
Basic Christianity
by
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Preface

This little booklet has been written especially for new Christians, basically for absolute beginners. I have tried to cover as many of the basics of Christianity as is feasible in a short booklet. I have not shied away from talking about the devil, as I believe that knowledge of our enemy is basic to our Christian lives.

The topics are lightly covered. I have not gone into great depth, but there is enough here to establish new Christians in their faith. This booklet is intended as a first step, there are other teaching materials available for the following steps.

This booklet can be given to any new converts, of any denomination, that you may know, in the knowledge that it will encourage them in their new lives

Contents:

1. The Bible & Prayer:
 2. Who is God?
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1. The Bible & Prayer.

In this first section we will look at some of the basics of the Christian life. Later we will cover many topics which may be new to you, but for now we will limit ourselves to the nitty gritty basics.

THE BIBLE.

The Bible as you must all know is the basis of the Christian way of life. As a book it is totally unique, as the word of God it is life its self.

HISTORY OF THE BIBLE.

The story of the Bible is in itself a story. It has survived intact for longer than any other book. There are something like 13000 surviving manuscripts of the New Testament alone. More than any other

ancient writings. None of the original manuscripts have survived, but we do have the most ancient copies. These are hand written copies of the originals.

There are 3 main ones:

The Codex Sinaiticus, the Greek Bible dated 4th century, bought from Russia in 1933, now in the British museum.

The Codex Alexandrinus, dated around the 5th century. This contains the whole Greek Bible except for 40 lost leaves. Also in the British museum.

The Codex Vaticanus, dated around the 4th century, now in the Vatican library Rome. The Word codex simply means book.

SOME FACTS.

The word Bible is from the Greek BIBLIA and means the books.

The word scripture means the writings.

The Bible was written over a period of about 2000 years by something like 40 different writers.

The Bible is the most printed book ever known, and a constant best seller.

MAKE UP OF THE BIBLE.

The Bible contains 66 books, 39 in the old and 27 in the New Testaments. They can be grouped as follows:

Pentateuch, the first 5 books written by Moses, sometimes called the Law or the Torah.

The history books (12 of them) from Joshua to Esther.

The poetry books (5) from Job to The Song of Solomon.

The major prophets(5) from Isaiah to Daniel.

The minor prophets (12) from Hosea to Malachi.

We then have a period of 400 years between the Testaments, (called the inter testamental period!), when God was silent, so there are no scriptures for this period. There are writings called The Apocrypha, some of which relate to this silent period, but these are not generally recognised as God breathed scripture.

This brings us to the New Testament:

The first 4 books are what we call the Gospels, and together with the 5th book Acts make up the history books.

Next we have the letters of Paul (14) from Romans to Hebrews.

Then the general letters (8) from James to Revelation. The book of Revelation is prophetic.

VERSIONS OF THE BIBLE.

There are many versions of the English Bible, but only 2 are in common use in England, the Revised Authorised (New King James Version) and the NIV (New International Version). These two are

different in their approach to translation.

The NKJV translates on a word for word basis. That is, the translators use one English word for each Greek or Hebrew word. This is somewhat limited by the lack of depth in our English language. Often there just isn't an English word that will adequately translate the original. Both Hebrew and Greek are very rich languages, the words have a much greater depth of meaning than our English.

The NIV translates phrases rather than single words. This method renders a more readable English, but suffers from the interpretation that is inevitably involved in the process. The NIV was translated by an international team of experts from all walks of Christianity, hence the name. But this approach has led to some weak translation.

Either of these translations is perfectly OK for study and every day general use. There are other versions too that are good:

The J B Phillips version of the New Testament, Letters to Young Churches is excellent.

The Spirit Filled Life Bible is also excellent.

The Message, is also to be recommended as a good alternative to the main translations.

The Living Bible is a paraphrase of the Bible which is useful.

The Amplified Bible expands on the meanings of some of the words and phrases used, useful as a study aid.

The Christian Life Bible is also good, as it contains some study outlines which will prove to be very helpful to you.

As Christians we accept the Bible as the word of God. We make no additions to it, and we take nothing away from it. We believe what it says from cover to cover.

Lets look at what the Bible says about itself.

God dictated the words. 2 Pet 1:20-21

God's word is totally reliable Titus 1:2

The Bible declares itself to be the word of God 2 Tim 3:16

Christ taught the inerrancy of the Bible John 10:35

Christ accepted Genesis as fact Matt 19:4

Christ accepted Jonah as fact Matt 12:40-41

Joshua 1:8, NIV

8 Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.

2 Timothy 2:15, NIV

15 Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.

These two verses give us a good guide for our attitude to the Bible.

PRIVATE BIBLE STUDY.

Private study is vital, you will not grow without it. There are many ways to study Gods word:

Use daily notes (eg Every Day With Jesus).

Select 1 book at a time, read it and take notes.

Select a theme, use a concordance and follow it through the Bible.

Read the Bible in 1 year. This is very rewarding, but a bit tough.

Always make notes, somehow it is easier to remember things if you write them down.

Study in groups, get hold of sermon tapes etc, all these things are well worth while. Remember the more you study the more you will grow.

PRAYER.

Together with Bible study and praise and worship, prayer is probably the most important thing in your Christian life. You cannot be a Christian and not pray, it just doesnt work.

WHAT IS PRAYER.

Prayer is you talking to God, but there is much more to it than that.

Look on God as your new friend, how do you get to know a new friend?

By talking to them. It is so important to you as a Christian that you

get to know God as a personal friend. If Jesus were here now we would

want to hug Him and love Him by touching him, well we can get close

to God even though we cant see Him. The way we do this is to be in

His presence as much as possible. Prayer and worship are the most

intimate ways to be in Gods presence. The Bible says go into your

closet and close the door to pray, be alone with God.

Matthew 6:6, NIV

6 But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

HOW LONG DO I PRAY?

There are two ways to approach prayer. One is through discipline, the other through relationship. Many use prayer as a discipline, but God prefers relationship. Its better to come to God because you want to, rather than because you feel you have to.

The length of your prayer times is totally up to you, God is always there to listen, so any time you care to you can talk to Him. I would suggest you set yourselves quite short times initially, say 10 mins.

This can be built up as you get more used to praying. Work your way up to 1 hour if you can, this may sound a long time now but after a while when you get to know God better you will be able to rattle away like 2 women over the garden fence. And thats the way God likes it, you can chat with God because believe it or not, He enjoys your company and is interested in every facet of your life.

Time is always a problem for us humans, and the devil makes sure that prayer time is at a premium, so finding that hour each day may be a problem. One way to solve this is to get up earlier. Another is to pray at night. Try setting your alarm clock a bit earlier and spending the start of the day with the Lord, its well worth the effort. Many Christians do this. If youre not a morning person dont worry about it. You can pray at any time and God will listen. God doesnt have a watch, so Hes not bound by time as we are. Some Christians get up in the night to pray. This is not as bad as it sounds. Often we lie awake at night, why not use this time to pray. I personally do this quite often.

Lets look at some scripture:

Luke 6:12, NIV

12 One of those days Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray, and spent the night praying to God.

Ok that is a bit extreme but why not spend the night with God every once in a while.

Philemon 1:4, NIV

4 I always thank my God as I remember you in my prayers,

Prayer can be used in a wrong way read below.

Matthew 23:14, NKJV

14 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers. Therefore you will receive greater condemnation.

When you pray mean it, dont mess with God, He is your friend but He is also your King. True friendship is never flippant. Have reverence. These Pharisees were using prayer to impress those who were watching, giving the impression that they were righteous, but Jesus denounced them as hypocrites because the show was false.

Colossians 4:12, NIV

12 Epaphras, who is one of you and a servant of Christ Jesus, sends greetings. He is always wrestling in prayer for you, that you may stand firm in all the will of God, mature and fully assured.

Epaphras is the kind of Christian you want on your side. We should pray for each other.

1 Timothy 2:1, NIV

1 I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone--

James 5:15, NIV

15 And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up. If he has sinned, he will be forgiven.

Pray for the sick.

James 5:13, NIV

13 Is any one of you in trouble? He should pray. Is anyone happy? Let him sing songs of praise.

Pray for yourself.

1 Thessalonians 5:17-18, NIV

17 pray continually;

18 give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

Pray without ceasing, talk to God a lot, if you get stuck for words you can make a prayer list. In a true relationship you commune with each other throughout the day. This is how you pray without ceasing. Include God in your everyday life.

LISTEN WHEN HE TALKS TO YOU.

Remember that conversation is a 2 way affair, and whilst you are encouraged to talk to God, learn to listen to Him as well. He will speak to you in various ways:

In your thoughts.

In visions.

In dreams.

Through His word.

Through other Christians.

Through sermons.

Through books.

Through circumstance.

God is never stumped for a way to reach you, He may even speak to you in an audible voice, some have heard it, but not many.

Have quiet times when you just let God take your thoughts and lead you where He wants to. Don't shut thoughts out just because they sound like your own.

God will speak to you in your own vocabulary, He will use your turn of phrase, so don't expect some great booming voice in your ear cos it won't happen.

Learn to trust Him to take your thoughts, it takes practice but it's worth it.

Be aware of what you are thinking, if it is to the glory of God then all is well, if not break off and start again.

HOME WORK.

Try to organise regular prayer. Don't set yourself goals that will be tough to keep up, prayer is not an endurance test. Do it as and when you want to. Mix prayer and Bible study. Pray as you read, read as you pray.

2. Who is God

Our God is a very complex being. He is in fact three beings in one! The trinity is a difficult concept to grasp. The fact is, that 1 is made up of 3, and that all 3 are 1. As we shall see, the Bible gives us plenty of evidence to support the trinity. God, as we call Him, is made up of:

God the Father.
God the Son.
God the Holy Spirit.

Three clearly defined and separate beings who together make up God. They are inseparable. There are many picture type representations of the trinity this is mine!

Picture a light bulb:

God the Father is the electricity, that is, the power flowing through the bulb.

God the Son (Jesus), is the visible bulb that the power flows through.

God the Holy Spirit, is the light that reaches out from the bulb in every direction at once.

So

God the Father the invisible power,
God the Son the visible representation,
God the Holy Spirit the all reaching light.

Take any one of the three away and it doesn't work. Let's look at God in all 3 persons and see what the Bible says about them.

1. GOD THE FATHER.

Jesus often referred to 'The Father' as the One who sent Him. Implying a separate being. At this time in history, and only at this time, there was a separation. God came to earth in the form of a man, Jesus. And yet remained in heaven. Jesus was also separate from the Holy Spirit until the time of His baptism, when 'the Spirit descended on Him in the form of a dove'. From that time on they were joined in Spirit, which is what we are now.

God the Father was (and is):

Always in control. 4. Omniscient. 7. All knowing.
Always supreme. 5. Omnipotent. 8. All powerful.
Always reigning. 6. Omnipresent. 9. All present.

Jesus talked to Him as a Son to a Father:

Matthew 11:25, NIV

25 At that time Jesus said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children.

John 6:37-40, NIV

37 All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away.

38 For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me.

39 And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day.

40 For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day."

John 6:57, NIV

57 Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me.

John 8:29, NIV

29 The one who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, for I always do what pleases him."

John 10:30, NIV

30 I and the Father are one."

John 14:6, NIV

6 Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No-one comes to the Father except through me.

In all of these scriptures we can see Jesus talking either to, or about, His Father

God talked to Jesus:

John 12:28, NIV

28 Father, glorify your name!" Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it, and will glorify it again."

Hebrews 5:5, NIV

5 So Christ also did not take upon himself the glory of becoming a high priest. But God said to him, "You are my Son; today I have become your Father."

So, God the Father talked to His Son whilst He was here on earth.

GOD THE SON.

There is enough known and written about Jesus to keep us busy for years. Throughout all the ages He has been present working out His plan.

John 1:1-3, NIV

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

2 He was with God in the beginning.

3 Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.

Jesus was there at the start, He is THE WORD. All things were made through Him, remember God "SAID" let there be light, the world was created by the WORD.

Colossians 1:15-17, NIV

15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.

16 For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him.

17 He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

Proof positive that Jesus is both the visible image of God and that He created and sustains all things.

THE WORD BECAME FLESH.

John 1:14, NIV

14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Again proof positive that Jesus is the bodily incarnation of the WORD (God), vrs 1 The Word (Jesus) was with God and the Word (Jesus) WAS God. We can add to this, THE WORD (Jesus) is God. The following scripture proves this.

Hebrews 13:8, NIV

8 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and for ever.

FACTS:

Jesus Christ existed before the world was made.

Jesus Christ made the heavens and the Earth. John 1:1

Jesus Christ is God incarnate. Col 1:15-17

Hebrews 1:1-14, NIV

1 In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways,

2 but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe.

3 The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.

4 So he became as much superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is superior to theirs.

5 For to which of the angels did God ever say, "You are my Son; today

I have become your Father"? Or again, "I will be his Father, and he will be my Son"?

6 And again, when God brings his firstborn into the world, he says, "Let all God's angels worship him."

7 In speaking of the angels he says, "He makes his angels winds, his servants flames of fire."

8 But about the Son he says, "Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever, and righteousness will be the sceptre of your kingdom.

9 You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions by anointing you with the oil of joy."

10 He also says, "In the beginning, O Lord, you laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands.

11 They will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like a garment.

12 You will roll them up like a robe; like a garment they will be changed. But you remain the same, and your years will never end."

13 To which of the angels did God ever say, "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet"?

14 Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?

Yet more confirmation of what we have already read, Jesus is God's final message to this lost world, He has been exalted above all things, He is heir to all things, and as His brothers so are we! Note vrs 14.

FACTS:

Jesus was born of a virgin Matt 1:18-23

Jesus purged our sins Heb 1:3

Jesus is the only name by which we can be saved Acts 4:12

Jesus paid the price for us 1Cor 6:20

Jesus died for us 1 Thes 5:9-10

Jesus rose again Rom 14:9 - 1Cor 15:3-7

Jesus ascended to be with the father Luke 24:50-53

Jesus will return Rev 22:6-7 - Acts 1:9-11

There is so much more we could say about Jesus, but this is only a foundational booklet. Read for yourselves the Gospel accounts of the life and ministry of Jesus, it is the best teaching you can have.

GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT.

There are 117 references to the Holy Spirit in the NIV New Testament. He (never it) has a very special ministry, and also a unique standing in scripture. We would have to read quite a bit of the New Testament to really appreciate all that the Holy Spirit does. For our purposes, we will just select a few examples, to give a general outline. Lets start by looking at an anomaly. Theres one sin that God wont forgive!

Matthew 12:31, NIV

31 And so I tell you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men,

but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven.

Its obvious then, that the Holy Spirit must hold a special place in creation. If you blaspheme Jesus you will be forgiven, even though Jesus was the sacrifice that paid for our atonement. Blaspheme God the father and you will be forgiven. Even though it was God the Father who gave His own Son to be that sacrifice. The Holy Spirit must be, and is, very special.

Matthew 1:20, NIV

20 But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.

It was the Holy Spirit who implanted the embryonic Jesus in Marys womb.

Matthew 3:11, NIV

11 "I baptise you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

With, by, and in, are all translations of the same Greek word.

Matthew 28:19, NIV

19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

We are baptised in His name.

Luke 2:26, NIV

26 It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Christ.

He brings revelation.

Mark 13:11, NIV

11 Whenever you are arrested and brought to trial, do not worry beforehand about what to say. Just say whatever is given you at the time, for it is not you speaking, but the Holy Spirit.

He speaks through us.

John 14:26, NIV

26 But the Counsellor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.

He is our counsellor, our helper, our memory aid.

Acts 9:31, NIV

31 Then the church throughout Judea, Galilee and Samaria enjoyed a time of peace. It was strengthened; and encouraged by the Holy

Spirit, it grew in numbers, living in the fear of the Lord.

He strengthens and encourages.

Acts 13:2, NIV

2 While they were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."

He gives commands.

Acts 16:6, NIV

6 Paul and his companions travelled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia.

He prevents us making wrong moves.

Acts 20:28, NIV

28 Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood.

He gives us jobs.

Romans 8:26, NIV

26 In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express.

He intercedes for us.

1 Corinthians 3:16, NIV

16 Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you?

He lives in us.

Hebrews 2:4, NIV

4 God also testified to it by signs, wonders and various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will.

He brings gifts.

Galatians 5:22, NIV

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,
23 gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

There is fruit of His presence in our lives.

Ephesians 1:13, NIV

13 And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked

in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit,

He is the 'seal' of our salvation.

Ephesians 4:30, NIV

30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

He can be grieved.

2 Timothy 1:14, NIV

14 Guard the good deposit that was entrusted to you--guard it with the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in us.

He helps us.

These are just some of the things the Holy Spirit does. As you can see, He plays an enormous part in our lives.

HOME WORK: Begin to study the Gospels.

3. Who Am I Now.

It is important to know what we were before we became Christians, what happened to us to change us, and what we are now that we are Christians. Lets look at these things.

BEFORE CONVERSION:

This is fairly easy to establish:

Romans 3:23, NIV

23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

We were all sinners. Remember that sin is being disobedient to God.

Matthew 18:11, NKJV

11 "For the Son of Man has come to save that which was lost.

We were all lost, that is lost to God's forgiveness. God cannot tolerate sin so, sinners are cut off from God. He cannot give them all the things that He wants to give them. This is what we were, sinners cut off from the love and presence of God by our sin. Sin acts as a barrier between us and God. The devil has put up the sin barrier to try to keep us from God, and this barrier has to be broken down before we can be acceptable in God's sight.

BUT WEVE CHANGED.

So what brings about the change in us ? The Holy Spirit, the third person of the trinity of God does this work. He alone can bring about

the miraculous change within us that we call being BORN AGAIN. There are 4 stepping stones to this experience, lets take a look at them in turn.

1.CONVICTION.

A primary act of the Holy Spirit bringing us a sense of NEED. the Spirit offers a 3 fold revelation.

John 16:8-11, NKJV

8 "And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:

9 "of sin, because they do not believe in Me;

10 "of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more;

11 "of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.

In vrs 9 the revelation is of sin, note these points:

The lost state of the sinner, 2 Cor 4:3-4

The terror of sin, ending in death Rom 6:23

The hopelessness of man saving himself Eph 2:12

The unsaved are already condemned John 3:18,36

In vrs 10 the revelation is of the Saviour.

Christ speaks here of His own righteousness, ours is as filthy rags Isaiah 64:6.

God confirmed Christ's righteousness by the resurrection Eph 1:19-20.

So Jesus is righteous in Gods sight, this means we can trust Him.

In vrs 11 the revelation is of Satan who is called, the ruler of this world.

Satan is the cause of all our trouble (1John 5:19), but Jesus has overcome him (Col 2:15). Conviction is the first step towards God:

It reveals sin.

It reveals the Saviour.

It reveals the enemy.

2.REPENTANCE.

This word means to change our mind. It is our reaction to conviction, and the first move we make ourselves. Without repentance there can be no salvation, and true repentance brings about a change of mind and action. We dont just change our minds, we don't just say "sorry Lord", we change our way of life, we stop sinning. To repent is to turn your back on your old way of life, and thus forsake it in favour of following Christ.

3.CONVERSION.

This is the fruit of repentance, the actual about face of our lives.

Our turning from our sinful ways to the ways of God. This is our second step to salvation and perhaps the hardest, but without it there is no salvation. Conversion is an on going process, for some there are remarkable changes over night. But for others, changes come more gradually. Let's face it, some of us were worse than others in our pre saved state, and some are more willing to let go of the old life than others. God doesn't require miracles here, but He does expect steady progress in the right direction.

4. REGENERATION.

This comes directly from God, having truly repented and turned from our sin He gives re-birth to our spirit, or recreates us. At this point our spirit becomes alive to God and this has a drastic effect on our lives, it:

TRANSFORMS you from a sinner to a child of God John 1:12
RECREATES a new person in Christ 2Cor 5:17
QUICKENS you from spiritual death to spiritual life Eph 2:1,5
TRANSLATES you from Satan's domain to God's kingdom Col 1:13
IMPUTES Christ's righteousness to you Rom 3:22
IMPARTS all the blessings of God to you Rom 8:32

God does not clean the old person up. God creates a totally new person.

2 Corinthians 5:17, NIV
17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!

2 Corinthians 5:17, GLT
17 So that if anyone is in Christ, that one is a new creation; the old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new!

I've shown two translations just to make it absolutely clear, that after conversion, you really are a new person.

AFTER:

So after this mighty change in my life who am I ?

I am a CHILD OF GOD John 1:12
I am a NEW CREATION 2Cor 5:17
I am RIGHTEOUS 2Cor 5:21
I am a SON and HEIR in God's family Gal 4:6-7
I am a PRIEST 1Pet 2:9
I am SAVED Rom 10:13
I am CLEANSED 1John 1:7
I am LIGHT instead of darkness Matt 5:14
I am HOLY- BLAMELESS Col 1:22

And above all else I AM LOVED (John 3:16 Rev 1:4-6)

John 14:21, GLT

21 He that has My commandments and keeps them, it is that one who loves Me; and the one that loves Me shall be loved by My Father, and I shall love him and will reveal Myself to him.

John 14:23, GLT

23 Jesus answered and said to him, If anyone loves Me, he will keep My Word, and My Father shall love him. And We will come to him and will make a dwelling place with him.

John 16:27, GLT

27 for the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came out from God.

HOME WORK:

See how many more I AMs you can find. Each I AM is a promise from God to you.

Read :

Romans 12:9-21

Eph 4:17-32

Col 3:1-25

These scriptures will help you to develop the Christian way of life.

4. What Happens Next?

So we are Christians. We know that we are saved and that we belong to Christ, so what do we do now? Lets look at the next step in our Christian lives.

1.STUDY.

It is most important that we study the word of God. We will need a good working knowledge of it if we are to serve Him, and also if we are going to grow in faith and power in our Christian lives.

We are called to service:

Mark 16:15, NIV

15 He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation.

The world in this case starts right outside your church, or even your own front door. We are to be witnesses for Christ, that means we are to tell others about our faith, about Jesus, about the Gospel (good news), so that they also may be saved.

Romans 10:13-14, NIV

13 for, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

14 How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?

So you see we have a great responsibility now that we are Christians, to go and tell others.

2.SERVICE.

In the church, or body of Christ as the Bible calls us, there are many duties to be performed. Some are obvious, the pastor is the head of our church for instance, but we will not all be pastors.

Romans 12:4-5, NIV

4 Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function,
5 so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.

Remember, each member belongs to all the others. We are accountable to our brothers and sisters, just as they are accountable to us.

1 Corinthians 12:27, NIV

27 Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.

We are all members of the body, each one different and individual, but all the little parts make up the whole. Where would pastor be without helpers, those who take care of administration, those who clean? These may seem menial jobs, but all are equal in God's eyes. No part of the body is more important than any other part.

Ephesians 4:15-16, NIV

15 Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ.
16 From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

You will find your place, it will come to you quite naturally. God has given each one a natural gift or talent. Yours will soon become obvious if it isn't already.

3.BE A DOER.

The bible is quite clear about being a doer of the word not just a hearer.

James 1:21-27, NIV

21 Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent, and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you.
22 Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.

23 Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror

24 and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like.

25 But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it--he will be blessed in what he does.

26 If anyone considers himself religious and yet does not keep a tight rein on his tongue, he deceives himself and his religion is worthless.

27 Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

To be a doer means to put into practice what the word says. Allow it to penetrate your whole being and become your handbook of life.

4.FAITH.

In order to be a doer of the word you will need faith. Some people struggle with this word but in fact you use faith every day. When you sit down you don't worry about the chair holding your weight, you just sit down. This is faith. It is an attitude of mind, just knowing that something is so, or that something will happen. So in our Christian life we just know that God is with us, His word tells us this is so, in fact His word promises us this very thing.

Matthew 28:18-20, NIV

18 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

I am with you always... So our faith can rest and rely on this promise, if Jesus is with us, He will give us the strength and the ability to be a doer of His word.

5.HOW MUCH FAITH.

Another area where some Christians go wrong about faith is in the amount of faith we have. You will sometimes hear Christians pray Lord give me more faith. A measure of faith has been given to each one of us.

Romans 12:3, NIV

3 For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you.

You have each been given a measure of faith, you will not need any more than the portion you already have.

Luke 17:5-6, NIV

5 The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!"

6 He replied, "If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it will obey you.

If anyone needed faith it was the apostles, but Jesus said, use what you have.

Matthew 17:20, NIV

20 He replied, "Because you have so little faith. I tell you the truth, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you."

A mustard seed is very small yet this much faith can move a mountain. With faith all things are possible, yes, ALL things.

6.PRESS UPS.

Faith is like muscle, no matter how hard you exercise you dont get any more muscles, what happens is that the muscles you already have get bigger and more efficient. So it is with faith, the more you exercise it the more effective it becomes. You dont get more, but what youve already got gets bigger and becomes stronger.

7.FAITH AND WORKS.

Faith without works is dead, you cant say Ive got faith if you dont put it into practice.

James 2:14-18, NIV

14 What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him?

15 Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food.

16 If one of you says to him, "Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it?

17 In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.

18 But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds." Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do.

You must have both faith and works. As Christians we must have balance in our lives (well talk more about balance later), works alone are not enough, faith alone is not enough, but both working together is the right way. One last point to bear in mind:

Romans 14:23, NIV

23 But the man who has doubts is condemned if he eats, because his eating is not from faith; and everything that does not come from faith is sin.

8. FELLOWSHIP.

Be in the company of other Christians when you can, this will give you strength and encouragement.

(Acts 2:42, NKJV).

42 And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

The word for doctrine simply means 'teaching' , or, 'that which is taught'. The word for fellowship (koinonia), means 'joint participation', or 'community'. The important thing is that they "devoted" themselves to these things.

You will grow faster and learn more if you fellowship.

Get as much fellowship with other new Christians (in the company of more mature Christians) as you can, dont huddle together like a bunch of new chicks get in amongst the folks in the church. They will enjoy your newness it will give them a chance to flex their teaching muscles, and you will make new friends.

If you haven't already joined one, then join a good lively church, one where the gospel of Jesus Christ is preached, and where the Holy Spirit is allowed to have free reign.

Keep away from traditional dead churches, they wont do you any good at all. Dead traditional religion is the kiss of death to your spiritual growth.

9. PRAISE.

This is also very important, we were created by God to be in fellowship with Him, to praise Him, to worship Him. Its a great joy to do this so get into the habit. In church we sing little songs to the Lord, some are fast some are slower, but they all focus on the glory of the Lord and what He has done for us.

Isaiah 43:21, NIV

21 the people I formed for myself that they may proclaim my praise.

In this verse we can clearly see the importance of praise. We were formed by God to do it. Praise is simply telling out the good things that God has done for you. Learn to praise the Lord out loud and do it often. The Bible says, let the praises of the Lord be always on your lips (Heb 13:15). This is a good way to be. When you are praising the Lord the devil has a job to get to you with his temptation, and if you feel a bit down then praise God that He has set you free, and you will soon rise above your depression. Remember: Praising God will Seriously Damage Your Problems.

10. WORSHIP.

Worship differs from praise in the Bible. Praise is always vocal, and usually loud. The biblical words for worship always refer to a bodily action of some kind. In the Old Testament, the words usually mean to work, or to bow down before God. In the New Testament, the most used word means to bow down and kiss! Proskuneo, which means 'kiss towards'. So, acts of service are also acts of worship, ie, cleaning

the church, or giving your 'offering'. Helping and serving others are acts of worship, because we do these things 'for' God. If it wasn't for God we wouldn't do them. Both praise and worship are to be offerings and sacrifices, the following scriptures clearly illustrate this.

Hebrews 13:15, NIV

15 Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise--the fruit of lips that confess his name.

Romans 12:1, NIV

1 Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God--this is your spiritual act of worship.

HOME WORK.

Read Genesis 22:1-19 This was real faith.

Read James 2:21-24 and vrs 26.

Try to put your faith into action, tell someone about Jesus. The first time isn't easy, but as your faith grows so does your power to overcome the nerves.

Look up some of the instances of praise and worship in both Old and New Testaments and make notes on them.

5. Pentecost & Baptism.

I have called this chapter Pentecost, because this is perhaps the most important aspect of our everyday Christian lives. This week we will look at water baptism, and the baptism in the Spirit, also Spiritual gifts and fruits.

Pentecost was when the Holy Spirit was given to the church. It's a familiar story:

Acts 2:1-4, NIV

- 1 When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place.
- 2 Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting.
- 3 They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them.
- 4 All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

A mighty rushing wind, and tongues of fire were the first signs of His coming, but 'speaking in tongues' was the first outward manifestation of His presence in their lives. At this point, the disciples were baptised in the Holy Spirit.

BAPTISM WITH 'FIRE':

1. Being baptised in the Holy Spirit brings about major changes in our lives.

Matthew 3:11, NIV

11 "I baptise you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

Why fire? God only gives us what we really need, He is an abundant giver, but He is not frivolous. The only exception was Solomon. We need Gods fire, theres a world to save.

2. Jesus is the baptiser, the Holy Spirit is what we are baptised in.

Mark 1:8, NIV

8 I baptise you with water, but he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit."

With, by, and in, are translations of the same Greek word.

3. God gives us this baptism as an empowering.

Acts 1:8, NIV

8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Power to be witnesses. That's why we need the fire.

SPIRITUAL GIFTS.

The Holy Spirit brings certain gifts with Him when He comes. These gifts are listed for us in the scripture below. This scripture contains a wealth of wisdom, you would do well to study these verses at some length.

1 Corinthians 12:1-11, NIV

1 Now about spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be ignorant.

2 You know that when you were pagans, somehow or other you were influenced and led astray to mute idols.

3 Therefore I tell you that no-one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus be cursed," and no-one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit.

4 There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit.

5 There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord.

6 There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men.

7 Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.

8 To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit,

9 to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by

that one Spirit,
10 to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another
distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different
kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues.
11 All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives
them to each one, just as he determines.

In verse 1 the word for gifts isn't in the Greek at all, it appears
in verse 4. The Greek word is 'charisma' which is how the word
'charismatic' came about. It means to receive even though you don't
merit anything. Our God is a giver!

As we have read there are gifts or manifestations of the Spirit that
are present in the believer's life after the baptism in the Holy
Spirit. There are also FRUITS of the Spirit imparted by this
marvellous experience.

List the gifts and fruits in the spaces below.

GIFTS:

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FRUITS:

Galatians 5:22-23, NIV
22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience,
kindness, goodness, faithfulness,
23 gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

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LOVE:

Love obviously plays an important part in the Christian way of life.
You could say that love was central to it. Love is the all prevailing
force of Christianity. Read the following scripture:

1 Corinthians 12:31- 13 13, NIV

31 But eagerly desire the greater gifts. And now I will show you the most excellent way.

1 If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal.

2 If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.

3 If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing.

4 Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud.

5 It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.

6 Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.

7 It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

8 Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away.

9 For we know in part and we prophesy in part,

10 but when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears.

11 When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me.

12 Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.

13 And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

Balance in our Christian lives is so important, and love is the key to it all. None of the gifts means anything without love. On the other hand, love alone is incomplete without the gifts. Ideally, both should be in harmony with one another, so that what is done is done in love, and that love has the means, or giftings, to do what is necessary.

The gifts are given at the Spirit's discretion, we may not have all of them, in fact, most people only have 2 or 3, but all 9 fruits should be evident in our lives.

Love is the greatest power of all, love sent Jesus to the cross, love conquers all, love will get us into Heaven.

WATER BAPTISM.

For those who dont know what this is:

It is the total immersion of the believer in water.

It is a public declaration of your inner faith and belief in Jesus Christ.

It also signifies being buried with Him, and rising up from the water to a new life.

I must stress that water baptism does not cleanse you from your sins, only the blood of Jesus can do that, but it does symbolise cleansing and newness.

The first act we read that Jesus did was to be baptised in water.

Matthew 3:13-17, NIV

13 Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptised by John.

14 But John tried to deter him, saying, "I need to be baptised by you, and do you come to me?"

15 Jesus replied, "Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfil all righteousness." Then John consented.

16 As soon as Jesus was baptised, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him.

17 And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."

If it was necessary for Jesus to be baptised, then how much more so for us.

There are many scripture references to baptism we will look at just a few. Remember that baptism is a command not an option!

Romans 6:4, NIV

4 We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

This is the real significance of baptism, being buried with Him and raised to new life. Ideally, baptism should come directly after conversion.

Colossians 2:12, NIV

12 having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead.

A further scripture to confirm this.

Mark 16:16, NIV

16 Whoever believes and is baptised will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.

Believe and be baptised both commands.

Acts 2:38, NIV

38 Peter replied, "Repent and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Repent and be baptised 2 more commands.

Acts 18:8, NIV

8 Crispus, the synagogue ruler, and his entire household believed in the Lord; and many of the Corinthians who heard him believed and were

baptised.

After belief comes baptism, in this case straight away.

These are just some of the mentions in scripture of water baptism. When you feel ready to undertake in this act have a word with your pastor, but don't wait too long.

SOME MISCONCEPTIONS.

There are many who have wrong ideas about water baptism. Some argue that sprinkling with water is correct, because the amount of water used is never specified in scripture. This is not true. The word baptise comes from the Greek word 'Baptizo', which means to immerse, or more literally, to sink until submerged! There has to be sufficient water to 'submerge' whomever is being baptised. Sprinkling with water is not in the Bible.

Some sections of the church baptise babies. This too is not in the Bible. Mark 16:16 says, believe and be baptised. How can a baby believe? Acts 2:38 says, repent and be baptised. How can a baby repent?

Some sections of the church say that baptism is the entry into God's Kingdom. The Bible says in John 3:3, you must be born again to see the Kingdom, and in John 3:5, you must be born of water, which is our natural birth, and of Spirit, which is our second birth. It's this spiritual rebirth, being born again, that gets us into God's Kingdom. The first birth only gets us into this world.

6. Things Christians Need to Know About.

There are some things we Christians do in church that may need a little explanation. Below are some examples:

1. BREAKING BREAD.

Breaking bread was instituted by Jesus on the night that He was betrayed.

Matthew 26:26-28, NIV

26 While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body."

27 Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you.

28 This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

The Lord explains here why He did it. The wine represents the Blood of Jesus which is the sign, or seal of the 'New Covenant', or New Testament. A covenant is a binding agreement, in this case made

between us and God.

Luke 22:19, NIV

19 And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me."

Here Jesus tells us that the bread represents His body, which is given for us. Christ's body was sacrificed on the cross in our place. He was the atoning sacrifice that God required for the forgiveness of our sin.

1 Corinthians 11:23-30, NIV. This is Paul speaking.

23 For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread,

24 and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me."

25 In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

26 For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

27 Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord.

28 A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup.

29 For anyone who eats and drinks without recognising the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself.

30 That is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep.

Here Paul tells us that he received these instructions from the Lord. He gives the same instruction about the bread and the blood as the Lord, but adds in the reason why we do it. We do it as an act of remembrance and proclamation. We do it in remembrance of Jesus, and to proclaim His death (which is our life).

In verse 27 we see that we must approach this feast in a proper manner, else we will be sinning against the body and blood of the Lord.

In verses 28 and 29 we see that we should 'examine' ourselves before we partake, because to partake without recognising the body of the Lord brings judgment.

Acts 2:42-47, NIV

42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

43 Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles.

44 All the believers were together and had everything in common.

45 Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need.

46 Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts.

They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts,
47 praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

This gives us a glimpse of life in the first century church. Notice:

They devoted themselves to the apostles teaching, to the breaking of bread, and to prayer.

Miracles were common place.

They were together and had all things in common.

They met together everyday to break bread and to praise God.

To summarise:

breaking of bread is for Christians only, and must be approached in a worthy manner.

These times are intimate with God, and as a consequence, healings often happen, and revelation can come from the Lord of a personal nature.

Breaking of bread is a special time, cherish it.

2. TITHES

Giving our money to the church can be a point of contention. People outside the church are always suspicious when it comes to giving money, but this should not be the case for us. The Bible is quite clear about giving:

2 Corinthians 9:6-8, NIV

6 Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously.

7 Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

God's principals run contrary to the world's. So, we know that giving is good and brings a blessing on the giver. But what do we give? A tithe is a tenth part. In the Old Testament it meant a tenth of everything that increased. So, a tenth of your flocks, your grain etc. In those days, these things were the measure of wealth. Today we give a tenth of our income, before tax! God gets the first tenth. There are numerous scriptures that illustrate this, look up the word 'tithe' in your concordance and study a few of the references.

The tithe is the required offering, if you like, it's your duty to give a tenth., not to do so is, well, read the following scripture:

Malachi 3:8-12, NIV

8 "Will a man rob God? Yet you rob me. "But you ask, `How do we rob you?' "In tithes and offerings.

9 You are under a curse--the whole nation of you--because you are robbing me.

10 Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the LORD Almighty, "and see if I

will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it.

11 I will prevent pests from devouring your crops, and the vines in your fields will not cast their fruit," says the LORD Almighty.

12 "Then all the nations will call you blessed, for yours will be a delightful land," says the LORD Almighty.

You see not paying your tithe is unhealthy, and sadly much of the church doesn't pay it. By that I mean, a lot of people don't give God the first tenth of their income. But look at the blessings that God promises for obedience. Don't ever think that you can't afford your tithe. The truth is, you can't afford not to tithe.

A cheerful giver doesn't just give what's required. There are free will offerings. This is where you give over and above your tithe, and this is the bit that God loves. Be generous to others, and God will be generous to you. You can't out give God! Try it.

3. WHAT IS SIN

The first thing to learn about sin is that we've all done it. No-one is perfect:

Romans 3:23, NIV

23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Sin is disobedience to God and can take two forms:

Sins of commission.

Sins of omission.

If you do something you know is wrong, that's a sin. If you don't do something that you know you should do, that's a sin. Both are equally sin.

There is no size to sin. There are no big sins and little sins, all are sins. God judges 'sin' not sins. To Him, all sin is sin, however big, however small.

Romans 6:23, NIV

23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The result of sin is death, but for the Christian there is a different end. We have eternal life, praise God.

Romans 6:22, NIV

22 But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves to God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life.

This is much better, but what if we do sin?

1 John 1:9, NIV

9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us

our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

God is ever faithful, and when He forgives, He forgets!

4. WHAT IS HOLINESS.

The Greek word for holiness simply means 'separation'. In other words, to be holy is to be separate. This does not mean that you shut yourself away from the world. Jesus went in amongst the sinners and yet was holy. Holiness is an attitude of mind. You can go amongst sinners and not join them in their sin. This is exactly what Jesus did, read the gospels.

Holiness is given by God. He separated you from sin when you got saved, so you became holy at your conversion. Lets look at this in scripture.

Hebrews 10:10, NIV

10 And by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

We have been 'made' holy by God's will. That's fine, but we have a part to play too. We must remain holy by our own efforts:

James 1:27, NIV

27 Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

You can see it's up to us to keep ourselves from being polluted by the world. That's why holiness is separation.

Hebrews 12:14, NIV

14 Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness no-one will see the Lord.

It pays to be holy! So, holiness is of major importance to you as a Christian. Seek to be holy in all you do. You do this by studying the Bible. All the information you need is in there. It will tell you what is, and what is not acceptable

7. Enemy Territory.

It is important to know about the Devil, who he is, who he was and what role he plays in God's plan. Please note, I said, God's plan. Satan is only a pawn in the game.

LUCIFER:

Isaiah 14:12, NKJV

12 "How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!

How you are cut down to the ground, You who weakened the nations!

Here we see that Lucifer fell (or was cast down) to the ground. Why? Lets read some scripture and find out. The reference to the King of tyre is really a reference to Satan.

(Ezekiel 28:12-15, NKJV).

12 "Son of man, take up a lamentation for the king of Tyre, and say to him, `Thus says the Lord GOD: "You were the seal of perfection, Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.

13 You were in Eden, the garden of God; Every precious stone was your covering: The sardius, topaz, and diamond, Beryl, onyx, and jasper, Sapphire, turquoise, and emerald with gold. The workmanship of your timbrels and pipes Was prepared for you on the day you were created.

14 "You were the anointed cherub who covers; I established you; You were on the holy mountain of God; You walked back and forth in the midst of fiery stones.

15 You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, Till iniquity was found in you.

Here we have confirmation that Lucifer was the seal of perfection, wise, musical (timbrels and pipes), and the anointed Cherub who covers, until iniquity was found in him.

God created an ark angel called Lucifer, (you probably know this name). Lucifer was very beautiful and powerful, and was created to cover the throne of God.

This Hebrew word for 'anointed', means 'with outstretched wings'. He was musical, and may have even led the host of Heaven in their worship of God.

So what became of Lucifer ?

In verse 17 we see that God cast Lucifer out of Heaven because of the iniquity that was found in him. Sin was found in him! Sin, brought on by Pride caused his fall.

Ezekiel 28:17, NIV

17 Your heart became proud on account of your beauty, and you corrupted your wisdom because of your splendour. So I threw you to the earth; I made a spectacle of you before kings.

He corrupted his wisdom. The Hebrew means literally to kill off. The Hebrew for splendour means brightness.

Satan's Hebrew name is 'Heylel' which means 'lite bearer', and is related to the Hebrew word Hallal, which is translated worship. He was covered in precious stones and so was a reflection, or bearer, of God's light. This was the splendour that caused him to sin.

Isaiah 14:13-15, NIV

13 You said in your heart, "I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God; I will sit enthroned on the mount of assembly, on the utmost heights of the sacred mountain.

14 I will ascend above the tops of the clouds; I will make myself

like the Most High."

15 But you are brought down to the grave, to the depths of the pit.

Lucifer said I will, this is pride. God hates pride.

So Lucifer as was, became the devil (Satan) as is.
He is real and not a myth.

Ezek 28:13 says you (Satan) were in Eden the garden of God...., remember the serpent? This is were the devil enters our history.

WARFARE.

You may be surprised to hear a Christian use the word warfare, but in fact almost everything we do is directly opposed by the devil. He opposes us at our every turn, so we must know about him, his methods, and how we can defeat him in our every day lives. I must stress at this point that the devil is already defeated. Jesus broke his power on the cross, and took all authority away from him at Calvary (Col 2:15). Praise the Lord! So in no way should we fear the devil, our God is bigger than Satan, and in the name of Jesus, we have authority over the enemy. Having looked at Satan, lets look at his helpers.

1.DEMONS, WHAT ARE THEY?

Demons are in fact fallen angels:

Revelation 12:7-9, NIV

7 And there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back.

8 But he was not strong enough, and they lost their place in heaven.

9 The great dragon was hurled down--that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him.

We see from this passage that the devil has his angels. These angels would have served him in heaven as Lucifer, and when he rose up against God they joined with him in battle. They lost the fight and were thrown out of heaven.

Revelation 12:12, NIV

12 Therefore rejoice, you heavens and you who dwell in them! But woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has gone down to you! He is filled with fury, because he knows that his time is short."

They were obviously glad to be rid of him. The devil knows his time is short, so he and his demons are active all the time in the fight against mankind. The war they wage is one of constant harassment. They cant win, but they can do a lot of damage.

2.POSSESSION WHAT IS IT?.

Many people are afraid of this word. It has been blown up out of all

proportion by Hollywood in the name of making money. So, what is possession? The Greek word simply means to be under the power of a demon. It means to be owned by or to belong to. Your car is a possession, you own it, and do with it what you like. This would be a good description of what demon possession is. Someone who is demon possessed is so under their power that they are owned by the demons. And the demons do what they like with him. Lets look at true demon possession in scripture:

Luke 8:26-33, NIV

26 They sailed to the region of the Gerasenes, which is across the lake from Galilee.

27 When Jesus stepped ashore, he was met by a demon-possessed man from the town. For a long time this man had not worn clothes or lived in a house, but had lived in the tombs.

28 When he saw Jesus, he cried out and fell at his feet, shouting at the top of his voice, "What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you, don't torture me!"

29 For Jesus had commanded the evil spirit to come out of the man. Many times it had seized him, and though he was chained hand and foot and kept under guard, he had broken his chains and had been driven by the demon into solitary places.

30 Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" "Legion," he replied, because many demons had gone into him.

31 And they begged him repeatedly not to order them to go into the Abyss.

32 A large herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside. The demons begged Jesus to let them go into them, and he gave them permission.

33 When the demons came out of the man, they went into the pigs, and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and was drowned.

There is a lot of teaching in this passage I suggest you study it at your leisure, but for now we will just look at the nature of demons.

3.DEMONS DONT HAVE A BODY.

Demons are spiritual beings, they dont have a physical body of their own. They didnt die in the lake!

This is why they want to possess someone else's body.

They can only find an outlet for their character in a body.

Notice in the reading how they asked to go into the swine. Any body will do.

They are desperate creatures who live in world of fear, but we must not pity them. Remember they made their choice in Heaven when they followed Satan.

4.WE MUST CAST THEM OUT.

A lot of Jesus ministry on Earth was casting out demons.

Mark 16:9, NIV

9 When Jesus rose early on the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had driven seven demons.

Mark 1:23-26, NIV

23 Just then a man in their synagogue who was possessed by an evil spirit cried out,

24 "What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are--the Holy One of God!"

25 "Be quiet!" said Jesus sternly. "Come out of him!"

26 The evil spirit shook the man violently and came out of him with a shriek.

This is a classic example of how to deal with a demon. Shut up and come out. Don't go looking for them, Jesus didn't, they found Him.

5.DEMONS LIKE TO PERFORM.

Notice from all the readings how the demons like to put on a show, shouting, foaming at the mouth, convulsing etc. So don't be surprised by these things.

They also like to talk, notice how they talked to Jesus.

They knew who He was and BEGGED Him not to destroy them.

As a rule we don't ever talk to them, they are liars, we just use the name of Jesus and cast them out.

The word for cast really means to 'throw'. I like the sound of throwing them out.

6.DO NOT BE AFRAID OF DEMONS.

There is no need to be afraid of the devil or his demons. Fear is the opposite to faith. Remember we as Christians are possessed by God, His Holy Spirit indwells us, we are His.

Ephesians 1:13-14, NIV

13 And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit,

14 who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession--to the praise of his glory.

From these marvellous scriptures we can clearly see that we, born again Christians are indeed possessed by God, bought and paid for with the blood of Christ! How can a demon deal with that?

Luke 10:17-20, NIV

17 The seventy-two returned with joy and said, "Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name."

18 He replied, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.

19 I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you.

20 However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven."

Ok, so we can see that we have authority over the enemy and nothing shall by any means hurt us. There are many other such scriptures you can look for them at your leisure, but the promise of vrs 19 is in itself enough for us to stand on.

7.LETS SUMMARISE.

The devil is the fallen angel Lucifer, he is the head or leader of all the demons.

Demons are the devil's servants, fallen angels who are under the power of Satan.

He rules them by fear.

The devil is not omnipresent like God, he is not everywhere at once, but he has so many demons that he seems to be everywhere.

Do not fear him or them.

Do not be obsessed with them.

They are a pain in the neck, treat them as such.

8.TEMPTATION.

One of the ways the devil comes against us is through temptation:

Temptation is the desire to do something that is against God's will. James 1:13-15

We must resist at all cost. James 4:14

Temptation itself is no sin, only yielding to it is sinful. Luke 22:40

If you are tempted you are in good company. Heb 2:18

Matthew 4:1-11, NIV

1 Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil.

2 After fasting for forty days and forty nights, he was hungry.

3 The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread."

4 Jesus answered, "It is written: `Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

5 Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple.

6 "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down. For it is written: "He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.'"

7 Jesus answered him, "It is also written: `Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

8 Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendour.

9 "All this I will give you," he said, "if you will bow down and worship me."

10 Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: `Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'"

11 Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.

Jesus was tempted by the devil himself, not many of us will have such an honour. The role of the demon is to tempt.

Notice how Jesus beat the temptation, it is written. He used the word of God as a weapon (which it is!) against the devil and the devil had no answer to it. Notice, the devil didnt argue!

Notice also that the devil used the word of God to try to trick Jesus, vrs 6, but Jesus had the perfect answer every time. The lesson is simple, use the word of God against the devil, against the demons, against temptation, and you will be victorious.

A POINT TO REMEMBER:

The devil will use your old self as the basis for temptation:

Remember that the 'old' self is dead, (Gal 5:24) and Satan can't raise the dead!

He can't, but you can. So be careful not to.

Don't listen to his lies that you haven't really changed. You have.

God's word says you have, so you have.

Remember too that there is no truth in him.

Read the following text and see what Jesus said concerning both the pharisees and the devil.

John 8:44, NIV

44 You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

There is no truth in the devil. This is because the truth is not an 'it', it's a person, Jesus. Read on:

John 14:6, NIV

6 Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No-one comes to the Father except through me.

The devil is a liar, and the father of it. That's the only mention of him being a father - creator.

9.THE ARMOUR.

God has provided us with armour so that we can defend ourselves against the attack of the enemy, and also that we can attack him! We read about this armour in Ephesians:

Ephesians 6:10-18, NIV

10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power.

11 Put on the full armour of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes.

12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

13 Therefore put on the full armour of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.

14 Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled round your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place,
15 and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace.

16 In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.

17 Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

18 And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.

Let's look at the armour in more detail.

THE BELT OF TRUTH.

The Christian must always walk in the truth, lies are of the devil, but Jesus said I am the Way the Truth and the Life. (John 14:6) Always, always be truthful in all things. Truth counteracts lies. The truth sets us free, you could quite rightly say that Jesus (who is the truth) has set us free.

John 8:31-32, NIV

31 To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples.

32 Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

We can see from this that as Jesus disciples, we have been set free by the Truth.

THE BREAST PLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.

2 Corinthians 5:21, NIV

21 God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

We are the righteousness of God, we should live clean and wholesome lives.

Leviticus 19:2, NIV

2 "Speak to the entire assembly of Israel and say to them: `Be holy because I, the LORD your God, am holy.

1 Peter 1:15, NIV

15 But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do;

Righteousness is walking upright, ie, doing what's right in God's eyes, then the world has no reason to denigrate the name of God. Righteousness shows! Rev 19:8

THE GOSPEL OF PEACE.

The word Gospel means good news. Isn't it true that peace is good news? Today there are more wars going on simultaneously than you would

believe. What the world really needs right now is the Gospel of peace, and where does this piece of the armour fit the Christian? The feet! Jesus said GO.....

Study the word of God. 2Tim 2:15
Learn its truths. 2Pet 1:3
Walk in its ways. matt 7:24
Be at peace with all men. Heb 12:14

When you know the word of God and apply it to your life you do this automatically. Look at the following scripture and see just how contrary Gods way is to the devils:

Matthew 5:44, NIV
44 But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,

Love your enemy . This scripture applies to humans not demons, we are told to hate evil.

These 3 pieces of the armour we must have on all the time. We never take them off!!!

THE SHIELD OF FAITH.

With the shield we can defend ourselves against the attacks of the devil. No matter what he throws at us the shield will protect us so long as it is raised. Our faith is in God who will protect and keep us. Faith doesn't have to see, faith simply believes. The devil has no answer to simple faith.

1 Peter 1:3-5, NIV
3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,
4 and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade-- kept in heaven for you,
5 who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.

You see? Faith is a shield, and look at that shield Gods power. The devil has no chance against this shield.

2 Thessalonians 3:3, NIV
3 But the Lord is faithful, and he will strengthen and protect you from the evil one.

Not only does God protect us from the evil one, but He also strengthens us. This is an important truth to be learned. God gives us strength! How else could Christians survive in such a hostile world?

THE HELMET OF SALVATION.

The helmet protects our mind. Most of the devil's attacks come here. He is very subtle and will try to confuse us with all kinds of false doctrine, thoughts and feelings. All of these live in the mind, the place where you think. The helmet is the ultimate defence, lets face it, we are going to Heaven, whilst the devil is going into the lake of fire, what better thought could you have to stand on in times of trial. The Bible advises us to take every thought captive:

2 Corinthians 10:5, NIV

5 We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

In this way you will stop the rot before it gets a hold. Notice that this verse talks about, arguments, and pretension. These try to set themselves up against the knowledge of Christ. Much of the battle is in our mind. Be aware of this fact, it will help you as you grow.

THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT.

The word of God which as we have seen is our weapon of attack. With it we can silence the enemy. He has no defence against the Christian warrior who is armed with this fantastic weapon. But, a sword must be drawn to be a threat, and it must be wielded to do any damage. It is no good having a sword and keeping it sheathed. So, it is no good knowing the word of God, and not using it to attack. We are in a war, and as you know, in war you defend and attack. Some say that the best defence is to attack. This is certainly true for the Christian, especially as the enemy is already defeated! It should be noted that the sword is a spiritual weapon. The enemy is spirit, God is Spirit, the Word is Spirit. The battle is spiritual, so the weapon is Spiritual.

HOME WORK.

Read 2 Tim 2:3-5 Be a soldier note vrs 5, whos rules?

I suggest that you thoroughly study this chapter until you are familiar with the devil and his demons, and each part of the armour. Look for scriptures similar to those in this study, note them, learn them, use them against the enemy at every opportunity.

I can recommend my booklet called, "So! What About the Devil". It gives a lot more detail about our enemy.

8. The End Times.

Even today many Christians are not very aware of those events that will take place in the last days. In this last chapter we will take a brief look at the end times. Remember that this is not a definitive study on this vast subject, but it will give you a good idea of what is yet to come.

RAPTURE.

This event has been shrouded in mystery for centuries. The rapture of the church is the taking out of the world of all the Christians. This will happen sometime before Jesus returns to the Earth to rule from Jerusalem. The Bible says that we shall be changed in a moment of time. Our bodies will be transformed from corruptible flesh into incorruptible glorious bodies like unto His glorious body

1 Corinthians 15:50-55, NIV

50 I declare to you, brothers, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.

51 Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed--

52 in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.

53 For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality.

54 When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: "Death has been swallowed up in victory."

55 "Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?"

We can see from these verses that our present body is not going to heaven, so God will provide a new one! Many of us will be glad about this fact. Read on.....

Colossians 3:1-4, NIV

1 Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.

2 Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.

3 For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.

4 When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

This is the second coming of Christ to the Earth. When Christ appears we will be with Him, but he will appear from Heaven, so we will have to be taken up at some point in order to be able to appear with Him. Read on...

1 Thessalonians 4:13-17, NIV

13 Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope.

14 We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him.

15 According to the Lord's own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep.

16 For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.

17 After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord for ever.

Praise God, can you imagine what it will be like, the Lord will descend with a shout and we will be caught up to meet Him in the air. This is the rapture. Read on.....

Matthew 24:40-44, NIV

40 Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left.

41 Two women will be grinding with a hand mill; one will be taken and the other left.

42 "Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come.

43 But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and would not have let his house be broken into.

44 So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.

How ever will the world explain the sudden disappearance of millions of Christians. If you as a Christian are with a non Christian friend at the time of the rapture, you will suddenly vanish, but your clothes will be left behind. You won't need them where you're going. I think there will be a lot of head scratching going on!!

ANTICHRIST.

This man will rise to power in the end times.

2 Thessalonians 2:1-12, NIV

1 Concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered to him, we ask you, brothers,

2 not to become easily unsettled or alarmed by some prophecy, report or letter supposed to have come from us, saying that the day of the Lord has already come.

3 Don't let anyone deceive you in any way, for that day will not come until the rebellion occurs and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the man doomed to destruction.

4 He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshipped, so that he sets himself up in God's temple, proclaiming himself to be God.

5 Don't you remember that when I was with you I used to tell you these things?

6 And now you know what is holding him back, so that he may be revealed at the proper time.

7 For the secret power of lawlessness is already at work; but the one who now holds it back will continue to do so till he is taken out of the way.

8 And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendour of his coming.

9 The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders,

10 and in every sort of evil that deceives those who are perishing.

They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved.

11 For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie
12 and so that all will be condemned who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness.

Antichrist will be empowered by the devil, he will appear at first to be a peace maker, and will indeed have the answers to many of the world's problems, but after that which is restraining (the Holy Spirit & the church) is taken out of the way, he, antichrist will reveal his evil nature. Many will die at the hands of this beast, we must be all the more vigilant to get people saved before it is too late. Read on....

Revelation 13:1-18, NIV

1 And the dragon stood on the shore of the sea. And I saw a beast coming out of the sea. He had ten horns and seven heads, with ten crowns on his horns, and on each head a blasphemous name.
2 The beast I saw resembled a leopard, but had feet like those of a bear and a mouth like that of a lion. The dragon gave the beast his power and his throne and great authority.
3 One of the heads of the beast seemed to have had a fatal wound, but the fatal wound had been healed. The whole world was astonished and followed the beast.
4 Men worshipped the dragon because he had given authority to the beast, and they also worshipped the beast and asked, "Who is like the beast? Who can make war against him?"
5 The beast was given a mouth to utter proud words and blasphemies and to exercise his authority for forty-two months.
6 He opened his mouth to blaspheme God, and to slander his name and his dwelling-place and those who live in heaven.
7 He was given power to make war against the saints and to conquer them. And he was given authority over every tribe, people, language and nation.
8 All inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast--all whose names have not been written in the book of life belonging to the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world.
9 He who has an ear, let him hear.
10 If anyone is to go into captivity, into captivity he will go. If anyone is to be killed with the sword, with the sword he will be killed. This calls for patient endurance and faithfulness on the part of the saints.
11 Then I saw another beast, coming out of the earth. He had two horns like a lamb, but he spoke like a dragon.
12 He exercised all the authority of the first beast on his behalf, and made the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast, whose fatal wound had been healed.
13 And he performed great and miraculous signs, even causing fire to come down from heaven to earth in full view of men.
14 Because of the signs he was given power to do on behalf of the first beast, he deceived the inhabitants of the earth. He ordered them to set up an image in honour of the beast who was wounded by the sword and yet lived.
15 He was given power to give breath to the image of the first beast, so that it could speak and cause all who refused to worship the image

to be killed.

16 He also forced everyone, small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on his right hand or on his forehead,

17 so that no-one could buy or sell unless he had the mark, which is the name of the beast or the number of his name.

18 This calls for wisdom. If anyone has insight, let him calculate the number of the beast, for it is man's number. His number is 666.

This is hard scripture to understand but patient study will reveal the truth about antichrist. Don't get caught up too much in end time theology. Much confusion reigns in the church about this subject, dont be drawn into any debates about it. Remember, we are called to preach the gospel.

THE SECOND COMING.

After antichrist has been in power for 7 years Jesus will come back to Earth for the second time. He shall descend to the mount of Olives this same Jesus who ascended shall return in like manner. When Jesus ascended into heaven angels came to speak to those who had seen it.

Acts 1:11, NIV

11 "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven."

So, Jesus is coming back, and in the same way that He went.

Zechariah 14:1-5, NIV

1 A day of the LORD is coming when your plunder will be divided among you.

2 I will gather all the nations to Jerusalem to fight against it; the city will be captured, the houses ransacked, and the women raped. Half of the city will go into exile, but the rest of the people will not be taken from the city.

3 Then the LORD will go out and fight against those nations, as he fights in the day of battle.

4 On that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem, and the Mount of Olives will be split in two from east to west, forming a great valley, with half of the mountain moving north and half moving south.

5 You will flee by my mountain valley, for it will extend to Azel. You will flee as you fled from the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Then the LORD my God will come, and all the holy ones with him.

In vrs 2 it says I will gather all nations to battle against Jerusalem, this is the war of Armageddon (Rev 16:16) you will probably have heard of this.

Vrs 3, Jesus will fight on behalf of the Jews and of course He will win (Rev 19:17-21).

In vrs 4 it says, the mount of olives will split. It has been recently discovered that there is a fault running through the mount of olives East to west!!

In vrs 5, the last line, we see that we shall be with Jesus at this time (the holy ones).

THE MILLENNIUM.

The survivors of the battle of Armageddon will then live under the rule of Christ. This rule will last for 1000 years. We will play a part in that rule.

Revelation 20:4-6, NIV

4 I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony for Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshipped the beast or his image and had not received his mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

5 (The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended.) This is the first resurrection.

6 Blessed and holy are those who have part in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years.

We shall reign with Christ during this period. We will be immortal, already in our glorified bodies. The survivors of the war will still be mortal. We will in effect be like super man is in the comics. The Earth shall at last be at peace.

Isaiah 2:4, NIV

4 He will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples. They will beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war any more.

No more war. Christ will rule firmly but fairly. For once the world will see perfect government, and perfect justice.

Revelation 20:1-3, NIV

1 And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key to the Abyss and holding in his hand a great chain.

2 He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years.

3 He threw him into the Abyss, and locked and sealed it over him, to keep him from deceiving the nations any more until the thousand years were ended. After that, he must be set free for a short time.

Satan will be bound during this period, so not only will the people of the world know perfect government, but there will be no devil to tempt them, sounds too good to be true but it will happen. There is no mention of what happens to the demons during this time!

Revelation 20:7-10, NIV

7 When the thousand years are over, Satan will be released from his prison

8 and will go out to deceive the nations in the four corners of the

earth--Gog and Magog--to gather them for battle. In number they are like the sand on the seashore.

9 They marched across the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of God's people, the city he loves. But fire came down from heaven and devoured them.

10 And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulphur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

During the 1000 years the Earth is re-populated, and at the end of this time Satan is let loose one last time to deceive the nations, who flock to Jerusalem to make war on it. God destroys them with fire from Heaven, proving that even with perfect government and no temptation, the nature of fleshly man is only evil.

THE GREAT WHITE THRONE JUDGMENT.

This is the last judgment:

Revelation 20:11-15, NIV

11 Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. Earth and sky fled from his presence, and there was no place for them.

12 And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books.

13 The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what he had done.

14 Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death.

15 If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

We have no part in this judgment it is strictly for the evil dead. This is the final judgment, after this it's Heaven for all eternity praise the Lord.

Let's finish by reading one last passage of scripture:

Revelation 21:1- 22 v 5, NIV

1 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea.

2 I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband.

3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.

4 He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."

5 He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."

6 He said to me: "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the

Beginning and the End. To him who is thirsty I will give to drink without cost from the spring of the water of life.

7 He who overcomes will inherit all this, and I will be his God and he will be my son.

8 But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practise magic arts, the idolaters and all liars--their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulphur.

This is the second death."

9 One of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and said to me, "Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb."

10 And he carried me away in the Spirit to a mountain great and high, and showed me the Holy City, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God.

11 It shone with the glory of God, and its brilliance was like that of a very precious jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal.

12 It had a great, high wall with twelve gates, and with twelve angels at the gates. On the gates were written the names of the twelve tribes of Israel.

13 There were three gates on the east, three on the north, three on the south and three on the west.

14 The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

15 The angel who talked with me had a measuring rod of gold to measure the city, its gates and its walls.

16 The city was laid out like a square, as long as it was wide. He measured the city with the rod and found it to be 12,000 stadia in length, and as wide and high as it is long.

17 He measured its wall and it was 144 cubits thick, by man's measurement, which the angel was using.

18 The wall was made of jasper, and the city of pure gold, as pure as glass.

19 The foundations of the city walls were decorated with every kind of precious stone. The first foundation was jasper, the second sapphire, the third chalcedony, the fourth emerald,

20 the fifth sardonyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelfth amethyst.

21 The twelve gates were twelve pearls, each gate made of a single pearl. The great street of the city was of pure gold, like transparent glass.

22 I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.

23 The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp.

24 The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendour into it.

25 On no day will its gates ever be shut, for there will be no night there.

26 The glory and honour of the nations will be brought into it.

27 Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

1 Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear

as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb
2 down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of
the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit,
yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for
the healing of the nations.

3 No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the
Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him.

4 They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads.

5 There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp
or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And
they will reign for ever and ever.

He who testifies to these things says:

Surely I am coming quickly, amen, even so come LORD JESUS.

AMEN.

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