



## Principles for Christian Living and Eternal Life

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# Contents

Introduction .....	3
From Darkness to Light .....	4
The Light of the Gospel of the Glory of Christ .....	6
God .....	9
The Holy Spirit .....	12
The Bible.....	14
Prayer .....	16
Is Jesus Christ Your Lord? .....	17
Turbulent Times Ahead .....	18

## Introduction

The signs of the last days are similar to what we see and experience when a storm is approaching. As clouds appear on the horizon an uneasy feeling begins to rise as ominous darkness approaches. Our senses confirm a storm is imminent as we witness flashes of lightening, followed by the sound and feeling of reverberating thunder. Our thoughts soon transition to concern and safety as we determine what to do and where to go to avoid harm.

Many persons (Christians and non-Christians) are aware of an approaching “storm;” see and have a conceptual understanding of the “signs;” and are experiencing various degrees of deep gut-wrenching anxiety and fear due to pending unknowns. However, due to our human nature it is much easier to live in denial (i.e. “sleepwalking”) than to take a good hard look at what’s going on in the world and prepare for the One who will come in the twinkling of an eye.

Jesus said “Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall.” Matthew 7:24-27



Jesus Christ used a parable of two builders to convey the importance of hearing God’s Word and changing our behavior. Each person is the builder of their own house and has the choice of which foundation to build upon. At one end of the spectrum is solid rock (Jesus Christ), the other is soft sand (all delusional lies the world offers). The rain, rising streams and wind represent difficult and perilous times. Each person who builds their foundation upon Jesus Christ are able to withstand day-to-day trials in life. But what is more important—they will be able to withstand the “stormier” days ahead. However, those who build their foundation on sand will be overtaken and destroyed by the “torrential rains,” “flooding waters” and “tornadic winds” of the last days.

Jesus said of the last days “For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect’s sake those days will be shortened.” Matthew 24:21-22

“Foundation” is comprised of key fundamentals upon which to build a mature faith in Jesus Christ; and is intended for all persons—including those who do not know Jesus Christ.

# From Darkness to Light

## What is Sin?

If you ask a diverse group of people to define the word “sin” you’d likely receive varying responses that range across an entire spectrum. For example, there are some who believe there is no such thing as sin. Others may define sin from a behavioral perspective, such as murder, theft, sexual immorality, and so forth; or knowing what should be done, and not doing it. (James 4:17). While others may define sin based upon thoughts.

Sin		
Does not exist	Behavior	Thoughts

God gave us the Ten Commandments ([Exodus 20](#), [Deuteronomy 5](#)) as a “minimal benchmark” or “standard” to enter into Heaven, and as means to reveal our sin. But more important, He gave us the Ten Commandments because of His love for us. (Unfortunately, many fail to understand this and view them as a list of do’s and don’ts.) God’s Commandments are a list of logical, relevant and prudent behaviors that seem fairly easy to obey.

1. I am the Lord you God, you shall have no other gods before me.
2. You shall not worship false gods.
3. You shall never take My name in vain.
4. Keep the Sabbath day holy.
5. Honor your father and mother.
6. You shall not murder.
7. You shall not commit adultery.
8. You shall not steal.
9. You shall not lie.
10. You shall not want what belongs to others.

Take a moment and review the list. Have you ever broken one of the commandments? If you’re like everyone else on earth your answer is yes because we are all guilty. Romans 3:23 says “[For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.](#)” The reason is because everyone is born with a sinful nature which has been passed down through the generations since the beginning, starting with Adam and Eve.

God gave Adam one simple and easy-to-follow commandment. “[And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, ‘Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.’”](#) Genesis 2:16-17

Adam and Eve could live a perfect life in absolute bliss in Heaven and in God’s presence. All of their needs were met and they could do anything they desired. The only commandment from God is they were not allowed to eat the fruit from one tree. Besides, there’s many other trees to eat from. Seems like a pretty good deal, right?

In Genesis chapter 3, the serpent (Satan) executed his standard method of operation: use deceptive lies to stimulate our sinful nature and desire to sin.

“Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, ‘Has God indeed said, ‘You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?’’ And the woman said to the serpent, ‘We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, ‘You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.’ Then the serpent said to the woman, ‘You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.’ So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings. And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. Then the Lord God called to Adam and said to him, ‘Where are you?’ So he said, ‘I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself.’ And He said, ‘Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?’ Then the man said, ‘The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate.’ And the Lord God said to the woman, ‘What is this you have done?’ The woman said, ‘The serpent deceived me, and I ate.’”  
Genesis 3:1-13

Adam and Eve knew God’s one and only commandment, and they decided to disobey and sinned against God. Their response was to (1) hide from God, and (2) pass the blame. These two behaviors are indicative of spiritual death, and a common response when people sin.

God’s word defined the consequences if they disobeyed: they would die. Satan attacked the authority of God’s word by saying they will not die (which is both a lie and truth). It is a lie because they would die spiritually. It was also true because they would not physically die. Then he added another lie—targeted at their sinful nature—in that they will be like God.

As Eve listened, she became mentally “locked in” on the forbidden fruit, saw it was pleasant to the eyes and would make her wise. They ate and spiritually died—as God said would happen.

Jesus said regarding Satan “He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.” John 8:44

“6 Stages of Temptation” (on UniqueBibleStudies.com) provides additional details of what occurred in the garden, the different stages of temptation, and how to overcome temptation.



The same deceptive lies in the garden are used today by the god of this age (Satan).

“But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the **light of the gospel of the glory of Christ**, who is the image of God, should shine on them.” 2 Corinthians 4:3-4

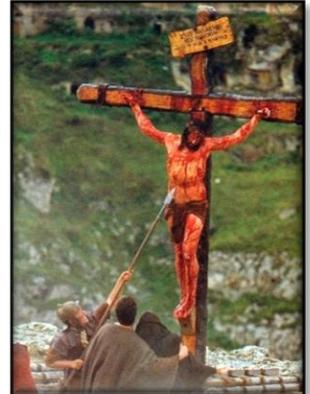
# The Light of the Gospel of the Glory of Christ

“For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Romans 6:23

The wage (consequence) of sin is spiritual death. The term of “death” defines the same consequences Adam and Eve experienced: a separation from God and torment of soul and spirit. However, God provided a means to restore the relationship through His Son, Jesus Christ. 1 John 2:1-2 says “And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And He Himself is the **propitiation** for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.”

Propitiation is defined as an action meant to make up for something you did wrong. For example, think back to when you were a child and you did something wrong that demanded punishment. Now imagine as your parental “executioner” prepares to deliver chastisement, your friend steps in and says “I will take the punishment for you,” and does so. This is what Jesus did for us when He died on the cross. In other words, Jesus Christ took the punishment for our sins when He offered His body as a living sacrifice—to all who believe.

“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.” Ephesians 2:8-9



What’s interesting (and very sad), this glorious, wonderful, and simple truth confounds those who consider themselves wise.

“For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written: ‘I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.’” 1 Corinthians 1:18-19

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.” John 3:16-17

It is God’s grace (receiving forgiveness we do not deserve) and mercy (not receiving the punishment we deserve)—combined with our belief in His Son, Jesus—is what restores the relationship, breaks the bondage of sin, changes us from within, and opens the door to everlasting life. This spiritual transformation occurs when one is “born again.”

## Jesus Christ Said You Must Be Born Again

“There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, ‘Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him.’ Jesus answered and said to him, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.’ Nicodemus said to Him, ‘How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born?’ Jesus answered, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.’” John 3:1-6

We are all born into this world of the flesh (physical body and soul)—including our sinful nature and self-centered heart. Those who are reborn in the Spirit will experience a regeneration of their soul via the washing and cleansing of sinful impurities by the Holy Spirit. In addition, those who are reborn in the Spirit will also experience a renewing of their heart—where real and lasting change occurs.

“Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit.” Titus 3:5

In response to the Samaritan woman at a well, “Jesus answered and said to her, ‘Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life.’” John 4:13-14

“On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, ‘If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.’” John 7:37-38

When someone is born again, their rebirth is not just a superficial improvement of the old nature. But rather, it is a supernatural (Holy Spirit) creation of a new nature. There is a change in the core desire; and in the underlying motivation; and in the basic need—from seeking to fulfill the desires of the flesh to pleasing the One who forgives us and loves us unconditionally. This is where the relationship with our Savior thrives; this is where our efforts produce an eternal benefit; and this is where indescribable joy may be found.

### Human Birth vs. Spiritual Birth

Human Birth	Spiritual Birth (Born Again)
Occurs via mother’s womb	Occurs via the Holy Spirit
Faith in Jesus Christ is non-existent or weak	Faith in Jesus Christ grows day-by-day
There is no desire to seek and know God	Active and growing desire to seek and know God
May have conceptual understanding of sin, but no heart-felt remorse	A continual increase in awareness, forgiveness, and repentance of sin occurs
There is little to no concern regarding sin’s: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Consequences</li> <li>○ Effect on others</li> </ul>	Takes personal responsibility for sin’s: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Consequences</li> <li>○ Effect on others</li> </ul>
Delights in sin	Experiences guilt, pain, shame, and remorse when sin occurs
Is unaware (or does not care) of sin’s bondage	Has a growing repulsion towards sin as breakage of sin’s bondage occurs
Is unable to see the world and those around them through the eyes of God	Looks at the world and those around them from a completely new Godly perspective
Behavior is controlled by the flesh for the glory of self	The heart takes control over the flesh for the glory of God

“And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others. But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.” Ephesians 2:1-10

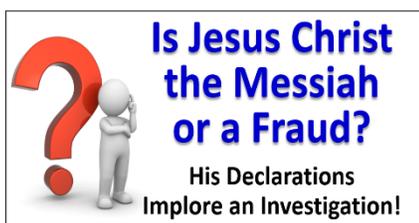
In answering Paul’s question below, Jesus Christ explained how people are unable to see due to the power of Satan and the darkness that results from sin. However, every person who places their faith and trust in the unmerited grace, forgiveness, and eternal life given to us by God in His son Jesus Christ will see the world from a completely different view—as His light illuminates our life from His perspective.

“So I said, ‘Who are You, Lord?’ And He said, ‘I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. But rise and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to make you a minister and a witness both of the things which you have seen and of the things which I will yet reveal to you. I will deliver you from the Jewish people, as well as from the Gentiles, to whom I now send you, to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.’” Acts 26:15-18

Those who recognize the deceptive lies of Satan; those who realize the vanity and uselessness of sin; those who are tired of the bondage and pain; those who have a desire for more than what the world has to offer; those who experience the tugging of their heart by God’s Holy Spirit; and those who obey—these are they who can see in the dark because of His light; as their perception of the world, of people; and of themselves began to change. These are they who also witness (and can attest) to their behavioral transformation that occurs because of His love, and His grace, and the eternal forgiveness of their sin.

For additional and insightful information, read the following two Bible studies on UniqueBibleStudies.com.

“What is a Born-Again Christian” explains why we cannot earn our way to Heaven; expands biblical understanding of what it means to be born again; facilitates self-evaluation; and enhances spiritual growth and maturity in Christ.



Paraphrasing C.S. Lewis in his book *Mere Christianity*, based upon the words Jesus spoke and who He claimed to be, Jesus Christ was either a lunatic or the Son of God. This is a very bold and provocative statement. But when you think about it...C.S. Lewis was right: it is one or the other. There’s no middle-of-the-road statement such as “Well, he was simply a prophet, or a good teacher, or a godly man.” This lesson provides factual evidence Jesus Christ is the Messiah.

# God

If you ask a group of persons who believe in God to describe their relationship with Him, you will likely get varying responses that fall under two categories. The first category is based upon our perception of how God views us: hateful, angry, or loving. The second category is based upon whether or not God is perceived as being close or distant.

Sin causes us to live in darkness, reduces our ability to see the Truth, and separates us from God—which is why one may perceive God as being hateful or angry, and distant.

How do you think God views you?	God's involvement in my life:
<i>Hateful</i> = God is critical, condemning, scornful	<i>Close</i> = God influences my day-to-day events and is aware of all aspects of my life
<i>Angry</i> = God is irritated, frustrated, upset	
<i>Loving</i> = God is forgiving, compassionate, merciful	<i>Distant</i> = God is not around and I'm on my own

## God Loves Us More Than We Realize

As one grows and spiritually matures in Jesus Christ; as they yield to the guidance of the Holy Spirit; and as they are changed into His likeness; perceptions of God as being hateful and angry will transform due to an affirmation that God loves us above and beyond all human understanding. In addition, any perceptions of God as being distant will also change due to evidence He is very close and involved with all aspects of our lives.

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.” John 3:16

“But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved).” Ephesians 2:4-5

“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 created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Romans 8:38-39

“Therefore, humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.” 1 Peter 5:6-7

## God is Not Distant

We may feel God is distant, but He is still there. In lieu of the word distant, a better term to consider is discipline. Sin separates us from God, which is a form of punishment. For example, when a child disobeys, the parent must immediately chastise the child—otherwise the inappropriate behavior will continue. Disengagement from God due to sin equates to disapproval and punishment. The pain on the inside will cause us to reconsider the painful experience the next time we are tempted.

“As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore, be zealous and repent.” Revelation 3:19

It is very important to note there are times when our faith will be tested; and it may seem God is distant during this time—even when we have not sinned (i.e. Job). This is when we need to hold onto our faith, and His grace, and His promises.

“Through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope.” Romans 5:2-4

“And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.” Romans 8:28

“For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother’s womb. I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvelous are Your works, and that my soul knows very well. My frame was not hidden from You, when I was made in secret, and skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they all were written, the days fashioned for me, when as yet there were none of them. Psalm 139:13-16

“And the Lord, He is the One who goes before you. He will be with you, He will not leave you nor forsake you; do not fear nor be dismayed.”. Deuteronomy 31:8; Hebrews 13:5

God desires communion, communication, and fellowship. He wants our heart, our desire, and our inner self seeking and yearning for His presence. For every step we make towards God, He will make 10 towards us. For every area in our life we yield to God, He will keep His promise in that we may have and enjoy life, and have it in abundance.

### **God is Omnipresent**

It is difficult for our finite minds to comprehend our infinite God—who is not limited by space and time—and is everywhere.

“Can anyone hide himself in secret places, so I shall not see him?’ Says the lord; ‘Do I not fill heaven and earth?’ says the Lord.” Jeremiah 23:24

“The eyes of the Lord are in every place, keeping watch on the evil and the good.” Proverbs 15:3

“Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? If I ascend into heaven, You are there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there Your hand shall lead me, and Your right hand shall hold me.” Psalms 139:7-10

### **God is Omnipotent**

Omnipotent is defined as having unlimited power and authority. God’s omnipotence is exemplified by His speaking the earth and the heavens into existence (Genesis 1; Psalm 33:6); and by His granting authority to His Son, Jesus Christ, to rise from the dead.

“Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer, and He who formed you from the womb: ‘I am the Lord, who makes all things, who stretches out the heavens all alone, who spreads abroad the earth by Myself.’” Isaiah 44:24

Jesus said “Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father.” John 10:17-18

### **God is Omniscient**

Omniscient is defined as having unlimited knowledge of all things past, present, and future; absolute awareness and understanding; perceiving all things. What is hidden from human sight is still known by God.

“O Lord, You have searched me and known me. You know my sitting down and my rising up; You understand my thought afar off. You comprehend my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word on my tongue, but behold, O Lord, You know it altogether.” Psalm 139:1-4

Jesus said “Are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin? And not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father’s will. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.” Mat. 10:29-31; Luke 12:7

### **God is the Source of Love**

“Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.” 1 John 4:7-10

“I love those who love me, and those who seek me diligently will find me. Riches and honor are with me, enduring riches and righteousness. My fruit is better than gold, yes, than fine gold, and my revenue than choice silver. I traverse the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of justice, that I may cause those who love me to inherit wealth, that I may fill their treasuries.” Proverbs 8:17-21

# The Holy Spirit

## Jesus Said He Would Send A Helper (the Holy Spirit) After He Dies and Goes to the Father

“But now I go away to Him who sent Me, and none of you asks Me, ‘Where are You going?’ But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart. Nevertheless, I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they do not believe in Me; of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged. I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore, I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you.” John 16:5-15

The Holy Spirit is more than a force, a presence, or a power. The Holy Spirit has attributes and characteristics of a person: imparting knowledge (teaches and explains), has a will (makes decisions), and experiences feelings. Most important, the Holy Spirit came to glorify Christ and to lead believers into truth.

## The Holy Spirit Teaches and Guides Us

Jesus said “But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.” John 14:26

Jesus said “But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me.” John 15:26

Jesus said “However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.” John 16:13

“Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. These things we also speak, not in words which man’s wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” 1 Corinthians 2:12-14

## The Holy Spirit Distributes Spiritual Gifts

“Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be ignorant: You know that you were Gentiles, carried away to these dumb idols, however you were led. Therefore, I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed, and no one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit.”

“There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all: for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills. 1 Corinthians 12:1-11

### **The Holy Spirit Is With Us and Lives Within Us**

Jesus said “And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.” John 14:16-17

“Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?” 1 Corinthians 6:19

### **The Holy Spirit Prays for Us**

“Likewise, the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.” Romans 8:26-27

### **The Holy Spirit Prepares Us to Live with God for Eternity**

“Now I myself am confident concerning you, my brethren, that you also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another. Nevertheless, brethren, I have written more boldly to you on some points, as reminding you, because of the grace given to me by God, that I might be a minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering of the Gentiles might be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.” Romans 15:14-16

“For we ourselves were also once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another. But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.” Titus 3:3-7

“The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.” Romans 8:16

### **The Fruit of the Spirit**

“But the fruit of the Spirit is **love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control**. Against such there is no law. And those who are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.” Galatians 5:22-25

# The Bible

The Bible is God's word. It is the greatest "How To" book ever written; and a key source for guidance, direction, decisions, and every need in your life. ["Your word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path."](#) [Psalms 119:105](#)

The Bible is comprised of 66 books, written by more than forty authors during a period of approximately sixteen centuries. The Bible is also comprised of narratives and dialogues; proverbs and parables; songs and allegories; history and prophesy. What's more, ["All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."](#) [2 Timothy 3:16](#)

Additional facts about the Bible include:

- The Bible is comprised of two Testaments (Old and New Covenants)
  - The Old Testament was written for the most part in Hebrew, with a small percentage in Aramaic.
  - The New Testament was written in Greek.
- The books in the Bible may be grouped by content:
  - Pentateuch:
    - The first five books of the Bible (Genesis – Deuteronomy)
    - Primary author is Moses
    - Overview: Creation, God's divine purposes and plans, how sin entered the world, God's response, His relationship with man, and insight into the character and nature of God.
  - Historical:
    - Includes: Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, 1 and 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther
    - Covers approximately 1,000 years of Israel's history beginning with the entry into the Promised Land, transition and division of the nation, moral decline, period of captivity, and its return from exile.
  - Poetry and Wisdom:
    - Includes: Job, Psalms, Proverbs and Ecclesiastes
    - Conveys life's struggles and experiences; reveals man's relationship with God; covers practical topics; and are filled with wisdom.
  - Prophetic:
    - Major and Minor Prophets (based upon length and importance of their message)
      - Major Prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel
      - Minor Prophets: Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Johah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi
    - Empowered by the Holy Spirit, prophets spoke God's message to the Nation of Israel, warned of consequences for non-repentance, and described future times.
  - Gospels
    - Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John
    - Provide us with:
      - A perspective of the life of Jesus Christ
      - A link between the Old and New Testament
      - Evidence Jesus Christ is the promised Messiah and the Son of God
  - Epistles
    - Pauline Epistles (written by the Apostle Paul) Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus and Philemon
    - General Epistles (Hebrews, James, 1 & 2 Peter, 1 2 & 3 John, and Jude)
    - Letters written to individuals and early churches

Given all of the authors, given all of the books, given all of the different writing styles, given the extensive time span in which it was written—for those who diligently study the Bible—will find that there is a profound unity and interrelation between the Old and New Testaments. What’s more, the Bible is sufficiently “shallow” for a baby in Christ to wade; and wonderfully “deep” for Biblical scholars to never touch bottom.

## **How to Study the Bible**

The word study conveys a deeper and more active form of reading. Simple reading of the Bible often results in an assimilation of facts with little to no affect upon the heart. Whereas studying the Bible (with the assistance of the Holy Spirit) will enhance understanding, facilitate personal application, and assist in the transformation into Christlikeness.

Here are four basic foundational concepts with regards to studying God’s word:

1. If you do not eat food you will become hungry and weak. Likewise, God’s word is “food” for your heart, soul, and spirit. As such, you should study God’s word every day.
2. The “internalization” of God’s Word must occur at a much deeper level than just “between our ears” because knowledge alone is useless. God’s Word must also penetrate our heart, our soul, and our spirit for true transformation to take place.
3. We are incapable of truly understanding God’s word without guidance and revelation from the Holy Spirit. Therefore, prior to studying, ask God to help you understand:
  - a. What does it say?
  - b. What does it mean?
  - c. How may this apply to my life?
4. As you study God’s word the Holy Spirit will often reveal areas of your behavior, perceptions, thoughts, relationships, and so forth that require change and/or action on your part.

## **Book vs. Topical**

There are two ways one can study the Bible: Book and Topical. A book study may comprise an entire book by chapter and verse. A topical study is based upon researching a particular topic such as faith, salvation, biographical, and so forth.

A new Christian should begin with a book study, starting with one or more of the four Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John) because they focus on Jesus Christ. Then study Genesis, Ephesians, Romans, and any of the Gospels you have not completed.

I recommend listening to Pastor Chuck Smith. Chuck Smith is a highly-regarded expository teacher of the Bible (explains, describes, and informs verse-by-verse; from Genesis to Revelation). Although Chuck recently passed away, we are blessed in that there are audio recordings of his complete Bible teachings which may be accessed (for free) on the following website: <https://subsplash.com/twft/media/li/+fjbz8vs>

An excellent web-based tool for topical studies may be found at the following website: <https://www.biblegateway.com/topical/>

# Prayer

Some may have a perception of praying to God requires a format and style similar to Hollywood’s version of Moses (played by Charlton Heston) in the movie *The Ten Commandments*.

My son (when he was very young) would dramatically bow down on his knees, look up, and begin his prayer by yelling (and with authority) “OH JESUS!!!” People in the grocery store aisle would stand there with a look of shock and amazement.



In reality, genuine prayer has the same characteristics as a meaningful and personal conversation between two persons. Plus, there are no formulas or specific patterns for prayer. Prayer may be spoken verbally, or in your mind, and includes listening.

Because of Jesus Christ we can speak directly to God when we’re deep in the valley of life’s trials and tribulations; when we’re experiencing the “peaks” of life; and everywhere in between. [“For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.” Ephesians 2:18](#)

## Different Types of Prayer

Faith	This is the most common form of prayer: between one person and God. May consist of confession, repentance, or petition (asking) God for a particular outcome.	<a href="#">Mark 11:22-24</a>
Agreement	When two or more persons are in prayerful agreement.	<a href="#">Matthew 18:19-20</a>
Intercession	When we pray for someone else.	<a href="#">1 Timothy 2:1-6;</a> <a href="#">Ephesians 1:15-18;</a> <a href="#">Philippians 1:3-4;</a> <a href="#">Galatians 6:2</a>
Consecration	When we ask God to set our direction when two or more alternatives exist. This is an act of relinquishing our will and requesting God’s will be done.	<a href="#">Luke 22:39-42</a>
Praise and Worship	When we express thankfulness for His love, mercy, and blessings. All prayer should include thanksgiving regardless of the situation.	<a href="#">Luke 18:43;</a> <a href="#">John 11:41</a>
Binding and Loosing	Releases divinely-appointed power. Binding strips power from demonic spirits. Loosing releases angelic spirits to work on our behalf.	<a href="#">Matthew 16:19, 18:18</a>

## Attitude of the Heart

The attitude of our heart is absolutely important when we pray. As such, we should consider our feelings, thoughts, and underlying motivations. Here are some simple tests:

- Does my prayer align with God's will, or my flesh?
- Am I being real with God and myself (speaking from my heart)?
- Does my request have eternal heavenly consequences, or temporary earthly outcomes?
- Do you hold unforgiveness in your heart? If yes, you need to forgive. How can we accept God's forgiveness if we are unwilling to forgive others?

Jesus said *"And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses."* Mark 11:25

## Is Jesus Christ Your Lord?

Every person will eventually bow and acknowledge Jesus Christ is Lord.

*"Therefore, God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."* Philippians 2:9-11

Each person will confess Jesus Christ is Lord—while living—or after the soul and spirit leaves the physical body. One insures eternal life, the other eternal death.

Jesus said *"Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me."* Revelation 3:20

If God is knocking on the door to your heart—your life, your sin, and your relationship with Him is being revealed to you by the Holy Spirit. What's more, you are likely feeling a struggle (and even a fight) between accepting Jesus Christ and holding onto your sin. But be assured, this is more than a struggle between "your ears."

*"For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places."* Ephesians 6:12

*"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."* I John 1:9

If you desire to accept Jesus Christ as your lord simply confess your sins to God in prayer. An example is:

*Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, forgive me for my sins. Thank you for sending your Son into the world, allowing Him to be crucified for my sins and raising Him from the dead so that I may ask for...and receive...Your forgiveness. Jesus, take control of my life and change me into the type of person you want me to be. Amen.*

As you confess your sins believe and have faith Jesus Christ took the punishment for your past (and future) sins when He died on the cross almost 2,000 years ago. Then repent by turning away from your sin. Jesus preached repentance as soon as He began His ministry. "Repent for the kingdom of heaven is near" (Matthew 4:17). It involves a change in your heart from your sin toward God. Simply stated, there are four different aspects of repentance:

- A genuine sorrow toward God because of your sin
- An inward hatred toward the sin
- A realization of the depth of your sin and the magnitude of God's compassion and grace
- An actual forsaking of the sin

Finally, you must humbly surrender your life to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. For every step you make toward God, He will make 10 toward you. For every area in your life you yield to God, He will keep His promise in that you may have and enjoy life, and have it in abundance.

Jesus said ["But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you."](#) [Matthew 6:33](#)

## Turbulent Times Ahead

As last day events transpire life will become increasingly difficult. As the rain increases, as the streams rise, and as the winds will blow—the faith of those who have built the foundation of their life on Jesus Christ (the Rock) will not fail if they continue to yield to the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Remember...All that is occurring is fulfillment of prophesy.

Remember...The Lord reigns and is still on His throne.

Remember...The Lord is in control.

Remember...The beast and those who accept the mark will live for eternity in the lake of fire.

Remember...Those who trust in God will live for eternity in Heaven.

Remember...Our time on this earth compares to a grain of sand in an ocean of eternity.

Remember...God's Word and His promises are infallible.

Remember...Nothing on this earth is worthy.

Remember...Do not accept the mark and do not worship the beast.

Remember...To fear God and not man nor the beast.

Remember...These terrible times will end when Jesus Christ returns.

["Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice! Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."](#) [Philippians 4:4-7](#)

It is my prayer you build your house upon solid rock; your path is illuminated by God's Word; your direction is guided by the Holy Spirit; your anxieties and fears are overcome with the peace of His promises; and your life eternal with Jesus Christ.

Please write. Your comments and/or questions are greatly appreciated. Be assured, I will not respond unless asked to do so. My e-mail address is: [UniqueBibleStudies@Outlook.com](mailto:UniqueBibleStudies@Outlook.com)

All for the Glory of Jesus Christ,  
Harold D. Thomas

Can you think of one person who could benefit from reading this lesson? If yes, pass it on!