for all, by Jesus on the cross .... Sin is not, and will not be an issue any more.

### **Paul puts it this way to the Galatians:**

#### **Galatians 3:3**

*Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?*

#### **Galatians 3:6-8**

*Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.*

*And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, in*

*thee shall all nations be blessed. So then, they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.*

**We now live by believing (faith), not by doing good works:**

**Romans 1:17**

*The just (righteous) shall live by faith (believing).*

It is so important that a Christian becomes established in righteousness. We need to be grounded in and understand the truth about the teaching of righteousness, if we want to see changes in our lives.

**We should find our prayers being effective:**

**James 5:16**

*..... The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.*

**Psalm 34:17**

*The righteous cry, and the LORD heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles.*

**We should find ourselves speaking wisdom and thinking right:**

**Psalm 37:30**

*The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom, and his tongue talketh of judgment.*

## **Proverbs 10:11**

*The mouth of a righteous man is a well of life: but violence covereth the mouth of the wicked.*

## **Proverbs 12:5**

*The thoughts of the righteous are right: but the counsels of the wicked are deceit.*

There are many more scriptures which talk about righteousness, but I shall leave them for you, the reader, to explore for yourself.

We are now becoming established in the truth that we are now the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus.

It is now time to move on and grasp the fact that we are now meant to be living under Grace, rather than under the Law and definitely not in a mixture of both!

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# Chapter 9

## LAW AND GRACE

Now that we have received Eternal Life, we are to reign in this life, and not allow death to continue to reign over us.

The way we are to do this is through understanding His Gift of righteousness and receiving in abundance, the grace of God

### **Romans 5:17**

*For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.*

In this chapter we are going to take a look at the law, which was given by Moses; also, grace and truth which came by Jesus Christ.

It is by living in the grace and righteousness which comes through Jesus Christ, that we will reign in life, and not by keeping the law.

### **John 1:17**

*For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.*

To understand this verse, we need to understand what the law was all about, but more importantly we need to understand grace and truth.

The words "grace and truth" are translated from the Hebrew word "Hesed" and is the word that is often used in the Psalms. It can be translated as mercy, love, kindness, loving kindness.

In this verse the word translated “grace and truth” is in a singular form, and would be better translated as “truthful grace” or “grace which is the truth”. Grace and truth cannot be separated. You could say that grace is the truth that sets you free.

Before seeing what grace is all about, we shall take a look at the law that was given by God to Moses. God’s laws have always existed just as grace existed before Jesus died.

Adam was told not to eat from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil in the Garden of Eden .... That was a law.

We are, however, looking specifically at the law God gave to Moses for the Israelites.

Trying to obey the law to obtain righteousness keeps many Christians from experiencing the life Jesus has supplied for us to walk in today.

Obtaining righteousness came by obeying the law, given by Moses, during the time from the giving of the law at Mount Sinai to the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

In the present dispensation or age, which covers the period from the resurrection of Jesus Christ and the giving of the Holy Spirit until Jesus returns for His Church, righteousness comes by grace, through faith.

### **The Law given by Moses**

The Law, a conditional covenant was made between God and Israel and lasted approximately 1,500 years. It was established shortly after the Israelites left captivity in Egypt, and was replaced with a new covenant after the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The blessings stated in this covenant were conditional upon the Israelites obeying the Ten Commandments. Failure to do so would result in curses. The law is stated in the book of Exodus:

### **Exodus 20:1-17**

*And God spake all these words, saying, I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.*

- 1. Thou shalt have no other gods before me.*
- 2. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.*
- 3. Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.*
- 4. Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy*

*gates: For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.*

5. *Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.*
6. *Thou shalt not kill.*
7. *Thou shalt not commit adultery.*
8. *Thou shalt not steal.*
9. *Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.*
10. *Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.*

God's law was written on both sides of two tablets of stone.

### **Exodus 32:15**

*And Moses turned, and went down from the mount, and the two tables of the testimony were in his hand: the tables were written on both their sides; on the one side and on the other were they written.*

God gave Israel the law (10 Commandments) as a temporary supervisor to last until the New Covenant of grace would be established, where living by faith (believing) would be necessary.

It was also given to teach God's righteous standards and to magnify sin in order for the Israelites to see their need for a Saviour.

The law was in operation until Jesus Christ would appear on the earth and pay the price for all sin.

### **Galatians 3:24-25**

*Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.*

The law that was given to the Israelites was not just the Ten Commandments, but there were also over 600 other rules and observances which they were required to fulfil.

Many of these rules and observances are clearly pointing to Jesus, and it benefits us today to study and meditate on them in order to see a greater revelation of Jesus. They are not for us to “do” to be right with God.

We can use the law to see Jesus, as we agree with what is believed to be the words of David in the following Psalms:

### **Psalm 1:1-2**

*Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.*

### **Psalm 119:97-98**

*O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day. Thou through thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies: for they are ever with me.*

There was nothing wrong with the law. It was given, not only for the Israelites to live by, but to reveal to them their sin. It was given to show what sin was and to show them that they could not obey God's commandments by their own efforts.

It was designed to bring them to the end of themselves, so that they might realise, their need for a Saviour. It was given to reveal Jesus.

God knew that they would not be able to keep the Commandments, not even the first one.

Once God had given Moses the law on Mount Sinai, He gave the Israelites a way out of their dilemma. He immediately instructed Moses to build an altar on which to sacrifice, in order that the sins of the people could be covered and so that the blessings could continue until their Saviour, Jesus was revealed.

### **Exodus 20:24**

*An altar of earth thou shalt make unto me, and shalt sacrifice thereon thy burnt offerings, and thy peace offerings, thy sheep, and thine oxen: in all places where I record my name I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee.*

Whilst they obeyed God and brought their sacrifices they were blessed.

When they turned to other gods and ceased to sacrifice, they were cursed. As the Israelites sacrificed animals on the altar, to cover their sins, God was pointing them to the ultimate sacrifice, that He would send to them .... Jesus.

This system of blood sacrifices was to continue for approximately 1,500 years until the Lamb of God (Jesus) would be sacrificed on the cross at Calvary. His blood would finally pay the price for man's sin.

During Jesus' ministry on the earth, He preached His famous "Sermon on the Mount". At one point during this sermon, He told the Jewish people that He had not come to destroy the law but to fulfil it, which is exactly what He did. He was the only man to live and never break the law in any part.

### **Matthew 5:17-18**

*Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.*

For those who thought that they might be able to keep the law, Jesus made it clear to them that they were unable. One example that He gave to them was that if a man looked lustfully at a woman, then he had committed adultery with her in his heart.

Jesus, being the only one ever to fulfil the law, was the only spotless and blemish free sacrifice that could be offered for man's sin. This sacrifice took place at Calvary 2,000 years ago.

Paul talks in the book of Romans about the law, and how those in Jesus Christ are now free from that Old Covenant. He also tells us in his letter to the Colossians that the law was nailed to the cross:

### **Romans 7:6**

*But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we*

were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.

### **Colossians 2:13-15**

*And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances (The Law) that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.*

We now find that because Jesus has dealt with sin, the schoolmaster (the law) is no longer required and that God has entered into a New Covenant.

This New Covenant is an unconditional covenant between God and Jesus and we can participate in it when we become one with Jesus.

When the law was given by Moses from Mount Sinai, about 3,000 people died. Moses returned down from the mountain after receiving the Ten Commandments from God, and found the people worshipping idols. When he gave “the Word of the Lord”, about 3,000 men were killed.

### **Exodus 32:26-28**

*Then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, Who is on the LORD'S side? let him come unto me. And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him. And he said unto them, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man*

*his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbour. And the children of Levi did according to the word of Moses: and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men.*

**The Encyclopaedia Britannica describes Pentecost as follows:**

The Jewish feast of Pentecost (Shavuot) was primarily a thanksgiving for the firstfruits of the wheat harvest, but it was later associated with a remembrance of the Law given by God to Moses on Mount Sinai.

However, when the Holy Spirit was given at a later Pentecost, 3,000 souls were saved:

**Acts 2:1-4**

*And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they (the disciples) were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.*

The disciples of Jesus were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and went out into the street where Peter preached about Jesus. He told the people to change their mind about Jesus, and to receive Him as their Lord and Saviour and so have their sins forgiven. They would then receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The result was as follows:

## **Acts 2:41**

*Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.*

The giving of the Law (the Old Covenant) brought death, whilst the giving of the Holy Spirit (the New Covenant) brought life.

The Old Covenant has passed away ... The New Covenant has come.

We need to understand the distinction the Bible clearly makes between law and grace. A lack of understanding of this causes many still to walk in works, rather than accepting their righteousness by grace, through faith.

Before we go on to look at the New Covenant of grace, it is important for us to realise that the Old Covenant has been fulfilled by Jesus, and we are no longer required to fulfil the law in order to receive God's blessings.

In the New Covenant, we now walk in righteousness as we walk in Christ Jesus, by the Spirit, through faith.

In the Bible we learn of different covenants God has made with mankind. Some are conditional and others are unconditional. The one we are considering is God's conditional promise to Israel that He made through Moses, which is often referred to as the Mosaic Covenant.

Before we look at the New Covenant of Grace, an outline of the major changes between the two will be useful.

**Here are some of the differences between the two covenants:**

The law was between God and Israel.  
Grace was between God and Jesus.

The law brought death .... 3000 died.  
Grace brings life ..... 3000 received life.

The law shows man's lack of faithfulness towards God.  
Grace shows Jesus' faithfulness towards God.

The law exposes the sin nature that is latent in every man.  
Grace reflects the perfection of Jesus and makes men holy.

The law tells us to "do" in order to live.  
Grace tells us to "believe" in order to live.

Breaking the law brings curses upon men.  
Grace redeems man from the curse.

The law condemns man and makes us sin conscious.  
Grace forgives and justifies (makes righteous) man and makes us Christ conscious.

The law and its sacrifices cover sin for a year.  
Grace takes away sin for ever.

The law required priests to become mediators between God and man.  
Grace gives all believers access to God (priests are now unnecessary). All believers become priests and Jesus becomes our High Priest

The Covenant of Grace does not commence at the beginning of the New Testament where we find the story of the birth of Jesus. The law was in operation until the death and resurrection of Jesus.

The books of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John were written about Jesus during the time when He was operating under, and fulfilling the Law.

Old Covenant ..... The benefactor was God.  
The beneficiaries were Israel.

The benefits were blessings but breaking the law brought curses.

New Covenant ..... The benefactor is God.  
The beneficiary is Jesus Christ and those in Him.

The benefits are blessings only.

After the death of Jesus Christ, the dispensation or age of law changed to the dispensation or age of grace when God established this New Covenant.

The writer to the Hebrews talks about how the transition from the Old Covenant to the New Covenant took place and about how God did it.

He tells us that the new one is a more excellent covenant.

### **Hebrews 8:6-13**

*But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established*

upon better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.

When Jesus went to the Mountain where He was transfigured, He took with Him Peter, James and John.

### **Matthew 17:1-5**

And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.

*And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him.*

*Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.*

*While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.*

Here we find Moses (Law), Elijah (Prophet) and Jesus (Grace) together with Peter, James and John.

God speaks out of the cloud and says “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear **Him**”.

We see that God was indicating that a change had now come in Christ.

God was pointing to the New Covenant of Grace.

It is also interesting to note the meaning of the names of the three disciples who were there:

Peter ..... Rock or Stone (Represents the law, written on stone)

James ..... Supplants or replaces

John ..... Grace

In this event we see God saying that law was being replaced by grace, with Peter, James and John as witnesses.

## **Grace which came by Jesus**

We are now ready to move on and take a look at the New Covenant of Grace, which is an unconditional covenant. It is not conditional upon us doing anything except to believe God, whilst God takes care of the rest.

In the Old Testament, the prophet Jeremiah tells us what the New Covenant will be:

### **Jeremiah 31:33-34**

*But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.*

When we received Jesus Christ as our Lord and Saviour, we died with Him and were buried with Him and were raised with Him.

In water baptism we witness to our consecration to walk in the reality that has already taken place within.

Now we are in Christ, we are to walk in this New Covenant of Grace by faith and no longer try to obey the law by works.

In the New Testament the writer to the Hebrews tells us what this new covenant is:

## **Hebrews 10:16-18**

*This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin.*

## **What will God do in this New Covenant and what is our part?**

- a) He will put His Law in our hearts and write His Law on our minds.
- b) He will be our God and we shall be His people, who know Him.
- c) He will forgive our iniquities and no longer remember our sins.

Our part is to walk by faith in what God has now done.

## **John 6:28-29**

*Then said they unto him, what shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, this is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.*

We now have a New Covenant of Grace.

Grace can be summed up in the person of Jesus.

Grace is a person ..... Grace is Jesus.

**Grace (Jesus) is God's unearned, unmerited and undeserved favour towards mankind.**

This favour brings the promise of life and life in abundance. In Christ we are made righteous, we have eternal life, we are redeemed, we are made holy, by His stripes we were healed and He is our joy.

This is our inheritance in Christ, but these things can elude us if we do not know that they are already ours.

God gives us all these blessings freely without demanding anything from us other than being one with Jesus.

Because it is by grace, there is nothing we can do to obtain these blessings and any attempt to do so will result in us falling from grace and returning to the law.

If we think that we deserve to be blessed or think that we should get something from God because of what we have done or not done; then we have fallen from grace.

Trying to keep the law will result in failure.

**Galatians 5:4**

*Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.*

Trying to keep the Ten Commandments and all our good works to impress God; all our serving in church, all our giving, etc, will not result in God's favour falling upon us. We fall from grace when

we return to the law.

## **Grace (Jesus) is the Gospel (Good News)**

### **Romans 1:16-17**

*For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith (believing).*

The good news is; that those who believe in Jesus Christ and His finished work, will be brought into a right relationship with God and saved from the wrath that is to come. This is freely given (unmerited, unearned) to all that believe .... by grace.

This Gospel of Jesus Christ is the Gospel of Grace.

### **Acts 20:24**

*But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.*

### **Galatians 1:6-10**

*I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.*

*But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.*

The good news is that Jesus has paid the price to set us free from our sin nature and to restore our relationship with God and He demands nothing more than we put our trust in Jesus and His finished work.

It is called the Covenant of Grace because if the ungodly, sinful person will believe on Jesus Christ, then God will count them as righteous and bless them, even though they do not deserve it.

He then enables us to walk in righteousness, not by works but by a walk of faith, in the Spirit.

### **Romans 4:5**

*But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.*

### **Here are a small selection of comments that have been used to describe grace:**

“Grace is the opposite of karma, which is all about getting what you deserve. Grace is getting what you don’t deserve.”

“The very centre and core of the whole Bible is the doctrine of the Grace of God.”

“Grace is the most important concept in the Bible, Christianity and the world. It is most clearly expressed in the promises of God revealed in scripture and embodied in Jesus Christ.”

“Grace is unconditional love toward a person who does not deserve it.”

“Grace is most needed and best understood in the midst of sin, suffering and brokenness. We live in a world of earning, deserving, and merit, and these result in judgement. That is why everyone wants and needs grace. Judgement kills. Only grace makes alive.”

Grace is not something that God decided to make available after the law was superseded. Grace has always been available from God.

The first mention of grace in the Bible is found in the story of Noah:

### **Genesis 6:8**

*But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.*

The name Noah means “rest”.

We could, therefore, read “Rest found grace in the eyes of the Lord”.

As we rest in the finished works of Jesus our Lord, we will find that the grace that God is supplying, will be readily available to meet every need and every situation in our lives.

The grace of God can certainly be seen in Abraham's life. Abraham lived over 500 years before the law was given.

Abram was called by God to walk by faith (believing God), just as we Christians are today, under the Covenant of Grace.

Abram was promised by God that he would be the father of a great nation.

### **Genesis 12:1-3**

*Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.*

Being the father of a great nation meant having children but Abram's wife, Sarai, was barren and so Abram had a problem. How could he be a father with no children?

Abram and Sarai decided to help God, and so Sarai suggested that he have a child by her maid, Hagar. The result was Ishmael, from whom have descended all the Arab nations.

Thirteen years later, God made a covenant with Abram and promised him that he would be the father of many nations. God then changed his name to Abraham and Sarai's to Sarah and He promised that Sarah would bear him a son, who was to be called Isaac.

It was not long after God changed their names that Isaac appeared.

Paul in his letter to the Galatians explains that this is an allegory and goes on to explain its relationship to the law and to grace.

### **Galatians 4:21-31**

*Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman.*

*But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise.*

*Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children.*

*But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband.*

*Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now.*

*Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of*

*the freewoman.*

*So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free.*

Paul says that Hagar and Ishmael represent the law whilst Sarah and Isaac represent grace. He then says cast out the bondwoman and son.

Those under the law cannot inherit that which is available under grace.

## **The Hebrew Alphabet**

The fifth letter of the Hebrew alphabet is “Hei”, the number 5 which represents grace.

Written in Hebrew script it is a picture of an open window.

The Jews say that this window represents a mystery, the mystery of grace, that has now been revealed in Jesus.

One summer’s day, as I was walking in the countryside admiring the wild flowers, the Lord told me to count the petals. Every flower I counted that day, had five petals. He said to me “these wild flowers are my unearned, unmerited gift to you and required no work from you, unlike the ones in your garden”.

I have since counted other wild flowers and have found a few that do have more than five petals, but the majority do have five!

## **Sarai (Sarah) and Abram (Abraham)**

When God changed both Sarai and Abram’s names, He added one letter to both names. He added the fifth letter of the alphabet, “Hei”.

In Sarai's case God removed the "Yud", the tenth letter in the Hebrew alphabet (10 represents The Law) and replaced it with the letter "Hei", the fifth letter in the Hebrew alphabet (5 represents grace)

The name Sarai is: ..... **Yud** + Resh + Shin (Meaning: Captain or Lord)

The name Sarah is: ..... **Hei** + Resh + Shin (Meaning: Princess)

God removed the "Yud" (the trying to get by your own hand) .... from Sarai's name and gave her "Hei" (grace). She then became Sarah, the Princess who receives by faith.

The name Abram is: ..... Aleph + Beth + Resh + Mem (meaning: exalted father)

The name Abraham is: ..... Aleph + Beth + Resh + **Hei** + Mem (meaning: father of many)

In Abraham's case God added the letter "Hei"; the letter of grace to Abram's name.

The result .... Twelve months later Isaac was born to Abraham and Sarah.

Father God has always been the God of grace, but He has chosen to reveal it in this dispensation or age through His Son, Jesus.

Before we finish this chapter, it would be amiss not to address the issue of, "Now we are under grace, we can do what we like!" Some people make this an excuse for not embracing grace and feel that grace is a licence to sin. Nothing could be further from the truth!

Because we have been born anew, we find that the love of God

has been shed abroad in our hearts. Because of grace we find the desire of our heart is to please Him, who first loved us.

If someone we didn't know, gave us a million pounds that we didn't deserve, would we dishonour them? Of course, we wouldn't! We would show our gratitude and always speak highly about them. We would honour them.

So it is, with those of us who truly embrace Jesus and all he has done for us, through His grace. Our aim in life is to honour Him by trusting Him and being obedient to His Word.

Those who would deliberately continue to sin once they have professed to being saved by grace, should question whether they have indeed embraced the love of God shown to us in Jesus, and whether they have truly surrendered their lives to Him.

To sum up; we are to read, study and meditate on the Law in order to obtain revelation of Jesus.

But, as far as we are concerned, we are to live our Eternal life under the Covenant of Grace, walking by faith (believing God), and not by trying to keep the law in order to find favour with God.

As we walk in the Spirit, believing God, we will find that our lives are pleasing to God and that we have lost our desire to sin.

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# Chapter 10

## CONCLUSION

There is so much more that could be written about the new life in Jesus, the Eternal Life, but not in this book. There is sufficient written in these pages for the new Christian to begin their new exciting walk, led by the Holy Spirit, into their amazing new destiny as sons and daughters of God.

Ahead may lie difficult times for all but the Holy Spirit will lead and guide us, and bring us safely to the day when Jesus will come to collect us and take us to Heaven.

When God has judged an unbelieving world we will return with Jesus to earth and we will reign with Him for 1000 years before we are treated to a new heaven and a new earth, the likes of which we could not imagine.

So let's recap ....

We have discovered that our life is in our blood, the blood that we have had since the day that we were conceived.

We know that we were born into a state of sin which separates us from God and that our final destination after death is the Lake of Fire.

We learned that we are now able to be transferred into a state of righteousness and consequently back into fellowship with God, if we accept His gift of Eternal Life. The life of God which comes through receiving His Son, Jesus.

We discovered that we have a choice to make: do we accept God's plan to save us or do we just ignore it and plough headlong into disaster, from which there is no escape.

We found that by accepting Jesus as our Lord and King we can

be born again spiritually, receive His Holy Spirit, and begin our new Eternal Life guided by that same Spirit who now lives within us.

Next, we found out that if we have chosen Jesus, we have become a new creation .... We received a new spirit .... And all the blessings that come with that choice we made.

We found the purpose for our existence .... To know God and have fellowship with our creator God.

We discovered that the Bible and the Holy Spirit are His special gifts to help us and to guide us through this life on earth.

Finally, we learned that God has given us the gift of His righteousness and that we are to become established in it as we live by faith walking in the Spirit by the grace of God.

For those who have not yet chosen Eternal Life my plea is that you reconsider .... Time is passing very quickly. Life is short.

The signs are that we are fast approaching the end of this age. When Jesus appears in the clouds it will be too late.

For those who have chosen to live in Eternal Life, congratulations!

You are in the most wonderful place ... In Jesus, for evermore.

**My prayer for you is the one that Paul prayed for the Christians at Ephesus:**

*Father, I pray that you will give them the spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of you, that the eyes of their understanding may be enlightened; so that they may know what is the hope of your calling, and what are the riches of the glory of your inheritance in the saints, and what is the surpassing greatness of your power to us who*

*believe.*

*Father, I pray that you will grant them, according to the riches of your glory, to be strengthened with might by your Spirit in their inner man; so that Christ may dwell in their hearts by faith; and that being rooted and grounded in love, they may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which surpasses knowledge, that they may be filled with all the fulness of God. Amen.*

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