

DOING THE WILL OF GOD

“Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for **teaching**, for **reproof**, for **correction**, for **instruction which is in righteousness**. That the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work” (2 Tim. 3:16, 17 - ASV).

INTRODUCTION

We are all, *as new creatures in Christ Jesus*, working through weak flesh, and though we desire to live up to God's perfect requirements, we do fall short. As we study these pages, let us remember that God's instructions are always tempered with His love and mercy. May we never view God's commands as burdensome. Our Precious Saviour took away our burdens when he gave his perfect life on our behalf, and we accepted that wonderful provision. Whatever claim to goodness we have is only through our Lord Jesus Christ, who has promised to work in and through us, *if we abide in him*. Jesus very lovingly warned us, *“Apart from me, you can do nothing.”* We will do well to keep this in mind throughout our Christian walk.

As a thank-offering for all our Father is and has done for us, we desire to serve and obey Him, making Jesus Christ the Sovereign Lord of our life. If we always remember that it is ***the righteousness of Christ*** that makes us acceptable before God, and never our own, we will not become self-righteous, and proud, viewing *our* walk as a little closer to God's standard than the standards of our brethren. All *“our righteousness is as filthy rags”* before God. When we sin and are in need of forgiveness, let us go quickly and boldly to the throne of Heavenly Grace and in true repentance, along with a contrite heart, ask for God's gracious cleansing, for to continue to sin without repentance of heart and a desire to change is to stand before God unforgiven.

The things in this booklet are far from a complete listing of God's requirements for His people. We have dealt only with those Scriptures that deal with situations that most often confront us. We need, of course, to study the whole Word of God in order to know God's complete will for us.

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Section One - Toward A True Faith

OUR GOD

His Name

*"That men may know that thou, whose name alone is **Jehovah**, art the most high over all the earth" (Psa. 83:18 - KJV).*

The Creator

".... 'Sovereign Lord,' they said, 'you made the heaven and the earth and the sea, and everything in them'" (Acts 4:24). See also Psalm 8.

One God

"Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is One" (Deut. 6:4).

"For us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live" (1 Corinthians.8:6).

Infinite

"Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God" (Psalms 90:2).

Invisible

"No one has ever seen God, but the Only Begotten who is at the Father's side has made him known" (John 1:18).

"Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen" (1 Tim. 1:17).

All-seeing

"Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account" (Hebrews 4:13).

Only True

"Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent" (John 17:3).

His Attributes

Justice - *"Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne; love and faithfulness go before you" (Psalm 89:14).*

Wisdom - *"Who has understood the mind {or spirit} of the LORD, or instructed him as his counselor? Whom did the LORD consult to enlighten him, and who taught him the right way? Who was it that taught him knowledge or showed him the path of understanding?" (Isaiah 40:13, 14).*

Love - *"And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him" (1 John 4:16).*

Power - *"Your arm is endued with power; your hand is strong, your right hand exalted" (Psalm 89:13).*

Light - *"This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all" (1 John 1:5).*

To be Worshipped

"Jesus said to him, 'Away from me, Satan! For it is written: Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only'" (Matt. 4:10).

THE BIBLE

Inspired by God

"All Scripture is God-breathed (inspired) and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness" (2 Timothy 3:16).

Not to be added to or taken away from

"Every word of God is flawless; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him. Do not add to his words, or he will rebuke you and prove you a liar" (Proverbs 30:5 and 6).

IDOLS AND IMAGES

Should not worship

"You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them..." (Exodus 20:4, 5).

Many called gods

"For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as indeed there are many 'gods' and many 'lords')" (1 Cor. 8:5).

"The sorrows of those will increase who run after other gods" (Psalm 16:4).

All false gods useless

"For all the gods of the nations are idols, but the LORD made the heavens" (Psalm 96:5).

Making of idols

See Isaiah 44:9-20 for a detailed account of this subject.

Have no power

"But their idols are silver and gold, made by the hands of men. They have mouths, but cannot speak, eyes, but they cannot see; they have ears, but cannot hear, noses, but they cannot smell; they have hands, but cannot feel, feet, but they cannot walk; nor can they utter a sound with their throats. Those who make them will be like them, and so will all who trust in them" (Psalms 115:4-8).

Do not fear

"Of what value is an idol, since a man has carved it? Or an image that teaches lies? For he who makes it trusts in his own creation; he makes idols that cannot speak" (Habakkuk 2:18).

Section Two - The Church of God**INTRODUCTION**

Since the Church belongs to God, all of its affairs must be carried out in harmony with God's instructions, to please Him and not ourselves.

The Lord pays very serious attention to the workings of each congregation. Nothing that is done by any of us goes unseen by Him, and our earnest, heartfelt desire should be to please Him in everything. Therefore, we must always give careful thought to our actions, that they are in harmony with God's Holy Word, the Bible.

BASIC PRINCIPLES**Our Name**

The True Church is not a building. The word *church* comes from the Greek word *ekklesia* and means *"those called out."* When the word *church* is spoken of in the Bible, it refers to a congregation of God's people who have been called out of the world and set apart for Him. This shows that the word *church* does not mean a building, therefore we are free to meet anywhere. Romans 16:5 shows that the church in Rome met in a *house*. The Church is also called the *"Body of Christ"* (Ephesians 1:22 and 23). In other places it is called the *"Lamb's wife,"* the *"Bride,"* and *"the Church of the Firstborn."* See Rev. 21:9 and Heb.12:23. The name *Christian* means *"Christ's one"*; thus, the name we choose for our individual group should honor the Lord and never man.

Character of gatherings

The gatherings of the Lord's people should be held in an orderly yet joyous manner. They should be conducted in such a way as to be conducive to worship and of building one another up in grace and knowledge. We suggest the following guidelines for the establishment of gatherings of God's people:

1. Frequent, regular gatherings, including mid-week meetings.
2. A time of worship and prayer which would incorporate the singing of hymns and the reading of Scripture.
3. A sermon could be given by an Elder or a spiritually mature brother who is led of the Holy Spirit.
4. A time between services when the brethren could fellowship together.
5. After this period of fellowship, there could be a Bible study.

6. There might be a special meeting from time to time for newly interested persons, dealing strictly with the milk of God's Word. In this way, they will not become lost in the deeper things before they are ready. Wisdom and love should dictate.
7. Testimony meetings, telling of the Lord's leadings in the lives of His people, accompanied by prayer and praise, can be a rich source of blessing.

Collection of money

We do not believe the Lord is honored in the asking of money by the passing of a collection plate. God will provide the needs of the congregation through the contributions from those who can afford it and via prayer. Our giving should be done quietly and generously, as stewards of the Lord's goods. A collection box could be placed in the room where the brethren meet, where any so moved can contribute whatever the Lord lays upon their hearts. A collection may be requested by an Elder, with the approval of the congregation, for any who are in need, or to help cover expenses of an invited speaker from another distant congregation, or for other uses approved by the brethren.

Court of Law

The Bible strongly condemns the taking of one of the brethren to a court of law. *"If any of you has a dispute with another, dare he take it before the ungodly for judgment instead of before the saints? Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if you are to judge the world, are you not competent to judge trivial cases? Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more the things of this life! Therefore, if you have disputes about such matters, appoint as judges even men of little account in the church! I say this to shame you. Is it possible that there is nobody among you wise enough to judge a dispute between believers? But instead, one brother goes to law against another -- and this in front of unbelievers"* (1 Cor. 6:1-6).

EQUALITY

Of all nations

"From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live" (Acts 17:26).

\Races and tribes

"There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28).

"Then Peter began to speak: 'I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism but accepts men from every nation who fear him and do what is right'" (Acts 10:34 and 35).

"To show partiality is not good -- yet a man will do wrong for a piece of bread" (Proverbs 28:21).

Rich and poor

"Suppose a man comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes, and a poor man in shabby clothes also comes in. If you show special attention to the man wearing fine clothes and say, 'Here's a good seat for you,' but say to the poor man, 'You stand there or sit on the floor by my feet,' have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?" (James 2:2-4).

ELDERS

A Definition

Many denominations have an improper application for the words *Bishop, Overseer, Elder, or Pastor*. Though there are different ways of using some of these words, we will only note their meanings as they relate to the *Bishop, Overseer, Elder, or Pastor* in the congregation.

Bishop and Overseer

The Bishop and Overseer are one and the same person. The word *Overseer* means to look or watch over. The word *Bishop* has the same meaning. They are both from the same Greek word *episkopos*.

Elder

An Elder is also an overseer. (Please compare Acts 20:17 with Acts 20:28.) The Lamsa Bible brings this thought out clearly. In 1 Tim. 3:1 and Titus 1:7 of this translation, the word *Elder* is used instead of *Bishop*. The word *Bishop* is used in these verses by the King James Bible rather than *Elder*.

Vines' Expository Dictionary helps to explain the work of the Elder in his position as Overseer or Bishop: "In the Christian churches, those who, being raised up and qualified by the word of the Holy Spirit, were appointed to have the spiritual care of, and to exercise oversight over the churches. To these terms *bishop* or *overseer* is applied (see Acts 20, verse 17 with verse 28, and Titus 1:5 and 7), the latter term indicating the nature of their work, their maturity of spiritual experience."

In other words, the word *Elder* signifies the man himself. The words *Bishop* or *Overseer* signifies the Elder in his duties of overseeing the affairs of the congregation.

Pastor

A Pastor is a Shepherd, one who guides as well as feeds the flock. This work of pastor is provided by the Elder. He would be one to whom you could go with personal problems and find wise and gentle advice and comfort.

No clergy

"But you are not to be called 'Rabbi,' for you have only one Master and you are all brothers. And do not call anyone on earth 'father,' for you have one Father, and he is in heaven. Nor are you to be called 'teacher,' for you have one Teacher, the Christ. The greatest among you will be your servant. For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted" (Matthew 23:8-12).

A servant

Above all, an Elder must be humble, a servant to the brethren. *"Jesus called them together and said, 'You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave'"* (Matt. 20:25-27).

"...the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves. For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who is at the table? But I am among you as one who serves" (Luke 22:26, 27).

Lesson from the Pharisees

"Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples, 'The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. So you must obey them and do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach. They tie up heavy loads and put them on men's shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them. Everything they do is done for men to see: They make their phylacteries wide and the tassels on their garments long; they love the place of honor at banquets and the most important seats in the synagogues; they love to be greeted in the marketplaces and to have men call them 'Rabbi'" (Matthew 23:1-7).

Our perfect example

"When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. 'Do you understand what I have done for you?' he asked them. 'You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you'" (John 13:12-15).

Ordaining Elders

*"Paul and Barnabas ordained them Elders in each Church and, with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust" (Acts 14:23). The word *ordained*, as used in this verse, comes from the Greek word *kirotoneo*, and means *to elect by stretching out the hand*. Since this is the case, no brother should assume the position of Elder without a majority of the congregation giving their approval. He should remain an Elder for as long as he is qualified and unless there be such time that the congregation feels his services are no longer that which the Lord would approve. This also should never be done without prayer and fasting, the early Church setting an example for us.*

How Many?

As many as meet the qualifications may be selected, in each congregation, as they feel are necessary to provide for its needs.

No Paid Ministry

We have no Biblical example from Jesus or the Apostles of an Elder, Pastor, Deacon or Deaconess being paid for their ministry and service to the brethren. The Apostle Paul sums up our belief in this matter very well. In 1 Thess. 2:6-9, Paul states that he worked hard so that he would not burden the brethren. Elders in our congregations should have this same kind of unselfish dedication. We believe that *Pilgrim* Elders, as well as other brethren, who visit the different classes with the desire of helping to keep their faith strong, can receive a voluntary contribution from the congregation they have been invited to, if this is the will of the Church.

Qualifications

"Here is a trustworthy saying: If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer (traditionally bishop; also in verse 2), he desires a noble task. Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?) He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap" (1 Tim. 3:1-7).

"To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder, a witness of Christ's sufferings and one who also will share in the glory to be revealed: Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers -- not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock" (1 Pet. 5:1-3).

"He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it" (Titus 1:9).

"In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive'" (Acts 20:35).

Warning

"Not many of you should presume to be teachers, my brothers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly" (James 3:1).

False teachers

"But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them -- bringing swift destruction on themselves" (2 Peter 2:1). Where a congregation is without order and the proper discipline, as provided for by God's Word, a breeding ground is provided in which false teachers can rise up and exert power. False teachers or *wolves in sheep's clothing* are carnal, seeking power, and desiring to lord it over the brethren and abusing their position. Almost invariably, these false teachers have blights on their character. There will always be the danger of false teachers, but with a proper studying of Scripture by the congregation, and prayer, they will not gain a foothold.

DEACONS

Qualifications

"Deacons, likewise, are to be men worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain. They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience. They must first be tested, and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons. In the same way, their wives (or deaconesses) are to be women worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything" (1 Tim. 3:8-11).

Duties

Philippians 1:1 shows the Deacon in relation to the church.. 1 Timothy 3:8 shows the distinction between a Deacon and an Elder. Deacons are chosen by the congregation to serve as ushers, treasurers, setting up tables, or in other areas of service for the well-being of the physical needs of the brethren. They are not required to be *apt to teach*.

A servant

In Romans 16:1 the word *servant* comes from the Greek word *diakonos* and means a Deacon. This verse shows that women can be Deacons or Deaconesses. They are not chosen, however, to be Elders. See 1 Timothy 2:12.

CHURCH

Duties

"It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up" (Ephesians 4:11, 12).

"... speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. 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" (Ephesians 4:15, 16).

Many members

"The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ" (1 Corinthians 12:12).

Gifts

"There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men. Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, 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. All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines" (1 Corinthians 12:6-11).

Prayer and Worship

"Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:19, 20).

"And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him" (Matt. 6:7,8).

"Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name" (Psa. 100:4).

"For though I am absent from you in body, I am present with you in spirit and delight to see how orderly you are and how firm your faith in Christ is" (Col. 2:5).

"Worship the LORD with gladness; come before him with joyful songs" (Psalm 100:2).

Preach the Gospel

"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age" (Matt. 28:19, 20).

"I tell you, whoever acknowledges me before men, the Son of Man will also acknowledge him before the angels of God. But he who disowns me before men will be disowned before the angels of God" (Luke 12:8, 9).

"That if you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved" (Romans 10:9, 10).

"First to those in Damascus, then to those in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and to the Gentiles also, I preached that they should repent and turn to God and prove their repentance by their deeds" (Acts 26:20).

"They went out and preached that people should repent" (Mark 6:12).

Members called

Individuals in the Church are simply called *brother* and *sister*. "And we are sending along with him the *brother* who is praised by all the churches for his service to the gospel" (2 Corinthians 8:18).

"...no longer as a slave, but better than a slave, as a dear brother. He is very dear to me but even dearer to you, both as a man and as a brother in the Lord" (Philemon 16).

Responsibilities to Elders

"Now we ask you, brothers, to respect those who work hard among you, who are over you in the Lord and who admonish you. Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work. Live in peace with each other" (1 Thess. 5:12, 13).

"Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you" (Hebrews 13:17).

Accusation against Elders

While the Church has the right to question an Elder's qualifications if he teaches things contrary to the beliefs of the congregation, we must be certain that we know the facts and do not listen to gossip. Nevertheless, we are always to *"prove all things and hold fast to that which is good."* An Elder is subject to the same rules as any other member of the Church, but any accusations must be done with respect and in accordance with this scripture from 1 Timothy 5:19: *"Do not entertain an accusation against an elder unless it is brought by two or three witnesses."*

Mutual responsibilities

"Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ" (Galatians 6:2).

"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another" (John 13:34, 35).

"Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves" (Romans 12:10).

"Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love" (Ephesians 4:2).

"Finally, all of you, live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble" (1 Peter 3:8).

"Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins" (1 Peter 4:8).

"This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers" (1 Jn. 3:16).

"And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds" (Hebrews 10:24).

"Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves" (Romans 12:10).

"Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves" (Philippians 2:3).

Disfellowshipping

"If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.' (Deut. 19:15) If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector" (Matt. 18:15-17).

The act of disfellowshipping must only be carried out after all else has failed to correct the individual who is guilty of sin. Some admonitions to follow are found as follows:

"But now I am writing you that you must not associate with anyone who calls himself a brother but is sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or a slanderer, a drunkard or a swindler. With such a man do not even eat. What business is it of mine to judge those outside the church? Are you not to judge those inside? God will judge those outside. Expel the wicked man from among you" (1 Cor. 5:11-13).

When a brother or sister is seen falling into the ways of sin or immorality, that one must be lovingly warned. *"And we exhort you, brethren, admonish the disorderly..." (1 Thess- lonians 5:14 - ASV).*

"Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted" (Galatians 6:1).

The aim of such warning is always the restoration and bringing back of that person to the ways of God. We suggest that the more spiritually mature ones be the ones to admonish the disobedient in a spirit of love and gentleness.

"Those who sin are to be rebuked publicly, so that the others may take warning. I charge you, in the sight of God and Christ Jesus and the elect angels, to keep these instructions without partiality, and to do nothing out of favoritism" (1 Tim. 5:20, 21).

"Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator" (Col. 3:5-10).

It is important that we desire the restoration of one who has been disfellowshipped and pray for their repentance.

"Now instead, you ought to forgive and comfort him, so that he will not be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow" (2 Cor. 2:7).

"My brothers, if one of you should wander from the truth and someone should bring him back, remember this: Whoever turns a sinner from the error of his way will save him from death and cover over a multitude of sins" (James 5:19, 20).

Section Three - Unity, Liberty and Divisions

Unity

Admonitions

"Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification" (Romans 14:19).

"May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus, so that with one heart and mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Romans 15:5, 6).

"I appeal to you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another so that there may be no divisions among you and that you may be perfectly united in mind and thought" (1 Corinthians 1:10).

"Finally, brothers, good-bye. Aim for perfection, listen to my appeal, be of one mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you" (2 Corinthians 13:11).

"As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit -- just as you were called to one hope when you were called" (Ephesians 4:1-4).

"I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name -- the name you gave me -- so that they may be one as we are one. I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me, And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me" (John 17:11, 20-23 - NKJV).

Liberty

Stand fast

"Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage. For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another" (Galatians 5:1, 13 - NKJV).

"Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" (2 Corinthians 3:17 - NKJV).

"And this occurred because of false brethren secretly brought in whocame in by stealth to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage" (Galatians 2:4 - NKJV).

Not to negate Love

"But beware lest somehow this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to those who are weak" (1 Corinthians 8:9 - NKJV).

"...as free, yet not using liberty as a cloak for vice, but as bondservants of God" (1 Peter 2:16 - NKJV).

"...why is my liberty judged by another man's conscience?" (1 Cor- inthians 10:29 - NKJV).

Divisions

Is Christ Divided?

"Now I beseech you, brethren, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that....there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfect- ed together in the same mind and in the same judgment. For it hath been signified unto me concerning you, my brethren, by them that are of the household of Chloe, that there are contentions among you. Now this I mean, that each one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized into the name of Paul?" (1 Cor. 1:10-13 - ASV).

Causes

The Apostle Paul shows that it is carnality that causes divisions. *"I urge you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and put obstacles in your way that are contrary to the teaching you have learned. Keep away from them. For such people are not serving our Lord Christ, but their own appetites. By smooth talk and flattery they deceive the minds of naive people" (Romans 16:17,18).*

"Brothers, I could not address you as spiritual but as worldly -- mere infants in Christ. I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed, you are still not ready. You are still worldly" (1 Corinthians 3:1-3). We must preserve the Unity and Liberty within God's Church. There is a day coming when we will stand before God's Throne and give an account for our actions in the Church while here on earth. Should we be, in this life, division-makers and strife- breeders, and glory in our abuse of the brethren for self gain, we will not escape the judgment to come, even though we may seem to escape it at present. Nothing escapes the eyes of our Father. We may deceive others but God knows our hearts and motives. One of the seven things that the Lord our God hates, according to Proverbs 6:19, is *"... one who sows discord among brethren" (NKJV).*

Section Four - The Fundamentals of our Faith Includes all Sin

"As it is written: 'There is no one righteous, not even one'" (Romans 3:10).

"for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23).

"Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned --" (Romans 5:12 - NKJV).

"just as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness to bring eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 5:21).

"We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way..." (Isaiah 53:6).

"If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us" (1 John 1:8).

Penalty for sin

"But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die (Gen- esis 2:17- KJV). (Hebrew- "dying thou shall die.")

"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 6:23).

What is death?

"By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return" (Genesis 3:19).

"His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish" (Psalm 146:4 - KJV).

Death likened to sleep: "'Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I am going there to wake him up.' His disciples replied, 'Lord, if he sleeps, he will get better.' Jesus had been speaking of his death, but his disciples thought he meant natural sleep. So then he told them plainly, 'Lazarus is dead'" (John 11:11-14).

"But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep" (1 Cor. 15:20).

"... Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers *fell asleep*, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation" (2 Pet. 3:4 - KJV).

Salvation

Needed

"The law requires that nearly everything be cleansed with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness" (Heb. 9:22).

Our Redeemer

"I will ransom them from the power of the grave (Hebrew 'sheol'); I will redeem them from death" (Hosea 13:14).

"For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the *man* Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men -- the testimony given in its proper time" (1 Timothy 2:5, 6).

"The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, 'Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world'" (John 1:29).

The Cost

"...who, existing in the form of God, counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross" (Phil. 2:6-8 - ASV).

"Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. We

all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Isaiah 53:4-6).

The Redeemed

"He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours (the Church) but also for the sins of the whole world" (1 John 2:2).

"...we have put our hope in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, and especially of those who believe" (1 Timothy 4:10).

Jesus' Resurrection

"But if it is preached that Christ has been raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen. And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty. Yes, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ, whom He did not raise up -- if in fact the dead do not rise. For if the dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen. And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins" (1 Cor. 15:13-17 - NKJV).

"He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification" (Rom. 4:25).

A Free Gift

"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith -- and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God" (Ephesians 2:8).

"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 6:23).

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16).

Personal belief necessary

"That if you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved" (Romans 10:9, 10).

Repentance necessary

"Peter replied, 'Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit'" (Acts 2:38).

Discipleship

Conditions

"Jesus answered, 'I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit'" (John 3, 5, 6).

"Then he said to them all, 'If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it'" (Luke 9:23, 24).

“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” (Romans 12:1).

A High Calling

“Brethren, I count not myself yet to have laid hold: but one thing *I do*, forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things which are before, I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the *high calling* of God in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 3:13, 14 - ASV).

“Therefore, holy brothers, who share in the *heavenly calling*, fix your thoughts on Jesus, the apostle and high priest whom we confess” (Hebrews 3:1).

Who are called

“Listen, my dear brothers: Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom he promised those who love him?” (James 2:5).

“Brothers, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. He chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things -- and the things that are not -- to nullify the things that are, so that no one may boast before him” (1 Cor. 1:26-29).

Object and rewards

“For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers” (Romans 8:29).

“The Spirit himself (or itself) testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs -- heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory” (Romans 8:16:17).

“Do you not know that the saints will judge the world?” (1 Cor. 6:2).

“Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life” (Rev. 2:10). (See also Rev. 2:7,11,17,26-28.)

Baptism

Immersion

The Greek word *Baptiso* means an immersion. It is a symbol of what has already taken place in the heart, i.e., a full commitment to follow the Lord Jesus Christ, making him Sovereign Lord of their life.

Jesus baptized

“Then Jesus came...to the Jordan to be baptized by John” (Mt. 3:13).

Disciples -- “Into Christ”

“for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ” (Gal. 3:27).

“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Matt. 28:19). (See Acts 8:16; 19:5; Romans 6:3; Gal. 3:27.)

“Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day” (Acts 2:41).

"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" (Romans 6:4).

"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" (Colossians 2:12).

Resurrection

First - the Church

"But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep." (1 Cor. 15:20).

"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. 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 forever" (1 Thess. 4:16, 17).

"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" (Revelation 20:6).

Second - the world

"Marvel not at this: for the hour cometh, in which all that are in the tombs shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the Resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment" (John 5:28, 29 - ASV).

"However, I will restore the fortunes of Sodom and her daughters and of Samaria and her daughters, and your fortunes along with them, so that you may bear your disgrace and be ashamed of all you have done in giving them comfort. And your sisters, Sodom with her daughters and Samaria with her daughters, will return to what they were before; and you and your daughters will return to what you were before. You would not even mention your sister Sodom in the day of your pride" (Ezekiel 16:53-56).

The Kingdom

World-wide promises

"And the glory of the LORD will be revealed, and all mankind together will see it. For the mouth of the LORD has spoken" (Isa. 40:5).

"Nevertheless, as surely as I live and as surely as the glory of the LORD fills the whole earth" (Numbers 14:21).

"Then will I purify the lips of the peoples, that all of them may call on the name of the LORD and serve him shoulder to shoulder" (Zephaniah 3:9).

"Who will not fear you, O Lord, and bring glory to your name?
For you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship before you, for your righteous acts have been revealed" (Revelation 15:4).

“They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea” (Isaiah 11:9).

Restitution

“Whom the heavens must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began” (Acts 3:21 - KJV).

Day of Judgment

“For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead” (Acts 17:31).

“Let them sing before the LORD, for he comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world in righteousness and the peoples with equity” (Psalm 98:9).

“A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit. The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him -- the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD -- and he will delight in the fear of the LORD. He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes, or decide by what he hears with his ears; but with righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth. He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth; with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked. Righteousness will be his belt and faithfulness the sash around his waist” (Isaiah 11:1-5).

“...When your judgments come upon the earth, the people of the world learn righteousness” (Isaiah 26:9).

Final Judgment

Eternal life

“And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “See, the home of God is among *mortals*. He will dwell with them as their God; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them” (Revelation 21:3 - NRSV).

(This promise is to God’s earthly sons): “He who overcomes will inherit all this, and I will be his God and he will be my son.” (Revelation 21:7).

Second death

“Anyone who does not listen to him will be completely cut off from among his people” (Acts 3:23).

Note: Since the book of Revelation is a book of symbols, we should be careful how we interpret it and harmonize it with all Scripture. “Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death” (Revelation 20:14).

Section Five - The Daily Christian Life

Marriage

Honorable

“Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge” (Heb. 13:4 - NKJV).

“He who finds a wife finds what is good and receives favor from the LORD” (Proverbs 18:22).

“But since there is so much immorality, each man should have his own wife, and each woman her own husband” (1 Corinthians 7:2).

Husbands’ responsibilities

“Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing (or having cleansed) her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church -- for we are members of his body. For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh” (Ephesians 5:25-31).

“Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them” (Colossians 3:19).

“Likewise, you husbands, live with your wives with understanding, and hold them with tenderness like delicate vessels, because they will inherit with you the gift of everlasting life; do this that you may not be hindered in your prayers.” (1 Peter 3:7 - Lamsa).

“Let the husband render to his wife the affection due her, and likewise also the wife to her husband” (1 Corinthians 7:3 - NKJV).

Wives’ responsibilities

“Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything” (Ephesians 5:22-24).

“Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord” (Colossians 3:18).

“In the same way, their wives (or deaconesses) are to be women worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything” (1 Timothy 3:11).

“Wives, in the same way be submissive to your husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives, when they see the purity and reverence of your lives. Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewelry and fine clothes. Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight. For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to make themselves beautiful. They were submissive to their own husbands, like Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her master. You are her daughters if you do what is right and do not give way to fear” (1 Peter 3:1-6).

“Let the husband render to his wife the affection due her, and likewise also the wife to her husband” (1 Corinthians 7:3 - NKJV).

“Then they can train the younger women to love their husbands and children” (Titus 2:4).

Divorce

"Some Pharisees came and tested him by asking, 'Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?' 'What did Moses command you?' he replied. They said, 'Moses permitted a man to write a certificate of divorce and send her away.' 'It was because your hearts were hard that Moses wrote you this law,' Jesus replied. 'But at the beginning of creation God made them male and female (Gen. 1:27).

For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh. (Gen. 2:24).

So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate" (Mark 10:2-9).

"I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, and marries another woman commits adultery" (Matthew 19:9).

"But if she does, she must remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband. And a husband must not divorce his wife. To the rest I say this (I, not the Lord): If any brother has a wife who is not a believer and she is willing to live with him, he must not divorce her. And if a woman has a husband who is not a believer and he is willing to live with her, she must not divorce him. For the unbelieving husband has been sanctified through his wife, and the unbelieving wife has been sanctified through her believing husband. Otherwise your children would be unclean, but as it is, they are holy. But if the unbeliever leaves, let him do so. A believing man or woman is not bound in such circumstances; God has called us to live in peace"

(1 Corinthians 7:11-15).

"Are you married? Do not seek a divorce. Are you unmarried? Do not look for a wife" (1 Corinthians 7:27).

Responsibility

"But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, causes her to become an adulteress, and anyone who marries the divorced woman commits adultery" (Matthew 5:32).

"So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate" (Matthew 19:6).

Children

A reward

"Behold, children are a heritage from the LORD, The fruit of the womb is a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, So are the children of one's youth. Happy is the man who has his quiver full of them; They shall not be ashamed, But shall speak with their enemies in the gate" (Psalm 127:3-5 - NKJV).

Training

"So I counsel younger widows to marry, to have children, to manage their homes and to give the enemy no opportunity for slander" (1 Timothy 5:14).

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 'Honor your father and mother' -- which is the first commandment with a promise 'that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the

earth.’ “Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord” (Ephesians 6:1-4).

“These are the commands, decrees and laws the LORD your God directed me to teach you to observe in the land that you are crossing the Jordan to possess” (Deut. 6:1).

“Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up” (Deut. 6:7).

“He who fears the LORD has a secure fortress, and for his children it will be a refuge” (Proverbs 14:26).

“The righteous man leads a blameless life; blessed are his children after him” (Proverbs 20:7).

“Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord.
Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will become discour- aged” (Colossians 3:20, 21).

“Train up a child in the way he should go, And even when he is old he will not depart from it” (Proverbs 22:6).

“Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline will drive it far from him” (Proverbs 22:15).

“He who spares his rod hates his son, But he who loves him disciplines him promptly” (Proverbs 13:24 - NKJV).

“But abide thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them. And that from a babe thou hast known the sacred writings which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus” (2 Timothy 3:14, 15 - ASV).

Place in the Church

“Assemble the people, the men and the women *and the little ones*, and thy sojourner that is within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear Jehovah your God, and observe to do all the words of this law and that their children, who have not known, may hear, and learn to fear Jehovah your God, as long as ye live in the land whither ye go over the Jordan to possess it” (Deut. 31:12, 13 - ASV).

“The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off -- for all whom the Lord our God will call” (Acts 2:39).

Work

Paul, our example

“nor did we eat anyone's food without paying for it. On the contrary, we worked night and day, laboring and toiling so that we would not be a burden to any of you. We did this, not because we do not have the right to such help, but in order to make ourselves a model for you to follow. For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: ‘If a man will not work, he shall not eat.’ We hear that some among

you are idle. They are not busy; they are busybodies. Such people we command and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down and earn the bread they eat" (2 Thessalonians 3:8-12).

A gift

"That everyone may eat and drink, and find satisfaction in all his toil -- this is the gift of God" (Ecclesiastes 3:13).

Laziness

"A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest -- and poverty will come on you like a bandit and scarcity like an armed man" (Proverbs 24:33, 34).

"Go to the ant, you sluggard; consider its ways and be wise! How long will you lie there, you sluggard? When will you get up from your sleep?" (Proverbs 6:6, 9).

Mammon

The snares of wealth

"Still others, like seed sown among thorns, hear the word; but the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things come in and choke the word, making it unfruitful" (Mark 4:18, 19).

"Then he said to them, 'Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions'; And he told them this parable: 'The ground of a certain rich man produced a good crop. He thought to himself, "What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops." Then he said, "This is what I'll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I'll say to myself, 'You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry.'" But God said to him, "You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?"'" (Luke 12:15-20).

"People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs" (1 Timothy 6:9, 10).

Good Stewardship

"Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much. So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches? And if you have not been trustworthy with someone else's property, who will give you property of your own?" (Luke 16:10-12).

"Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful" (1 Corinthians 4:2). See also Luke 19:11-26.

The Simple Things

"Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, 'Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you'" (Hebrews 13:5).

“But godliness with contentment is great gain. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that” (1 Timothy 6: 6,8).

Treasures in Heaven

“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal” (Matt. 6:19, 20).

The World

Separation from

“Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For everything in the world -- the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does -- comes not from the Father but from the world. The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever” (1 John 2:15-17). See also 1 John 1:6.

Relationship to non-believers

There is a balance to be had in this regard. We are to do good to non-believers, loving them even as God does, while being cautious not to have close fellowship with them if their lives are patterned after the world’s way of thinking. The world and the lives of God’s saints should be 180 degrees apart.

“Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?” (2 Corinthians 6:14). See also Ephesians 5:11.

“Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers” (Gal. 6:10).

The Flesh

Its “works”

“The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God” (Galatians 5:19-21).

“People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God --” (2 Timothy 3:2-4).

Adultery

“You have heard that it was said, ‘Do not commit adultery.’ (Exodus 20:14) But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart” (Matthew 5:27, 28).

Anger

“But I say to you that if you are angry with a brother or sister (Gk. a brother; other ancient authorities add ‘without cause’), you will be liable to judgment; and if you insult (Gk. says Raca, an obscure term of

abuse) a brother or sister (Gk. a brother), you will be liable to the council; and if you say, 'You fool,' you will be liable to the hell (Gk. Gehenna) of fire" (Matthew 5:22 - NRSV).

Blasphemy

"You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name" (Exodus 20:7).

Envy

"A heart at peace gives life to the body, but envy rots the bones" (Proverbs 14:30).

Falsehood

"Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices" (Colossians 3:9).

Fraud

"that no one should take advantage of and defraud his brother in this matter, because the Lord is the avenger of all such..." (1 Thess. 4:6 - NKJV).

Gossip

"And besides they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house, and not only idle but also gossips and busybodies, saying things which they ought not" (1 Timothy 5:13 - NKJV).

Lust

"Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted" 1 Cor. 10:6 - NKJV).

Pride

"..God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble. Submit yourselves, then, to God." (James 4.6, 7).

Slander

"He who conceals his hatred has lying lips, and whoever spreads slander is a fool" (Proverbs 10:18).

Unfaithfulness

" Like a bad tooth or a lame foot is reliance on the unfaithful in times of trouble" (Proverbs 25:19).

The Devil

How he sinned

"You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created till wickedness was found in you" (Ezekiel 28:15).

"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 the assembly, on the utmost heights of the sacred mountain. I will ascend above the tops of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High'" (Isaiah 14:13, 14).

How he works

“Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith...” (1 Peter 5:8, 9).

“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” (Eph. 6:12).

“And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light” (2 Corinthians 11:14).

False Doctrines:

Immortality of the Soul

The basis of some false teachings can be laid at the feet of Satan himself in the Garden when he contradicted God and told Eve that she would not die. Thus, many still believe Satan’s lie, that when you die you are more alive than ever, by accepting the unscriptural doctrine of the Immortality of the soul. There is no scripture that says we have an immortal soul. The Bible teaches clearly that man does not *have* a soul, but rather that he *is* a soul. See Gen. 2:7; Ezek. 18:4; 1 Pet. 3:20 - KJV.

Death, as we have seen from the Lord’s Word, means the absence of life. The hope we have from the Scriptures is not an instant life in heaven or hell after death, but rather the precious promise of a coming Resurrection of the dead. See 1 Cor. 15:51-54; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; Job 17:13.

“...eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good *seek for* glory, honor, and immortality” (Romans 2:7 - NKJV).

“For this corruptible must *put on* incorruption, and this mortal must *put on* immortality” (1 Cor. 15:53 - NKJV).

“who *alone* is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see” (1 Timothy 6:16).

It is obvious, from the Scriptures, that no one would “seek for” or “put on” something he already had.

Eternal torment

If Jesus took the sinner’s place, and that penalty was eternal torment, then the man Christ Jesus would have had to pay that price and would be there now. But the Scriptures are clear that Jesus “*was put to death flesh and made alive spirit!*” Yes, the Bible tells us that the penalty for sin is *death*, *not eternal torment*, and as the price of the world’s redemption, the man Christ Jesus has paid the price to satisfy justice to the full. Those scriptures which are used to “prove” that false doctrine are either parables or from the symbolism of Revelation. Jacob said he would go down to “sheol,” the Bible “hell,” to his son (Genesis 37:35). Job pleaded with God, when going through his terrible trials, to be “hidden in sheol” (Job 14:13 - ASV). The Scriptures speak of both good and bad going there. “Sheol” (the “hell” of the Old Testament), and “hades” (the “hell” of the New Testament) will both be destroyed (Hosea 13:14).

The Trinity

There is not one scripture in the Bible that uses the word *trinity*. If Jesus had been immortal before he came to earth, he would not have been able to die and pay our ransom. Although the Bible says that our

Lord, as the Logos, “was brought forth” (See Proverbs 8:22-31) from the Father and was uniquely God’s “only begotten son”, he did not receive an immortal nature until after his resurrection. God’s Law was one of justice; therefore, it was “a perfect human life (Adam, before he sinned) for a perfect human life” (Jesus, as the “man Christ Jesus”). The Father could never have died. He has always been immortal. In Philippians 2:5-11, we have some of the most clear and beautiful scriptures regarding our Lord Jesus Christ. Let us look at them carefully. “Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, existing in the form of God, *counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped*, but *emptied himself*, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient *even* unto death, yea, the death of the cross. Wherefore also God highly exalted him, and gave unto him the name which is above every name; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (ASV). From these scriptures and others, we see that this precious “Son of His Love” never claimed nor thought to be “equal” with his Father, and after His Millennial Kingdom has accomplished the bringing of mankind back to perfection and harmony with their Creator and Father, we are told in 1 Cor. 15:28, “...then the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all.” However, we do fully believe that both Father and Son are to be worshipped as the above scriptures also clearly show.

Government

Duties toward

“Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities

that exist have been established by God. Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves. For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and he will commend you. For he is God’s servant to do you good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword

for nothing. He is God’s servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer. Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also because of conscience. This is also why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God’s servants, who give their full time to governing. Give everyone what you owe him: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor” (Romans 13:1-7).

Where man’s laws are contrary to God’s

“Having brought the apostles, they made them appear before the Sanhedrin to be questioned by the high priest. ‘We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name,’ he said. ‘Yet you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and are determined to make us guilty of this man’s blood.’ Peter and the other apostles replied, ‘We must obey God rather than men! The God of our fathers raised Jesus from the dead -- whom you had killed by hanging him on a tree. God exalted him to his own right hand as Prince and Savior that he might give repentance and forgiveness of sins to Israel. We are witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him’” (Acts 5:27-32).

Section Six - The Church's Guidance

Providences

Caused by God

"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose" (Romans 8:28).

"'For I know the plans I have for you,' declares the LORD, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future'" (Jeremiah 29:11).

God's Word

To be studied

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

"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15 - KJV).

"Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thesalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true" (Acts 17:11).

To be meditated on

"Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy -- meditate on these things" (Philippians 4:8 - NKJV).

"Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all" (1 Timothy 4:15 - NKJV).

"Oh, how I love your law! I meditate on it all day long. Your commands make me wiser than my enemies, for they are ever with me. I have more insight than all my teachers, for I meditate on your statutes" (Psalm 119:97-99).

Powerful

"For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart" (Heb. 4:12).

"'Is not my word like fire,' declares the LORD, 'and like a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces?'" (Jeremiah 23:29).

Gives Wisdom

"My son, if you accept my words and store up my commands within you, turning your ear to wisdom and applying your heart to understanding, and if you call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding, and if you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure, then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God. For the LORD gives wisdom, and from his mouth come knowledge and understanding. He holds victory in store for the

upright, he is a shield to those whose walk is blameless, for he guards the course of the just and protects the way of his faithful ones. Then you will understand what is right and just and fair -- every good path" (Proverbs 2:1-9).

Makes known Salvation

"...the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus" (2 Timothy 3:15).

"You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me" (John 5:39).

Holy Spirit

Define

"And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever -- the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you" (John 14:16, 17).

Our Teacher

"But the Counselor, 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" (John 14:26).

"As for you, the anointing you received from him remains in you, and you do not need anyone to teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about all things and as that anointing is real, not counterfeit -- just as it has taught you, remain in him" (1 John 2:27).

"However, as it is written: 'No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him,' but God has revealed it to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man's spirit within him? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is (or which is) from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us" (1 Corinthians 2:9-12).

"Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit" (Galatians 5:25).

Powerful

"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit" (Romans 15:13).

"For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline" (2 Timothy 1:7).

An indwelling Comforter

"But the Comforter, even the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you" (John 14:26 - ASV).

"Nevertheless I tell you the truth: It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I go, I will send him unto you" (John 16:7 - ASV).

Can be grieved

"And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom (or with which) you were sealed for the day of redemption" (Ephesians 4:30).

Can be quenched

"Do not put out the Spirit's fire" (1 Thessalonians 5:19).

Compassion - The feeling for another's needs that leads to helping that one without expecting anything in return. "Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you" (Ephesians 4:32).

Contentment - Satisfied with what one has; submission to life's circumstances. "But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that" (1 Timothy. 6:6-8).

Courage - The strength from God that enables you to endure any trial or danger. "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go" (Joshua 1:9).

Endurance - To continue steadfast, withstanding hardship and difficulties, no matter what the circumstances. "Endure hardship with us like a good soldier of Christ Jesus" (2 Timothy 2:3).

Faith - That which believes God and personally trusts Him with everything in life. "Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see" (Hebrews 11:1).

Forgiveness - The ability to overlook another's weaknesses or mistakes by expressing Christ's love. "Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you" (Colossians 3:13).

Gentleness - Is true strength; Considerate in disposition. "But we were gentle among you, just as a nursing mother cherishes her own children" (1 Thessalonians 2:7 - NKJV).

"Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight" (1 Peter 3:4).

Honesty - Being free of deceit and fraud, having the quality of being honorable and upright in character and actions. "Conduct yourselves honorably among the Gentiles, so that, though they malign you as evildoers, they may see your honorable deeds and glorify God when he comes to judge" (1 Peter 2:12 - NRSV).

Hospitality - Welcoming others with warmth and generosity of heart. "You know that the household of Stephanas ... they have devoted themselves to the service of the saints. I urge you, brothers" (1 Corinthians 16:15).

Humility - Being meek, modest in spirit, without wrongful pride in yourself or your accomplishments, giving God the credit for your accomplishments.

"Young men, in the same way be submissive to those who are older. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, 'God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.' Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time" (1 Peter 5:5, 6).

Joy - Gladness of heart and delight in the Lord. "Nehemiah said, 'Go and enjoy choice food and sweet drinks, and send some to those who have nothing prepared. This day is sacred to our Lord. Do not grieve, for the joy of the LORD is your strength'" (Nehemiah 8:10).

Kindness - Benevolent and gracious acts towards others. "Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers" (Galatians 6:10).

"Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you" (Ephesians 4:32).

Meekness - A teachable, patient attitude, even when wronged. "The meek also shall increase their joy in the LORD, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel" (Isa. 29:19 - KJV)

Merciful - A disposition to be kind and compassionate to an offender.

"Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful" (Luke 6:36).

"Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy" (Matthew 5:7).

Obedience - Submission to God and to those whom He puts in authority over you. "Does the LORD delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the voice of the LORD? To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the fat of rams. For rebellion is like the sin of divination, and arrogance like the evil of idolatry" (1 Sam. 15:22, 23).

Patience - Being long-suffering and still kind in difficult situations.

"being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience...." (Col. 1:11).

Peaceable - One who promotes calm; a peacemaker. "If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone" (Romans 12:18).

"But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere" (James 3:17).

Purity - Keeping yourself uncontaminated from the world, the flesh, and the devil. "Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity" (1 Timothy 4:12).

Reverence - A feeling of deep respect, love, honor, and esteem. "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding" (Proverbs 9:10).

Self-control - Bringing your body under subjection through instant obedience to the Holy Spirit. "Like a city whose walls are broken down is a man who lacks self-control" (Proverbs 25:28).

Tolerance - Acceptance of other people and their beliefs and actions even when you do not agree with them. "Therefore let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in your brother's way" (Romans 14:13).

Section Seven - A New Commandment

Royal Law

What is it

"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another" (John 13:34, 35).

Effects of Love

"We know that we all possess knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up" (1 Corinthians 8:1).

Love tested

"If anyone says, 'I love God,' yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen. And he has given us this command: Whoever loves God must also love his brother" (1 John 4:20, 21).

"Love does no harm to its neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law" (Rom. 13:10).

The greatest test

"Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13).

Consequences of disobedience

"Anyone who claims to be in the light but hates his brother is still in the darkness. But whoever hates his brother is in the darkness and walks around in the darkness; he does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded him" (1 John 2:9, 11).

Liberty and Love

"For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' But if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another" (Galatians 5:13-15 - NKJV).

"Be careful, however, that the exercise of your freedom does not become a stumbling block to the weak" (1 Corinthians 8:9).

Hating our brother

"...Anyone who does not do what is right is not a child of God; nor is anyone who does not love his brother" (1 John 3:10).

"Anyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life in him" (1 John 3:15).

"If anyone says, 'I love God,' yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love

God, whom he has not seen" (1 John 4:20).

“This is how we know who the children of God are and who the children of the devil are: Anyone who does not do what is right is not a child of God; nor is anyone who does not love his brother.” (1 John 3:10).

Love’s Spectrum

Patience - Love suffers long
Kindness - and is still kind
Gnerosity - Love envies not at all
Humility - Love is not puffed up
Courtesy - Love does not behave itself unmannerly
Unselfishness - Love seeks not her own
Good temper - Love is not provoked
Guilelessness - Love thinks no evil
Sincerity - Love rejoices in the truth

“If I speak with human eloquence and angelic ecstasy but don’t love, I’m nothing but the creaking of a rusty gate. If I speak God’s Word with power, revealing all his mysteries and making everything plain as day, and if I have faith that says to a mountain, ‘Jump,’ and it jumps, but I don’t love, I’m nothing. If I give everything I own to the poor and even go to the stake to be burned as a martyr, but I don’t love, I’ve gotten nowhere. So, no matter what I say, what I believe, and what I do, I’m bankrupt without love.

Love never gives up.
Love cares more for others than for self.
Love doesn’t want what it doesn’t have.
Love doesn’t strut,
Doesn’t have a swelled head,
Doesn’t force itself on others,
Isn’t always ‘me first,’
Doesn’t fly off the handle,
Doesn’t keep score of the sins of others,
Doesn’t revel when others grovel,
Takes pleasure in the flowering of truth,
Puts up with anything,
Trusts God always,
Always looks for the best,
Never looks back,
But keeps going to the end.
Love never dies.

Inspired speech will be over some day; praying in tongues will end; understanding will reach its limit. We know only a portion of the truth, and what we say about God is always incomplete. But when the Complete arrives, our incompletes will be canceled. When I was an infant at my mother’s breast, I gurgled and cooed like any infant. When I grew up, I left those infant ways for good. We don’t yet see things clearly. We’re squinting in a fog, peering through a mist. But it won’t be long before the weather clears and the sun shines bright! We’ll see it all then, see it all as clearly as God sees us, knowing Him directly just as He knows us! But for right now, until that completeness, we have three things to do to

lead us toward that consummation: Trust steadily in God, Hope unswervingly, Love extravagantly. And the best of the three is Love.” (1 Cor. 13 - The Message)

The Love of God

The Love of God is greater far
Than tongue or pen can ever tell.
It goes beyond the highest star,
And reaches to the lowest hell.
The guilty pair, bowed down with care,
God gave His Son to win.
His erring child He reconciled,
And pardoned from his sin.

When years of time shall pass away,
And earthly thrones and kingdoms fall,
When men, who now refuse to pray,
On rocks and hills and mountains call,
God’s love so sure, shall still endure,
All measureless and strong;
Redeeming grace to Adam’s race --
The saints’ and angels’ song.

Could we with ink the ocean fill,
And were the skies of parchment made,
Were every stalk on earth a quill,
And every man a scribe by trade,
To write the Love of God above
Would drain the ocean dry.
Nor could the scroll contain the whole,
Though stretched from sky to sky.

O Love of God, how rich and pure!
How measureless and strong!
It shall for evermore endure,
The saints’ and angels’ song.

“For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom. 8:38, 39 - NKJV).

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