

The Last Adam

(Expanded Edition)



"The first man Adam became a living being; the last Adam, a life giving spirit."

Apostle Paul

Brother Woody Brohm

The Last Adam

By Brother Woody Brohm

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**"For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
neither are your ways my ways,"
declares the LORD.**

**"As the heavens are higher than the earth,
so are my ways higher than your ways
and my thoughts than your thoughts.**

**As the rain and the snow
come down from heaven,
and do not return to it
without watering the earth
and making it bud and flourish,
so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater,
so is my word that goes out from my mouth:
It will not return to me empty,
but will accomplish what I desire
and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.**

(Isaiah 55:8-11)

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Section One: Sin

Chapter 1: The Origin of Sin for Mankind

The Bible is a collection of sixty-six different books composed by about forty human authors over a period of approximately fifteen hundred years. Its subject matter covers things we would never possibly understand without God's revelation. The origin of sin is just one of the many things that would remain unknowable without inspired revelation. The combined testimony of both the Old and New Testaments is that together they form the inspired Word of God. The revelation of the supernatural world, the creation of earth, the end of time, and many thought-provoking stories make the Bible the most fascinating book of all time.

God revealed things to mankind in stages. These stages are reflected in the current arrangement of the books of the Bible. Students of the Bible refer to this as a progressive revelation. One stage is established, then another, and so on. The key to an accurate understanding of the individual stages is to rely on the Apostles' teaching as recorded in the New Testament. God chose these men and gave them authority to formulate sound doctrine for us to believe.

In the beginning God created the earth, and there is a wealth of revelation contained in that amazing feat. Later, many exciting truths were spoken through the prophets in various ways. Eventually, God sent Jesus Christ, whose testimony is authoritative and true. God raised Jesus from the dead which validates the fact that the holiness of God had been propitiated. God is satisfied with the substitutionary sacrifice of Christ, but He did not stop there – God went on to

choose the Apostles to evaluate, interpret and proclaim the proper conclusions for us. Of course, the Holy Spirit accomplished that by working through the chosen Apostles, but the point is that their writings correlated all previously revealed truth into sound doctrine. We must not ignore what they recorded.

The origin of sin for mankind provides an excellent opportunity to demonstrate this point. Since the Bible is accurate and true in its entirety, then some believers would turn right to Genesis and identify the origin of sin for mankind (Genesis 2:15–3:24). The narrative would reveal that Satan tempted Eve to eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Though she knew better, she ate some of the forbidden fruit and then gave some to her husband who ate it too. Those facts are accurate, but the Apostles' teaching combines some other facts along with those and comes out with a doctrine that we probably would have otherwise missed. A careful study of the whole Bible is necessary when affirming sound doctrine.

In his letter to the Romans, the Apostle Paul refers back to the temptation in the garden and adds light to the subject. "Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man [Adam], and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned — To be sure, sin was in the world before the law [of Moses] was given, but sin is not charged against anyone's account where there is no law. Nevertheless, death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those who did not sin by breaking a command, as did Adam, who is a pattern of the one to come [Christ]" (Romans 5:12–14).

There are two main points to observe regarding this passage. Notice that Eve is not mentioned. The sole source of sin coming to all people is identified as Adam and his decision to eat the forbidden fruit. We are able to understand why this is stated by turning back to the Genesis passage. Adam was formed from the dust of the earth, received the breath of life, and was directly addressed by God. Eve was not formed until after God's command not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was spoken. In the beginning, all mankind was contained within Adam, and this one person represented the whole of mankind. He was the first and the head of the natural race. When the head sinned, we all sinned.

This introduces the doctrine of imputation, a concept which is discussed in detail in Chapter 11. Adam's sin resulted in Adam's immediate spiritual death (the fall of mankind) and led eventually to his physical death. The Apostle states, "sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned." Not only does he identify Adam alone, he also states that death comes to all people because "all sinned." In other words, we all sinned when Adam sinned. Exactly why God explains it that way is not entirely clear. Either we were all in Adam because he was the seminal (original) man, or he acted as the head of the race representing all of us as he sinned. In either case, the result is the same. Sin entered the world through Adam. Therefore, death comes to everyone because of the imputation of that original sin.

The second main point to observe is that the Apostle then references a period of several thousand years. By using two significant public

figures, he identifies a large group of people who lived from the time of Adam to the time of Moses. He stated that people from this period died because Adam disobeyed God's command, not because of their own sins. God's command to Adam was not to eat the forbidden fruit. God's law was revealed through Moses many generations later. The period in question is the several thousand years between these two events. The Apostle stated that the people who lived in this period did not sin by breaking a command as did Adam. Additionally, personal sin was not counted against them because there was no law. Nevertheless, they died. Now we can begin to understand that when God warned Adam that he would die if he ate the fruit, God meant not only Adam, but the entire race of mankind. At the end of time, God will destroy the created heavens and earth, judge mankind, and human life as we know it will cease to exist. Therefore, the Apostles' teaching affirms that all mankind was represented in Adam and the human race will certainly die because of his original sin.

We will expand on this concept as we continue. The main point will conclude that the origin of sin was the disobedience of Adam, the one man God created from the dust, the head of the race.

To fully grasp this doctrine, we must explore how Scripture reinforces it. The doctrine of imputation is not just a theological detail—it is the framework that explains our desperate need for redemption. Romans 5:18 states, *"Just as one trespass resulted in condemnation for all people, so also one righteous act resulted in justification and life for all people."* The comparison between Adam and Christ is central to the gospel.

Adam's sin wasn't just personal failure—it was representative. He stood as the federal head of the human race, and when he disobeyed, we were all counted guilty. Paul writes, *“For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive”* (1 Corinthians 15:22). Adam's disobedience brought condemnation; Christ's obedience brings justification. These aren't merely symbolic parallels—they are spiritual realities that determine our standing before God.

Even before the Mosaic Law was given, sin and death were active in the world. Romans 5:13–14 affirms this: *“To be sure, sin was in the world before the law was given... Nevertheless, death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses...”* Paul is showing that people died even when there was no formal law to break—yet death still ruled. Why?

Because of imputed sin. Death, the divinely appointed penalty, continued because the guilt of Adam's sin had been imputed to all humanity. Death was not—and is not—merely the result of personal wrongdoing. It is the clearest evidence that we are all bound up in Adam's guilt. Death reaches everyone—the infant, the morally upright, the educated, and the ignorant alike. It is not selective. It is the unavoidable consequence of Adam's rebellion.

This dismantles the idea that we begin life in moral neutrality. Death reigned—a metaphor showing that sin had already infected the root of the human condition. We are not sinners because we sin; we sin—and die—because we are sinners by nature and by imputation.

This affirms the seriousness of sin in God's eyes. Even without a written code, God's justice still required a penalty. Death is not

simply the end of life; it is sin's enduring consequence. Until the reign of death is broken by divine intervention, it continues its relentless hold over all who descend from Adam.

Consider the death of infants—those with no conscious sin—yet they die. This painful reality proves that death results from imputed guilt, not just personal acts. David confessed, *“Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me”* (Psalm 51:5). And Paul writes, *“You were dead in your transgressions and sins... by nature deserving of wrath”* (Ephesians 2:1–3). From conception, we carry this spiritual death.

Yet this is where the story of humanity becomes a story of grace. Romans 5:15 declares, *“But the gift is not like the trespass.”* God's grace through Jesus is greater than Adam's fall. The contrast is striking: one man's sin brought death; one Man's sacrifice brings life.

When John the Baptist saw Jesus, he proclaimed, *“Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!”* (John 1:29). This echoed God's plan from the beginning. When God clothed Adam and Eve with garments of skin (Genesis 3:21), He showed that covering sin required the shedding of blood. That theme flows through the Old Covenant sacrifices and finds fulfillment in Christ—the spotless Lamb whose death removes sin.

Imputation works both ways. Just as Adam's sin was counted against us, Christ's righteousness is counted to those who believe. *“God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God”* (2 Corinthians 5:21). This exchange is the heart of salvation.

This isn't theoretical—it's the reality of every soul's condition. Death proves the presence of sin. Its universality points to a universal problem. But the gospel reveals a universal offer: eternal life through faith in Christ.

So as we conclude this foundational chapter, we see the pattern: sin entered the world through one man, Adam. It passed to all of us, bringing death. But where sin abounded, grace abounded more. The same Bible that tells us the bad news also proclaims the good news.

Understanding the origin of sin gives us the right lens to understand the cross. Before we can appreciate the rescue, we must understand what we've been rescued from. That's why we begin not with speculation, but with revelation. And that's why we now turn to the divine law of sin and death.

Chapter 2: The Law of Sin and Death

Looking carefully into God's Word we see a consistent message regarding the law of sin and death (Romans 8:2). Before sin entered the world, God had warned Adam that if he sinned by eating the forbidden fruit, he would certainly die (Genesis 2:17). After he had sinned, an innocent animal suffered death as a sacrifice, by God who provided skins for Adam and Eve to wear (Genesis 3:21). That sacrifice initiated the idea of *substitutionary death*. Much later when the Law was revealed through Moses, it incorporated several animal sacrifices for sin offerings and atonement which expanded the concept of substitutionary death (Leviticus 9:1–23). Christ ultimately bore the penalty of death for mankind (Romans 8:5–11) which fully demonstrated God's just means of forgiveness through imputation, the death of one for the sin of all (John 11:49–53; cf. Hebrews 10:14–18).

Those who reject God's sacrifice by unbelief will suffer not only physical death, but also a lifetime of spiritual death as they are separated from fellowship with their Creator. Additionally, if they persist in their unbelief, they will ultimately suffer what has been described as a second death. Therefore, after dying physically, they will spend eternity in the lake of fire (Revelation 21:6–8). As we just quickly stepped through God's Word, we see a consistent message that sin results in death.

This foundational truth—that sin brings death—echoes across the entirety of Scripture. From Genesis to Revelation, God affirms the

same spiritual law: the soul that sins will die. This is more than a consequence; it is a divine diagnosis of the human condition.

Death is the common denominator of every human life. Hebrews 9:27 declares, “People are destined to die once, and after that to face judgment.” This isn’t just a reference to physical mortality—it’s the direct result of sin. Even those considered righteous in their generation, like Job, understood this. He lamented, “Mortals, born of woman, are of few days and full of trouble. They spring up like flowers and wither away” (Job 14:1–2). No one escapes. Death reigns. From Adam to Abraham, from Moses to David, from prophets to kings, Scripture never hides the reality of death—it highlights it as evidence of our shared problem.

After Adam and Eve sinned, God responded not just with judgment, but also with a quiet act of mercy. He clothed them with garments made from animal skin (Genesis 3:21), introducing the idea of substitution—the innocent covering the guilty. Later, through Moses, God codified this principle into a detailed system of offerings: burnt offerings, sin offerings, and the Day of Atonement, when two goats were selected—one sacrificed and one sent into the wilderness bearing the sins of the people (Leviticus 16). These ceremonies symbolized both atonement and the removal of guilt. But year after year, the sacrifices continued. As Hebrews 10:3 reminds us, they were “an annual reminder of sins.” They could never truly take them away.

That point is driven home in the tragic account of Nadab and Abihu, sons of Aaron, who offered unauthorized fire before the Lord and were immediately consumed by fire from His presence (Leviticus

10:1–2). Their deaths weren't the result of a mere ritual error—they were the result of irreverence. God made it clear: “Among those who approach me I will be proved holy; in the sight of all the people I will be honored” (v. 3). This wasn't a legal technicality. The law of sin and death was being enforced by divine holiness. God doesn't treat sin lightly—and neither should we.

The Law of Moses, then, didn't create sin or death, but exposed both. Paul explains this in Romans 7: “I would not have known what sin was had it not been for the law.” In Galatians 3:24, he calls the law a schoolmaster—an instructor designed to lead us to Christ. The law heightened our awareness of guilt, defined sin in detail, and required continual sacrifice. Its purpose wasn't to fix the problem, but to reveal how deep the problem really is. The more the law said “do this” or “don't do that,” the more obvious it became that something inside us was broken. And that brokenness would lead to judgment if not met by mercy.

For those who persist in unbelief, the Bible warns of more than physical death—it speaks of a “second death,” a final and eternal separation from God. Revelation 20:14–15 describes it as the lake of fire, a conscious and irreversible judgment. It is not symbolic, temporary, or metaphorical. It is the ultimate expression of the law of sin and death—a final verdict rendered against those who have rejected the gift of life in Christ.

Revelation 21:8 gives a sobering list of those who will face this judgment: “the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars.” What stands out is that it begins not with the most scandalous

crimes but with the cowardly and unbelieving—those who turned away from God’s offer of grace, perhaps quietly, but willfully. We are reminded that God takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked (Ezekiel 18:23), but He is just. He is patient, merciful, and long-suffering—but He will not ignore sin forever.

Jesus Himself did not shy away from speaking of judgment. In Matthew 25:46, He declares, “Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.” His words are not vague. The final destinies are parallel in duration—just as eternal as heaven is, so is hell. In Luke 16:19–31, Jesus gives us a glimpse into that reality through the story of the rich man and Lazarus. The rich man, having lived in selfish indulgence, dies and finds himself in torment. He pleads for relief, but none is given. The chasm is fixed. The moment is final. And though the man is conscious, articulate, and regretful, the opportunity for repentance is past. His anguish is not rooted in wealth, but in unbelief and spiritual neglect.

This parable teaches hard but vital truths. First, the separation is real and conscious. Second, it is irreversible—there is no movement between the saved and the lost after death. And third, the deciding factor is not earthly status, but response to the truth. It is belief—or the lack of it—that defines eternity.

None of this should be spoken of lightly. The reality of hell is not something to toss around in argument or wield in pride. It should humble us and move us to tears long before it moves us to speech. God’s love is vast—He desires all to come to repentance (2 Peter 3:9). He has gone to extraordinary lengths to make salvation available. He sent His Son, not to condemn the world, but to save it.

The lake of fire was not created for mankind, but for the devil and his angels (Matthew 25:41). And yet, those who reject the offer of salvation will share in that destiny—not because God delights in punishment, but because He honors the freedom He gave to choose.

God's judgment is never rash or reckless. He has revealed Himself in countless ways—in creation (Romans 1), in human conscience (Romans 2), in the Scriptures, and ultimately in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The second death is not the result of ignorance. It is the final result of light rejected.

But even now, while breath remains, the invitation still stands. John 3:16 declares it plainly: "Whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." This isn't just a hopeful idea. It's the only hope we have against eternal ruin. The law of sin and death is not abstract. It is real, it is unrelenting, and it will either end in eternal separation—or be interrupted by divine mercy.

We don't need to wait for eternity to see its effects. We see them now—in broken families, addiction, despair, division, guilt, and decay. We see it in creation itself, groaning under the curse (Romans 8:20–22). The law of sin and death is not confined to judgment day. It is already at work. And yet, even in its grip, we sense that something better is possible.

There is no ritual pure enough to erase it. No ladder high enough to climb above it. No personal strength strong enough to overcome it. "The mind governed by the flesh is death" (Romans 8:6), and all of Scripture affirms that where sin exists, death follows. But in

understanding this law, we're finally able to grasp the weight of our need. The death that began with Adam stretches to every heart and every household—and until we come to terms with that truth, we won't be ready for the grace that interrupts it.

Chapter 3: The Sinful Nature

Mankind is faced with an innate problem. When Adam sinned, he revealed his sinful nature and was no longer considered innocent. He found himself naked and ashamed, removed from the Garden of Eden and without the communion with God that he previously experienced. Because of subsequent revelation given through the Apostles, we can understand that God judicially declared him to be under sin (Romans 3:9–20; Galatians 3:22); he was enslaved to sin because of his sinful flesh (Romans 7:14–25); and was unable to overcome that condition on his own, no matter how acceptable he would try to become (Ephesians 2:8–10). So as Adam and Eve procreated, their children also inherited his sinful nature (Psalm 51:5; Ephesians 2:1–3). Subsequently, they passed their sinful nature down to the next generation, and so on. Therefore, all individuals, through all generations, possess a sinful nature.

The sinful nature is transmitted to us through birth. The resulting condition is spiritual death, or separation between man and God. As sons of Adam, we are born physically alive yet spiritually dead. The communion enjoyed by Adam and Eve with God before the fall was lost as symbolized by their sense of nakedness, the instinct to hide from God, and their banishment from the Garden. They were graciously allowed to live out their natural lives, but it was with a degree of separation from God that was not previously experienced. In the same way, their posterity has been separated from God and are longing for that acceptance and reconciliation. Simultaneously, the sinful nature entices sinful gratification. This creates an internal conflict, which adds to the despair of mankind in the fallen world in

which we reside. We desire communion with God, but the efforts of mankind fail to achieve it. This dire need for approval is why false religions that incorporate various forms of idolatry are so alluring (Acts 17:16–31). They suffice to give us approval from peers and a false sense of divine approval.

Therefore, we arrive again at the core of the problem. We do not have divine approval. We have come under divine judgment because we are sinners. We do not become sinners as we grow up and choose to sin. We sin because we are sinners! An apple tree bears apples. Ever since Adam sinned, the fruit of mankind is sin (Galatians 5:19–21). Sin characterizes the essence of what we are (Psalm 51:5). All men have a sinful nature (Ephesians 4:17–24).

The sinful nature is the inherited disposition of every human being to rebel against God. It's not something we learn with age—it's something we are born with. David confessed this reality in Psalm 51:5: "Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me." From our first breath, we carry within us a condition we didn't choose but one that defines our fallen nature. Paul echoes this in Ephesians 2, describing humanity as "dead in your transgressions and sins... by nature deserving of wrath." This is more than a set of bad habits—it is a deep-rooted, internal pull toward self-will and independence from God. Even a child doesn't need to be taught how to lie, manipulate, or resist authority. These instincts arise from the heart.

Before the fall, Adam had no such inner corruption. He was created innocent, free to choose obedience or disobedience without any bias toward evil. But once he sinned, that innocence was lost—not only

for him but for all of us. His nature became ours. Genesis 5:3 quietly reveals this when it tells us that Adam “had a son in his own likeness, in his own image.” That image was now fallen. What Adam passed to Seth—and every generation after—was not just a physical resemblance, but a spiritual corruption. Like a hereditary disease, the sin nature is passed down, untouched by human will or morality. Romans 5:12 affirms, “Sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned.” We’re not born morally neutral, waiting to tip one way or the other. We are born inclined to sin and spiritually dead from the outset.

This explains the universality of human depravity. From primitive tribes to modern cities, from kings to peasants, the evidence of sin is everywhere. History confirms it. Personal experience proves it. Scripture explains it. The problem is not our environment—it’s our nature. No system of government, education, or therapy can remove what was inherited in Eden. This sin nature dominates every part of our being. Jeremiah said, “The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?” (Jeremiah 17:9). Theologians have long called this “total depravity”—not that we are as wicked as possible in every way, but that every part of us has been affected: our mind, our will, our emotions, our desires. Even our best traits are tainted by selfishness or pride. Even our “good” deeds are laced with impure motives.

Isaiah 64:6 puts it plainly: “All our righteous acts are like filthy rags.” We may perform generous acts or seek justice, but apart from Christ, they do not spring from pure hearts. The sinful nature does

not seek God; it hides from Him. It constructs its own standards, then breaks them. Paul's summary in Romans 3:10–12 is sweeping and sobering: "There is no one righteous, not even one... there is no one who seeks God." That's not exaggeration—it's spiritual fact. It applies across cultures and generations. It's the level ground beneath every human foot.

The result of this condition is spiritual death. Ephesians 2:1 reminds us, "You were dead in your transgressions and sins." This isn't about physical death, which comes later. This is spiritual separation from God—a kind of soul-death that leaves us breathing but disconnected from the life we were created for. It's like a branch cut from the vine—it may still look alive for a while, but its source has been severed. And under that shadow of spiritual death, physical life itself takes on a distorted shape. Hebrews 2:15 speaks of people enslaved by their fear of death. This fear seeps into every culture, often driving ambition, addiction, escapism, and control.

Ironically, though, death can also serve as a divine alarm. Ecclesiastes 7:2 says, "It is better to go to a house of mourning than to go to a house of feasting... for death is the destiny of everyone; the living should take this to heart." Awareness of death can produce wisdom—if it leads us to the truth. The real tragedy is that the spiritually dead don't feel dead. They may sense restlessness or dissatisfaction, but they don't understand their true need until the Holy Spirit opens their eyes. That's why God's grace must always take the first step.

We see the law of sin and death at work all around us—in suffering, corruption, family breakdown, addiction, conflict, disease. These are

not just unfortunate features of life in a broken world—they are signs that something has gone terribly wrong. The sinful nature is the thread that runs through all of them, and only the gospel can cut that thread.

Attempts to overcome this nature by willpower or religion fail. Paul described his own battle in Romans 7: “I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out... What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death?” That cry of desperation is the cry of every honest soul who finally stops pretending. Whether masked by pride or buried beneath shame, it’s the universal need for rescue. And when religion steps in without the gospel, it only deepens the problem.

In Acts 17, Paul visited Athens and saw altars to many gods, including one “to an unknown god.” He pointed out their hunger for the divine, but exposed their ignorance: “What you worship as something unknown I am going to proclaim to you.” He was naming the human condition—spiritually blind, but searching nonetheless. In Romans 10, Paul described many Israelites as zealous for God, “but their zeal is not based on knowledge.” Passion without truth is dangerous. Worship without revelation leads only to more confusion.

The sinful nature produces longing. Deep inside every heart is a void—an ache for something we can’t quite name. We were made for communion with God, and without it, we search endlessly for substitutes. Some chase pleasure, others chase philosophy or possessions. Some turn to religion. But all of it is hollow without the truth of the gospel. These pursuits may mask the ache, but they

can't satisfy it. Like drinking salt water, they leave the soul thirstier than before.

This search for meaning apart from God isn't new. It's what Solomon chronicled in Ecclesiastes. He chased wisdom, wealth, pleasure, and success—yet at the end of it all, declared it “meaningless.” His conclusion wasn't bitter—it was honest. Nothing “under the sun” can fill the void within. The ache isn't mental or material. It's spiritual. And it's there to point us back to the One who made us. As Augustine famously said, “You have made us for Yourself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in You.”

The tragedy is that even religion can become a substitute for God. When faith becomes performance, ritual, or moral striving, it loses its power to transform. Religion without grace is just another version of self-salvation. And like every other idol, it will fail. Only grace can bridge the gap between what we are and what God requires.

That's why the awareness of our sinful nature is not meant to crush us—it's meant to open our eyes. It shows us who we are, yes—but more importantly, it shows us how much we need Christ. It removes every illusion of self-sufficiency and prepares our hearts for mercy. The doctrine of the sinful nature isn't cold theology—it's a mirror held up by God's Word, reflecting both our need and His provision.

As we continue, we'll see more of how deeply sin has affected us—and more of how powerfully God has intervened. Our problem is great, but His grace is greater still.

Chapter 4: Personal Sin

We must recognize that we are all guilty of sins we commit personally. This is normally the first thing that comes to mind when the sinfulness of man is mentioned. Personal sin may consist of overt acts such as lying, stealing, and various deeds of immorality; but it may also be the neglect of things known to be inherently right such as caring for the helpless, promoting justice, and forgiveness of others. It can also include sins of the heart and mind, such as pride or lust. Sin is either a violation of or lack of obedience to God's Holy standard of perfection. A cursory self-examination of anyone would reveal sinful acts, sinful practices and evidence of a sinful history. We are sinners, and there is no escaping that blunt truth (Romans 3:23).

The Apostle John teaches that mankind's sin stems from three basic desires inherent in human nature: the cravings of sinful flesh; the lust of his eyes and; the pride of life (1 John 2:16). This was the pattern of Satan tempting Eve in the Garden of Eden. It is also consistent with the temptation of Christ in the desert (Genesis 3:6; Matthew 4:1-11; cf. Luke 4:1-13). Every member of our race has a powerful attraction to this cursed world and the repulsive fleshly gratification that the sinful nature craves. While it is hard to comprehend, we demonstrate it to ourselves over and over again. Christ was the only exception as he was conceived by the Holy Spirit so he was not a son of Adam and never did sin, nor did he desire to, nor could he (Hebrews 10:7; 2 Corinthians 5:21).

Personal sin refers to the individual choices we make that violate God's holy standard—what we do, what we fail to do, and even what we think or desire when it conflicts with His will. John writes simply, “Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness” (1 John 3:4), while Paul reminds us that “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). These are not general observations—they are divine declarations. They hold up a mirror to our lives and leave no room for denial.

Personal sin is distinct from inherited sin. We are born with a sinful nature—that is what we are by birth. But personal sin is what we choose to do as a result of that nature. It reveals itself in outward actions, neglected responsibilities, and corrupt inward thoughts. These expressions of sin highlight just how far we fall short of the character and commands of God.

Outward sins are the most obvious. These are the things we do that directly disobey God's commands—lying, slander, theft, adultery, violence. Paul lists many of these in Galatians 5, including “sexual immorality, impurity, hatred, jealousy, fits of rage...” These are not just moral failings; they are willful acts that spring from selfishness and rebellion. They hurt others, dishonor God, and degrade the soul. But they're only the tip of the iceberg. Underneath them lie sins of omission—those invisible failures to do what we know is right. James 4:17 says, “If anyone knows the good they ought to do and doesn't do it, it is sin for them.” These sins may be quieter, but they are just as destructive. Turning away from someone in need, choosing silence when we should speak up for truth, refusing to forgive when

forgiveness is called for—these all reveal a passive resistance to God's heart.

Even deeper still are the inward sins—the attitudes and thoughts that no one else may see, but which God sees clearly. Jesus didn't shy away from exposing these. In His Sermon on the Mount, He equated anger with murder and lust with adultery. The problem is not only what we do but what we desire. Pride, envy, bitterness, greed, self-righteousness—these live in the unseen places of our hearts and corrupt even our good deeds. We may appear devout or moral outwardly, but if our hearts are filled with secret resentment, arrogance, or judgment, we are deceiving ourselves. Sin is not just behavior—it is a heart condition, and God's Word penetrates to the very core of it.

These categories—outward acts, neglected duties, and inward corruption—combine to form a complete picture of human guilt. They show us that no part of our lives is untouched by sin. And they prepare us to receive grace. Recognizing personal sin is not meant to bury us in despair, but to bring us to humility and repentance. It leads us to cry out for a righteousness we don't possess—and can never achieve on our own.

James describes the pathway of sin with piercing clarity: "Each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death" (James 1:14–15). Sin is not random or sudden—it begins with a desire, then comes deception, disobedience, and finally death. This pattern is not new. It's exactly what happened in Eden. Eve saw that the fruit was

good for food, pleasing to the eye, and desirable for gaining wisdom. Her desire grew, deception followed, and disobedience brought death (Genesis 3:6). This same pattern appears in 1 John 2:16—“the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.” These are not old temptations—they are the ones we still face every day.

Jesus, however, shows us a different path. When tempted in the wilderness, He faced the same categories—hunger, pride, power—but responded with truth. Where Eve doubted, Jesus trusted. Where she was silent, He spoke the Word. “It is written,” He declared again and again, standing firm against the enemy’s lies (Matthew 4:1–11). His obedience was not just for His own integrity—it was for our salvation. Hebrews 4:15 says that we have a High Priest who was “tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin.” That sinless record matters. It means He alone was qualified to bear our sin and become our substitute. As Paul writes, “God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God” (2 Corinthians 5:21).

Christ’s sinlessness wasn’t a theological detail—it was essential for our redemption. He bore our sins not as a fellow struggler, but as the spotless Lamb of God. Peter affirms this, saying, “He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth” (1 Peter 2:22). Because He was perfect, He could take our place. His perfection is our hope, His sacrifice our substitute, His righteousness our covering.

But while Christ stands alone in sinlessness, we all stand together in guilt. We are not only born in sin—we choose it. Our personal sin confirms our inherited guilt. Romans 3 declares that “there is no one righteous, not even one... all have turned away.” Ecclesiastes

agrees: “There is no one on earth who is righteous, no one who does what is right and never sins” (Ecclesiastes 7:20). We are not innocent victims—we are willful participants. Isaiah 53:6 says, “We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way.”

Our problem isn’t just Adam—it’s us. Every lie we’ve told, every selfish choice we’ve made, every opportunity for love or truth that we’ve ignored—these are our sins. The blame is personal, and so is the accountability. But that same accountability leads us to hope. Only those who know they are sick seek the Great Physician. And only those who confess their guilt can receive grace.

No one can claim ignorance before God. Romans 1:20 tells us that “God’s invisible qualities... have been clearly seen... so that people are without excuse.” The witness of creation, the voice of conscience, and the clarity of Scripture all testify to our need. And while we may try to silence that witness or distract ourselves with comparison, the truth remains. Jesus told of two men who went to the temple: one boasted in his own goodness; the other cried out, “God, have mercy on me, a sinner.” Only one went home justified (Luke 18:13–14).

We are skilled at deflecting blame. We compare ourselves to others to lessen our guilt. We justify our motives and rationalize our behavior. But God doesn’t grade on a curve. His standard is holiness—and by that measure, all fall short. Even those who claim not to believe in God often wrestle with shame or the sense that something inside is broken. That inner awareness is not a flaw—it’s a gift. It’s the imprint of God’s image pressing against our fallen condition.

The good news is that conviction is not condemnation. It's an invitation. When we recognize our sin, we are not called to fix ourselves—we are called to come to Christ. We don't need self-improvement—we need rebirth. We don't need performance—we need pardon. We don't need more resolve—we need rescue. The gospel is not for those who think they're doing fine. It's for those who know they're not.

That's why grace is so beautiful. It meets us not at the end of our efforts but at the end of ourselves. When we finally admit our sin—when we stop running, excusing, or pretending—we find a Savior ready to forgive. And it's there, in the shadow of our guilt, that we begin to see the brilliance of His mercy.

Chapter 5: The Fallacy of Human Logic

Mankind is easily lured to rely on mere human logic. We often seek justification by comparing ourselves with others instead of comparing ourselves to God's perfect standard. Deflection of the truth is a common tactic of the guilty. It is obvious that some men are better than others, but without exception, all fall short of perfection (Romans 3:23). Many false gospels promote the concept of self improvement and gaining greater merit than demerit during your lifetime. False teachings of earning God's favor through meritorious obedience to God's Word are common even within Christian churches. However, God's message is clear: Sin is the problem — not the lack of meritorious works (Genesis 3:17-19). Because we are sinners, all the merit we can accumulate will not matter (Romans 11:6).

Those who achieve a high moral standard hoping to be declared righteous based on their superior record will be disappointed. They will actually increase their own condemnation (Romans 2:1-29). God is communicating these things to us ahead of time, and we would do well to listen to His warnings. Sin is not canceled out by goodness or weighed against obedience. Sin requires death—that is the final word on the subject! Failure to acknowledge that fact is the first step towards condemnation.

Perhaps an analogy will be helpful to emphasize this critical point. Imagine two boys in front of a vending machine wanting a soft drink that costs \$1.00. One boy has three quarters and the other a nickel. Which one will be able to purchase the drink? Neither. It is the same

way with mankind. Some men are morally better than others but neither have Divine approval because we all come up short. It does not matter that some have a greater moral record than others any more than one boy having more money than the other. Neither boy will get the soft drink, nor will any son of Adam receive God's approval based on his own merit or good works (Romans 1:1-4:25). God has revealed himself as Perfect, Righteous, and Sovereign. His message to mankind is that we are sinners so we fail His standard based on that fact. We fail before any consideration is given to how morally acceptable or immoral we may be. The veracity of this conclusion is confirmed by the cursed world in which we live. We are cursed with sickness, deterioration, and despair. Existence in this life whether rich or poor, happy or miserable, pleasant or discontent, is nothing more than a grand exercise in futility because we all end up dead in the end (Ecclesiastes 1:1-12:14). Exclusion from God's Presence is what we justly deserve. "Life sucks—then you die!" That is not just an obnoxious bumper sticker; it is an accurate paraphrase of what God said to Adam in the Garden of Eden after he sinned (Genesis 3:17-19).

The main thing to remember about personal sin is that personal sin is not what condemned us; it is merely the fruit of the sinful nature inherited from Adam. What we are condemns us, not what we do. Because we are sinners, we are dead. Without help from an outside source, we would have no hope.

This is where human logic reaches its limit and ultimately breaks down. The human heart instinctively seeks to justify itself, and most people, when asked about their standing with God, begin with a list

of personal virtues. They mention honesty, kindness, responsibility, or the fact that they've "tried to be a good person." These are admirable qualities by human standards, but they fall far short of the divine standard. Scripture leaves no room for such self-evaluation. "A person may think their own ways are right, but the Lord weighs the heart" (Proverbs 21:2). God does not measure us against one another—He measures us against Himself.

Jesus makes this unmistakably clear: "Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matthew 5:48). James echoes the impossibility of human righteousness: "Whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it" (James 2:10). With God, there is no grading on a curve, no balancing act between good and bad. His standard is flawless righteousness, and His verdict is based on truth—not comparison.

Paul's argument in Romans chapters 1 through 3 systematically demolishes every claim to self-justification. He addresses the openly immoral, the self-righteous moralist, and the religious devotee—and finds them all equally guilty. His conclusion is sweeping and sobering: "There is no one righteous, not even one" (Romans 3:10). No one is good enough. No one escapes the charge. Then he delivers the theological bottom line: "Therefore no one will be declared righteous in God's sight by the works of the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of our sin" (Romans 3:20).

The purpose of the law was never to save. It was a mirror—not a ladder—meant to expose sin, not erase it. It reveals the dirt on the face but offers no way to cleanse it. Paul explains that he would not have known what sin was apart from the law (Romans 7:7). Instead

of providing a pathway to righteousness, the law intensifies guilt by shining a spotlight on human failure. It removes any illusion that we can earn divine approval and drives us instead to seek mercy.

Still, mankind clings to the idea of self-redemption. Like the builders of Babel, we reach for heaven by human effort, piling up good deeds, religious routines, moral intentions—all with the hope that they'll amount to something in the end. But these attempts don't lift us—they blind us. When moral behavior is substituted for spiritual rebirth, it becomes a trap. Religion without redemption is one of the enemy's most subtle deceptions. It appears righteous. It sounds holy. But it is powerless to save.

Paul knew this firsthand. Before encountering Christ, he had everything the religious world admired: heritage, law-keeping, zeal. But once he saw Jesus, everything changed. "Whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ" (Philippians 3:7). His resume meant nothing. His efforts, once a source of pride, became obstacles to grace. He discovered that righteousness could not be earned—it had to be received.

That's the heart of Galatians 2:21: "If righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing!" To trust in our own works is to deny the necessity of the cross. If we could contribute to our salvation, Christ's sacrifice would be redundant. But we can't—and it isn't. Our efforts, no matter how well-intentioned, are tainted with pride and self-interest. Even our best deeds are stained. Isaiah says it plainly: "All our righteous acts are like filthy rags" (Isaiah 64:6).

Religious pride may be the most dangerous form of deception. It blinds us not only to our need, but to the solution. Like the Pharisee in Jesus' parable, we compare ourselves to others and thank God we're not like them, while the humble tax collector cries out for mercy—and goes home justified. When we bring our good works as evidence of righteousness, we fail to see the depth of our need. When we bring nothing but our need, grace meets us there.

The vending machine analogy captures it perfectly. One boy has three quarters. Another has a nickel. Both fall short. One may appear closer to the goal, but neither can afford the cost. Likewise, some people may seem more righteous than others, but “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). The issue is not how far we fall—it's that we fall. And the standard isn't goodness—it's perfection.

Yet human logic persists in rejecting this truth. It insists that sincerity should count for something, that good intentions should matter, that trying hard should be rewarded. But Scripture reveals the opposite. “Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools” (Romans 1:22). This is not a failure of intellect—it is a rejection of revelation. Human wisdom cannot solve a spiritual problem. It cannot erase guilt, it cannot resurrect the dead, and it cannot reconcile sinners to a holy God.

Paul declares in 1 Corinthians 1:18 that “the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.” The gospel doesn't cater to human pride—it crushes it. It tells us we're not enough, we never were, and we never could be. But it also tells us that Christ is enough. His

death paid the price. His righteousness meets the standard. His grace opens the door.

In the end, the fallacy of human logic is that it underestimates the problem and overestimates the solution. It treats sin as a sickness when Scripture says we are dead. It treats morality as medicine when the gospel says we need resurrection. That's why the Bible doesn't offer advice—it offers a Savior. We are not sick people needing therapy—we are dead people needing life.

“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast” (Ephesians 2:8–9). Until we understand the futility of works, we will never grasp the beauty of grace. The truth is humbling: we are not enough. But that same truth is liberating: Christ is.

Only when we surrender our logic and receive God's truth will we see our condition rightly—and our hope clearly. The more clearly we see the failure of human reasoning, the more brilliantly the cross shines as the only way home.

Chapter 6: Awareness

Many of us have seen a pickup truck with a winch attached near the bumper. Most of the time we'd glance and shrug it off not caring at all. However, if you found yourself stranded at the bottom of a deep pit out in the wilderness, your perspective would change. From there, if you saw the driver arrive and initiate a rescue effort, your attitude about that driver and his truck would change drastically.

Sinful mankind will not be grateful for God's help unless we recognize that we are in a precarious predicament. The law of sin and death is so powerful that some may subconsciously repress the reality of its force. Many people do not care that God has gone to extraordinary lengths to initiate a rescue effort on behalf of our race.

Appendix "A" details God's full demonstration of the sinfulness of mankind. The sinful condition of the race has led to our fallen world full of illness, despair, and death. The sinfulness of mankind is consistent throughout each member of the race even inflicting its curse of death on the seemingly innocent members of the race. Whether we are young or old, rich or poor, moral or immoral, there is no difference: sin and death universally and comprehensively speak of God's judgment of mankind. We are effectively at the bottom of a pit.

Before someone can be rescued, they must first realize they're in danger. But Scripture teaches that in our natural state, we are blind to the seriousness of sin and unaware of the judgment we deserve. "The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that

they cannot see the light of the gospel” (2 Corinthians 4:4). We may experience moments of restlessness, emptiness, or vague conviction, but apart from divine intervention, we do not see the truth. Paul describes the unbelieving world as walking in the futility of their thinking, darkened in their understanding, and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them (Ephesians 4:17–18). It’s not only that we make bad choices—we are deceived in our perception, disconnected from God, and unable to grasp our true need.

That’s why awareness must begin with God. Jesus said that when the Holy Spirit comes, “He will convict the world of sin and righteousness and judgment” (John 16:8). We do not wake ourselves up spiritually—God opens our eyes. When He does, the fog begins to lift. The rescue becomes visible. What once seemed irrelevant suddenly becomes essential. The gospel is no longer background noise—it is a lifeline.

Imagine a father who prepares an elaborate banquet for his children—carefully shopping, preparing, and presenting a meal of love. But when the time comes, the children are distracted, indifferent, or simply uninterested. One is busy with sports. Another preoccupied with work. A few glance over, but shrug it off. The table sits full, but empty of guests. The father waits, his heart full of longing. This image mirrors how many treat the gospel. God has prepared the table of salvation, abundant and free, through the finished work of Christ. But many never come. The offer remains, but the tragedy is that it’s so often ignored.

Jesus gave a parable like this in Luke 14:16–24, where a man invited many to a great banquet. But the guests made excuses—business, possessions, relationships. So the invitation was extended to the poor, the blind, and the outcast. The meal was still served, but not to those who were too busy to care. In Matthew 22:14, Jesus said, “Many are invited, but few are chosen.” The difference is in who responds. The invitation is real. The table is set. But only those who see their need will sit and eat.

This awareness isn’t merely an intellectual realization—it’s personal and often painful. To see our sin is to come face to face with our need. That’s why Scripture repeatedly emphasizes repentance. The moment we recognize that our morality can’t erase our guilt and our efforts can’t lift us from the pit, everything changes. What once seemed unnecessary now becomes vital. The gospel becomes not just true—it becomes urgent. The rescue has already been initiated. The redemption price has been paid. The door to the Father’s table is still open.

God waits—not with reluctance or indifference, but like the father in the parable of the prodigal son, scanning the horizon for any sign of return. His arms are not crossed, but open. His heart is not cold, but full. He longs to welcome. But we must come. We must lay down our pride and acknowledge our need. The feast of grace has been prepared, but only the humble will taste its richness.

This is not a story of man searching for God, but of God seeking out man. Romans 5:8 tells us, “But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” He didn’t wait for us to ask. He moved first. John 3:16–17 echoes the same

truth: “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son... not to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.” Luke 19:10 makes it personal: “The Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.” This is not sentimental—this is rescue.

Yet, even with the rescue underway, many suppress the truth. Paul describes the condition of fallen humanity in Romans 1:18–21. People suppress what is plain, choosing to walk in darkness rather than respond to the light. To acknowledge the rescue means acknowledging sin. And that means surrendering illusions of self-sufficiency. Pride resists. Comfort distracts. Sin deceives. And so the offer is left unanswered by many. Hebrews 2:1–3 warns us, “We must pay the most careful attention... how shall we escape if we ignore so great a salvation?” The danger is not just rebellion—it’s indifference.

Awareness of sin may be uncomfortable, but it is a gift. Conviction is not rejection—it is the first spark of divine mercy. That unrest in the soul, that sudden clarity about guilt or emptiness, is not something to run from, but to lean into. It means the Holy Spirit is working. On the day of Pentecost, Peter’s words cut to the heart of his listeners (Acts 2:37). That moment of piercing wasn’t cruel—it was healing. They saw their sin clearly. And instead of hiding, they asked, “What shall we do?” Peter answered with simplicity and power: “Repent and be baptized... for the forgiveness of your sins.” And they came. Thousands responded, not because they had achieved something, but because they had finally recognized their need.

That is how grace works. It flows through broken hearts. Psalm 51:17 says, “A broken and contrite heart you, God, will not despise.”

God draws near to the humble. The story Jesus told about the younger son who finally “came to his senses” shows that awareness is the first step home. He expected rejection but received a robe, a ring, and a celebration. That is the Father’s heart.

Awareness isn’t the end—it’s the beginning. When we see ourselves rightly, we are positioned to receive the gospel fully. The pit no longer feels like home—it feels like death. And the sight of the rescuer coming over the edge, winch cable in hand, becomes the most beautiful thing in the world.

Chapter 7: Summary of Section One – Sin

The Bible describes God as Light. This characterization represents purity, holiness, and perfection. God has revealed Himself to the whole of mankind just as the sun casts its light across the entire earth—without partiality and without fail. This divine light exposes not only truth but also the deep sinfulness of man. In the presence of such perfect light, the darkness of our hearts cannot hide. Sin is no longer abstract when viewed in the radiance of God’s holiness—it is deeply personal, undeniably present, and universally condemning.

Our guilt is multilayered. First, we are guilty because of the direct imputation of Adam’s sin. In Romans 5:12, Paul explains, “Sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned.” Adam acted as the federal head of the human race. When he fell, we fell with him. His guilt became ours by divine reckoning. This is the doctrine of imputation—his sin was charged to our account.

Second, we are guilty because we inherit a sinful nature. David testified to this condition in Psalm 51:5: “Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.” We are not born innocent and later corrupted—we are born inclined toward sin. Paul affirms this in Ephesians 2:1–3, describing us as “by nature children of wrath.” This inherited nature explains the world’s moral collapse. Humanity’s default posture is rebellion, not righteousness. Spiritual death precedes moral decay.

Third, we are guilty because of personal sin. While imputation and inheritance describe what we are, personal sin reveals what we do. Isaiah 53:6 says, “We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way.” Romans 3:23 adds, “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” Every lie, every proud thought, every act of selfishness confirms that we are not only born into sin—we willfully embrace it.

The more light we receive, the more sin is exposed. And many do not want that exposure. As Jesus said in John 3:19, “Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil.” That instinct to flee from exposure—like Adam and Eve hiding in the garden—is itself an acknowledgment of guilt. We know we are not as we should be. We sense that something is wrong—not just around us, but within us.

Even those unfamiliar with the Bible or specific doctrines instinctively understand their sinfulness. Conscience testifies. Creation declares. The Spirit convicts. Romans 1:20–21 confirms that God’s invisible qualities—His eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, “so that people are without excuse.” The suppression of this truth is not a lack of access, but a willful rejection. There is no one righteous, no not one (Romans 3:10). All mankind is under the law of sin and death (Romans 8:2).

Efforts to fix this condition through human logic, moral behavior, or religious tradition are futile. The law was never meant to save, but to expose our need for grace. As Romans 3:20 says, “Through the law we become conscious of our sin.” It functions like a mirror—able to show us our failure but powerless to cleanse us. The standard of

perfection reveals the depth of our imperfection. Left to ourselves, we cannot meet the measure God requires. No amount of discipline, sincerity, or religious effort can undo the truth. Ephesians 2:8–9 settles the matter: “It is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast.”

Jesus illustrated this principle in His encounter with the rich young ruler (Luke 18:18–23). The man approached with confidence, believing his moral record was sufficient to gain eternal life. He had kept the commandments and maintained an outward sense of righteousness. But Jesus, looking beyond his performance, exposed the idol in his heart. When told to sell all he had and follow Christ, the ruler turned away sorrowful. His wealth wasn’t the problem—his trust in it was. He clung to his own standard of goodness and missed the invitation to grace. He wanted to inherit life on his own terms. But Jesus requires us to come empty-handed. His sorrow mirrors that of many who quietly hope their decency will be enough, only to realize too late that they never truly surrendered.

This story reveals the broader human condition. Many cling to morality, achievement, or religious affiliation, but none of these satisfy divine perfection. God does not measure us against one another, but against Himself. “Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect” (Matthew 5:48). The standard is absolute holiness. And by that measure, every soul is found wanting. Solomon wrote that life under the curse, whether experienced in wealth or poverty, is vanity—a grand, futile cycle that ends in death. No matter how

polished the exterior, the reality remains: “All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23).

Yet within this bleak diagnosis lies the first flicker of hope. The exposure of sin is not meant to condemn without purpose. It is to prepare the heart for grace. Romans 8:1 offers a stunning promise: “There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.” But that promise means little to those who do not see their need. It is only when we grasp the weight of sin that we can understand the beauty of the gospel. Grace shines brightest against the backdrop of guilt.

This chapter marks the end of the first section of our study—a sobering journey through the doctrine of sin. We have traced its origin through Adam’s transgression, considered its inheritance in the nature of every person, and recognized its expression in the personal sins we all commit. We’ve acknowledged that even the most moral among us stand guilty before a holy God—not just because of what we do, but because of what we are. Imputed sin, inherited nature, and personal rebellion converge to leave all humanity condemned under the law of sin and death.

Throughout history, humanity has offered its own remedies. Some pursue philosophy, others lean on religion, and many place their faith in logic or science. But none of these can change the soul. Jeremiah 2:13 captures the futility: “They have forsaken me, the spring of living water, and have dug their own cisterns, broken cisterns that cannot hold water.” The world builds systems of self-redemption, but they leak. They cannot hold life. They cannot hold hope.

The law can reveal sin but cannot remove it. Religion can inform but cannot transform. Human reasoning can describe the problem, but it cannot solve it. What we need is not self-help—it is salvation. The sin problem is not a bad habit to be corrected. It is spiritual death that demands resurrection. And the only remedy is the power and mercy of God.

This is where the light of Scripture turns a corner. The exposure of sin prepares us to behold the remedy. The same Bible that proclaims our guilt also proclaims our redemption. Section Two will usher us into that hope. We will move from the despair of condemnation to the joy of salvation. From the curse of Adam to the victory of Christ. From the futility of self-effort to the freedom of grace.

The rescue has already begun.

Section Two: Redemption

Chapter 8: Adam v2.0

Jesus Christ, the Creator of the Universe, became a man and represented all of mankind just as Adam did. Without diminishing the glory of our God and Creator, we will be speaking of Him as a human being and comparing Christ to Adam as necessary. The gospel declares that Christ bore the sin of the world in His body as He died on the cross. By rising from the dead, Christ has become the First and Head of the New Creation! The natural race is doomed because of sin and death; the new creation has begun with Christ. The title, Last Adam, signifies the end of the natural race and the beginning of the new spiritual creation. This characterization embraces the conclusion that Christ fulfills all that Adam failed to achieve. The Apostle Paul compares the first men of their respective creations in this way, "So it is written: 'The first man Adam became a living being'; the last Adam, a life-giving spirit" (1 Corinthians 15:45). Just as humanity originally bore similarity to Adam, we now have the opportunity to become part of a new creation! Adam was the first of the natural creation and Christ is the first of the new (spiritual) creation. The problem with the original creation is sin and death; all that remains associated with the natural creation is under divine condemnation. The good news of the gospel is that God sent Christ to pay the full redemption price to free us from sin and death! We will extend this fundamental doctrine with a brief comparison and a close look at the relevant Scripture.

God's authority has established both Adam and Christ as extraordinary men whose actions affect the entire race (1

Corinthians 15:22). Adam was a pattern of the One to come; Christ came and fulfilled all that Adam failed to achieve and more!

Adam was created. He came from the earth. He disobeyed God. His sin caused a spiritual gap between mankind and God. He transmitted his sin nature to his descendants. His sin resulted in physical death for all men. He lost his dominion over the earth. He returned to the earth from which he was formed, and his tenure as a representative for mankind ended.

Christ was the Creator. He came from heaven. He obeyed God. He paid the penalty for man's sin. He redeemed mankind from sin and death. He returned to heaven. He will come back and reign over the earth (as was intended for Adam). He will reign as King in The Eternal Kingdom of God.

Let us return to the main text from the Apostle Paul:

Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned—To be sure, sin was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not charged against anyone's account where there is no law. Nevertheless, death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those who did not sin by breaking a command, as did Adam, who is a pattern of the one to come.

But the gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God's grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many! Nor can the gift of God be compared with

the result of one man's sin: The judgment followed one sin and brought condemnation, but the gift followed many trespasses and brought justification. For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ!

Consequently, just as one trespass resulted in condemnation for all people, so also one righteous act resulted in justification and life for all people. For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous (Romans 5:12-19).

In this key passage of Scripture, the Apostle clearly states that all people have sinned. He associates sin with judgment, condemnation, and death. Fortunately the gift comes by grace, which means it is undeserved; therefore, it is accessible to all people! The source of the gift is identified as God and Jesus Christ. The words associated with the gift are righteousness, justification, and life. He states that those who receive the gift will reign in life through Jesus Christ! For this gift to be valid, Christ became obedient to death for the forgiveness of sin and God raised Him to life for justification; the gospel of our salvation! (cf. Philippians 2:6-8; Romans 4:25; Ephesians 1:11-14).

The apostle Paul draws a profound line in redemptive history between two men—Adam and Christ. These are not merely individuals, but representatives: the heads of two distinct races.

Adam brought sin, condemnation, and death. Christ brings righteousness, justification, and life. Through Adam's disobedience, the world was plunged into darkness. Through Christ's obedience, the door to eternal life was opened.

Paul writes, "Just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous" (Romans 5:19). This righteousness is not earned or improved—it is imputed, just as Adam's guilt was imputed. Christ's victory is credited to the believer through faith. It is not theoretical—it is transformational. Those who trust in Christ are moved from the realm of condemnation into the realm of grace. We are not merely improved versions of our old selves—we are new creations (2 Corinthians 5:17).

This contrast is reinforced in 1 Corinthians 15:45–49. Adam was a living being, formed from dust. Christ, the risen Lord, is a life-giving Spirit. Adam's legacy is weakness, shame, and death. Christ's legacy is power, glory, and resurrection. And Paul concludes: "Just as we have borne the image of the earthly man, so shall we bear the image of the heavenly man." Our identity has shifted—we now belong to a new humanity. In Christ, we are reborn, destined for glory, no longer bound to the failure of the first Adam but secured in the triumph of the Last.

Redemption is not merely a theological idea—it is a truth grounded in history. In Roman society, redemption referred to the price paid to free a slave. That is exactly what Christ has done. As Ephesians 1:7 declares, "In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace."

The price was not symbolic. It was His blood. He bore the full weight of sin, absorbed divine wrath, and fulfilled the demands of justice. Galatians 3:13 says, “Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us.” What Adam introduced—sin and the curse—Christ endured and overcame. Not through avoidance, but through sacrifice.

The sufficiency of His work is confirmed in Hebrews 9:12: “He entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, thus obtaining eternal redemption.” The work is finished. The debt is paid. The curse is broken. The way is open.

Romans 5 repeatedly describes salvation as a gift. Grace is never a wage—it is never earned or owed. It is given freely, and yet it must be received. Paul declares, “How much more will those who receive God’s abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ!” (Romans 5:17). This reception is not passive—it’s the active trust of a soul placing all hope in Christ alone. Salvation is not God helping us try harder. It is God substituting Himself in our place.

When we receive this gift, everything changes. We pass from death to life, from guilt to righteousness, from slavery to freedom. No longer sons of Adam, we become children of God. The gospel doesn’t fix the old man—it replaces him. The Last Adam inaugurates a new creation. Jesus is the firstborn from the dead, the head of a new humanity, the one who begins what will never again be undone.

What Adam lost, Christ has regained. What Adam broke, Christ has restored. What Adam failed to do, Christ completed. This is the

gospel of our salvation—not the improvement of the old, but the beginning of something gloriously new. The cross was not the end of the story. It was the hinge of history. And from that moment on, the new creation began.

Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift.

Chapter 9: The Necessity of the Death of Christ

By God's standard, a perfect and sinless sacrifice was necessary for the forgiveness of sin. Unfortunately, no descendant of Adam could ever succeed to serve as this sacrifice. It would not matter how many exceptional candidates we may have considered, sin would always disqualify every son of Adam. We required a substitutionary sacrifice.

The Old Testament era featured animal sacrifices, but these were temporary and were only effective because they anticipated the eternal sacrifice that God would provide. The animal sacrifices were divinely established to teach mankind the concept of Substitutionary sacrifice. It is necessary to note that all the animal sacrifices were performed at recurring intervals, which is evidence that they were not intended to remove sin permanently (Hebrews 10:1-18).

Since the beginning of creation, only one qualified candidate has ever existed or ever will. That one is Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and miraculously existing as a man. Apart from the Substitutionary sacrifice of Christ, mankind would have been doomed with no way of salvation. There was no deed humanity could have possibly accomplished to make things right with God. Sin requires death and that is a divine law that the Holiness of God demands and enforces.

Christ was God, but he became a man so he could die. It is enlightening to realize that this sacrifice represented the greatest thing God could have done (the figurative use of human limitations is necessary because the infinite attributes of God are incomprehensible). It exhausted all His Might, Wisdom, and Power to

execute this plan of redemption (Ephesians 1:18-23). If there would have been something harder or greater or more costly than the death of Christ, that would have been chosen—there was not.

Christ's death satisfied the requirement established by God for the penalty of sin. It is momentous to note that God was aware of this sacrificial demand long before Adam sinned. God's Omniscience led Him to choose a plan for creation and redemption that required His Omnipotence. The plan was conceived, executed, and completed according to the design of God the Father (Ephesians 1:3-14). Christ accomplished the work of redemption. The Holy Spirit is accomplishing the indoctrination of believers.

Having seen the absolute necessity and eternal significance of Christ's death, we now turn to the divine purpose behind it and the spiritual truths it reveals—from prophecy to fulfillment, shadow to substance, and death to life.

The principle of substitution is woven throughout Scripture. In Genesis 22, when Abraham prepared to offer Isaac, God provided a ram—a substitute. That moment foreshadowed Calvary, where another Father would give His only Son. Similarly, at the first Passover, God commanded the Israelites to apply the blood of a spotless lamb so that judgment would pass over them (Exodus 12). These were not empty rituals—they were prophetic shadows pointing to the perfect sacrifice of Christ.

Only Christ could satisfy the justice of a holy God. Hebrews 4:15 tells us He was “tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin.” Because He was born of a virgin, conceived by the Holy Spirit,

He did not inherit Adam's sin. He alone was qualified to represent humanity. As 2 Corinthians 5:21 declares, "God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."

This is why Christ is not one savior among many—He is the only one. No prophet, teacher, or religious figure could satisfy God's holiness. Even the most upright human would still be disqualified by inherited guilt. Only the sinless Son of God could bear the penalty of sin and overcome death. His death was not tragic martyrdom or symbolic gesture—it was substitutionary sacrifice, planned before the foundation of the world (1 Peter 1:19–20). When Jesus cried, "It is finished" (John 19:30), He declared the debt paid in full.

His resurrection is the ultimate validation. Paul writes, "If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins" (1 Corinthians 15:17). But Christ did rise. His death achieved redemption. His resurrection ensures eternal life. This is why Christ alone can save—He is not a way, but *the Way, the Truth, and the Life* (John 14:6).

The book of Hebrews elevates Christ above all prior mediators and rituals. Hebrews 9:11–14 contrasts the limitations of the old system with Christ's sufficiency: "He entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, thus obtaining eternal redemption." The blood of animals could never cleanse the conscience, but Christ's blood does. Unlike the high priests who had to offer sacrifices for their own sins, Christ had no sin. Hebrews 7:27 says, "He sacrificed for their sins once for all when he offered himself."

The repetitive nature of Old Testament sacrifices signaled their insufficiency. Hebrews 10:1–4 affirms, “It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.” These offerings were shadows that pointed to the substance—Christ. They taught Israel about the cost of sin and the need for a substitute, but only Christ could fulfill what they anticipated.

When He offered Himself, it was once—for all. “We have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all” (Hebrews 10:10). That one offering is eternally sufficient. Hebrews 10:14 confirms: “For by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy.” This is not provisional—it is permanent.

Unlike earthly priests, Christ entered “heaven itself, now to appear for us in God’s presence” (Hebrews 9:24). His work continues—not in repeated sacrifice, but in ongoing intercession: “He is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them” (Hebrews 7:25).

In every way, Christ is superior. His priesthood is eternal, His sacrifice once for all, His blood sufficient, His intercession ongoing, and His redemption everlasting. What the Law anticipated, Christ fulfilled. Hebrews shouts the message: *Jesus is enough*.

And unlike animals led unknowingly to slaughter, Jesus laid down His life willingly. In John 10:17–18, He said, “I lay down my life... No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord.” Philippians 2:6–8 reveals that He “humbled himself by becoming obedient to

death—even death on a cross.” His death was not defeat—it was the triumph of divine love.

The cross was not plan B—it was foreordained. Revelation 13:8 calls Him “the Lamb who was slain from the creation of the world.” Acts 2:23 confirms He was “handed over to you by God’s deliberate plan and foreknowledge.” From the beginning, God’s redemptive plan was already in motion.

This mission involved the full unity of the Trinity. The Father sent, the Son obeyed, the Spirit applies. Ephesians 1:3–14 outlines this glorious work—from the Father’s choosing, to the Son’s redeeming, to the Spirit’s sealing. Every part of salvation is a divine act—none of it originates from man.

What does this mean for us? That salvation is not earned, improved, or achieved by us—it is received as a gift. No part of redemption was entrusted to human effort. It is a work of God from start to finish.

To reject this gift is to reject the greatest act of love ever shown. Christ’s death was not just necessary—it was the greatest expression of grace the world has ever known. It cost the Father His Son, the Son His life, and the Spirit His grief. But it won for us eternal forgiveness and glory.

We cannot approach God through religion or good works. We must come through the cross. Romans 3:24–25 says we are “justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement... to be received by faith.”

This is not a theological footnote—it is the very heart of the gospel. God's holiness demanded it. His love provided it. His grace now offers it freely to all who will believe.

Chapter 10: The Beauty of Christ's Sacrificial Death

It is incredible to realize that God loves mankind. He demonstrated the extent of that love by sending Christ to die for us (Romans 5:8). God's offer of salvation is available to every member of the race. We all fell under the curse of sin and death when Adam sinned, but because of God's passionate love for us, the debt for sin was paid in full. Christ came as a man, died in place of all mankind, and rose again. The key to God's salvation is to believe the gospel revealed through the death and resurrection of Christ. That belief leads to God's imputed righteousness, followed by justification. Once God declares us to be righteous, we become a new creation that includes life through Christ! The beauty is that God did it all. God loved us; God sent Christ; Christ died in place of mankind. God raised Him from the dead. Christ sent the Holy Spirit to lead us into an understanding of what God has accomplished. The Holy Spirit illuminates the truth and leads us to believe at which point we are made into a New Creation. The believer's new identification in Christ provides ample assurance of full protection against any and all threats.

All that effort and protection is done for us, which completes the salvation of believers. The process of salvation, in no way, includes anything we could do ourselves. Belief is the opposite of doing something. We believe that God did it all! God chose us, redeemed us, justified and protects us. The way we receive this generous gift is through the believer's new relationship with Christ, namely becoming one with Him. Nothing we could have done would save us because what we did was sin; what God did was everything else! The triumph

was that God took the sum of mankind's sin and imputed it to Christ. It is beautifully simple to understand, and belief is within reach of any of us.

God has clearly communicated his divine law of Substitutionary sacrifice. The sacrificial death of an innocent substitute results in forgiveness of sin and removal of guilt. We'll clarify this idea by briefly reviewing three key highlights from God's Word.

In the beginning, when Satan tempted Adam and Eve, God came and spoke to them. He told Satan that Eve's offspring would crush his head. In light of the historical record of Christ's death and resurrection, we are now able to understand what that statement meant. In context, it is clear that God was referring to the eventual coming of Christ who would disarm and defeat Satan (Colossians 2:15; Genesis 3:1-19; Revelation 20:1-10). Satan's greatest achievement was the death of the human race, which he had just acquired by causing man to sin. When Christ came and died in place of mankind, that substitutionary sacrifice defeated Satan, and he lost all he had gained. Christ died in our place, and the guilt of our sin was forever removed. Christ's redemption of mankind frees us from the penalty and power of sin. So as early as the Garden of Eden and immediately after the first sin, we have God's Word that He would be providing redemption from sin and death for all mankind.

A second reassuring example can be discovered if we fast-forward a couple of thousand years or so to the time of Moses. By this time, God had chosen Israel as a Holy Nation. He used Moses to redeem them from their slavery in Egypt (Exodus 19:5-6). Part of the process of being set apart from the other nations included a complete set of

rules known as the Law of Moses. This was God's Law given through Moses to the Nation of Israel. It included the Ten Commandments plus much more. The section we'll be looking at briefly can be found in Leviticus 16. Two goats would be chosen for use in the ritual imputation of sin. The sin of the people would be transferred to these two goats. One goat would be sacrificed which demonstrates the penalty of sin. The other was led to the desert and released, never to return again. This sacred ritual confirmed the previous message which promised the forgiveness and removal of sin. This is a fundamental concept that God established and confirmed each year (while the Law was in effect) to teach people this concept of Substitutionary sacrifice. Sin can be paid for by the death of an innocent substitute who suffers the penalty of death followed simultaneously by the removal of guilt.

The third revelation comes from the Prophet Isaiah who explained that Christ would be the one who would be the substitutionary sacrifice for all mankind. The collective sin of humanity was imputed to this one Man who suffered death for us all! The Prophet made this revelation several hundred years before Jesus was born. "But he [Christ] was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed" (Isaiah 53:5).

So we hear God communicating in the Garden of Eden that one would be born who would become our Savior. We hear God communicating through the Law of Moses that sin requires death, but that sin and guilt are removed once the sacrifice is completed. Additionally we hear God communicating through the Prophet Isaiah

that Christ would be the one who would fulfill this requirement for the race. Every Christmas and Easter we are reminded that Christ did appear. He was miraculously born as a man, and eventually suffered death on the cross, followed by His Glorious Resurrection. In so doing, our sin was paid for and removed! Once removed, it will not be held against us any longer. What a beautiful revelation that has proven to be for those who believe!

Christ's death is the high point of redemptive history—not just because of the event itself, but because of what it accomplished. Romans 3:25 calls Christ a “sacrifice of atonement, through the shedding of his blood—to be received by faith.” His death satisfied divine justice. The righteous requirement of the law was met in full.

This was no tragic accident, but a divine appointment—foreordained “before the foundation of the world” (Revelation 13:8). When Jesus cried, “It is finished” (John 19:30), He wasn't surrendering in defeat; He was proclaiming victory. In that declaration, the debt of sin was paid in full. What countless generations of animal sacrifices could never accomplish, Christ did in one act of obedience (Hebrews 10:14). His sacrifice was not a shadow, but the substance—not temporary, but eternal; not symbolic, but fully effective.

The meaning of Christ's death is most clearly seen through the lens of imputation. As 2 Corinthians 5:21 says, “God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.” On the cross, Christ bore the full weight of human guilt. Every vile deed, every bitter thought, every selfish act was transferred to Him. Though sinless, He was treated as though

He were the sinner. Isaiah puts it plainly: “The Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all” (Isaiah 53:6).

This is the scandal and glory of the cross. That the sinless Son of God was reckoned guilty of every human offense is both astonishing and essential. God did not ignore our sin—He dealt with it thoroughly and justly. And the only way to do that was to place it all on Jesus. Every sin that would have condemned us was placed on Him instead.

As darkness covered the land from noon to three (Luke 23:44–45), creation itself bore witness to the weight of what was happening. Jesus cried out, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” (Matthew 27:46). In that moment, He experienced what we deserved—separation, judgment, wrath—not because He sinned, but because He stood in our place. He was the substitute, enduring the silence of the Father so that we might hear the words “You are forgiven.”

This is why the gospel is not just a message of love—it is a declaration of justice satisfied. Christ didn’t just die for sin in general; He died for *our* sin. He bore the curse, carried the shame, and paid the penalty. And in exchange, He offers forgiveness, righteousness, and eternal life. The cross is where mercy triumphed and where the greatest exchange in history took place: our guilt for His righteousness, our judgment for His peace, our death for His life.

That means our guilt is truly gone—permanently and completely. “As far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us” (Psalm 103:12). The blood of Christ

cleanses the conscience (Hebrews 9:14), washes away every stain (1 John 1:7), and secures a verdict that can never be overturned. “There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus” (Romans 8:1). That “now” is not pending—it is present and eternal. No charge remains. No penalty lingers. The Judge has spoken, and the gavel has fallen: forgiven.

But the beauty of Christ’s sacrificial death is not only in what we are saved *from*, but also in what we are saved *for*. This isn’t just pardon—it’s adoption. We are not merely rescued; we are welcomed. “How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!” (1 John 3:1). In Christ, we are given a new identity, a new status, and a new relationship. We now live not as condemned criminals, but as beloved sons and daughters. Our access to God is secure. Our standing is unshakable. We no longer earn a place at the table—we inherit it.

And this inheritance is not abstract. It is the everyday reality of walking with God. We live with a clean conscience, a renewed mind, and a future anchored in hope. We have peace with God (Romans 5:1), intimacy with the Spirit (Romans 8:15), and the joyful calling to walk in newness of life (Romans 6:4). Because of Christ, we run boldly to the throne of grace (Hebrews 4:16), confident not in our merit but in His mercy.

The courtroom has become a family room. The Judge has become our Father. The sentence we deserved was carried out on the cross, and the life we could never earn was freely given. That is the glory of

Christ's sacrificial death—it is not just the end of guilt; it is the beginning of grace.

What began in the Garden with a curse has been reversed by the cross. Death is defeated. Guilt is gone. Fellowship is restored. And all of it is a gift. Paid for by Christ, offered to all who believe. That is the beauty of His sacrificial death: it is finished, it is full, and it is forever.

Chapter 11: God is Not Imputing Sin to Man Anymore

Since God imputed the sin of mankind to Christ, there is no reason that He would impute it to us any longer! Let us now examine three major imputations recognized by students of the Bible:

1. Adam's sin was imputed to all of mankind.
2. The sin of mankind was imputed to Christ as He died on the cross.
3. The righteousness of God is imputed to those who believe the gospel.

Some of us may struggle with the overwhelming significance of these imputations, but let's remember that we are paying less attention to viewing things from a mere human outlook and more attention to understanding God's revelation to us. These doctrines are revealed to give us insight to things that rise above human understanding. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the Lord. "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts ... " (Isaiah 55:8–9).

In the beginning, God imputed Adam's sin to his posterity. As a result of that imputation, we still live in mortal bodies in a fallen world. Thankfully, God did not end with that imputation. Clearly God went on to impute Adam's sin to Christ, the One represented by the first animal sacrifice in the Garden of Eden, which provided the covering for Adam and Eve to wear. The men who lived before the death of

Christ anticipated the Divine Atonement accomplished by Christ; the men who live after Christ accept it as a historical fact. In either case, consequences for sin do remain such as the curse put upon the race, but a temporary consequence is much different from the ultimate effect. The effect, described as death—was suffered by Christ. God imputed the whole sin debt of mankind to Christ, and He bore the sin of the world in His body and died vicariously for the race. Therefore, God is propitiated and has declared that the sin debt has been settled. It has, in fact, been paid in full (Colossians 2:13–15; Romans 5:6–11).

As stated in the first Scripture reading, Romans 5:12–19, the Apostle Paul established that the men who lived from Adam to Moses did not suffer death because of their own sins but because of Adam's sin. Their personal sin was merely the fruit of the sinful nature inherited from Adam. They entered life as sinners. God promised redemption to them. Whether or not they chose to believe, their sin and accompanying guilt was obviously imputed to the coming Christ. We know certain men from this period are men of faith who experienced salvation. Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Moses, and others are all recorded in the (unofficial) believer's hall of fame (Hebrews 11:1–40). Undoubtedly the offer of salvation was available to all but only some received God's provision of grace, which was accepted by faith.

The rest of mankind undoubtedly follows the same pattern as the segment of humanity who lived before Moses. We are born sinners and are heading toward death from the moment we were conceived. Faith in God's redemption is the key to salvation. A lack of faith will lead to condemnation in spite of Christ's sacrifice.

As we move forward in the timeline to present day, we see that God is not presently imputing sin against us (2 Corinthians 5:19). The fact that mankind still exists; the reason Christ came and died; the crowning achievement of God's power and love hinges on the doctrine of imputation! God imputed Adam's sin to all of us making us equally guilty. God then went on to impute the sum of mankind's sin to Christ, equally freeing us from the law of sin and death. God removed the sin of the world via the death of Christ and made a way for all of us to be eternally reconciled to Him. To make all this feasible, God made the decision (before the creation of the world) not to impute sin against us as clearly taught by the Apostle Paul, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world [all mankind] to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us [believers] the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. God made him who had no sin [Christ] to be sin for us [all mankind], so that in him we [who believe] might become the righteousness of God" (2 Corinthians 5:17-21).

In this passage, we can see that God made Christ to be sin and suffer death in place of mankind because He desired reconciliation. He is no longer "counting people's sins against them". Mankind is redeemed from the consequence of sin and death. The full redemption price was paid by the death of Christ. Therefore, sin is not an obstacle to salvation; failure to believe the gospel is the

problem. There is no impediment to God's mercy and grace other than the individual decision to reject the Person and Work of Jesus Christ, the Savior of the World.

God is no longer counting men's sins against them. That declaration, drawn straight from 2 Corinthians 5:19, may be the most liberating truth ever spoken over a condemned race. It does not mean that God has grown lenient or changed His standards. It means that the sin debt has already been settled—once, fully, and forever—at the cross of Jesus Christ.

The doctrine of imputation undergirds this stunning reality. In it, we find three great transactions: Adam's sin imputed to all mankind, mankind's sin imputed to Christ, and God's righteousness imputed to the believer. These are not just theological abstractions—they are the framework of God's redemptive strategy. And though they defy human logic, they are thoroughly biblical, divinely revealed, and eternally consequential.

Through Adam, sin entered the world. He was our representative head, the federal agent of humanity. When he fell, we fell. The guilt of his rebellion was transferred to the account of every one of his descendants. "In Adam all die," Paul writes (1 Corinthians 15:22), and again in Romans 5:12, "sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people." The judgment didn't wait for our first lie or selfish thought. We were born into it. Imputation began at birth.

But God didn't stop with that imputation. From the earliest moments of human history, we are given glimpses of a second—more hopeful

—transaction. In Eden, God clothed Adam and Eve with garments of skin, signaling that a substitute had died to cover their shame. Later, on Mount Moriah, God stayed Abraham's knife and provided a ram in Isaac's place. At Passover, the blood of a lamb marked the doorposts of every home that wished to escape judgment. And in the wilderness tabernacle, again and again, sin was ceremonially transferred to animals who died in the place of the guilty.

All of these pointed forward to Christ. He is the true and final substitute. The sin of mankind—mine, yours, everyone's—was imputed to Him. Isaiah said it plainly: "The Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all" (Isaiah 53:6). Paul echoes: "God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us" (2 Corinthians 5:21). That's not poetic metaphor—it's divine transaction. Christ bore the legal penalty for our guilt. He became sin in standing—not in nature—so that we might become righteous in standing, though we were far from it in nature.

This is what the cross accomplished. God was not overlooking sin—He was judging it. He didn't forgive by ignoring guilt—He forgave by placing it on Christ. And now, that payment having been made, He does not double-charge the debt. He is not imputing sin to man anymore—not because sin isn't serious, but because Christ already bore its full weight.

That's the good news. That's the gospel. But the story doesn't end with Christ absorbing our guilt. The third and final imputation is the one that secures our place in God's family: the righteousness of God is credited to the one who believes. This is what Paul means when he writes in Romans 4 that "faith was credited to Abraham as

righteousness.” The righteousness that saves is not earned—it is transferred. It comes from God. It is received by faith.

Let this sink in: If you are in Christ, then God sees you clothed in the very righteousness of His Son. You are no longer defined by your sin, but by His perfection. This isn’t a staged exchange. It’s real. It’s final. And it means that nothing—absolutely nothing—can separate you from the love of God.

And yet, so many continue to live as if the debt hasn’t been paid. They try harder, fear more, and exhaust themselves trying to gain what God is already offering as a gift. Others reject it entirely—not because they haven’t sinned, but because they’ve never believed. That is the true barrier now. Not guilt. Not failure. But unbelief. Christ has already removed the obstacle. “God was reconciling the world to Himself in Christ, not counting people’s sins against them,” and now He “has committed to us the message of reconciliation” (2 Corinthians 5:19).

We are not called to tell people to be better—we are called to tell them they are already forgiven. We are not spiritual salesmen peddling a religious system—we are ambassadors of a finished work. Our job is to proclaim, “Be reconciled to God!” Not by works. Not by rituals. Not by merit. But by faith in the crucified and risen Savior.

This message should change how we speak, how we live, and how we view those around us. It should humble us deeply, knowing that our righteousness was not achieved but received. And it should

embolden us joyfully, knowing that the gospel we proclaim is not wishful thinking—it is objective truth backed by the blood of Christ.

For the weary believer who still feels the sting of shame—remember, your sin has already been judged. It was nailed to the cross and buried with Christ. God is not waiting to catch you failing. He's already declared you righteous. You are secure, not because you are consistent, but because Christ is faithful.

And for the skeptic, the seeker, the one who fears God's rejection—know this: the cross wasn't just enough, it was more than enough. God is not counting your sins against you. He is calling you to believe.

This is the beauty of divine imputation. It doesn't ask you to work—it invites you to rest. It doesn't hold your failures over you—it places Christ's victory upon you. It doesn't require perfection—it offers it.

The ledger has been cleared. The righteousness has been transferred. The invitation stands.

Be reconciled to God.

Chapter 12: God's Discipline

Even though sin and guilt are forgiven and removed, temporary consequences remain. The ongoing sin of mankind continually reminds us of our innate sinfulness and fosters an opportunity for God to lovingly discipline people with a view to promote reconciliation. As a dutiful father disciplines his son because he loves him and wants what is best for him, so also God disciplines His children. He loves each and every one of us as we are made in His image and likeness. Man is His offspring. As a godly father patiently establishes an appropriate environment for learning through a combination of affirmation and discipline that expands in scope as the child matures, so also God has established the fallen world as a comprehensive learning environment in which we can learn of sin, judgment, and righteousness.

God desires us to be reconciled to Himself. To that end, He has brilliantly crafted the world with all its features and cycles to appeal to the intellect and will which we all possess. He requires that we willingly seek Him. As we reflect on the cycles of nature, the course of mankind, the demise of our earth and the next life, we can begin to see God's revelation come into focus. Instead of acting as a powerful slave trader who redeemed us only to force his will on us as his slaves, God acts as a loving father who welcomes us back and provides love and security counting us as His heirs. For our own benefit, He provided physical and spiritual death so we would experience and understand the loss of fellowship with our Creator and long for this reconciliation. All the time, Christ was (and is) present and sustaining life for humanity. God allows us to sin and fail

so we can understand that we cannot make it alone. It is when we trust entirely in the finished Work of Christ that we can experience peace with God and rest in His righteousness. This is a concept that needs to develop over the course of time. It may be compared to a young adult who realizes that the discipline received during childhood was for his own benefit. Once that light comes on, there is a higher level of understanding which results in a new appreciation and respect for his parents.

Even though sin has been paid for in full, and the eternal penalty removed, God has not eliminated the earthly consequences of sin altogether. And that, too, is an act of mercy. The world we live in—a world marked by struggle, failure, and consequence—is not a chaotic wasteland, but a carefully designed learning environment. A place where a loving Father trains His children.

Scripture assures us that this training is not punishment in the wrathful sense. It is discipline, flowing from love. Hebrews reminds us that “the Lord disciplines the one He loves, and chastens everyone He accepts as His son” (Hebrews 12:6). Just as an earthly father corrects his child to protect and shape him, so God corrects His children for their good. His discipline is never aimless or cruel—it is designed to bring about righteousness, to cultivate dependence, and to deepen the bond between Father and child.

In that way, discipline is evidence of belonging. It means we are His. We are not left to our own devices to self-destruct, but graciously interrupted, redirected, and restored. God’s correction trains our hearts to crave what is right instead of what is easy. Hebrews 12:11 acknowledges the discomfort honestly: “No discipline seems

pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.” The pain is temporary; the fruit, eternal.

Consider the difference between punishment and discipline. Punishment seeks retribution. Discipline seeks restoration. God’s discipline is never about retribution. Christ already bore that. Instead, it’s about bringing us into greater intimacy with Him—teaching us to trust, helping us see the futility of our independence, and drawing us back when we stray.

This is clearly seen in Jesus’ parable of the prodigal son. The younger son’s rebellion landed him in ruin. It wasn’t until the emptiness of his chosen path became unbearable that he turned back toward home. And what met him there? Not a lecture. Not a beating. A father running. Arms open. Tears flowing. That is the heart of God’s discipline: it allows us to feel the ache of separation so we might value the joy of reconciliation.

The Bible is filled with examples like this—God allowing His people to experience the results of sin, but always with redemptive purpose. Adam and Eve were driven from Eden, but not before being clothed. Israel was exiled for their disobedience, yet God still promised their return. David faced crushing consequences after his sin with Bathsheba, but his repentance birthed the depth of Psalm 51. Jonah fled, was swallowed, and cried out from the depths before being restored to his mission. Peter wept bitterly after denying Christ, only to be tenderly reinstated by the risen Lord. In each case, God’s discipline stung—but it healed. It corrected, but it never condemned.

Even creation itself serves this purpose. The world is groaning under the weight of sin, yet it continues to reveal God's invisible attributes—His eternal power, His divine nature—testifying to every human soul that there is a Creator, and that we are accountable to Him (Romans 1:20). The rise and fall of nations, the rhythms of life and death, the beauty and fragility of creation—these are not random. They are divine echoes, whispering of judgment, redemption, and eternity.

That's why the fallen world functions as more than a backdrop—it's a classroom. Solomon saw it and called life "meaningless" apart from God. But through eyes of faith, the same struggles that once caused despair now spark hope. Romans 5 reminds us that "suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope." The trials of life are tools in the hands of a wise Father, shaping us to reflect the image of His Son.

Not every hardship we face is a direct act of discipline. But every hardship can be used for discipline. God wastes nothing. He works through all things for the good of those who love Him (Romans 8:28). And as we mature in our walk with Christ, we begin to see that even the moments we once resented—failures, delays, heartbreaks—were often the very things that drew us to God in the first place.

Like the young adult who finally understands what childhood correction was really about, spiritual growth often includes moments of clarity when we say, "Now I see." In hindsight, God's hand becomes visible. His timing makes sense. His boundaries seem kind. His lessons prove lasting. The discipline that once felt like rejection now feels like grace.

This is the kindness of God—that He does not leave us in our ignorance. He interrupts us. He corrects us. He leads us away from destruction and into deeper freedom. He teaches us what we could not learn apart from difficulty: that His grace is sufficient, that His power is made perfect in weakness, and that true peace is found not in escaping discomfort, but in trusting Him through it.

God's discipline is one of the clearest signs of our sonship. He doesn't discipline slaves—He disciplines children. And the goal is never punishment. It's always transformation. He is not trying to force our submission—He is shaping our hearts. He is not after compliance—He is after Christlikeness.

At the heart of it all is this: we are being prepared for something far greater. Temporary pain, eternal gain. Present discomfort, future glory. As Paul said in 2 Corinthians 4:17, "Our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all."

The beauty of God's discipline is not just in what it corrects—but in what it creates. Righteousness. Peace. Maturity. Gratitude. Trust. And, most of all, a deeper relationship with the One who loved us enough not to leave us as we were.

He is not standing far off with arms folded. He is near, guiding, pruning, correcting, and inviting us to walk with Him through the very trials that once made us run. And in that journey, we find that the sting of discipline fades, but the fruit remains.

We are not abandoned—we are being shaped. We are not punished—we are being loved. And the Father who disciplines us now is the

same One who will one day wipe away every tear.

Chapter 13: One Cause, Two Effects

When God demonstrated his displeasure by sending the Great Flood during the time of Noah, the water is what brought judgment to the ungodly. The rains fell; the springs of the earth opened up; the water level rose so high that the entire population was destroyed, except for those in the ark (Genesis 7:6-24). Notice that the same water that brought judgment also provided salvation for those who floated safely above the water in the ark. The water brought death to some and salvation to others. The same is true of Christ. He will bring judgment to the unbelieving world while simultaneously providing salvation to those who believe. Christ will be Judge as well as Savior.

The ark provided salvation from the flood. The way to salvation from the law of sin and death is to believe the gospel. The full cost of redemption was paid for humanity by the death and resurrection of Christ. If a man believes that Christ died to pay the penalty for sin, and rose again to declare justification for those who believe—he will be imputed with the righteousness of God. Life in the new creation awaits those who believe the gospel, and a second death awaits those who reject it.

God's actions throughout redemptive history often yield two distinct outcomes: life or judgment, salvation or condemnation. The same divine act that delivers one group can bring destruction to another, depending on the heart's response. This principle—one cause, two effects—appears again and again in Scripture and is perfectly embodied in the person and work of Christ.

This concept stretches far beyond the example of Noah and the Ark. Throughout Scripture, we find examples where one divine act brings opposite results:

Passover (Exodus 12): When God struck down the firstborn in Egypt, every household experienced the weight of that judgment—except those marked by the blood of the lamb. The same plague that brought mourning to Egypt brought deliverance to Israel. The key difference was not merit, but obedience. Those who trusted God's instruction and applied the blood were spared. Those who did not suffered the consequences.

Red Sea (Exodus 14): God parted the waters so Israel could cross on dry land. The very sea that opened as a path of deliverance for His people became a grave for Pharaoh's army. One body of water, two destinies. The outcome depended entirely on relationship to God.

Bronze Serpent (Numbers 21): When Israel rebelled, God sent venomous snakes. But in His mercy, He offered a strange yet simple cure: look at the bronze serpent lifted on a pole. Those who looked lived. Those who refused died. Centuries later, Jesus would invoke this event: "Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes may have eternal life in Him" (John 3:14–15).

God's Word (Hebrews 4:12): Scripture is described as a double-edged sword. To the receptive, it brings conviction, correction, and life. To the proud and resistant, it exposes sin and confirms guilt. The Word is the same; the response makes all the difference.

Again and again, we see this truth: one act of God, two effects. One Savior, two outcomes. Jesus Himself affirmed this duality: "Whoever believes in Him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already" (John 3:18). He is both Savior and Judge. He is the ark and the flood, the Lamb and the Lion.

Paul echoes this in 2 Corinthians 2:15–16: "We are to God the pleasing aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing. To the one, we are an aroma that brings death; to the other, an aroma that brings life."

Even fire—often used as a biblical metaphor—illustrates this point. In the blacksmith's forge, fire purifies and shapes. In the dry forest, it devours and destroys. The fire does not change—its effect depends on what it touches. For the believer, trials may burn but they refine (1 Peter 1:6–7). For the unbeliever, God is a consuming fire (Hebrews 12:29).

This principle will reach its climax when Christ returns. Revelation 19 depicts Him riding in judgment, but also coming to rescue those who belong to Him. The same Lord who bore wrath on the cross will one day execute wrath in righteousness. One Christ. Two eternal effects.

And this is not injustice—it is grace. The ark had room for more. The serpent was lifted high for any to see. The lamb's blood could have been applied by all. Christ's death is sufficient for all, but only applied to those who believe (Romans 3:22).

That is the point: the difference is not in the act, but in the response. The gospel is a gift extended to all, but it must be received. To ignore

it is to remain under judgment, not because Christ failed, but because unbelief persists.

The floodwaters are rising. The ark is open. The cross has already borne the weight of judgment. Today, the invitation still stands. As Hebrews 3:15 pleads, "Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts."

One cause. Two effects. When Christ returns, will you be safe or left-behind?

Chapter 14: The Next Life

Conscious life will not end with the death of the bodies we now possess. We must seek revelation from God to obtain reliable information regarding the future. The Apostle Paul was selected to contribute to the doctrine of spiritual life.

But someone will ask, "How are the dead raised? With what kind of body will they come?" How foolish! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. When you sow, you do not plant the body that will be, but just a seed, perhaps of wheat or of something else. But God gives it a body as he has determined, and to each kind of seed he gives its own body. Not all flesh is the same: People have one kind of flesh, animals have another, birds another and fish another. There are also heavenly bodies and there are earthly bodies; but the splendor of the heavenly bodies is one kind, and the splendor of the earthly bodies is another. The sun has one kind of splendor, the moon another and the stars another; and star differs from star in splendor.

So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.

If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. So it is written: "The first man Adam became a living being"; the last Adam, a life-giving spirit. The spiritual did not come first, but the natural, and after that the spiritual. The first man was of the

dust of the earth; the second man is of heaven. As was the earthly man, so are those who are of the earth; and as is the heavenly man, so also are those who are of heaven. And just as we have borne the image of the earthly man, so shall we bear the image of the heavenly man (1 Corinthians 15:35-49).

The resurrection of the dead is not merely a theological curiosity—it is the blazing hope of every believer, the divine promise that death is not the end. Scripture is clear: conscious life does not cease at the grave. Instead, it continues, transformed and glorified, for those who are in Christ.

Paul's words in 1 Corinthians 15 anchor this hope in both logic and revelation. He anticipates the natural question: "How are the dead raised? With what kind of body will they come?" His answer is both corrective and illuminating. Just as a seed must be buried before it grows into something greater, so too must our earthly bodies die to be raised in glory. The same God who created countless varieties of physical life—people, animals, birds, fish—will clothe us with a new, spiritual body, each according to His perfect design.

Our present bodies are perishable, weak, and dishonored—marked by the fall of Adam. But the bodies we will receive are imperishable, glorious, and powerful—marked by the resurrection of Christ. "If there is a natural body," Paul writes, "there is also a spiritual body." The contrast is striking: from weakness to strength, from dishonor to glory, from the dust of Adam to the image of Christ.

Christ, the Last Adam, did more than restore what was lost in the first—He inaugurated something entirely new. His resurrection body was

not just a revived corpse; it was a glorified existence. He walked and talked, ate and taught, yet He passed through walls and ascended to heaven. This is the kind of body believers will receive: familiar, yet transformed; tangible, yet eternal. As Philippians 3:21 declares, Christ "will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body."

This promise is not merely theoretical. It is intensely personal. Every ache, every diagnosis, every funeral we attend whispers that we were made for something more. The gospel doesn't deny our mortality—it overcomes it. "In Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive" (1 Corinthians 15:22). This is not poetic optimism. It is gospel truth.

The future resurrection is not only a comfort but a call to perspective. Paul reminds us that our current sufferings are "light and momentary" when compared with the eternal weight of glory (2 Corinthians 4:17). We fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen—for what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

This resurrection hope also forms the bedrock of our Christian ethic. Because the next life is real, we can live with holy urgency in this one. Paul concludes his chapter not with speculation, but with action: "Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord" (1 Corinthians 15:58). The promise of a glorified body empowers us to serve in this broken one.

The Church, in particular, holds a unique hope. Paul reveals a mystery: not all will sleep, but all will be changed—in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye. This sudden transformation, often called the rapture, will gather believers to Christ, whether dead or alive. For the Church, Christ's return is imminent, personal, and glorious.

This truth compels us to holiness, humility, and hope. It reminds us that the grave is not our destination. Our lives are not measured by the decay of the body but by the promise of resurrection. We await not just a new world, but new bodies to inhabit it—bodies fit for eternity.

And so, as this section on Redemption closes, we pivot toward the next: Justification. For such a resurrection to occur, sin must be dealt with. Righteousness must be imputed. Justification answers that need. It is the legal basis by which God can raise the dead in glory without compromising His justice.

We look to Christ, risen and reigning, knowing that as surely as He lives, we too shall live. This is the next life: not merely existence beyond the grave, but eternal life in glorified union with our Savior.

Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Chapter 15: Summary of Section Two – The Key to Salvation is Belief in the Gospel

The gospel presented in the Bible is the good news that God may declare someone to be righteous even though they are sinful. This is a gospel of grace, meaning that the one in question has not done anything to earn or deserve it and that God has provided this salvation freely to all of mankind regardless of the extent of their depravity, their race, social status, or former creed.

God has arranged a just means to declare a person righteous. The sin of man is not overlooked or brushed aside but rather was paid for in full by the death and resurrection of Christ. God sent Christ to become a man. He was the only man who ever lived a sinless life. He thereby demonstrated His qualification to the world as a perfect and sufficient sacrifice. God divinely imputed the sin of mankind to Christ, and Christ died in our place. Not only did He die for the forgiveness of our sins, He was raised from the dead and exalted to the highest place of honor at God's right hand declaring justification for all who believe.

God has provided a solution for the salvation of man. It begins with the personal acknowledgment of the deadly result of sin. Having made that acknowledgment, we must exercise faith by believing that God is satisfied with Christ's Sacrifice and sin is forgiven and removed. Exercising faith in God's solution to the sin problem also means dismissing any other way of becoming right with God. Additionally, we must recognize that more than merely a forgiveness of sin; believers receive the righteousness of God as their own by

their intimate association with the Risen Christ. God, through Christ, makes the believer holy.

The core message of redemption is breathtaking in its simplicity and beauty: that a holy and just God would not only forgive sinners but also declare them righteous through faith in Christ alone. This is not just good news—it's the best news ever proclaimed. As Paul writes in Romans 3:23–24, “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.”

Throughout this book so far, we have followed the story of God's redemptive plan—beginning with Adam's failure and culminating in the victory of Christ, the Last Adam. Adam's sin brought condemnation; Christ's obedience brings justification. Romans 5:18–19 says it best: “Just as one trespass resulted in condemnation for all people, so also one righteous act resulted in justification and life for all people.”

This isn't abstract doctrine—it is the lifeline for the guilty. We have seen that the death of Christ was not just necessary—it was enough. He paid the full price for sin, satisfied the justice of God, and rose again to declare justification for all who believe. Hebrews 10:14 captures this perfectly: “By one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy.”

At the heart of this good news is the doctrine of substitution. Christ took our place. Our guilt was imputed to Him; His righteousness is imputed to us. As 2 Corinthians 5:21 declares, “God made him who

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

This exchange is not achieved by merit, works, or personal improvement—it is received by faith. Romans 10:9–10 puts it plainly: “If you declare with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.”

Faith, then, is the key to unlocking the gift of salvation. It is not mere agreement—it is personal trust in what God has done through Christ. It is letting go of every other path to righteousness and embracing the one way God has provided.

We also discovered that salvation is not just the removal of guilt—it is the beginning of new life. Believers are united with Christ, raised with Him, seated with Him in heavenly places (Ephesians 2:6). Salvation is not a bandage on the old life—it is the birth of a new creation.

In this section, we have seen clearly that God does not call us to climb our way to Him. He calls us to trust in the One who came down to us. He doesn’t require performance—He requires faith. And for all who believe, the result is righteousness, adoption, and eternal security.

Galatians 2:21 draws a stark conclusion: “If righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing!” But Christ did die—and He did rise again. That is our certainty. That is our gospel.

Redemption, then, is not just about what Christ did in the past—it’s about what we receive now, by faith. And it is open to all. Sin is

universal, but so is the offer of grace. What Adam ruined, Christ restored.

And belief is the hinge. Without it, the gospel remains news. With it, the gospel becomes salvation.

As we now transition into Section Three—Justification—we will move from the act of redemption to the benefits of being declared righteous in God's sight. Redemption is the purchase; justification is the receipt. It is the legal standing we now enjoy because of Christ's finished work.

The door has been opened. The invitation remains: Believe the gospel, and live.

Section Three: Justification

Chapter 16: Justification by Faith

Some 2000 years or so before Christ, God promised Abraham that his descendants would become a great nation with many blessings (Genesis 12:1-4; 13:14-17; 15:1-7; 17:1-8). This seemed impossible because Abraham's wife had been barren and was past the childbearing age. Abraham believed God in spite of the odds, knowing that God had the ability to deliver on His promise. God immediately credited Abraham with righteousness because of his faith. Through this example, we see that righteousness is divinely imputed based on belief, not deeds.

“Yet he [Abraham] did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised. This is why ‘it was credited to him as righteousness.’ The words ‘it was credited to him’ were written not for him alone, but also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness—for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead” (Romans 4:20-24).

See Appendix “B” for a timeline of Abraham's journey of faith. Justification comes by faith, not by works. For example, when a man believes God's promise of redemption through Christ, he is immediately credited with God's righteousness and divinely proclaimed as righteous (Romans 4:1-25).

Students of the Bible refer to this divine proclamation as *justification*. Because God is just, the only possible way to achieve redemption was by the sacrifice of Christ. The sin that would have otherwise condemned us was not overlooked or brushed aside; it was weighed, cataloged, transferred to Christ and paid for in full by His death. Now it is forever removed. Moreover, instead of just being back where we started at the state of innocence, believers are credited with the righteousness of God. It is an immeasurable turnaround. It is more than just the removal of a negative; it is also the addition of a positive that was previously far beyond the reach of mankind! The Apostle Paul declared that the death and resurrection of Christ made it all possible. "He [Christ] was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification" (Romans 4:25).

Justification is one of the most powerful declarations in all of Scripture. It is not merely a theological concept—it is a verdict from the highest court in the universe. When a sinner believes in Jesus Christ, God Himself, the righteous Judge, makes a legal pronouncement: "Justified!"

The word "justified" in the New Testament is a legal term meaning to declare righteous. It does not mean to make someone righteous by nature, but to declare them righteous by position. This is a vital distinction. Justification is a judicial act, not a moral process. It doesn't describe a change in character, but a change in standing before God.

In human courts, a judge may declare someone "not guilty" when there isn't enough evidence for conviction. But that doesn't make the

person innocent—it just means they cannot be condemned legally. In contrast, when God justifies a person, He doesn't just say "not guilty"; He says "righteous." The justified person is not only cleared of all charges but stands fully acceptable before God.

This is why justification is more than forgiveness. Forgiveness removes the penalty of sin, but justification also grants the sinner a new status. It's not simply the cancellation of debt; it is the declaration of divine approval. The sinner is not merely pardoned—they are accepted.

Romans 4 highlights this through Abraham's story. Abraham wasn't declared righteous because of obedience to law or performance. He believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness (Romans 4:3). Long before the Law was given, faith was already the means by which God granted righteousness.

Paul affirms this principle in Romans 5:1: "Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Faith is the channel through which justification is received—not a work, but a humble trust in God's promise.

Galatians 2:16 echoes this: "A person is not justified by the works of the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ." And Ephesians 2:8–9 reminds us: "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast."

Justification is God's gift to the one who believes. It is received instantly and irrevocably at the moment of faith. Romans 3:26

summarizes the glory of this truth: God is both "just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus."

This declaration is not based on moral achievement but on Christ's finished work. Because Jesus bore the penalty of our sin, God can declare the guilty righteous without compromising His holiness.

This verdict is final. Romans 8:33–34 boldly proclaims: "Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us."

Justification transforms our relationship with God. It grants peace, assurance, and boldness. It allows us to serve God not to earn His favor, but from the security of having already received it. Romans 5:1 affirms this peace is ours—not based on feelings, but on a settled legal declaration.

Abraham's faith was not a vague hope. It was confident trust in God's promise, even when circumstances seemed impossible. Romans 4:21 says he was "fully persuaded that God had power to do what He had promised."

That same kind of faith is what God honors today. Romans 4:24–25 brings it home: "[Righteousness] was also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness—for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification."

Justification is not the end of the story—it is the foundation. It opens the way for sanctification, fellowship, and eternal life. And it is the basis for all Christian assurance.

If you have believed the gospel, then this is your reality. You are justified. Declared righteous. Fully accepted in Christ.

So live in that peace. Rest in that truth. And rejoice in the grace of God, who justifies the ungodly through faith alone.

Chapter 17: Sanctification

Sanctification is a process that sets apart a believer from the unbeliever—the Holy from the unholy. The sanctification of a believer has three main aspects which set the believer apart from sin. A believer is set apart from: (1) the penalty of sin, (2) the power of sin, and (3) the presence of sin.

1. **Positional sanctification** occurs at the moment of justification. At that time, a believer's spiritual condition changes instantaneously. He moves from a state of spiritual death to spiritual life. This regeneration is the first step of a believer's journey as part of the new creation. It is, in essence, the counterpart to birth in the natural creation. From that moment on, the believer is set apart, or positionally sanctified (Hebrews 10:10; cf. Ephesians 4:22-24).
2. **Experiential sanctification** relates to the believer's new life in holiness. This aspect of sanctification is not something that is achieved, but is experienced during the believer's natural lifetime. It is an ongoing learning process in which he learns to resist sinful behavior and live by the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit teaches believers about their new standing in righteousness and leads them into a life of holiness. This is done while believers are bound to their sinful bodies in a fallen world. It is no small undertaking (2 Corinthians 3:17-18; Romans 12:1-2).
3. **Ultimate sanctification** occurs when we arrive in heaven. Once a believer passes from this life into the next, they will be

purified to such an extent that they will be unable to sin. The old creation will be destroyed, and by that means, they are removed from the presence of sin. The believer will, in fact, lose the desire or ability to sin (1 John 3:2-3; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24).

Therefore, sanctification progressively sets the believer apart from all aspects of sin. The penalty of sin is death. Because of our regeneration and our union with Christ in the new creation, we are no longer dead, but spiritually alive. We are set apart from the power of sin, which is our sinful nature. The believer shares Christ's divine nature (2 Peter 1:4). The Holy Spirit enables our new nature to overcome the sinful desires that our flesh craves. Victory over the power of the sinful nature is available through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. He helps us identify and resist the temptation to sin while enabling us to serve others by using our new spiritual gifts. Sin is a clear and present danger while we remain in our fleshly bodies, but that is a temporary situation. After our death and resurrection, we will receive new, purified bodies. We will, in a true sense, be forever sanctified.

The experiential sanctification phase is the most challenging for the believer as failures and blunders are inevitable. We must acclimate to our new holy standing. Like children that need to learn acceptable behavior, so also the new believer needs to learn to be holy. God anticipated this and of course, has made provision for the sin of believers. He requires that we confess our sins. Christ is presently serving as an advocate and mediator for believers. Our sin is washed away by the blood of Jesus who continues to serve as High

Priest in the true tabernacle of God in heaven. As we acknowledge our failures, we learn to depend on the Holy Spirit who has been sent to help us. He will grant us the wisdom and power to accomplish the works that will bear witness to our faith (Ephesians 2:8-10). Believers will either give in to our fleshly desires, or obey the Holy Spirit. It takes time and effort to get it right. The Apostle John encouraged believers saying, “But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. All who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure” (1 John 3:2-3).

Sanctification means being set apart for God. In Scripture, it describes how believers are made holy—not just morally, but in the deeper sense of being devoted for divine purposes. Just as the sacred items in the temple were declared holy because they were set apart for worship, believers are set apart through their union with Christ.

Unlike justification, which is a once-for-all legal declaration, sanctification has three distinct phases. First, positional sanctification occurs the moment someone believes the gospel. Hebrews 10:10 affirms, “We have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.” This initial sanctification does not fluctuate based on behavior—it is rooted in the finished work of Christ and marks our identity as saints.

Second, experiential sanctification is the ongoing process of becoming in practice what we already are in position. Paul describes it in 2 Corinthians 3:18 as being “transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory.” This transformation is not about human effort

alone—it is the Spirit's work within us. Romans 12:1–2 calls us to surrender ourselves daily so that our minds may be renewed and our lives reshaped.

This middle phase is where the tension of Christian living resides. Believers still battle the flesh, but the Holy Spirit empowers victory. Galatians 5 speaks of this inner conflict, but also reveals the Spirit's fruit: love, joy, peace, and more—evidence of our growth.

Sanctification includes practices like prayer, Scripture meditation, confession, and fellowship, not as means to earn God's favor, but as ways to align with His will.

Finally, ultimate sanctification—also called glorification—will take place when believers are in Christ's presence. In that moment, sin will no longer dwell in us. As 1 John 3:2–3 says, “We know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.” Paul echoes this hope in 1 Thessalonians 5:23–24, praying that God would sanctify us completely—and assuring us that “He will do it.”

This threefold progression also reflects how our relationship to sin changes:

- **Penalty of sin:** Removed at salvation.
- **Power of sin:** Broken as we walk with the Spirit.
- **Presence of sin:** Eliminated in eternity.

In the meantime, sanctification involves struggle. We stumble. But when we confess our sins, Christ our Advocate restores us (1 John 2:1; 1 John 1:9). The Spirit does not abandon us but patiently works in us, refining our desires and strengthening our faith.

Sanctification is not about striving to be accepted—it's about living from our acceptance in Christ. We are not trying to earn our holiness; we are growing in it. Ephesians 2:10 says we are "God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works." These works are not prerequisites for salvation—they're the outflow of it.

If you are in Christ, you are already sanctified positionally, being sanctified experientially, and will be sanctified ultimately. That reality should comfort us in failure, energize us in growth, and anchor us in hope.

So walk humbly. Depend daily. Yield continually. You are set apart. You are being transformed. And one day, you will be made perfect in His presence.

Chapter 18: The Present Struggle

The present dispensation of grace began with the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost and will continue until the end of the great tribulation (Acts 2:1-4; Revelation 16:1-21). During this age, believers will continue struggling through the conflict between following the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the desire to fulfill our fleshly desires. Confession of sin will be an essential part of our spiritual lives (1 John 1:5-10). We will practice baptism of new converts to show our identification with Christ, and we will continue to partake of The Lord's Supper in which we remember the life and death of Christ symbolized by the bread and wine (1 Corinthians 11:23-26). We will rely on the Holy Spirit to accomplish all that God intends to accomplish in this dispensation. We will serve others through the spiritual gifts we receive (Romans 12:3-8). We will press on with purpose and meaning, even knowing that in the end, the Church will fail to convert the mass of humanity (Revelation 16:10-11). We will witness the infiltration of false teachers and spiritually blinded members to the church. The false church will grow exponentially and the antichrist will unite the world in purported peace (2 Thessalonians 2:1-12).

The present struggle is divinely designed to stimulate the spiritual growth of individual believers. This begins with the understanding of an Apostolic doctrine regarding spiritual baptism. The believer and Christ are inseparable because of a spiritual union. This association is described as a co-death and co-resurrection with Christ. In a true spiritual sense, believers have been crucified, buried, and resurrected along with Christ. To begin to understand the meaning of

Christ's resurrection, the believer must accept the reality of this relationship. We will reference the inspired words of the Apostle Paul.

Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? 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.

For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his. For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin—because anyone who has died has been set free from sin.

Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God.

In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus" (Romans 6:3-11).

The contemporary style of believer's baptism by immersion is often used to describe how believers were included with Christ in His death and resurrection. As a believer stands and makes a profession of faith, he is then laid down under the water as if dead, and raised up out of the water, as if resurrected. This symbolizes a complete change. We must recognize that as dramatic as the physical act of

baptism may be, and as large of a change as it may indicate, it merely symbolizes what has happened spiritually. Upon belief of the gospel, the Holy Spirit enters (indwells) our bodies; He sanctifies us to be simultaneously spiritually baptized into Christ. By means of this spiritual baptism, we become intimately joined to Christ.

The believer's union with the indwelling Spirit; his oneness with Christ; and sonship with the Father will never be broken. The security of our salvation is sure since it is based on the Word of God. Nevertheless, the believer is encouraged to grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ (2 Peter 3:18). To that end, we will continue to explore some enlightening illustrations provided for our benefit. These figures illustrate the unity of Christ to believers in our dispensation. Reflection on such matters will prove to be invaluable in times of sin and doubt. An educated believer is a fruitful believer. Knowledge cancels out fear as light displaces darkness.

1. **Christ is the Head; believers are the body** (Colossians 1:18; cf. Ephesians 1:22-23; 5:25-29; 1 Corinthians 11:3). This figure is remarkable as it takes a complex relationship and compares it to something even a child can understand, the human body. The head is the source of direction and intelligence. However, the head is incomplete without the body. The individual believers collectively comprise the body which makes all of them dependent on the same head. The unity of this relationship is obvious.

God has brilliantly orchestrated an abundance of examples from our natural world to illustrate spiritual truths; none is as fundamental as Christ and believers as one body.

2. Christ is the Vine; believers are the branches (John 15:1-17). The emphasis in this figure is on the importance of being connected to a life source. Fruit is formed on the branches, but not without a nourishing connection to the vine. Christ supplies all we need to bear spiritual fruit: e.g., compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience, forgiveness, and love (Colossians 3:12-14). As a branch must rely on the vine to bear fruit, so also the believer must rely on Christ to love others. An added element to this figure is God the Father who administers effective disciplinary action for believers who are unfruitful. As a master gardener strategically prunes to increase healthy yields, so also God is involved attaining all that He desires in each one of His beloved children.

3. Christ as the Bridegroom and the Church as the Bride (Ephesians 5:22-33; Revelation 19:6-9). In this unique example, the believers together comprise the figure of the bride. Christ has demonstrated his love for the church by paying the full redemption price to free us from the bondage of sin. He demonstrates His loving attention by cleansing us through the washing of the Word (Ephesians 5:26-27). He has left to prepare a place for us (John 14:1-3). We are anxiously awaiting our heavenly life with our Bridegroom, the Lord Jesus Christ. This figure effectively incorporates all that Christ has done, is doing and will do for believers. We are assured that Christ will return and we will reign with Him eternally (Revelation 22:1-17).

The love of Christ was unrevealed without an object of affection with whom to demonstrate His love. Christ's love for the Church prompted Him to share the accomplishment of great things through them. Christ promised that the believers would do greater things than he did personally in his earthly ministry. The potential of this spiritual relationship is infinite!

The preceding examples from Scripture are more than sufficient to communicate our union with Christ. But I should mention that Appendix C explains them in greater detail and also catalogues four additional biblical analogies for further study. After reviewing the biblical evidence, it is safe to conclude that our position, as believers, is secure. Our security does not depend on our effort or endurance, but on the infinite power, love, and promise of God. In his letter to the Romans, the Apostle Paul rejoices in God's love for us:

“What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? ... For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from

the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 8:31-39).

The present Dispensation of Grace began with the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost and will continue until the end of the great tribulation (Acts 2:1–4; Revelation 16:1–21). In this age, believers live in the tension between their new identity in Christ and the pull of the sinful nature. This struggle is not a sign of failure—it is evidence of life. The flesh and the Spirit are at war within us (Galatians 5:17), and spiritual maturity involves learning to walk by the Spirit rather than by the desires of the flesh.

Paul’s teaching on spiritual baptism in Romans 6 helps clarify the believer’s position in this struggle. When we believed the gospel, the Holy Spirit united us with Christ in His death and resurrection. This spiritual baptism means that our old self has been crucified with Christ and we are now raised to walk in newness of life. This union is not a future goal—it is a present reality. We are no longer slaves to sin, even though we continue to battle its lingering influence.

This invisible spiritual baptism is what water baptism symbolizes. The immersion under water represents burial with Christ; rising from the water symbolizes resurrection into new life. But the act itself is a symbol—the reality is what the Spirit has already accomplished. The believer is now joined to Christ, indwelt by the Spirit, and positioned for a life of growth and fruitfulness.

The believer’s identity is secure, not because of personal effort, but because of divine promise. Yet spiritual growth is not automatic. The Holy Spirit works in us to produce fruit—love, joy, peace, patience,

and more (Galatians 5:22–23)—but He also calls us to cooperation. Our responsibility is to remain connected to Christ and yield to the Spirit’s work. This is what Jesus illustrated when He called Himself the Vine and us the branches (John 15:1–8). Fruit comes not from striving, but from abiding.

Throughout this age, believers will observe baptism and the Lord’s Supper. Baptism identifies us with Christ’s death and resurrection. The Lord’s Supper reminds us of His sacrifice and ongoing presence. These practices root us in the gospel and direct our eyes to Christ’s return (1 Corinthians 11:23–26).

The New Testament also offers rich illustrations to help us understand our spiritual union with Christ. He is the Head; we are the body (Ephesians 1:22–23). He is the Vine; we are the branches (John 15:5). He is the Bridegroom; we are His bride (Ephesians 5:25–27). These metaphors not only convey intimacy and unity but also emphasize dependence. Our growth and usefulness flow entirely from Him.

This dispensation will culminate in widespread spiritual decline, the rise of false teaching, and the eventual appearance of the antichrist (2 Thessalonians 2:1–12; Revelation 16:10–11). Yet none of this undermines the believer’s secure position in Christ. Our hope is not in changing the world system but in remaining faithful and fruitful until Christ returns.

The struggle of this age is meant to mature us. We are called to grow in grace, resist sin, and trust in the Spirit’s power. Confession

and restoration remain vital (1 John 1:9). God's goal is not perfection through performance, but transformation through relationship.

In all this, our security is grounded in Christ's love. Paul assures us that nothing can separate us from God's love—not death, demons, failures, or the future (Romans 8:31–39). That promise sustains us in the battle. Christ is our source, our advocate, and our victory.

Until He returns, we walk by faith—daily depending on the Holy Spirit, sometimes stumbling, but always held by grace. The struggle is real, but so is our Savior. And He is enough.

Chapter 19: Spiritual Gifts

The work of God is to call believers out of the world and into salvation. God has honored Christ with the task of accomplishing this important mission. Christ has already come and offered Himself as the sacrifice for mankind and is continuing to serve believers as High Priest. He is our advocate and mediator in heaven, seated at the right hand of God (Hebrews 10:1-18). Christ has dispatched the Holy Spirit to work through believers in the accomplishment of God's plan (John 16:12-15). As the Holy Spirit manifests Himself in individual believers, various tasks are performed which work together to accomplish God's overall plan. These manifestations of the Holy Spirit are spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12:12-31). They may include wisdom, knowledge, faith, generosity or any service that is needed to assist in accomplishing God's plan. Prayer is a common privilege of all believers and is in addition to any spiritual gift. Love is the core of any gift. The believer serves others and expects nothing in return (1 Corinthians 13:1-13).

Each person has physical attributes and intellectual abilities that make them unique. These may be incorporated into the use of a spiritual gift, however they should not be confused as being the spiritual gift. Spiritual gifts are reserved for believers. They didn't exist prior to the individual's belief of the gospel, and are only possible because of the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. A spiritual gift is a manifestation of the Holy Spirit in the life of a believer (Acts 2:18).

All believers are indwelt by the Holy Spirit but not all are filled with the Spirit (Romans 8:9; 1 Thessalonians 5:19; Ephesians 4:30). Sin and willful disobedience will halt a manifestation of the Spirit. However, the Holy Spirit will use a believer who is actively involved in the confession of sin and willful obedience to God's plan.

God has revealed portions of His plan to the world. He has increased understanding of His plan to believers. However, no one should be deceived into thinking that they understand the details of God's plan. It rises so far above human comprehension that we must simply rely on the Holy Spirit to lead us into individual tasks, and believe that they fit into the overall plan. The complexity of God's plan may be compared to a heavenly kaleidoscope. There are so many variables, so many complicated factors involved, that we could never participate on our own. We simply trust the Holy Spirit to manifest Himself through us in whatever way, time, or place that He wills. As God's plan unfolds and we witness the beauty of it, we rejoice in His wisdom and love (Ephesians 4:1-21).

Believers will be judged according to use of their spiritual gifts. Any service that is performed using mere natural abilities, cultivated skills, or self promotion will be judged and eliminated (2 Corinthians 5:10). The only lasting credit will come from the use of a spiritual gift allocated by Christ, and powered by the Holy Spirit. We would do well to judge our motivation and execution of service based on these prerequisites. The Apostle Paul compares God's plan to the construction of a building with Christ as the foundation. He compares the authentic manifestation of the Spirit to lasting materials, and mere human effort with combustible materials. He refers to the

judgment seat of Christ as fire that will purify each man's work. Fire is often used in the Bible to represent judgment. Christ has been described as having eyes of fire (Revelation 2:18). The idea is that as he looks at our work, only the work accomplished by the power of the Holy Spirit will remain (1 Corinthians 3:13). Everything accomplished by other means will be consumed. Believers must constantly evaluate the motive and means of service to others.

“By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as a wise builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should build with care. For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. If anyone builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, their work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each person's work. If what has been built survives, the builder will receive a reward. If it is burned up, the builder will suffer loss but yet will be saved—even though only as one escaping through the flames” (1 Corinthians 3:10-15).

The Dispensation of Grace is a time in which Christ ministers to the world through His Body—the Church. Believers are not passive observers but active participants in God's plan. One of the clearest expressions of this partnership is the use of spiritual gifts. These gifts, empowered by the Holy Spirit, are given to each believer not for self-glory but to serve others and build up the Body of Christ.

Spiritual gifts are divine enablements, not natural talents or learned skills. They are specific manifestations of the Spirit given to believers at the moment of salvation. Paul explains this in 1 Corinthians 12:7:

“Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.” These gifts vary—some believers are equipped to teach, others to serve, encourage, give, lead, show mercy, or speak with wisdom or knowledge (Romans 12:6–8; 1 Corinthians 12:8–10). Though their functions differ, their purpose is unified: the edification of the Church and the fulfillment of God's purposes.

Importantly, spiritual gifts are distributed according to the Spirit's will—not human choice or merit. We do not earn or achieve these gifts, nor are they evidence of spiritual superiority. They are simply tools, entrusted to us for a divine mission. Whether visible or unseen, dramatic or quiet, each gift matters. As Paul writes, “Just as a body, though one, has many parts... so it is with Christ” (1 Corinthians 12:12).

These gifts are to be exercised in love. Without love, even the most impressive gift loses its value. Paul emphasizes this in 1 Corinthians 13: “If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong...” (v. 1). Love is not an accessory to spiritual gifts—it is the atmosphere in which they thrive. When love governs our service, the Spirit's work is both effective and pleasing to God.

It's also important to distinguish between talents and spiritual gifts. Talents are part of God's common grace to all people, believers and unbelievers alike. A person may be naturally gifted at communication, hospitality, or music—but unless that ability is yielded to the Spirit and used for God's glory, it is not a spiritual gift. Spiritual gifts are the Spirit's work through the believer, not merely the believer's work for God.

Each believer has a unique role in the Church. If you've trusted Christ, you've been gifted by the Holy Spirit. You may not know immediately what your gift is—but that shouldn't stop you from serving. Often, our gifts are revealed as we step out in obedience. As Peter writes, "Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others..." (1 Peter 4:10). The discovery of your spiritual gift often unfolds over time, through prayer, Scripture, and faithful service.

The motive behind our service matters deeply. Spiritual gifts are not for personal recognition or platform—they are for ministry. Paul compares ministry to building on a foundation. Christ is the only foundation, and we build upon it with either lasting materials (Spirit-led service) or perishable ones (human effort). "The fire will test the quality of each person's work," Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 3:13. What is done in the Spirit will endure. What is done in the flesh will be burned away.

This evaluation is not about salvation but about reward. Every believer will stand before Christ at the judgment seat—not to face condemnation, but to give an account for how we used what was given. The goal is not perfection but faithfulness. The works done through the Spirit will last. Everything else will fall away.

So how should we live? We live by surrender. We begin where we are, offering ourselves to God and trusting the Spirit to guide our service. Whether your gift is teaching, giving, serving, or encouraging, use it faithfully. Don't compare, don't hesitate—just serve.

The Church is healthiest when every member functions in their God-given role. You may not see immediate fruit, but the Spirit is at work. Be patient. Be faithful. And let love lead the way. One day, when the work is revealed by fire, may it be shown that your labor was not in vain. “Well done, good and faithful servant”—this is the reward we seek.

Spiritual gifts are not about what we do for God, but about what God does through us. Surrender to Him. Serve in love. And trust that your small acts of faithfulness are woven into His eternal plan.

Chapter 20: The Future Glory

At a time appointed by God, Christ will remove the remaining believers of the true Church and execute the tribulation judgments on the earth. New believers will surface during the tribulation period and will suffer considerably under the antichrist. These tribulation believers will receive special recognition in heaven (Revelation 6:9-11).

At the conclusion of the seven-year tribulation period, Christ will return to the earth. He will reign as King from David's throne in Jerusalem. This earthly kingdom will remain for 1000 years and all believers will be involved in some capacity, though the details are not made clear in the revelation we've received. At the end of the 1000 years, Satan and all the dead will be consigned to the lake of fire. The present earth and heavens will be destroyed by fire (Revelation 20:1-15). With all enemies of Christ judged, and everything that was originally cursed by Adam's sin destroyed, Christ will hand the purified Kingdom over to The Father (1 Corinthians 15:24-28). The Eternal Kingdom will consist of the New Heaven and Earth, the New Jerusalem, and all believers that received new life through Christ. We will serve God in His Eternal Kingdom forever. We will live in perfect communion with Jesus Christ, the Head of the New Creation! It is a magnificent hope we share, indeed.

The future God has revealed is not given to satisfy our curiosity—it is given to shape our character. The knowledge of what is coming should transform the way we live today. The Apostle Peter makes this connection explicit when, after describing the coming destruction

of the heavens and earth, he asks, *“Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be?”* His answer is simple and sobering: *“You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming”* (2 Peter 3:11–12).

We are not waiting for judgment—we are waiting for glory. But we are also waiting with purpose. The Christian life is not aimless wandering; it is a journey of preparation. Every act of service, every moment of obedience, every step of faith is a movement toward eternity. God has revealed the end from the beginning not so that we would predict dates or indulge speculation, but so that we would live with reverence, urgency, and hope.

As we trace the timeline of future events, let us do so with an eye toward application. These things are coming—and because they are, we are called to live in light of them now.

The Prophetic Timeline: From the Rapture to the Eternal State

The Bible presents a clear sequence of future events, revealing God's plan for the culmination of human history. This prophetic timeline is not a mystery for the believer—it is revealed in Scripture for our understanding, encouragement, and readiness. The Church Age, in which we now live, will conclude with the sudden removal of the Church at the Rapture.

1. The Rapture of the Church

The next event on God's prophetic calendar is the Rapture, when Christ will descend from heaven to gather His Church. Paul writes, *"For the Lord himself will come down from heaven... and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive... will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air"* (1 Thessalonians 4:16–17). This event will happen in the twinkling of an eye (1 Corinthians 15:51–52). It is the moment when believers are given glorified bodies and are taken to be with Christ forever.

2. The Judgment Seat of Christ

After the Rapture, believers will stand before Christ—not to be judged for their sins (which were paid for at the cross), but to be evaluated for their service. This is the Judgment Seat of Christ, also known as the Bema Seat (2 Corinthians 5:10). Here, rewards will be given for faithful works, and anything done in the flesh will be burned away (1 Corinthians 3:10–15). This judgment is about reward, not condemnation.

3. The Tribulation and Rise of the Antichrist

Following the Rapture, the world will enter a seven-year period of Tribulation (Daniel 9:27; Revelation 6–18). This time will be marked by the rise of the Antichrist, global deception, and divine judgment poured out on the earth. Many will suffer, and believers who come to faith during the Tribulation will be persecuted and martyred (Revelation 6:9–11). God's wrath will be poured out in waves—seal, trumpet, and bowl judgments—each increasing in intensity.

4. The Second Coming of Christ

At the end of the Tribulation, Christ will return—not in secret, but in glory and power. *“I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True... On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS”* (Revelation 19:11, 16). This is the Second Coming, where Jesus defeats the armies of the Antichrist, casts him and the false prophet into the lake of fire (Revelation 19:19–20), and reclaims His rightful place as King of the Earth.

From the Rapture to the return of Christ, the prophetic clock will tick steadily toward the full redemption of creation. These events are not symbolic—they are literal and future. And they point us toward the final act of God’s great plan: the establishment of His Kingdom on earth.

The Millennial Kingdom: Christ’s Reign on Earth

Following His victorious return, Christ will establish His Millennial Kingdom—a literal, thousand-year reign on earth in fulfillment of numerous Old Testament and New Testament prophecies. This Kingdom is not symbolic or spiritualized. It is the long-anticipated reign of the Messiah from David’s throne in Jerusalem, just as the prophets foretold (Isaiah 9:6–7; Luke 1:32–33).

Revelation 20:4–6 tells us plainly: *“They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years... Blessed and holy are those who share 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.”*

During this time, the curse placed upon creation in Genesis 3 will be largely lifted. Peace and justice will prevail across the earth. Isaiah describes a world in which *“The wolf will live with the lamb... and a little child will lead them”* (Isaiah 11:6). The nations will come to Jerusalem to learn from the Lord, and disputes will be settled by His perfect wisdom (Isaiah 2:2–4).

Believers from all ages will participate in this Kingdom, each given responsibilities according to their faithfulness in this life (Luke 19:17; Revelation 2:26–27). Though the exact details of our roles are not revealed, we know we will reign with Christ in glorified, resurrected bodies. We will experience firsthand what it means for righteousness to dwell on the earth.

Christ’s rule will be just, firm, and filled with grace. There will still be people born during the Millennium in natural bodies—descendants of those who survived the Tribulation. These individuals will be given the same opportunity to trust in Christ as we were, and though the devil will be bound during this age (Revelation 20:1–3), the human heart will still be tested.

The Millennium is a period of peace, restoration, and fulfillment—a glorious foretaste of eternity itself. It proves once and for all that Christ alone is worthy to rule, and that no system of man can achieve what only the righteous reign of the King can accomplish.

Satan’s Final Rebellion and Judgment

At the beginning of the Millennial Kingdom, Satan will be bound and confined to the abyss—*“so that he might not deceive the nations anymore until the thousand years were ended”* (Revelation 20:3). His

imprisonment will bring about a time of unprecedented peace and righteousness on earth, but this peace is not the final state. It is a temporary demonstration of what the world can be like when evil is restrained and Christ rules visibly.

After the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released for a short time. Though this may seem unexpected, it serves a critical purpose in God's redemptive plan. Revelation 20:7–8 says, *“When the thousand years are over, Satan will be released from his prison and will go out to deceive the nations... to gather them for battle.”* Tragically, many who lived under Christ's rule will choose to rebel when given the opportunity. This final rebellion confirms the depravity of the human heart and vindicates the righteousness of God's eternal judgment.

But the outcome is certain. *“Fire came down from heaven and devoured them. And the devil... was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur... and will be tormented day and night forever and ever”* (Revelation 20:9–10). With Satan's final defeat, all spiritual opposition is silenced forever.

This moment marks the absolute end of evil, the final victory over the deceiver of mankind, and the permanent removal of sin from God's universe. No longer will creation groan. No longer will temptation exist. The enemy will be destroyed—and the stage will be set for the final judgment and the dawn of eternity.

The Great White Throne and the End of All Things

With Satan defeated and history's final rebellion crushed, God will bring the present creation to a close. Revelation 20:11 describes a

scene of awe and finality: *“Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. The earth and the heavens fled from his presence, and there was no place for them.”* This is the moment when time as we know it ends—and the eternal state begins.

Before the Great White Throne stand the unbelieving dead from all generations. These are not believers—those who have trusted in Christ have already been raised and rewarded. This judgment is reserved for those who rejected the gospel, no matter their status, morality, or religious works. Revelation 20:12 says, *“And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened... The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books.”*

There is no defense. There is no appeal. Their deeds—no matter how noble—cannot justify them before a holy God. Only one book holds the key to eternal life: *“the book of life.”* And tragically, *“anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire”* (Revelation 20:15). This is the second death—eternal separation from God.

At this point, the present heavens and earth are destroyed. Peter writes, *“The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare”* (2 Peter 3:10). This is not symbolic—it is cosmic renewal. The old, corrupted order will be completely wiped away to make room for the new.

The Great White Throne reminds us that God is not only loving—He is just. He has patiently offered salvation to all. But to reject the Son

is to choose judgment. The end of the age brings both sorrow and joy—sorrow for those lost, but joy for those who are about to step into eternal glory. What comes next is beyond imagination.

The New Heaven, New Earth, and New Jerusalem

After the Great White Throne judgment and the destruction of the old creation, God ushers in the eternal state—a new beginning that will never end. John writes, *“Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away”* (Revelation 21:1). This is not a renovation, but a complete and glorious re-creation. The curse is gone. Death is gone. Sin is gone. All that remains is life with God forever.

At the heart of this new creation is the New Jerusalem, described as *“coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband”* (Revelation 21:2). This holy city will be the dwelling place of the redeemed and the eternal seat of God’s presence. *“Look! God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God”* (v. 3).

John tells us, *“He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain”* (v. 4). Imagine it: no suffering, no fear, no sin—just perfect peace and joy in the presence of the Lamb. The glory of God will illuminate the city, and the Lamb will be its lamp (Revelation 21:23). There will be no temple, because *“the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple”* (v. 22).

In this eternal kingdom, we will not sit idly—we will reign and serve (Revelation 22:3–5). Believers will participate in God’s purpose and

worship without end. We will see His face. We will be like Christ in glorified bodies, freed from every trace of sin.

This is our destiny. This is our hope. This is the future glory that makes every earthly trial worth it. As Paul writes, *“I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us”* (Romans 8:18). This world is not our home—but something far better is coming. And it is guaranteed by the Word of God.

Final Appeal: Living Holy and Godly Lives

Knowing all that lies ahead—judgment for the wicked, reward for the righteous, and eternal communion with Christ—how then should we live? The Apostle Peter answers with piercing clarity: *“Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming”* (2 Peter 3:11–12).

The knowledge of the future isn’t meant to make us fearful or detached from the present—it’s meant to make us faithful. Eternal glory should shape daily decisions. When we remember that everything visible is temporary, and everything eternal is unseen (2 Corinthians 4:18), we begin to prioritize differently. We live not for earthly success, but for eternal reward. We seek not the applause of men, but the approval of God.

This world is fading. The trials, temptations, and triumphs of life are passing shadows. But every act of love, every prayer of faith, every moment of obedience done in the Spirit will last forever. Paul encourages us, *“Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm.*

Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain” (1 Corinthians 15:58).

So let us live as people of hope—holy, joyful, and full of purpose. Let us serve others as we await the return of our King. Let us keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of our faith (Hebrews 12:2). For soon, we will see Him face to face. And when we do, may He find us faithful.

Chapter 21: Summary of Section Three

Believers of the gospel are imputed with the righteousness of God and stand divinely justified. Glorification and eternal communion with God will complete the process of sanctification.

The righteousness of God is something we could never earn or achieve by human effort. It is a gift—freely given through our union with Christ, our Savior. The believer has been baptized into Christ by the Holy Spirit and is joined to Him forever. In this life, we have received the Holy Spirit as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come, as we await the resurrection—or translation—of our bodies. Once glorified, we will enter the presence of the Lord, fully possessing our inheritance. We are assured that we are heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ!

Students of the Bible recognize three key imputations that God has revealed through His written Word:

1. The sin of Adam was imputed to all of mankind.
2. The sin of all mankind was imputed to Christ as He died on the cross.
3. The righteousness of God is imputed to those who believe the gospel.

Jesus Christ became the Head of a New Creation through His resurrection from the dead. All who believe the gospel are miraculously transformed and made part of that new creation along

with Christ. We live new spiritual lives, exercise our spiritual gifts, and will one day reign with Christ eternally.

Justification is God's declaration of righteousness over the sinner who is saved by grace. The righteousness of God is imputed to one who believes the gospel. Therefore, justification is by grace through faith in the finished work of Christ. Salvation is a work of God for mankind—not a work of man for God. If God justifies a person, there is no condemnation.

The death and resurrection of Christ remain the monumental demonstration of God's love and power. By these mighty acts, believers will live forever and serve the Head of the New Creation—The Last Adam!

The journey through justification is more than a doctrinal study—it is a revelation of the heart of God and a call to live in light of His grace. In Section Three, we have traced the incredible truths of what it means to be declared righteous—not by effort, ritual, or law-keeping, but by faith in the gospel of Jesus Christ. From the moment of belief, the sinner is not only forgiven, but credited with the very righteousness of God and brought into union with Christ, the Head of a new creation.

This is not a distant or abstract truth—it's the foundation of the believer's daily confidence, joy, and purpose. Justification means we are secure. It means we are accepted. It means we are now able to walk in the Spirit, serve others in love, and live for eternity without fear of condemnation. As Paul boldly writes in Romans 8:1, *"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus."*

This section has also shown us the present struggle between flesh and Spirit, the empowering work of the Holy Spirit through spiritual gifts, and the future glory that awaits the justified. But as we conclude, it is not enough to simply understand these truths—we must embrace them, live them, and pass them on.

The Christian life begins with justification, but it continues with transformation. As we move into this final summary, let us recall what God has done for us—and what He now invites us to become.

Review of Doctrinal Themes from Section Three

Justification by Faith Alone

The foundation of all that follows in the Christian life is the believer's justification before God. This is not a reward for religious performance, but a legal declaration made by God in response to faith in the gospel. As Romans 4 so clearly illustrates through the example of Abraham, *"Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness."* This divine crediting, or imputation, is the central act of grace in salvation. The righteousness of God—perfect and eternal—is placed on the account of the one who believes.

Justification is instantaneous, not progressive. It is the moment when the guilty sinner is declared righteous, fully and forever, because of the finished work of Christ. *"Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ"* (Romans 5:1).

This declaration changes everything. We no longer relate to God as condemned criminals, but as beloved children. We are no longer bound to fear judgment, but are free to serve in joy. Justification is not the end of the story—it is the beginning of eternal life in Christ.

Sanctification: Positional, Experiential, and Ultimate

Following justification, the believer enters into a lifelong journey of sanctification. This doctrine has three essential phases:

- **Positional Sanctification** occurs at the moment of salvation. The believer is set apart unto God, transferred from death to

- life, from the domain of darkness into the Kingdom of Christ.
- **Experiential Sanctification** is the process of spiritual growth in this life. The believer is not sinless but is being conformed to the image of Christ through the work of the Holy Spirit, the study of Scripture, and obedience in daily life.
 - **Ultimate Sanctification** will occur at glorification—when the believer enters the presence of God, completely free from the presence and power of sin.

Sanctification is proof that God not only saves, but transforms. It is a divine process that depends on our cooperation with the Spirit, even as He supplies the strength.

Even after being justified and sanctified, believers still wrestle with sin. This is not evidence of failure—it is the very evidence of life. The internal battle between the flesh and the Spirit marks the Christian experience in the current age. But God has not left us powerless.

We have been spiritually baptized into Christ, united with Him in His death and resurrection (Romans 6:3–11). We are the Body, and He is the Head. We are the branches, and He is the Vine (John 15). We are the Bride, and He is the Bridegroom (Ephesians 5).

These illustrations reveal that our union with Christ is eternal and unbreakable. Though we may struggle, our position in Him never changes. We are called to walk by the Spirit, confess sin, and cling to the promises of our Savior. The presence of the struggle proves the presence of the Spirit—and He will lead us forward.

Spiritual Gifts and Faithful Service

God not only saves us—He equips us. Every believer receives at least one spiritual gift from the Holy Spirit. These gifts are not natural talents or learned abilities. They are divine empowerments given for the purpose of building up the Body of Christ and advancing the mission of the gospel.

Whether it be teaching, exhortation, mercy, giving, administration, or any other Spirit-enabled function, each gift is a vital piece of the puzzle. No gift is too small, and no believer is unnecessary. We serve best when we serve in love, motivated not by recognition but by grace.

At the Judgment Seat of Christ, every believer's work will be evaluated (2 Corinthians 5:10). Service done in the flesh will burn away. Service done in the Spirit will endure and be rewarded (1 Corinthians 3:10–15). This judgment is not about salvation—it's about reward. Our labor is not in vain.

The Future Glory

The believer's justification ultimately points forward to our future glorification. The prophetic Scriptures reveal a sweeping, majestic plan: the Rapture of the Church (1 Thessalonians 4), the Judgment Seat of Christ, the Tribulation, the Second Coming of Christ, the establishment of His Millennial Kingdom, and the final judgment at the Great White Throne.

After all is fulfilled, God will create a New Heaven and a New Earth—a world with no more sin, sorrow, or death (Revelation 21:1–4). The New Jerusalem will descend, and God will dwell with His people. We will see His face and serve Him forever.

This is not fantasy or wishful thinking—it is the revealed future for all who are in Christ. And in light of this, Peter’s question rings true: *“What manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness”* (2 Peter 3:11, KJV).

Living in Light of Justification

Justification is more than a moment in time—it’s a new position that leads to a new perspective. To be justified is to be accepted, secure, and eternally loved by God. But this standing isn’t a license for complacency; it’s a call to holiness, gratitude, and service.

The believer who understands justification walks with both confidence and humility. Confidence—not in self, but in the finished work of Christ. Humility—because we know we contributed nothing to our salvation but the sin that made it necessary. This combination creates a life marked by worship, obedience, and surrender.

“Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus” (Romans 8:1). These words are more than theological—they are practical. They empower us to stop striving for God’s approval and start walking in His Spirit. We no longer serve to earn love; we serve because we are loved. We no longer fear rejection; we rejoice in acceptance.

This assurance changes how we respond to sin. Rather than hiding or denying our failures, we confess them, knowing we are already covered by grace (1 John 1:9). It changes how we view trials—seeing them as temporary, purposeful tools in the hands of a loving Father (Romans 8:28–30). It changes how we serve—freely and joyfully, using our spiritual gifts to build others up.

And it changes how we face the future. We are no longer prisoners of fear, but pilgrims walking toward glory. *“When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory”* (Colossians 3:4). That’s the believer’s hope. That’s the power of justification.

To live in light of justification is to live with eternal perspective and present responsibility—not perfectly, but purposefully, by grace through faith.

As I bring this book to a close, I would be remiss not to reflect on one of the greatest influences in my life—my father, the Rev. Neil I. Brohm. He was not only a faithful preacher of God’s Word, but a living example of what it means to walk in the truth we’ve explored throughout this final section: justified by grace, empowered by the Spirit, and living with hope in the glory to come.

For decades, my father stood behind pulpits, opened his Bible, and pointed people to Christ. He didn’t seek attention. He didn’t chase applause. But he lived what he preached—day by day, year after year—with unwavering consistency. His faith wasn’t just theology; it was life. He ministered to others with humility and love, prayed fervently, and remained anchored in Scripture until the Lord called him home at the age of 91.

He understood justification not just as a doctrine to teach, but as a truth to cherish. He knew what it meant to be declared righteous by God—not because he was perfect, but because Christ was. That confidence shaped the way he lived, served, and endured. Even in his later years, he carried with him a calm assurance that came from knowing his salvation was settled, secure, and sustained by grace.

At the close of many of his sermons, he would often quote a beautiful benediction, memorized in his younger ministry years from the King James Bible. He spoke them boldly with quiet confidence, almost as if he were stepping aside to let the voice of God have the final word. As I conclude this book, I can think of no better way to honor him than to let those same words speak once more—not only as a reminder of his legacy, but as a blessing to every believer who has trusted in Christ.

May this benediction encourage you, as it encouraged him—and may it inspire us all to live justified, sanctified, and eternally secure in Christ.

*“Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead
our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through
the blood of the everlasting covenant,
Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working
in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus
Christ;
To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.”
(Hebrews 13:20–21, KJV)*

Appendix A: Dispensational Timeline

God's Sevenfold Demonstration of the Sinfulness of Mankind

Throughout Scripture, God has progressively revealed His will to humanity through a series of distinct time periods, or dispensations. The word "dispensation" means stewardship, administration, or household management. A biblical dispensation is not a different method of salvation but a unique way in which God governs humanity and reveals His expectations during a specific period of history.

Each dispensation follows a recognizable pattern: God gives a revelation and a responsibility; mankind is tested in response to it; mankind ultimately fails; and God brings judgment—followed by the gracious introduction of a new stewardship. The purpose behind these successive dispensations is not merely historical organization. They form a divine demonstration: a complete and compelling case against the fallen human race. Dispensational theology teaches that under every condition, whether man is innocent or informed, guided by law or grace, governed by others or by himself, he fails to meet God's standard. In each dispensation, God's righteousness is upheld, and man's sinfulness is exposed.

There are seven primary dispensations revealed in Scripture:

1. **Innocence**
2. **Conscience**
3. **Human Government**
4. **Promise**
5. **Law**
6. **Grace (The Church Age)**
7. **The Kingdom (Millennial Reign of Christ)**

Each of these periods builds on the last, adding revelation, deepening responsibility, and culminating in the final eternal state where Christ will reign supreme. Let us walk through each one in turn and consider how God has shown His holiness and man's deep need for redemption through these stages in human history.

1. The Dispensation of Innocence

(Genesis 1:26 – 3:24)

This first dispensation begins at creation and ends with the fall of man. Adam and Eve were created in a state of perfect innocence, placed in a perfect environment, and given one simple command: "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die" (Genesis 2:16–17).

God gave them dominion over creation, meaningful work, and direct fellowship with Him. Their test was straightforward: obey God's command. There was no sin nature, no fallen world, no evil influence internally—only a choice. Yet, when tempted by Satan, they disobeyed. With that act, innocence was lost. Shame, fear, guilt, and death entered the world. The consequences were immediate and devastating: spiritual separation from God, the curse upon the ground, pain in childbirth, and eventual physical death.

This first failure demonstrated that even in the best environment, with the clearest command and closest fellowship, man would still choose disobedience. Romans 5:14 and 1 Corinthians 15:22 identify Adam as the federal head of the human race. His fall condemned all who would follow. Thus begins the long record of failure and judgment that characterizes the rest of human history.

2. The Dispensation of Conscience

(Genesis 4:1 – 8:19)

After being expelled from Eden, Adam and Eve began life in a fallen world with a new and painful awareness of good and evil. Their conscience was now awakened. In this second dispensation, mankind was left to live according to the knowledge of right and wrong without direct law, relying on the inner moral compass of conscience and the example of others.

This stewardship spanned many generations, from Cain and Abel to the days of Noah. Yet instead of improving morally, humanity descended into violence, idolatry, and depravity. Genesis 6:5 records God's chilling assessment: "The Lord saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time."

Though God extended patience and sent righteous witnesses like Enoch and Noah, mankind failed this test completely. The judgment came in the form of the global flood, sparing only Noah, his family, and representatives of the animal kingdom. Conscience, as the guiding principle, was shown to be insufficient. Even with the knowledge of good and evil, the human heart bent toward sin.

Importantly, this dispensation teaches us that moral knowledge alone does not lead to righteousness. Man not only sins in ignorance but rebels knowingly. The failure of conscience confirms that inward awareness, without divine transformation, cannot produce a holy life.

3. The Dispensation of Human Government

(Genesis 8:20 – 11:9)

Following the flood, God established a new arrangement with humanity. For the first time, man was given the responsibility to govern others. God instituted capital punishment and gave the principle that "Whoever sheds human blood, by humans shall their blood be shed; for in the image of God has God made mankind" (Genesis 9:6).

This was a step beyond conscience; it was the delegation of justice. Mankind was now responsible not only for personal morality but for creating and upholding laws that reflected God's standards. They were also commanded to spread out and populate the earth (Genesis 9:1).

Instead, mankind again chose rebellion. United by one language, they gathered at Babel to build a tower "that reaches to the heavens" and to "make a name for ourselves" (Genesis 11:4). It was a clear act of defiance. God came down, confused their language, and scattered them across the face of the earth.

The failure of human government was not in law itself but in the prideful misuse of authority and the collective rebellion of society. Despite the gift of organization and leadership, mankind used their unity to resist God rather than serve Him. The dispersion of the nations stands as judgment and proof that even structured society cannot reform the human heart.

This closes the early dispensations, in which God dealt broadly with all mankind. In the next dispensation, He narrows His focus to one man and one nation—a redemptive pivot in human history.

4. The Dispensation of Promise

(Genesis 12:1 – Exodus 1:22)

God's next phase of revelation came through a personal covenant with Abram (later Abraham). God called him out of idolatry and promised to make his descendants into a great nation, give them a land of their own, and bless all nations through them (Genesis 12:1–3). The only requirement was faith—believe the promises and walk in obedience.

This period, which spans from Abraham to the enslavement of Israel in Egypt, highlights a more intimate and gracious interaction between God and a chosen people. Yet even here, mankind faltered.

Abraham and his descendants often doubted God's word, turned to Egypt for help, and disobeyed in various ways. Jacob, though chosen, deceived. His sons sold their brother into slavery. And eventually, the family settled in Egypt, where they multiplied but became enslaved.

The dispensation of Promise shows that even when God offers unconditional blessing, man's distrust and disobedience distort the outcome. Nevertheless, God's promises stand. The failures of the patriarchs set the stage for the need for deliverance—and for the next great act of divine revelation through Moses.

5. The Dispensation of Law

(Exodus 2 – Matthew 27)

With the deliverance of Israel from Egypt, God established a new dispensation based on law. Through Moses at Mount Sinai, God gave Israel the Ten Commandments and a detailed law code, covering worship, civil justice, and personal morality. The Law revealed God's holiness and required total obedience.

Israel willingly agreed to this covenant: "We will do everything the Lord has said" (Exodus 19:8). But their track record from that point forward proved otherwise. Idolatry, rebellion, injustice, and hypocrisy characterized much of their national life. The sacrificial system, which pointed to the need for atonement, became an empty ritual. Prophets were sent, warnings given, blessings and curses poured out—but the nation, as a whole, hardened its heart.

The climax of Israel's failure under the Law was their rejection of Jesus Christ, their Messiah. Instead of recognizing Him as the fulfillment of the Law and the promises, they crucified Him. At His death, the temple veil was torn from top to bottom (Matthew 27:51), symbolizing the end of that system.

This dispensation teaches that law can diagnose sin, but it cannot deliver from it. The Law was never meant to save, but to reveal the need for a Savior (Galatians 3:24). It prepared the way for the dispensation that would follow—the age of grace.

6. The Dispensation of Grace (The Church Age)

(Acts 2 – Revelation 3)

With the resurrection and ascension of Christ, a new era began. God now calls out a people from every nation—Jew and Gentile alike—into one spiritual body: the Church. This is the age of grace.

Salvation is offered freely through faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ. The indwelling Holy Spirit empowers and equips each believer to live a holy life and serve others in love.

Never before has humanity been so richly blessed with revelation and divine help. We have the complete Scriptures. We have Christ's example. We have the Holy Spirit indwelling each believer. And yet, even in this dispensation, the Church will ultimately fail.

This truth is sobering but clear. While there are faithful believers in every generation, the visible church becomes increasingly compromised. False teachers creep in. Sound doctrine is replaced with ritualism, moral compromise, and worldly entertainment. The cross of Christ is neglected or distorted. The Church, called to be salt and light, blends into the world. And in the end, a counterfeit religious system overtakes the weakened true Church.

This failure is prophesied in Revelation 3:17, where the Laodicean church—the final stage of Church history—is described as "wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked," though it sees itself as rich and in need of nothing.

The Dispensation of Grace will end with the Rapture—the removal of the true Church. This will be followed by the Tribulation, a period of

divine judgment and wrath. The remnant who believed will be saved; the world at large will follow the Antichrist into destruction.

Despite the Church's glorious beginning, her end is marked by apostasy. Yet the grace of God shines even brighter in this context. Those who respond by faith are saved eternally and placed into the very Body of Christ. But the overall testimony of this age? Failure. Not because of God's provision, but because of man's refusal to believe and obey.

7. The Dispensation of the Kingdom (Millennial Reign of Christ)

(Revelation 20:1–10)

The final dispensation in human history will be the 1,000-year reign of Christ on earth. After returning in glory, Jesus will establish His kingdom, ruling from Jerusalem with perfect justice. Satan will be bound, and the curse on creation will be lifted to a large degree.

Those who enter this kingdom will be believers—survivors of the Tribulation. But they will have children, and over time, many generations will repopulate the earth. Though Christ reigns visibly and righteously, many will only offer outward compliance.

At the end of the millennium, Satan will be released one final time. Incredibly, he will lead a great rebellion against Christ. Fire from heaven will consume the rebels, and Satan will be cast into the lake of fire forever.

This final failure proves that even under perfect government, in an ideal world, man will rebel if his heart is unchanged. The depravity of man is absolute.

Conclusion: God's Verdict on Humanity

With the close of the Millennial Kingdom, time itself reaches its conclusion. The heavens and earth will be destroyed by fire. The Great White Throne judgment will occur. And all who refused to believe the gospel will be cast into eternal punishment.

Then Christ, having defeated every enemy and purified His kingdom, will hand it over to the Father (1 Corinthians 15:24–28). A new heaven and new earth will be created, free from sin and death (Revelation 21:1–5).

Dispensationalism is not just a method of Bible interpretation—it is God's systematic demonstration of man's sinfulness. In each age, under different conditions, man fails. But God remains faithful. In the end, the only hope is found in the Last Adam—Jesus Christ—who redeems fallen humanity and leads the redeemed into everlasting glory.

Those who believe the gospel are not merely forgiven—they are justified, sanctified, and one day, glorified. They are the trophies of God's grace, living testimonies that salvation is of the Lord.

Appendix B: Abraham's Timeline and the Harmony of Faith and Works

Two Apostles, Two Perspectives, One Gospel

At first glance, the words of Paul and James about Abraham seem contradictory. Paul says that Abraham was "justified by faith" (Romans 4:1–25), while James insists he was "justified by works, and not by faith alone" (James 2:14–24). Some critics highlight this supposed discrepancy as evidence of internal conflict within the Bible. Even sincere Christians may struggle to understand how these two teachings can both be true.

But there is no contradiction. These two apostles were chosen by the same Lord, writing under the same divine inspiration, proclaiming the same gospel. What appears to be tension disappears when we consider context. Paul and James were addressing different issues, different audiences, and different types of justification. When we turn to the life of Abraham and place their statements along a timeline, the harmony becomes beautifully clear.

In this appendix, we will walk through Abraham's life and trace how both Paul and James can affirm that he was justified—by faith, and also by works—without undermining each other. Instead of competing, their voices converge into a rich and complete picture of saving faith.

2. Paul's Focus: Justification Before God

Paul's message in Romans and Galatians is a clear and powerful defense of salvation by grace through faith alone, apart from works. Writing to both Jews and Gentiles, Paul is confronting the false belief that keeping the Mosaic Law, or performing any good works, could earn justification before God. Against this, he appeals to Abraham as the prototype of justification by faith:

"Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness" (Romans 4:3).

This event occurs in Genesis 15:6, when God makes a promise to Abraham—then childless and aging—that his descendants would be as numerous as the stars. Abraham believed God, and that faith was counted as righteousness. Paul emphasizes that this took place before the Law, before circumcision, and long before any notable works.

Paul's point is theological: justification before God is a divine declaration based on faith alone. Nothing we do earns this standing. It is not achieved, it is received. This is the heart of the gospel.

3. James's Focus: Justification Before Men

James, on the other hand, addresses a different problem: empty profession of faith. Writing to Jewish believers under pressure and persecution, James is concerned that some claim to believe in Christ, but their lives show no evidence of change.

He challenges this idea:

“What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them?”
(James 2:14)

James isn't contradicting Paul; he's clarifying the nature of true, saving faith. He uses Abraham as an example, but references a different point in Abraham's life: the near-sacrifice of Isaac in Genesis 22, which occurred decades after the event Paul references in Genesis 15.

“Was not our father Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? ... You see that his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did” (James 2:21–22).

James's concern is practical and pastoral: genuine faith will always produce works. If it doesn't, it's not real. His use of “justified” refers not to the initial declaration of righteousness by God, but to the visible proof of faith seen in action.

4. Abraham's Timeline: Faith First, Works Later

When we lay out Abraham's life chronologically, the harmony between Paul and James becomes undeniable.

Key Events in Abraham's Life:

- **Age 75:** Abraham leaves Haran in obedience to God's call (Genesis 12:4)
- **Age >75:** Separates from Lot (Genesis 13:8–9)
- **Age ~85:** God promises a son; Abraham believes and is declared righteous (Genesis 15:6)
- **Age 86:** Ishmael is born (Genesis 16:16)
- **Age 99:** God establishes circumcision as a sign of the covenant (Genesis 17:24)
- **Age 100:** Isaac is born (Genesis 21:5)
- **Age ~110+:** Abraham offers Isaac on Mount Moriah (Genesis 22:1–19)

There is a span of 30 to 35 years between Abraham's justification by faith and the work that James highlights. In Genesis 15, Abraham is declared righteous because he believed God's promise. In Genesis 22, that same faith—matured and tested—is proven through action.

Paul refers to the root of justification: faith alone. James refers to the fruit of justification: works that flow from genuine faith.

Understanding this sequence resolves any perceived contradiction. Abraham's faith was real. It justified him before God immediately. But that same faith later manifested itself through obedience, confirming its reality for all to see.

5. Two Sides of One Coin: Faith and Works Together

When understood in sequence and context, Paul and James are not presenting rival theologies but complementary truths. Justification before God is entirely by faith, apart from works. But justification before others—the public demonstration of our faith—is evidenced by our works.

God sees the heart. He declares a person righteous the moment they trust in Him. But fellow humans cannot see the heart. They can only observe actions. This is why works matter—not to earn salvation, but to reveal its presence.

A fruitless faith is no faith at all. As Jesus said, “By their fruit you will recognize them” (Matthew 7:20). Faith is the root of our salvation; works are the fruit. The two must be kept in order, but both are essential to the full picture of the Christian life.

6. Church History and Theological Insight

The church fathers, and later Protestant reformers, never viewed Paul and James as being in theological conflict. Instead, they saw two apostles addressing different errors.

- Paul confronted those who wanted to add works to faith as a basis for justification.
- James corrected those who thought they could have faith without works and still be saved.

Martin Luther, though initially troubled by James, came to understand and teach that “we are saved by faith alone, but the faith

that saves is never alone.”

Dispensational scholars have also affirmed that these writings reflect different stewardship roles and audiences, but both ultimately affirm the same gospel. Paul's epistles build foundational doctrine; James provides a pastoral exhortation for living it out.

If we emphasize Paul to the exclusion of James, we risk antinomianism—living as though holiness doesn't matter. If we elevate James and forget Paul, we fall into legalism—trying to earn what God has already given. In harmony, these two voices uphold the full counsel of God.

7. Final Thoughts

Faith is not a mere mental agreement—it is a living trust in the Living God. That kind of trust will always grow, stretch, and ultimately act.

When Abraham believed God in Genesis 15, his faith was real. God saw it. God credited righteousness to his account. But the world saw the evidence decades later—when Abraham laid his son on the altar, trusting that God would provide.

The call to every believer is the same. Trust God, and let that trust bear fruit. As the apostle Paul wrote, “The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love” (Galatians 5:6).

James does not challenge the sufficiency of faith. He challenges the authenticity of faith that never expresses itself.

In the end, Paul and James proclaim the same Christ, the same gospel, and the same call:

- Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved.
- Live out that salvation through love, obedience, and service.

Faith is the root. Works are the fruit. And God is the gardener who cultivates both in the life of every true believer.

Let us, then, be both grounded in faith and rich in good works, as we walk in the grace and truth of the One who justifies the ungodly and transforms them into vessels of His glory.

Appendix C: The Believer's Oneness with Christ

The Bible presents the believer's relationship with Christ as one of profound and inseparable oneness. This concept, called "union with Christ," means that believers are bound spiritually to Him, sharing in His life, death, resurrection, and even His exaltation. Union with Christ permeates the New Testament's teachings, highlighting how closely believers are joined with their Savior and emphasizing the deep, personal nature of the Christian faith.

This unity is beautifully expressed in passages like Ephesians and Colossians, where Paul reveals how believers are both raised with Christ to the heavenly realms and how Christ Himself indwells each believer. In Ephesians 2:6, Paul writes, "And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus," indicating that believers share in Christ's victory over sin and death. Likewise, in Colossians 1:27, he states, "To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." Together, these passages illustrate a union that is both empowering and life-changing.

The importance of this union is further captured through seven illustrations provided in Scripture, each one revealing a unique aspect of the believer's oneness with Christ. From the image of Christ as the head of the body to the metaphor of the vine and branches, these illustrations deepen our understanding of the

spiritual relationship that defines and sustains our faith. In exploring these figures, we gain insight into how our lives are intertwined with Christ's, empowered by His life, and sustained by His love.

“And by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.” (Hebrews 10:10)

In the sections that follow, we'll examine these images of oneness to uncover what they reveal about the believer's spiritual identity, security, and purpose. Some were previously mentioned in the text briefly, but here we'll expand the depth and detail.

Christ as the Head, Believers as the Body

One of the most profound illustrations of the believer's union with Christ is found in the image of Christ as the Head and believers as His Body. This figure highlights both the unity and interdependence that exist within the Church. Just as the head controls, directs, and sustains the physical body, so Christ guides, sustains, and empowers those who are united with Him.

In the letter to the Colossians, Paul writes, "And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy" (Colossians 1:18). This passage points to Christ's authority and His role as the leader of the Church, the "body" composed of all believers. Through this headship, believers receive guidance, purpose, and unity, bound together by their shared connection to Christ.

Paul continues this theme in Ephesians 1:22-23, where he explains that God has put all things under Christ's authority, appointing Him as "head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way." Here, Paul emphasizes that Christ's headship is comprehensive; He doesn't just rule over the Church but also fills and completes it. The relationship between the head and the body speaks to the mutual dependence: the body depends on the head for direction, but the head is incomplete without the body. This mutual dependency emphasizes unity within diversity, as believers, though different, are all part of one Body under one Head.

The head-body illustration also carries a message of security and dependence. As the head governs the body, so Christ governs and sustains the lives of His followers. Believers find their identity and purpose in Christ, just as a physical body finds coordination and meaning through the head. This unity reflects a bond that cannot be separated by external forces, for it is an eternal connection grounded in Christ's love and secured by His authority.

“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 12:12-13)

Through this illustration, believers are reminded that they are not isolated members; they are part of a larger whole, each playing a vital role in God's kingdom. This interdependence reinforces the call to humility, as believers recognize that all parts of the Body are essential and each believer must rely on Christ as the Head.

Christ as the Vine, Believers as the Branches

The illustration of Christ as the Vine and believers as the branches further clarifies the nature of the believer's oneness with Christ, particularly in terms of spiritual vitality and fruitfulness. In John 15:1-5, Jesus describes Himself as the true vine and His followers as branches that draw life and sustenance from Him. Jesus says, "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me, you can do nothing" (John 15:5). This vivid imagery underscores the essential truth that all spiritual life, strength, and productivity in a believer's life flow from their union with Christ.

This figure emphasizes the necessity of a continual, abiding relationship with Christ for believers to live fruitful lives. Just as a branch cannot bear fruit without being connected to the vine, believers cannot produce the fruits of righteousness, love, and service apart from their connection to Christ. This fruit-bearing life is possible only through the power that flows from the Vine into the branches. Paul also captures this idea in Galatians 5:22-23, listing the "fruit of the Spirit"—love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control—as the natural outgrowth of a Spirit-filled life that abides in Christ.

The Father's role as the "gardener" in this illustration highlights the importance of divine discipline and growth in the life of a believer. Jesus says, "He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful" (John 15:2). God is actively involved in shaping and

nurturing each believer, pruning away attitudes, behaviors, and influences that hinder spiritual growth. This pruning process, though sometimes challenging, ultimately leads to greater fruitfulness and alignment with God's purposes.

The vine and branches illustration also reflects the continuous reliance believers have on Christ. Unlike human relationships, which may change or diminish over time, the relationship between the vine and the branches is marked by constant, uninterrupted dependence. Believers who remain in Christ are empowered to grow and mature in their faith, bearing fruit that reflects the character of Christ. Jesus assures His followers of the permanence and security of this connection when He says, "If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you" (John 15:7).

"This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples." (John 15:8)

Through this illustration, Jesus calls believers to an active, abiding relationship with Him, emphasizing that true spiritual vitality and effectiveness come only through remaining in the Vine. This oneness assures believers that as they stay connected to Christ, they will naturally bear fruit that glorifies God and displays His love to the world.

Christ as the Bridegroom, the Church as the Bride

One of the most intimate illustrations of the believer's oneness with Christ is that of a marriage, with Christ as the Bridegroom and the Church as His Bride. This image underscores the depth of love, commitment, and sacrifice that Christ has for His followers. The marriage metaphor is woven throughout Scripture, representing the covenant relationship between Christ and the Church, symbolizing not only union but also the promise of eternal fellowship.

In Ephesians 5:22-33, Paul describes the Church's relationship with Christ using the marriage bond. He writes, "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing 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" (Ephesians 5:25-27). This passage highlights the sacrificial love that Christ has for the Church. Just as a loving husband cares for his wife, Christ gave Himself up for the Church, enduring the cross to redeem and sanctify her.

The imagery of Christ as Bridegroom also emphasizes the purity and sanctification of believers. Christ's love for the Church is not only demonstrated through His sacrifice but also through His ongoing work of purification. The "washing with water through the word" reflects the transformative power of Scripture in cleansing and shaping believers to be holy and blameless. This process prepares the Church for her ultimate union with Christ in eternity. Just as a bride prepares for her wedding day, the Church is being prepared to

dwell with Christ forever, cleansed and sanctified by His love and grace.

Furthermore, this figure conveys a sense of anticipation and hope. In John 14:1-3, Jesus comforts His disciples by promising to prepare a place for them, saying, "My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am." This promise parallels the ancient Jewish wedding custom, where a groom would go to prepare a home for his bride and return for her when all was ready. In the same way, Christ will return to take His Church to dwell with Him in eternal glory.

The culmination of this union is portrayed in Revelation 19:6-9, where the marriage of the Lamb is celebrated in heaven: "Then I heard what sounded like a great multitude, like the roar of rushing waters and like loud peals of thunder, shouting: 'Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns. Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready.'" This moment reflects the ultimate fulfillment of Christ's relationship with the Church, where believers will be united with Him in perfect fellowship and joy.

"The Spirit and the bride say, 'Come!' And let the one who hears say, 'Come!' Let the one who is thirsty come; and let the one who wishes take the free gift of the water of life." (Revelation 22:17)

This marriage illustration reveals the depth of Christ's commitment to His people and His desire for their eternal companionship. Through

His sacrificial love, purification, and promise of return, Christ assures believers of a relationship that is eternal and unbreakable, giving them a profound sense of purpose and hope.

Christ as the Last Adam, Believers as the New Creation

The concept of Christ as the “Last Adam” is what prompted the writing of this book. This metaphor offers a powerful illustration of the believer’s union with Him, particularly in terms of redemption and restoration. In this figure, Paul compares Christ to Adam, the original representative of humanity. While Adam’s disobedience brought sin and death to the human race, Christ’s obedience and sacrifice brought life and righteousness to all who believe in Him. Through this comparison, believers are invited to see themselves as a new creation in Christ, redeemed from the old nature inherited from Adam and transformed into a new nature aligned with God’s purposes.

Paul addresses this illustration in 1 Corinthians 15:45-49, where he writes, “So it is written: ‘The first man Adam became a living being’; the last Adam, a life-giving spirit. The spiritual did not come first, but the natural, and after that the spiritual. The first man was of the dust of the earth; the second man is of heaven. As was the earthly man, so are those who are of the earth; and as is the heavenly man, so also are those who are of heaven. And just as we have borne the image of the earthly man, so shall we bear the image of the heavenly man.” In this passage, Paul contrasts the earthly, perishable nature inherited from Adam with the heavenly, imperishable nature believers receive in Christ.

The doctrine of believers as a “new creation” in Christ is central to understanding this transformation. In 2 Corinthians 5:17, Paul writes, “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The

old has gone, the new is here!” This verse underscores the radical change that occurs in the life of every believer through their union with Christ. Through this spiritual rebirth, believers are no longer defined by the sin and mortality that entered the world through Adam. Instead, they partake in the divine life of Christ, sharing in His victory over sin and death.

In Romans 5:18-19, Paul explains the profound implications of this comparison: “Consequently, just as one trespass resulted in condemnation for all people, so also one righteous act resulted in justification and life for all people. For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.” Here, Paul highlights the representative roles of Adam and Christ, illustrating that just as Adam’s sin was imputed to all humanity, Christ’s righteousness is imputed to all who place their faith in Him.

The Last Adam-New Creation relationship carries with it a message of hope and renewal. Through Christ, believers are freed from the bondage of their old nature and empowered to walk in the newness of life. This transformation is not merely a change in status but a fundamental change in identity. As the “heavenly man,” Christ grants believers access to a new nature that reflects His own, allowing them to grow in holiness and to live lives that glorify God.

“For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive.” (1 Corinthians 15:22)

This figure underscores the completeness of the believer's transformation in Christ. No longer bound to the sin and consequences inherited from Adam, believers are part of a new humanity led by Christ, the Last Adam, and empowered to live in righteousness and freedom. This truth forms the foundation of the believer's new identity, promising both a present reality of transformation and a future hope of glorification in Christ.

Christ as the Cornerstone and Foundation

The imagery of Christ as the cornerstone offers a profound understanding of the believer's spiritual position and the Church's divine structure. In Ephesians 2:19–22, Paul paints a vivid picture of believers as members of God's household, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, "with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone." This metaphor draws from ancient construction practices where the cornerstone was the first and most important stone laid, setting the orientation and stability for the entire building. Paul's use of this language reveals that the Church is not a random assembly but a divinely ordered structure in which Christ alone determines the shape, unity, and strength of every part.

As the cornerstone, Christ does not merely initiate the structure—He governs it. Every spiritual stone—the individual believer—is aligned in reference to Him. Without Christ, there is no cohesion or spiritual order. The apostles and prophets form part of the foundation, but even their inspired words and ministries are subordinate to Christ, who is the eternal reference point. This reinforces the dispensational understanding that the Church is a distinct body, unveiled through the apostles but centered entirely on Christ. In this present age of grace, God is not building a kingdom on earth, but a spiritual house in heaven's likeness, joined together and indwelt by His Spirit (Ephesians 2:22). The cornerstone ensures that this structure will not collapse, because it is fitted together by divine design.

Peter echoes this teaching in 1 Peter 2:6, citing Isaiah 28:16 to declare: "See, I lay a stone in Zion, a chosen and precious

cornerstone, and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame.” Here, Christ is not only the foundational stone but also the object of trust. This cornerstone is not just for architectural alignment—it is a person to be believed in, honored, and obeyed. The security of the spiritual house depends entirely on its relationship to Christ. For believers, this brings immense assurance: we are not loosely held in place by our works or spiritual performance, but firmly joined to Christ by faith. Our position is as immovable as the cornerstone itself.

Furthermore, this cornerstone metaphor conveys both stability and exclusivity. In ancient practice, any stone that did not align with the cornerstone was discarded. So it is in the spiritual realm—there is no other foundation that can support God’s household (1 Corinthians 3:11). Christ is not one among many; He is the cornerstone upon which everything else stands or falls. This truth exposes the emptiness of religious systems that attempt to build apart from Christ. The true Church is not built by men, but by God, using living stones joined by faith to His Son. This is not a loose fellowship—it is a masterfully designed spiritual temple, each part precisely set, each believer divinely placed, every angle measured by Christ Himself.

In this current dispensation, when the mystery of the Church has been revealed (Ephesians 3:5–6), the image of Christ as the cornerstone takes on even deeper meaning. It reflects the eternal plan of God, now made manifest, in which Christ is not only Savior and Head but also the fixed and guiding standard of the entire spiritual structure. The believer’s identity, purpose, and security are all tied to this unshakable stone. As long as Christ remains the

cornerstone—and He always will—the building will endure. In a world marked by instability, theological confusion, and moral decline, the Church stands firm, not because of cultural relevance or institutional strength, but because it is founded upon the Cornerstone who was laid by God, chosen and precious.

Christ as the High Priest and Believers as a Royal Priesthood

The New Testament presents Christ as the exalted and eternal High Priest, fulfilling and surpassing the Old Testament priesthood in both office and efficacy. Hebrews 4:14–16 declares, “Since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess.” This declaration marks a decisive shift in redemptive history. Under the old covenant, the high priest entered the earthly sanctuary once a year to offer sacrifices for sin, always with fear and uncertainty (Leviticus 16). But Christ, having offered Himself once for all, has now passed through the heavens and sat down at the right hand of God—a posture signifying the completed and perfect nature of His sacrifice (Hebrews 10:12). His priesthood is unending, unblemished, and unmatched.

Unlike the Levitical priests who offered the blood of animals, Christ offered His own blood—the pure, spotless offering that fully satisfied divine justice (Hebrews 9:12). In doing so, He became the mediator of a better covenant, one based on better promises (Hebrews 8:6). This heavenly priesthood is not according to the order of Aaron but of Melchizedek—an eternal, kingly priesthood uniquely suited to the exalted Christ (Hebrews 7:17). As the High Priest who sympathizes with our weaknesses, He does not stand aloof from human frailty but intercedes with compassion, having endured every temptation yet without sin (Hebrews 4:15). Through Him, believers are granted full and fearless access to God—not through rituals, sacrifices, or intermediaries, but through the torn veil of His own flesh (Hebrews 10:19–20).

This access defines the believer's present position. No longer are we spectators or outsiders to divine things; we are participants in a heavenly calling. Peter affirms this in 1 Peter 2:9, declaring that believers are "a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession." In the Church Age, every believer is consecrated as a priest unto God—set apart to offer spiritual sacrifices, not of blood, but of praise, prayer, generosity, and obedience (Romans 12:1; Hebrews 13:15–16). This priesthood is both royal and spiritual. It is royal because it shares in Christ's exalted position; it is spiritual because its offerings are not external rituals but inward expressions of worship. In this dispensation of grace, believers are not governed by a priestly class but are themselves the temple and the ministers within it (1 Corinthians 3:16; Revelation 1:6).

This priestly identity is not merely symbolic; it comes with responsibility and calling. As priests, we are to intercede for the world, proclaim the excellencies of the One who called us out of darkness, and serve as living testimonies of His redeeming grace. The veil that once separated humanity from God's presence has been forever torn (Matthew 27:51), and through Christ's priestly work, the way into the Most Holy Place is now open to all who believe. We approach God not in fear but in confidence, because we are continually represented by Christ before the throne. His intercession is not intermittent—it is eternal and effectual, preserving the believer in grace and presenting us faultless before the presence of His glory (Hebrews 7:25; Jude 24).

In dispensational terms, this priesthood belongs uniquely to the Church. It is not inherited through lineage or ritual but is granted to every believer by virtue of spiritual union with Christ. Israel had a priesthood; the Church is a priesthood. While God will fulfill His promises to Israel in a future kingdom age, the present dispensation is marked by this extraordinary privilege: every believer has access to the throne of grace, every believer is called to spiritual ministry, and every believer shares in the High Priest's ongoing work. Christ, our High Priest, remains ever faithful. And because He is enthroned in the heavenly sanctuary, our position as priests in Him is unshakable, honored, and eternally secure.

Christ as the Shepherd and Believers as His Sheep

Among the many titles ascribed to Christ in Scripture, none is more tender or personally reassuring than that of the Shepherd. In John 10:11, Jesus makes a profound declaration: “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.” With these words, He identifies Himself as the true and faithful guardian of God’s flock. Unlike hired hands who flee in the face of danger, Christ lays down His own life to secure the safety of His sheep. This is not mere poetic imagery; it reflects the very core of the gospel—sacrificial love, substitutionary death, and covenantal care. His death was not random or reactionary—it was intentional, redemptive, and deeply personal.

The shepherd-sheep relationship captures both the vulnerability of the believer and the unwavering faithfulness of Christ. Sheep, by nature, are prone to wander, unable to defend themselves, and in need of constant guidance. Yet the Good Shepherd is never indifferent. He calls His sheep by name, leads them out, and goes before them (John 10:3–4). This intimate knowledge reflects divine election and personal fellowship. “My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me” (John 10:27). These words assure the believer of a relationship built not on performance, but on the Shepherd’s initiative and care. He knows His own, not in a general sense, but with a precise, personal familiarity. In a world of noise and confusion, His voice remains the anchor of the soul.

The Shepherd’s care is not only protective—it is also sustaining. Psalm 23, long cherished for its beauty and peace, speaks of a

Shepherd who “makes me lie down in green pastures” and “leads me beside quiet waters.” These phrases reflect Christ’s ongoing ministry to the heart of the believer. He does not merely rescue and then abandon; He tends, nourishes, and restores. “He refreshes my soul,” David writes, and “guides me along the right paths for his name’s sake.” In dispensational clarity, this speaks to the current Church Age, where believers—united by grace through faith—are individually led by Christ through the indwelling Holy Spirit. The Shepherd walks with us, not just in stillness, but also “through the valley of the shadow of death,” where His rod and staff offer comfort and correction.

Importantly, the Shepherd’s care guarantees not only present provision but eternal security. Jesus boldly proclaims, “I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand” (John 10:28). The promise here is absolute. The hand that was pierced for the flock now holds them with omnipotent strength. No force—spiritual, physical, or circumstantial—can sever the believer from the Shepherd’s grasp. This assurance rests not in the sheep’s ability to follow perfectly, but in the Shepherd’s unchanging commitment to preserve His own. Such a truth brings deep peace to the believer’s heart and underlines the certainty of our salvation in this present age.

In this dispensation of grace, the Shepherd’s voice calls out continually, not only to lead but to comfort and to correct. His flock, though scattered across nations and generations, remains one in Him. He walks before them, disciplines them in love, and ultimately brings them into His fold with joy. The believer’s life, then, is not

marked by fear or aimless wandering, but by confident following. In Christ, the Shepherd of our souls (1 Peter 2:25), we are not only protected—we are pursued, known, and loved. His guidance is not seasonal; it is constant. His goodness is not conditional; it is covenantal. And His promise is not temporary; it is eternal.

Practical Implications of Oneness with Christ

Understanding the believer's oneness with Christ carries profound, practical implications for daily life, spiritual growth, and the believer's identity. This unity with Christ shapes how believers view their relationship with God, how they respond to life's challenges, and how they live out their faith. The following aspects highlight the practical impact of this doctrine, providing believers with strength, assurance, and purpose in their spiritual journey.

1. Strength in Spiritual Battle: The believer's oneness with Christ empowers them to stand strong in the face of spiritual opposition and temptation. Since believers are united with Christ, they share in His victory over sin and death. This truth provides believers with the confidence that they are no longer bound to sin and are able to resist the desires of the flesh. Paul emphasizes this freedom in Romans 6:11, saying, "In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus." Because of their union with Christ, believers are empowered to live victoriously, drawing strength from Him rather than relying on their own abilities.

Ephesians 6:10-18, where Paul describes the armor of God, offers practical advice on standing firm against spiritual forces. The armor is rooted in the believer's identity in Christ—the "helmet of salvation," the "breastplate of righteousness," and the "shield of faith" all reflect aspects of the believer's union with Christ. This spiritual armor reinforces that believers, as part of the body of Christ, are equipped and empowered for any battle they may face.

2. Assurance and Comfort: Oneness with Christ also brings assurance and comfort, grounding the believer's identity in God's promises rather than in circumstances or personal achievements. The Bible reassures believers that their salvation and security are not based on their own efforts but are the result of their union with Christ. In Romans 8:38-39, Paul expresses this confidence, saying, "For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future... will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

This unbreakable bond with Christ provides immense comfort, particularly in times of suffering, doubt, or failure. Believers can rest assured that their standing before God is rooted in Christ's finished work and not in their own actions. This truth serves as an anchor for the soul, offering stability even when life's circumstances are uncertain or challenging. Knowing they are held securely in Christ, believers are encouraged to approach God with confidence and to rely on His sustaining grace through all of life's trials.

3. Purpose and Fruitfulness: Finally, the believer's union with Christ infuses life with purpose and meaning, calling them to a life of fruitfulness and service. Because believers are one with Christ, they are called to reflect His character and love to the world. Jesus's words in John 15:8 capture this mission: "This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples." Just as branches depend on the vine to bear fruit, so believers depend on their union with Christ to live lives that reflect His love, compassion, and holiness.

This call to bear fruit goes beyond mere actions; it is an invitation to live in such a way that others see Christ's love, joy, peace, and righteousness manifested in their lives. Spiritual fruitfulness, therefore, is not a self-generated effort but a natural outgrowth of abiding in Christ. Through this relationship, believers discover purpose in serving others, using their spiritual gifts, and growing in holiness.

“His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.” (2 Peter 1:3)

The practical implications of the believer's oneness with Christ reveal a life that is strengthened, assured, and fruitful because of their union with Him. This connection is a source of peace and empowerment, motivating believers to live confidently, even as they anticipate the day when they will be fully united with Christ in eternity.

Conclusion: Reflecting on the Believer's Union with Christ

The doctrine of the believer's oneness with Christ is one of the richest and most transformative aspects of the Christian faith. Through biblical images like the head and body, the vine and branches, the bridegroom and bride, and the Last Adam with the new creation, believers gain a multifaceted understanding of their inseparable connection to Christ. Each illustration emphasizes a unique element of this relationship—authority, dependence,

commitment, and renewal—revealing how deeply woven believers are into Christ's life, death, resurrection, and purpose.

This oneness is more than just a theological concept; it is a practical and powerful reality that impacts every aspect of a believer's life. Strengthened in spiritual battles, comforted by the assurance of God's unbreakable love, and motivated to live a life of purpose, believers find both their identity and security in Christ. This unity is not conditional or temporary; it is rooted in Christ's eternal, sacrificial love and reinforced by the promises of God's Word.

As believers reflect on their union with Christ, they are invited to live in light of this profound truth, growing in grace and pursuing a life that honors and glorifies Him. The Scriptures assure them that this oneness will find its ultimate fulfillment when they are united with Christ in eternity, where they will see Him face to face and experience perfect communion forever.

“For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.” (Colossians 3:3-4)

Through the images of oneness given to us in Scripture, we are reminded that our lives are hidden in Christ, held securely by His love, and destined for a future of eternal fellowship with Him. May this truth inspire believers to live faithfully, abiding in Christ and bearing fruit, as they journey toward the glorious promise of being fully united with their Savior.

Glossary

This word index contains commentary primarily to aid the reader in understanding the usage of these words within the scope of this work. It may double as a reference guide to any Bible Study.

[\(A-L\)](#) [\(M-Z\)](#)

A

Abel - A son of Adam and Eve who was murdered by his brother Cain. Abel brought an appropriate sacrifice to the Lord which infuriated Cain who refused to comply to God's requirements. Abel's story is told in Genesis 4 but is also mentioned in the New Testament, "By faith Abel brought God a better offering than Cain did. By faith he was commended as righteous, when God spoke well of his offerings. And by faith Abel still speaks, even though he is dead" (Hebrews 11:4).

Abraham (aka Abram) - The man God chose to be the progenitor (father) of the Israelites. This particular line would come through his son Isaac and grandson Jacob. Jacob's name was subsequently changed to Israel. The Twelve Tribes proceeded from Jacob's sons and became the Jewish Nation. Familiarity with the life and career of Abraham is critical to understanding the Bible. See Appendix "B" for reference. God told Abraham that his descendants would be as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore (Genesis 22:17-18). The former may represent his spiritual lineage while the former may represent his natural lineage. "If you belong to

Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Galatians 3:29).

Abyss - A place where certain demons are held in bondage until released. "And they [many demons] begged Jesus repeatedly not to order them to go into the Abyss" (Luke 8:31).

Adam - The seminal work of God in creating mankind. From Adam's side Eve was formed, and from his posterity emerged everyone who has ever existed with one exception, Jesus Christ. Adam was formed from the dust of the earth. God breathed life into him, and Adam became a fascinating union of body and soul complete with intellect, conscience, free will, and accountability. Adam's sin had the effect of death on all mankind. Christ has been described as the Last Adam as he had a similar yet opposite effect by redeeming us from death. "For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous" (Romans 5:19).

Advocate - One who speaks for another in an official capacity much like a lawyer does for a client. Christ is presently fulfilling this role for sinning believers as he defends them against Satan. He would defend them by the mention of His own blood which was presented to forgive all sin (Revelation 12:9-11). The Holy Spirit is also described as our advocate as He knows our hearts and intercedes accordingly, expressing things we would not be able to put into words (Romans 8:26-27). He also teaches us the things of God as we need to know them. "The person without the Spirit does not accept the things that come

from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness, and cannot understand them because they are discerned only through the Spirit. The person with the Spirit makes judgments about all things, but such a person is not subject to merely human judgments, for 'Who has known the mind of the Lord, so as to instruct him?' But we [believers] have the mind of Christ" (1 Corinthians 2:14-16).

Angels - An innumerable army of spirit beings who possess supernatural abilities. Apparently divided into ranks with various capabilities and authority, they perform duties as assigned by God. Satan was originally a high ranking angel and sinned. This rebellion resulted in a judgment which included a number of minions usually now described as demons. Angels do not propagate or die. The Lake of Fire was prepared for the Devil and his angels (Matthew 25:41). Angels are normally mentioned as being in the presence of God and assisting in a wide array of tasks. "I tell you, whoever publicly acknowledges me before others, the Son of Man [Jesus] will also acknowledge before the angels of God ... " (Luke 12:8).

Antichrist - A man who will emerge as the leader of the world. Satan will indwell this man and will manipulate world events to accommodate his rise to power. His popularity, authority, and purported peace are the culmination of the counterfeit kingdom of Christ. After promising peace, the antichrist will demand worship at a temple in Jerusalem.

"For the secret power of lawlessness is already at work; but the one who now holds it back [The Holy Spirit] will

continue to do so till he is taken out of the way. And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendor of his coming. The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with how Satan works. He will use all sorts of displays of power through signs and wonders that serve the lie, and all the ways that wickedness deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie and so that all will be condemned who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness” (2 Thessalonians 2:7-12). See also Revelation chapters 19-22.

Apostle - One who is chosen to be sent with the authority of the one who sent them. After Jesus’ death, certain men were recognized as Apostles. The most well known of them would be Peter, James, John and Paul. These and others established doctrines which have been recorded in their writings. Apostleship denotes leadership and authority whereas discipleship refers to a follower or student (Matthew 5:1-2). The original Apostles have died but the message must continue to be told. Therefore, the term now also includes those who have received a spiritual gift which enables them to identify and communicate the untainted message established by the original Apostles. Subsequently the Holy Spirit illuminates truth to believers validated by the full testimony of Scripture. “They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship,

to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles (Acts 2:42-43).

Apostolic - Of or relating to the work or office of Apostle. The Apostles were given authority to establish and lead the early church. God has communicated to man in various ways such as through creation, through the prophets and His Son. However, nothing has been as explicit as the Holy Spirit working through an Apostle resulting in an inspired written explanation of God's previous methods of communication. While the previous methods may be correctly or incorrectly interpreted by some of us, the recorded teachings of the Apostles formulate sound doctrine. Their writings are contained within the canon of the New Testament. They will prove to be the only reliable conclusions for those who seek a proper understanding of God's Message to mankind. "Consequently, you [believers] are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone" (Ephesians 2:19-20).

Ark - A boat which was constructed by Noah according to God's specifications. "Every living thing on the face of the earth was wiped out; people and animals and the creatures that move along the ground and the birds were wiped from the earth. Only Noah was left, and those with him in the ark" (Genesis 7:23).

Ascension - The movement of Christ from earth to heaven. This was a literal event where he visibly rose into the clouds and out of sight (Acts 1:10-11), but it also includes all that was implied including the fact that He was seated on the Throne of God. It denotes the distinguished honor bestowed on the Risen Christ by God the Father. Christ is now serving as High Priest, Advocate, and Mediator (Hebrews 10:5-10). At a time appointed by God, He will return and establish a Kingdom on Earth for 1000 years (Revelation 19:11- 20:15). The Ascension of Christ is a pillar of Christian doctrine. "Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God" (Colossians 3:1).

Atonement - An act that negates the effect of sin for one party by the imputation of sin and its effect to another party. God used various animal sacrifices to teach mankind the concept of substitutionary sacrifice and then sent Christ as the ultimate sacrifice as He died in place of mankind. The Divine atonement formula revealed to man is that sin requires the substitutionary death of a qualified candidate. Guilt is subsequently removed once the process of imputation and atonement is accomplished. "When he had received the drink, Jesus said, 'It is finished.' With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit (John 19:30).

B

Baptism - A public act performed to signify identification to Christ, and consequently to others who have done the same. Believers are either immersed under water or have water

applied to them shortly after they announce their belief in Christ. The Apostle Paul taught that in a spiritual sense, believers were baptized into death with Christ. This spiritual act identifies our choice to die to self and to live as Christ (Philippians 1:21). Additionally, believers are also described as being baptized with the Holy Spirit. "In him [Christ] you were also circumcised with a circumcision not performed by human hands. Your whole self ruled by the flesh was put off when you were circumcised by Christ, having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through your faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead" (Colossians 2:11-12).

Belief - Denotes an informed, contemplated conclusion. The decision to believe or reject the gospel is the decision that will precede our eternal destiny.

"Then they [representatives from a unbelieving crowd] asked him, 'What must we do to do the works God requires?'

Jesus answered, 'The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent' (John 6:28-29).

Bible - God's revealed Word recorded and preserved in written form. A collection of 66 books (Genesis to Revelation) and broken down into two sections, the Old Testament and New Testament. Approximately 40 authors contributed over a span of about 1500 years. The subject matter ranges from the creation of the world to the destruction of the world and the next life. It covers activities of God, angels, Satan, and man. It

speaks authoritatively on all subjects as the authors miraculously worked under the guidance of the Holy Spirit resulting in an inspired text. Its contents include history, science, poetry, allegory, parables, and many other literary devices to convey its message. It expands our minds by revealing God's attributes, purposes, and glory. The Bible magnificently frames Jesus Christ as the Savior of the World. He is essentially concealed and anticipated in the Old Testament, revealed in the New Testament, and worshipped by all who believe. "But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work (2 Timothy 3:14-17).

C

Called-out Ones - A term used when God called out someone to be set apart or Holy. God called the Nation Israel to be set apart from the other nations. He calls believers individually to be set apart from sinners. The term may be used to signify any or all believers as they were each called and responded accordingly. "Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our

knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness” (2 Peter 1:2-3).

Chosen Ones - The Bible teaches us that God chose certain individuals for salvation before the creation of the world. Every believer is chosen by God before we chose Him. There is no hindrance for any man to choose to believe except for his own will to reject the Gospel. “In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, in order that we, who were the first to put our hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory” (Ephesians 1:11-12).

Christ - (Messiah or Anointed One) God's chosen one. His mission was to deliver the human race from the law of sin and death. Famously anticipated by the Israelites, God's Messiah would redeem not just their one nation, but the world. Additionally, He will rule over the world as God's Representative on Earth assuming the role originally assigned to Adam. Christ is a title; Jesus is a given name. “Grace and peace to you from him who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits before his throne, and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth” (Revelation 1:4-6).

Christ the King - Jesus Christ fulfills many roles. He is the Eternal Second Person of the Trinity; He is the Creator; He is Savior; He is High Priest; and He will reign as King over the earth upon His Second Coming¹. While He is presently seated on God's Throne and is the recipient of much honor and glory,

that is still technically the Throne of God the Father. He will receive the Throne of David as promised and reign as King of Jerusalem and the entire world. His role as High Priest and the duties of Advocate and Mediator are the priority of Christ at this time. Upon His second coming, he will return in power, defeat Satan, bind him in the abyss, and then rule the earth as King. "Coming out of his mouth is a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. 'He will rule them with an iron scepter.' He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: king of kings and lord of lords" (Revelation 19:15-16).

Christmas - A day that commemorates the Birth of Christ, the Son of God. The significance is that God became man so he could die as a Substitutionary sacrifice for mankind. "She [Mary] will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21).

Colossians - A book of the Bible which was originally a letter from the Apostle Paul. He wrote to the church in Colossae and included in-depth spiritual instruction. "Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, To God's holy people in Colossae, the faithful brothers and sisters in Christ: Grace and peace to you from God our Father" (Colossians 1:1-2).

Communion - A healthy relationship between oneself and God. Sin inhibits this relationship for believers, but confession of sin restores it. At regular intervals, the Church celebrates the

Lord's Supper at which time the bread and wine (or grape juice) is shared which remind us of the life and death of Christ, the forgiveness of sin which we received, and the importance of maintaining fellowship. This ordinance, by its very nature, encourages the confession of known sins and also the fact of our sinful nature. The Church will continue this practice until Christ returns to establish His earthly Kingdom. "For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, 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.' 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.' For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes" (1 Corinthians 11:23-26).

Condemnation - The Divine judicial ruling of all who reject God's provision for sin. "For certain individuals whose condemnation was written about long ago have secretly slipped in among you. They are ungodly people, who pervert the grace of our God into a license for immorality and deny Jesus Christ our only Sovereign and Lord (Jude 1:4).

Conscience - Knowledge of good and evil. Care must be exercised because we may be so conditioned to evil that we may consider the evil within us to be good. We must trust God's principles to guide us. "If anyone, then, knows the good

they ought to do and doesn't do it, it is sin for them" (James 4:17).

Corinthians - Recipients of two letters from Paul, 1 and 2 Corinthians. Paul apparently contacted them by letter other times as well, but these two were included in the canon (Bible) while the others were not. "Paul, called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and our brother Sosthenes, To the church of God in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be his holy people, together with all those everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ—their Lord and ours: Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 1:1-3).

Creation - All material things known to man including planets, stars, animals, plants, and mankind. "In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe" (Hebrews 1:1-2).

Creator - Refers specifically to Jesus Christ, the Second Person of the Godhead. "The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together" (Colossians 1:15-17).

Cross - The Cross that Christ was nailed to as He died carries with it the implication of all that was accomplished in His life, death, and resurrection. "When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross. And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross" (Colossians 2:13-15).

D

Daniel - A prophet of God and the author of the Old Testament Book of Daniel. "Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt. Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever. But you, Daniel, roll up and seal the words of the scroll until the time of the end. Many will go here and there to increase knowledge" (Daniel 12:2-4).

Death - Death represents a separation. Physical death is a separation of man's body and spirit. Spiritual death is a separation between man and God. When a person dies, the body deteriorates and returns to dust while the spirit is contained at a place determined by God until the resurrection of the dead at which point body and spirit will be reunited for eternity. "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. 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 they had done” (Revelation 20:12-13).

Demerit - Denotes evil behavior. Christians normally refer to this as sin where others refer to the same thing as demerit. Both believers and unbelievers mistakenly think that merit (or good works) can make up for demerit. The Bible teaches that man is evil and no good can come from him. Only once we are made into a new creation can anything Holy be accomplished in our life, and that by the Holy Spirit. “He [Jesus] went on: ‘What comes out of a person is what defiles them. For it is from within, out of a person’s heart, that evil thoughts come—sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly. All these evils come from inside and defile a person” (Mark 7:20-23).

Demons - Fallen angels. (See Satan.) “The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons” (1 Timothy 4:1).

Devil - For all intents and purposes, used synonymously with Satan. “You [unbelieving Jews] belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father’s desires. 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” (John 8:44).

Disciples - Followers of Christ. Jesus chose 12 men to teach and travel with as He presented Himself as King to the Jewish Nation during His earthly ministry. Of this group, Peter, James, and John gained special access and instruction. After the death of Christ, certain disciples became known as Apostles and provided leadership to the growing group of disciples. “So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith” (Acts 6:7).

Dispensation - A biblical dispensation refers to a revelation from God that forms a standard for a segment of mankind during their time. The seven dispensations together span the timeline of the created world. These periods are not divided equally, nor is time the important issue as the emphasis is on the results of the portion of mankind who are under observation. Their stewardship (management) of the responsibility God entrusted to them will determine whether or not they meet His standard. The conclusion in each dispensation is that man fails to meet God’s standard. God uses these dispensations to teach us a series of lessons about ourselves, and Himself. “Now to him who is able to establish you in accordance with my [The Apostle Paul’s] gospel, the message I proclaim about Jesus Christ, in keeping with the revelation of the mystery hidden for long ages past, but now revealed and made known through the prophetic writings by the command of the eternal God, so that all the Gentiles might come to the obedience that comes from faith — to the only

wise God be glory forever through Jesus Christ! Amen”
(Romans 16:25-27).

Divine - Refers to God’s handiwork or God’s enablement. “For though we [believers] live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds” (2 Corinthians 10:3-4).

Divine Solution - God has a Glorious remedy for all man’s problems. It starts with our awareness of our sinfulness and moves on to our belief in the Gospel. To validate this solution, he sent Christ to be a substitutionary sacrifice for mankind. Christ was followed by the Holy Spirit who instructs us on sin, judgment, and righteousness. The final phase of God’s solution is the destruction of the created heavens and earth, mankind, and all that was cursed by Adam’s sin. Salvation from this destruction is a ministry of God for mankind. All other solutions will prove to be invalid. “Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of the Messiah and the glories that would follow. It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. Even angels long to look into these things” (1 Peter 1:10-12).

Doctrine - A teaching or truth which serves as a pillar to an organization. False doctrine will displace true doctrine in the Church, and in the end the church will fail. “As I [Paul] urged you when I went into Macedonia, stay there in Ephesus so that you may command certain people not to teach false doctrines any longer or to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies. Such things promote controversial speculations rather than advancing God’s work—which is by faith” (1 Timothy 1:3-4).

E

Easter - The day Christians traditionally celebrate the Resurrection of Christ. “And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith” (1 Corinthians 15:14).

Ecclesiastes - An Old Testament book of the Bible written by Solomon. He observed that life is seemingly meaningless with endless cycles of nature including death. He spent much time and effort exploring various life choices. Solomon was renowned for his great wisdom and he instructed leaders from all around the world. “Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the duty of all mankind. For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil” (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14).

Enoch - A descendant of Seth. Seth was a direct son of Adam who established a godly line of descendants. Enoch is said to have walked with the Lord for 300 years and was taken away without dying. “Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied

about them [false teachers]: ‘See, the Lord is coming with thousands upon thousands of his holy ones to judge everyone, and to convict all of them of all the ungodly acts they have committed in their ungodliness, and of all the defiant words ungodly sinners have spoken against him” (Jude 1:14-15).

Eternal Kingdom - The Kingdom of God in Eternity Future. At that time Christ will present the purified kingdom to the Father (1 Corinthians 15:24-28). “Therefore, my brothers and sisters, make every effort to confirm your calling and election. For if you do these things, you will never stumble, and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 1:10-11).

Eternal Life - Technically begins with belief of the gospel in this world, but the thrust of the usage means life in heaven for eternity as opposed to the eternal existence in the lake of fire. “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).

Eternity - Where time doesn’t exist. Time is apparently a mechanical system incorporated into our creation and marks the progress towards the ultimate destruction of all things that fell under the curse resulting from Adam’s sin. Eternity past marks all things before the fall of man and eternity future begins (for us) with the destruction of the present heavens and earth. “In a similar way, Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding towns gave themselves up to sexual immorality

and perversion. They serve as an example of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire” (Jude 1:7).

Eve - The first woman formed by God from some flesh and bone taken from Adam. She became one with Adam through marriage and went on to be the mother of all the living. Though Eve ate the forbidden fruit first, her condemnation came because of Adam’s disobedience to the direct command of God. Adam received God’s command before Eve was formed. “And the Lord God commanded the man, ‘You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die.’ The Lord God said, ‘It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.’” (Genesis 2:16-18).

F

Futility - The lack of purpose or meaning to life since we have been infected by sin and death. This observation is magnificently presented in the Book of Ecclesiastes written by King Solomon. “‘Meaningless! Meaningless!’ says the Teacher. ‘Everything is meaningless!’” (Ecclesiastes 12:8).

Faith - The Bible speaks of a faith that is abandoned, and a faith for healing, and saving faith. Saving faith is what is referred to in this work and the explanation can be found under the glossary entry for Belief. “God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement, through the shedding of his blood—to be received by faith (Romans 3:25).

False Church - The one-world church that will emerge under the antichrist. The world will believe that it is the true church and that peace has been finally accomplished. Movement is already underway to this end though it is impossible to predict how near it will manifest itself in full. "The whole world was filled with wonder and followed the beast. People worshiped the dragon because he had given authority to the beast, and they also worshiped the beast and asked, "Who is like the beast? Who can wage war against it?" (Revelation 13:3-4).

False Religion - False religion is any and all religious systems that do not rest on faith in the gospel alone as the sole source of salvation. Most religions emphasize either totally false doctrines or perhaps faith-plus-works in a way that denies the efficacy of Christ's death and resurrection to some degree. False religion often puts the emphasis on man and enslaves the follower to an impossible set of standards. The gospel frees a person from sin and guilt and the Holy Spirit manifests Himself in believers who invariably serve others. "Those who consider themselves religious and yet do not keep a tight rein on their tongues deceive themselves, and their religion is worthless. 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" (James 1:26-27).

False Teacher - A leader in a church or some religious group that projects himself as knowledgeable in the things of God but rather leads his followers away from the truth of the Gospel.

“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. Many will follow their depraved conduct and will bring the way of truth into disrepute. In their greed these teachers will exploit you with fabricated stories. Their condemnation has long been hanging over them, and their destruction has not been sleeping (2 Peter 2:1-3).

Fire - Often used biblically as a symbol for divine judgment. “By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly (2 Peter 3:7).

Flesh - The body our spirit resides in during our life on earth. Our bodies in this life are under the curse of sin and death and the sinful nature contained within will lure us to sin even after we are believers of the gospel. “For if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live (Romans 8:13).

Flood - The Divine Judgment which wiped out all mankind except for Noah, his sons and their wives, eight people in all. God warned Noah of the flood, gave him instructions on how to build the ark, and allowed time for its completion. Students of the Bible see many similarities between the flood and God’s final judgment of mankind. He has warned us, given instructions on what to believe, and allowed time for the gospel to be preached to every people group. At a time appointed by

God He will destroy the world again, except for those who believe the gospel. "But they deliberately forget that long ago by God's word the heavens came into being and the earth was formed out of water and by water. By these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed. By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly (2 Peter 3:5-7).

Free Will - The ability human beings have to make choices culminating in the choice to believe the gospel or reject it. Free will exists alongside predestination which means God set a plan in motion in which He controlled all things including our will. Obviously the logistics of such plan rises above human comprehension. The fact remains that we are able to choose, we will be held responsible for our choice, and God's plan will be fulfilled down to the last detail. "Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God's one and only Son (John 3:18).

Fruit - As a tree bears fruit which removes all possible doubt as to what type of tree it is, so also humans bear fruit, so to speak. We either bear the fruit of our sinful nature or we bear the fruit of the Holy Spirit. "So, my brothers and sisters, you also died to the law through the body of Christ, that you might belong to another, to him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit for God. For when we were in the realm of the

flesh, the sinful passions aroused by the law were at work in us, so that we bore fruit for death (Romans 7:4-5).

G

Garden of Eden - The beautiful abode of Adam and Eve prior to their sin. The exact location is unknown. “The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. And the Lord God commanded the man, ‘You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die’” (Genesis 2:15-17).

Genesis - The first book of the Old Testament authored by Moses the Prophet. Its content includes creation, the flood of Noah, and the story of the Israelites as they sought comfort in Egypt. “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Genesis 1:1).

Gentile - A person from any race or background other than an Israelite. All Israelites practiced Judaism and were called to be Holy or set apart from the rest of the world. So according to the Israelites there were Jews, and there was everyone else, or Gentiles. “For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile” (Romans 1:16).

Glorification - Describes the death of our physical body of sin and signifies our presence in Heaven where the power and presence of sin is gone. We will receive new bodies in the order of the Risen Christ. Glorification denotes the same state

as Ultimate Sanctification. “Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is” (1 John 3:2).

God - The Supreme Being who for man’s benefit has created our universe and all things contained within including the earth, plants, animals, and mankind. He has progressively revealed Himself to us as One God but revealed in Three Persons; The Father, The Son, and The Holy Spirit. While this concept rises above human comprehension it remains logical since God is, by nature, above human comprehension. God is Eternal, Righteous, Holy, and Sovereign. He is Omniscient, Omnipotent, and Omnipresent. God became flesh in the Person of Jesus Christ and Jesus died as payment for man’s sin. God’s plan for creation was determined before the creation was started, and nothing that happens will surprise or disappoint God. He has brilliantly orchestrated all things to accomplish His Will. As the concept of God is contemplated, consideration must be given to the Greatness of our God and Creator. “‘For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,’ declares the Lord. ‘As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts. As the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it’” (Isaiah 55:8-11).

God's Right Hand - The Highest Place of Honor. God (the Father) is Spirit but is often personified to poetically illustrate a point. "It [Spiritual Baptism] saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at God's right hand —with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him" (1 Peter 3:21-22).

God's Word - Used to emphasize that the Bible is authoritative since it originated from God and was miraculously provided to us through Inspiration. "And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as a human word, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is indeed at work in you who believe" (1 Thessalonians 2:13).

Gospel - Good News, specifically the proclamation that Jesus Christ bore the sin of the world in his body as he died on the cross and rose again to declare justification to all who believe. "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile" (Romans 1:16).

H

Headship - A designation of authority where the submission is voluntary and mutually beneficial. Christ is the Head of the Church. A husband is the head of his wife. Citizens should submit to the authorities. Children should submit to their parents. Everyone has a role and should accept the responsibility of that role. Even within the Godhead where the Father, Son, and Spirit are equal and considered One, the Son

submits to the Father and the Spirit submits to both the Son and the Father. The Father sent the Son and the Son fulfilled the Father's will and sent the Spirit who is now working with believers. A willing submission is Christlike, mutually beneficial, and efficient. "But I want you to realize that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man, and the head of Christ is God" (1 Corinthians 11:3).

Heal - To change from a condition of illness or sickness back to healthy and normal. Many miracles included healing of various ailments including physical death. These infirmities are symptoms of our real problem which is sin. Jesus heals us from sin based on His sacrifice which paid the penalty for sin, and His work as High Priest where he continually cleanses us from the filth of sin as we journey through this life. The penalty for sin is death. Jesus took our medicine but we were healed. "But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed" (Isaiah 53:5).

Heaven - A place that exists in the spiritual realm but is usually spoken of in human terms in reference to the place where God dwells with all His Holy ones. The Apostle Paul spoke of it as the third heaven. The first heaven would be the sky and atmosphere which surrounds planet earth. The second heaven would be outer space where all the stars and planets and physical universe is. The third heaven would be where God dwells. "I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven. Whether it was in the body or out

of the body I do not know—God knows—was caught up to paradise and heard inexpressible things, things that no one is permitted to tell” (2 Corinthians 12:2-4).

Heir - One who qualifies for a share of an inheritance. “The Spirit himself 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).

Holy - People, places, and things set apart from ordinary use for special purposes may all be considered to be Holy or sanctified. God is Holy as He is set apart from man or angels. Heavenly Angels are set apart from fallen angels. God established Israel as a Holy Nation as they were set apart from the nations of the world. Believers (saints) are set apart from sinners. Objects may be set apart (sanctified) for Holy purposes. God may set man apart to be Holy and man may set God apart to be Holy. “They [believers] are not of the world, even as I am not of it. Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified” (John 17:16-19).

I

Imputation - Primarily used in accounting, the concept of imputing means to credit or debit someone's account. A change to the record may be necessary because of the direct action of the account owner or someone acting on their behalf. The meaning of imputation has expanded over time to include more

than just its use in ledgers. Honor, shame, legal judgments and other traits are often considered to be imputed or attributed to someone because of the actions of another. In this work, various forms of 'imputation' are incorporated to describe how sin and righteousness are attributed to individuals by God. "Since we [believers] have now been justified [declared to be righteous] by his [Jesus'] blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! For if, while we were God's enemies [declared to be sinners], we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life!" (Romans 8:9-10).

Indwell - The Holy Spirit literally lives within a believer. He is a deposit against our full inheritance. "You, however, are not in the realm of the flesh but are in the realm of the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, they do not belong to Christ" (Romans 8:9).

Ishmael - Abraham's son born to Hagar. This was the result of a human solution to the problem of Sarah's inability to bear children. "So after Abram had been living in Canaan ten years, Sarai his wife took her Egyptian slave Hagar and gave her to her husband to be his wife. He slept with Hagar, and she conceived" (Genesis 16:3-4).

Inspiration - The miracle of chosen men recording God's message through the Work of the Holy Spirit. All sixty-six books of the Bible are considered to be a complete collection of God's Written Word. "We also have the prophetic message as

something completely reliable, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation of things. For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit" (2 Peter 1:19-21).

Iron Scepter - A scepter is a rod used as a symbol of power and authority by a king and an iron scepter denotes that his authority will be established by force. He will demand compliance by any and all means necessary! "Coming out of his mouth is a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. 'He will rule them with an iron scepter.' He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: King of Kings and Lord of Lords" (Revelation 19:15-16).

Isaac - The promised son of Abraham. Spared from being sacrificed by his father, he went on to marry Rebekah who gave birth to twins Esau and Jacob. God revealed to Rebekah as she was still pregnant that the older son would serve the younger, indicating God's Sovereign choice of the line that would eventually lead to Jesus. "Not only that, but Rebekah's children were conceived at the same time by our father Isaac. Yet, before the twins were born or had done anything good or bad—in order that God's purpose in election might stand: not

by works but by him who calls—she was told, ‘The older will serve the younger’” (Romans 9:10-12).

Isaiah - A prophet from the 8th century b.c. who authored the Book of Isaiah. “The vision concerning Judah and Jerusalem that Isaiah son of Amoz saw during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah” (Isaiah 1:1).

Israel - The name given to Jacob but normally used to refer to the Nation of Israel, also known as Israelites (Jews[^]). They descended from Abraham as a fulfillment of God’s Promise, were redeemed by Moses, and later dispersed throughout the world by God. Israel will eventually be regathered and exalted above all nations of the world during the Millennial Kingdom. “For I could wish that I myself were cursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my people, those of my own race, the people of Israel. Theirs is the adoption to sonship; theirs the divine glory, the covenants, the receiving of the law, the temple worship and the promises. Theirs are the patriarchs, and from them is traced the human ancestry of the Messiah, who is God over all, forever praised! Amen” (Romans 9:3-5).

J

Jacob - The grandson of Abraham and son of Isaac. After wrestling with God, his name was changed to Israel. The Jewish Nation emerged from his posterity. As the reigning patriarch, he decided to seek comfort in Egypt instead of the land God provided. This decision eventually led to slavery for his posterity until Moses arrived and redeemed them by a

mighty display of the Power of God. “Then Jacob went down to Egypt, where he and our ancestors died” (Acts 7:15).

Jesus - God in the flesh, conceived by the Holy Spirit, born to a virgin, living, eating, breathing, and dying as any human being. The only human who ever existed that didn't originate from Adam. Jesus is the Creator, Savior, High Priest, King, and Judge of mankind. He is the Eternal Second Person of the Godhead and was sent by the Father to be the Lamb of God to bear the sin of the world. Upon dying, He sent the Holy Spirit to instruct the world regarding sin, judgment, and righteousness. Of the offices listed above, King and Judge are awaiting the advancement of time. The office of Creator and Savior are history, and the office of High Priest is ongoing in the True Tabernacle of God (in heaven). Though seated on God's Throne, Jesus will return to earth at an appointed time, and reign from David's throne for 1000 years followed by the judgment the world. See Hebrews Chapters 7-10 for a synopsis His Ministry to mankind. “In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe. 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” (Hebrews 1:1-3).

Jew - One who practices the religion of Judaism. These are descendants of Abraham and/or converts. Also known as Israelites, and includes various sects such as Pharisee, Sadducee, and others. They accept the Old Testament Scriptures but reject Jesus Christ as the Messiah. They are mistakenly still waiting for the messiah to arrive. They will experience reconciliation with God after the Rapture. “Then I (John) heard the number of those who were sealed: 144,000 from all the tribes of Israel” (Revelation 7:4).

John - Originally one of the twelve Disciples and later an Apostle. He authored the Gospel of John, three New Testament Letters, and the Book of Revelation. “The revelation from Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants what must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, who testifies to everything he saw—that is, the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ” (Revelation 1:1-2).

Jude - Short for Judas, a son of Joseph and Mary and half brother of Christ (Joseph wasn't involved in the conception of Jesus). Author of the New Testament Book of Jude which strongly warns us about the infiltration of false teachers in the Church. See Matthew 13 for validation of his warning as well as his identification as a brother of Christ. “Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and a brother of James, To those who have been called, who are loved in God the Father and kept for Jesus Christ: Mercy, peace and love be yours in abundance” (Jude 1:1-2).

Judgment - A disciplinary action of God because of sin. God has used a series of minor and/or major judgments for mankind, nations, groups, and individuals since the Garden of Eden, but the end will culminate with a final judgment of man and creation. "In a similar way, Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding towns gave themselves up to sexual immorality and perversion. They serve as an example of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire" (Jude 1:7).

Just - An attribute of God consistent with Righteousness. Fair when considering perspectives of all parties concerned. "And I heard the altar respond: 'Yes, Lord God Almighty, true and just are your judgments.'" (Revelation 16:7)

Justice - Divine righteousness. Signifies the truthfulness, righteousness, and sovereignty of God in all matters. Humans may be just in a limited capacity or promote justice, however nothing compares to the perfect justice of God. "Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever; a scepter of justice will be the scepter of your kingdom" (Psalm 45:6).

Justification - The act of God declaring a sinner to be righteous. Justification is awarded by grace through faith which means the justified one didn't deserve or earn it but rather believed in the Person and Work of Christ, the Righteous One. Faith in the gospel results in imputed righteousness which is followed simultaneously with justification. Only God can justify someone and His judgments are always right and true. Once justified, there is no way to lose that standing. Subsequent sin is dealt with in a Father/son type relationship as opposed to a

Judge/defendant relationship. Christ serves believers as an advocate and answers all accusations with the power of His cleansing blood which ends any or all accusations. “Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died —more than that, who was raised to life —is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us” (Romans 8:33-34).

K

Kingdom of God, Everlasting - God is the Ruler of all things from everlasting to everlasting. At one point He decided to initiate a plan which included the creation of our universe. This plan included things like sin, redemption, salvation, and glorification of those He chose for salvation. While God is altogether Holy and ruler of this world, He allows sin, evil, sickness, and injustice to achieve His purpose for the created world, which is to honor His Son Jesus Christ. So it's important to understand that God is the Ruler of all things including our rebellious creation. “David praised the Lord in the presence of the whole assembly, saying, ‘Praise be to you, Lord, the God of our father Israel, from everlasting to everlasting. Yours, Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the majesty and the splendor, for everything in heaven and earth is yours. Yours, Lord, is the kingdom; you are exalted as head over all. Wealth and honor come from you; you are the ruler of all things. In your hands are strength and power to exalt and give

strength to all. Now, our God, we give you thanks, and praise your glorious name” (I Chronicles 29:10-13).

Kingdom of God, Proffered - Jesus Christ began His public ministry by offering Himself as King to the Nation of Israel. They rejected Christ and crucified their King so that kingdom didn't ever materialize. “These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: ‘Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans. Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel. As you go, proclaim this message: ‘The kingdom of heaven has come near’” (Matthew 10:5-7).

Kingdom of God, Spiritual - Believers of the gospel experience a spiritual Kingdom of God. They are no longer of this world but have become a new creation and are alive spiritually. They receive spiritual food, spiritual gifts, and maintain a spiritual faith and hope. Christ is King in their hearts and minds but is not ruling the physical world they live in. “For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, because anyone who serves Christ in this way is pleasing to God and receives human approval” (Romans 14:17-18). “Jesus said, ‘My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jewish leaders. But now my kingdom is from another place’” (John 18:36).

Kingdom of God, Millennial - Upon the second coming of Christ, He will establish an earthly Kingdom for 1000 years, the millennial kingdom. He will be present physically and will reign from Jerusalem with an iron scepter. At the end of the 1000

years, there will be an attempt to overthrow Him and He will execute the judgment of the Great White Throne. The heavens and earth will be destroyed by fire. "Blessed and holy are those who share 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).

Kingdom of God, Eternal - Once the cursed world and all wickedness has been purified by fire, all that will remain is what Christ made new: a new heaven, new earth, new glorified mankind and so on. He will then hand the purified kingdom over to His Father and His Kingdom will last forever. The eternal kingdom will (in a sense) merge back in with the everlasting kingdom but with several new features. "Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. For he 'has put everything under his feet.' Now when it says that 'everything' has been put under him, it is clear that this does not include God himself, who put everything under Christ. When he has done this, then the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all" (1 Corinthians 15:24-28).

L

Lamb of God - Animal sacrifices were established by God to teach man the concept of substitutionary sacrifice. The most famous of these lessons was the passover lamb which

happened when the Israelites were serving as slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt. The last of the ten plagues would be the death of the firstborn. God was preparing to kill the first born son of each family and the first born cattle from their herd. The Israelites were instructed ahead of time to sacrifice a lamb and put some of its blood on the door of their home. When the Lord came, he would pass over the homes with the required blood markings. In so doing, the Israelites were spared the death of their first born sons and animals. (See Exodus 11:1 - 12:30)

Later, Jesus was described as the Lamb of God indicating that his blood would save man from death if applied as instructed (spiritually). The implication is that Jesus is God's Sacrifice for the sin of man. "The next day John [John the Baptist] saw Jesus coming toward him and said, 'Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!'" (John 1:29).

Lake of Fire - The future eternal abode of Satan, his demons, and all those who rejected God's Provision for sin. Fire often is used by the Holy Spirit to refer to judgment. Probably not a literal lake of fire, existence will invoke the knowledge of God's wrath and judgment. "In a similar way, Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding towns gave themselves up to sexual immorality and perversion. They serve as an example of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire" (Jude 1:7).

Language - A way humans communicate with one another. The various languages used throughout the world are a result of one of God's judgments on mankind. These different languages led to nations who went to battle with other nations

and we still are suffering from the effects of that judgment to this day. "That is why it was called Babel —because there the Lord confused the language of the whole world. From there the Lord scattered them over the face of the whole earth" (Genesis 11:9).

Law, Law Code - God's revealed Law given through Moses which includes the 10 commandments and much more. This Law was intended for the Israelites alone to teach them principles needed for sinful man to approach a Holy God and to set them apart from the other nations. This aspect of the Law ended with the death of Christ, however many of the moral principles have always and will always be in effect. For example, it was always wrong to murder, covet, and engage in idolatry. The Law wasn't given to make men righteous but rather to demonstrate that they aren't. Christ was perfect as the law demanded, and he also suffered the penalty of death the law required. By meeting the full requirements of the Law, Christ put mankind under grace instead of law. Grace requires nothing more than faith, and that is within reach of all mankind. "Christ is the culmination of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes" (Romans 10:4).

Law of Sin and Death - A divine law established by God which states that sin will result in death. Because of Adam's sin, all men are now under the law of sin and death. Freedom from this law is available to those who believe the gospel. "Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who

gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death”
(Romans 8:1-2).

Leviticus - The Third Book of the Old Testament authored by Moses. It details many of the rituals required by the Law which emphasize how sinful man can approach Holy God. "These are the commands the Lord gave Moses at Mount Sinai for the Israelites" (Leviticus 27:34).

Life (New Life) - Denotes the newness of life experienced by a believer when the gospel is accepted through faith. Sin is acknowledged to be forgiven and removed, purpose and meaning in our human existence is heightened because of our newly acquired spiritual gifts, and communion with Christ is experienced in this new life. "Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit" (Galatians 5:25).

Light to the World (Israel) - Israel was chosen to be light to the Gentiles. God's light would culminate in illuminating the truth of the gospel, however Israel failed to complete their mission. They isolated themselves from the world and became full of pride and selfishness thereby hiding their light. "[Jesus saying] You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven" (Matthew 5:14-16).

Light of the World - Jesus became the Light of the World since Israel had neglected to fulfill that role. " [Jesus saying]

While I am in the world, I am the light of the world” (John 9:5).

Lord’s Supper - An ordinance begun just before Jesus was crucified and will continue until He returns in Glory. (See Communion)

M

Man, Mankind - A creation of God for the special purpose of revealing the depth of His love. To this end, God created man knowing he would sin and require grace, forgiveness, and redemption. The glory of God is manifested in Jesus Christ, the Man from Heaven, who gave Himself over to death to redeem mankind. Humanity has been equalized by the imputed sin of Adam so the individual depth or extent of any one isn’t significant. We’ve all sinned; we’ve all received forgiveness for sin. We must believe the Gospel to be reconciled with God. “Consequently, just as one trespass resulted in condemnation for all people, so also one righteous act resulted in justification and life for all people. For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous” (Romans 5:18-19).

Man from Heaven - Natural man came from Adam who was formed from the dust of the earth. Jesus Christ is distinguished from all other men by the fact that He came from heaven. He was miraculously born to a virgin and is fully man and fully God. "The first man was of the dust of the earth; the second man is of heaven" (1 Corinthians 15:47).

Mediator - One who serves as a link or bridge between two parties. Jesus Christ is serving as High Priest for mankind and one of the responsibilities of that role is to be a mediator between God and man. Even believers retain their sinful nature and require a mediator. It's important to note that we don't work through angels or saints to communicate with God, but through Christ. "For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all people" (1 Timothy 2:5-6).

Merit, Meritorious - The perceived good that comes from within man through training and good choices. While some men are obviously better than others by comparison, all are sinful and the Bible teaches that no good can come from within man. Only when we believe the gospel and receive the Holy Spirit can any good be accomplished through us and that by the Holy Spirit who provides spiritual gifts, guidance, and enablement for good works. False gospels promote merit and meritorious works. "What then shall we say? That the Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have obtained it, a righteousness that is by faith; but the people of Israel, who pursued the law as the way of righteousness, have not attained their goal. Why not? Because they pursued it not by faith but as if it were by works. They stumbled over the stumbling stone [Jesus Christ]" (Romans 9:30-32).

Moses - Chosen by God to serve as redeemer for the Israelites from Egypt. He went on to be a great prophet of God as he received the Ten Commandments and the rest of the Law Code

for Israel. He authored the first five books of the Old Testament. His story begins in Exodus 4 but his tenure is closely tied to God's Law which extends into the New Testament. "Now if the ministry that brought death, which was engraved in letters on stone, came with glory, so that the Israelites could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of its glory, transitory though it was, will not the ministry of the Spirit be even more glorious?" (2 Corinthians 3:7-8).

Mount Sinai - The place where Moses received the Ten Commandments. "On the first day of the third month after the Israelites left Egypt —on that very day—they came to the Desert of Sinai. After they set out from Rephidim, they entered the Desert of Sinai, and Israel camped there in the desert in front of the mountain" (Exodus 19:1-2).

N

New Creation, man - Natural man is made into a new creation upon belief of the gospel. The new creation follows the pattern of the Risen Christ (the Last Adam) rather than Adam. "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

New Earth - The present earth will be destroyed by fire and a new earth will be made. "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" (Revelation 21:1).

New Heaven - Outer Space, or the universe that exists outside of the earth's atmosphere will be destroyed by fire and a new

heaven will be made. “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” (Revelation 21:1).

New Jerusalem - The present city of Jerusalem will be destroyed with the present earth. A New Jerusalem will be the eternal abode of believers. “I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband” (Revelation 21:2).

New Song - A song of praise to Christ as we will have a greater understanding of His Greatness once we are in heaven. “And they sang a new song, saying: “You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased for God persons from every tribe and language and people and nation” (Revelation 5:9).

NIV - The New International Version (NIV) is a completely original translation of the Bible developed by more than one hundred scholars working from the best available Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek texts.

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Noah - A descendant of Seth and noted to be a preacher of righteousness (2 Peter 2:5). Noah and his family were saved from the flood that destroyed the rest of mankind. “This is the account of Noah and his family. Noah was a righteous man,

blameless among the people of his time, and he walked faithfully with God” (Genesis 6:9).

O

Omnipotence - An attribute of God which speaks of His Mighty Power. He is all-powerful. This is a conclusion drawn from the full counsel of Scripture and no particular passage sums up the concept adequately.

Omnipresence - An attribute of God which speaks of His simultaneous presence everywhere. He is all-present. This is a conclusion drawn from the full counsel of Scripture and no particular passage sums up the concept adequately.

Omniscience - An attribute of God which speaks of His Mighty Wisdom. He is all-knowing. This is a conclusion drawn from the full counsel of Scripture and no particular passage sums up the concept adequately.

P

Paul - An Apostle of Jesus Christ who was uniquely instructed by the Risen Christ (Galatians 1:11-12). Embarking on several missionary trips he gained the title as the Apostle to the Gentiles though he sought converts from the Jewish community first wherever he traveled. He preached of justification by grace through faith and referred to this core doctrine as “my gospel” to set it apart from the many perverted and twisted versions of the gospel which was apparently as common then as they are today. Paul’s story is told in Acts and bits and pieces are scattered throughout his writings in the New Testament which

includes Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, and Philemon. “Now to him who is able to establish you in accordance with my gospel, the message I proclaim about Jesus Christ, in keeping with the revelation of the mystery hidden for long ages past, but now revealed and made known through the prophetic writings by the command of the eternal God, so that all the Gentiles might come to the obedience that comes from faith — to the only wise God be glory forever through Jesus Christ! Amen” (Romans 16:25-27).

Perfection - An attribute of God which emphasizes His Pure, Holy Nature. When used in this context, nothing compares to God’s Perfection. One exception is made as a believer is made into a new creation and imputed with God’s righteousness. “God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God” (2 Corinthians 5:21).

Person and Work of Jesus Christ - Denotes that God has been revealed to us as One God, in Three Persons (The Trinity). God the Father is the First Person, Jesus Christ the Son is the Second Person, The Holy Spirit is the Third Person. The work of Christ was to become man, live a sinless life, offer Himself as a sacrifice for the human race, and rise again to proclaim justification for all who believe the gospel. “He [Jesus Christ] was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification” (Romans 4:25).

Pharaoh - A title used for whichever individual was presently King of Egypt. "Joseph was thirty years old when he entered the service of Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from Pharaoh's presence and traveled throughout Egypt" (Genesis 41:46).

Posterity - The descendants of a person. Children's children encompassing all subsequent generations. "Posterity will serve him; future generations will be told about the Lord. They will proclaim his righteousness, declaring to a people yet unborn: He has done it!" (Psalm 22:30-31).

Predestination - God initiated a marvelous plan for creation knowing all the details of how it would progress and end up. Mankind is included in this plan and we have free will. We don't understand how these two coexist but we know them to be factual as revealed in God's Word. Those who choose to believe the gospel realize that God chose them first. "In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, in order that we, who were the first to put our hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory" (Ephesians 1:11-12).

Priest, High Priest - Under the Law of Moses the High Priest would make a special annual sacrifice for the Nation of Israel on the Day of Atonement. The writer of Hebrews compares and contrasts Jesus to that office of High Priest. He concludes that Jesus is superior for several reasons. The main point of the explanation is that there is no longer any need for sacrifice

because sin is now forgiven by the once-for-all sacrifice of Christ. (See Hebrews 6:13 - 10:18)

Prodigal Son - Jesus told a parable about a young man who demanded his inheritance early and wasted it. Upon returning home, he was welcomed back by his father. God will accept anyone who seeks Him and will rejoice when they arrive no matter what the circumstances. (See Luke 15:11-32)

Prophecy - The Divine gift to identify and communicate spiritual truth. This may involve interpreting Scripture accurately, advising wisely, or predicting the future with certainty. "Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. And God has placed in the church first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, of helping, of guidance, and of different kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? Now eagerly desire the greater gifts" (1 Corinthians 12:27-31).

Prophet - A person designated by God as one who would reveal God's truth to man. Often thought of as one who predicts future events, it also includes those who properly interpret past events and/or truth concerning the present. The world abounds with false prophets and caution must be exercised when weighing what is communicated. False prophets will be proven false when what they say turns out to be false. "Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether

they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world” (1 John 4:1).

Propitiation - A way or means to satisfy God. In regard to the sin of man, there would be two ways to provide atonement. The first would be the eternal death of the race; the second would be by the substitutionary sacrifice of Christ. “God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement, through the shedding of his blood—to be received by faith. He did this to demonstrate his righteousness, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished—he did it to demonstrate his righteousness at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus” (Romans 3:25-26).

Purified Kingdom - At the end of the Millennial Kingdom there will be a rebellion against Christ the King. Christ will end this rebellion by destroying the world as we know it and judging all the wicked of all time and binding them to the lake of fire for eternity (Revelation 20). This act will purify the remaining features of the kingdom at which time He will hand over the kingdom to His Father. “Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. For he ‘has put everything under his feet.’ Now when it says that ‘everything’ has been put under him, it is clear that this does not include God himself, who put everything under Christ. When he has done this, then the Son

himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all” (1 Corinthians 15:24-28).

Q,R

Rapture - Denotes the removal of the Church (also known as the Body and Bride of Christ) from the earth as the Tribulation Period begins. This includes a resurrection of the dead as well as the removal of the living believers. This event precedes the Second Coming of Christ to earth by seven years. At the Rapture we rise to meet the Lord in the air. At the second coming, Christ establishes a kingdom on earth beginning with an unmistakable entrance (Zechariah 14:4; Revelation 19:11-21). The end times sequentially is as follows: Rapture; Tribulation; Second Coming; Millennial Kingdom; Destruction of Heavens and Earth; Eternal Kingdom. “According to the Lord’s word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. 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” (I Thessalonians 4:15-17).

Reconciliation (with God) - When Adam sinned mankind suffered a fall. The only way we can be reconciled to God is to believe that He has provided an adequate substitutionary sacrifice for us. God didn’t move, we did. God initiated the

sacrifice before the world was created. He accomplished it as Christ died on the cross. Our choice to believe or reject the gospel will determine if we are reconciled or not. "We (Apostles and all believers) are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God" (2 Corinthians 5:20-21).

Red Sea - A body of water that parted for the Nation of Israel to pass through but then closed up and wiped out Pharaoh's Army. "Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and all that night the Lord drove the sea back with a strong east wind and turned it into dry land. The waters were divided, and the Israelites went through the sea on dry ground, with a wall of water on their right and on their left" (Exodus 14:21-22).

Redemption - Adam (and all mankind) sinned and fell under the Divine judgment of physical and spiritual death. God's revealed law allows for substitutionary sacrifice where one must take the place of another. Christ became man to redeem mankind from the bondage of sin and death by offering Himself as a pure and blameless sacrifice. God showed His approval of this substitutionary sacrifice by raising Jesus from the dead and awarding Him the highest place of honor on God's throne.

An example of the redemption process can be seen in the redemption of Israel from Egypt. Jacob and his family entered Egypt as a clan of about 75 and after approximately 400 years developed into a nation of over 600,000 men plus women and

children. You might say the nation was formed, or born in Egypt. Israel may be used to represent mankind, and Egypt may be compared to our cursed and sinful world. Pharaoh may be used to represent Satan. Moses may be used to represent Christ as redeemer. God sent Moses and by a mighty demonstration of the power of God, Pharaoh was defeated and the Nation of Israel was redeemed from slavery. Subsequently, they chose to submit themselves to God's Law received at Mount Sinai¹ and began a journey to their promised land.

In a similar way, mankind is born into sin and held in bondage to death by Satan. God sent Christ and by a mighty demonstration of the Power of God, Satan was defeated at the cross and mankind was redeemed from death. Though this happened as an event in time, it was an eternal certainty which God preordained. Therefore each man is presented with a choice to believe the gospel or reject it. Those who believe God will begin a journey to their promised abode in the New Jerusalem. Those who fail to believe will begin a journey to their promised abode in the lake of fire. The contrast is stark enough to be compared to life versus death. Just as Adam had a choice before he sinned, we each have a choice to obey God. Obedience to God is demonstrated by belief in the gospel. Disobedience of God is demonstrated by a rejection of the gospel.

“Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God — the gospel he promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy

Scriptures regarding his Son, who as to his earthly life was a descendant of David, and who through the Spirit of holiness was appointed the Son of God in power by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord. Through him we received grace and apostleship to call all the Gentiles to the obedience that comes from faith for his name's sake. And you also are among those Gentiles who are called to belong to Jesus Christ" (Romans 1:1-6).

Remnant - A small portion of the whole. There is an ongoing theme throughout the Bible of a remnant of believers over against the larger whole of mankind. "[Jesus emphasizing the point of a parable] 'For many are invited, but few are chosen'" (Matthew 22:14).

Revelation (66th Book) - The last book of the Bible which wraps up all the loose ends. This prophetic book was written by John the Apostle in his old age. "I, John, your brother and companion in the suffering and kingdom and patient endurance that are ours in Jesus, was on the island of Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus" (Revelation 1:9).

Righteousness - Perfection; as in no failure, blemish or shortcoming. Only God is righteous. Also used in a human sense where we are sometimes proven to be righteous though always qualified and limited to a certain act or duration. Man may gain a righteous standing with God by having God's righteousness imputed to us. Our standing is much different than our state. A believer may have a righteous standing by believing the gospel but simultaneously be in a sinful state by

committing some type of sin or sinful practice. The context must qualify the intended meaning. The believer begins immediately with imputed righteousness and continues the process of sanctification where righteousness is imparted or learned as the Holy Spirit is given control of one's will. "God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement, through the shedding of his blood—to be received by faith. He did this to demonstrate his righteousness, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished—he did it to demonstrate his righteousness at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus" (Romans 3:25-26).

Romans - A letter from Paul written to a group of believers in Rome. He contacted them in advance of his first visit to clarify his doctrinal teachings. "I urge you, brothers and sisters, 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. Everyone has heard about your obedience, so I rejoice because of you; but I want you to be wise about what is good, and innocent about what is evil" (Romans 16:17-19).

S

Sacrifice - See **Substitutionary Sacrifice**.

Salvation - An all encompassing word which describes the work of God for sinful mankind. The death and resurrection of

Christ is the only basis for the salvation of mankind. It includes redemption, forgiveness, reconciliation, propitiation[^], imputation, justification, sanctification, and glorification. “Bear in mind that our Lord’s patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him” (2 Peter 3:15).

Sanctification - A process which takes one from a sinful standing and state to a Holy standing and state. The new standing, often referred to as positional sanctification, happens instantaneously with belief of the gospel. Following this initial act, a lifetime program of learning and practicing Holiness is instituted and guided by the Holy Spirit and this is referred to as experiential sanctification. Experiential sanctification occurs while we battle against and often succumb to our sinful flesh in this life. Finally as we cross over from this world and into the next we experience ultimate sanctification where we are removed from the power and presence of sin for eternity. So we are Holy and are being made Holy simultaneously. All this depends on the Divine work of God on our behalf. “It is God’s will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; that each of you should learn to control your own body in a way that is holy and honorable, not in passionate lust like the pagans, who do not know God; and that in this matter no one should wrong or take advantage of a brother or sister. The Lord will punish all those who commit such sins, as we told you and warned you before. For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life. Therefore, anyone who rejects

this instruction does not reject a human being but God, the very God who gives you his Holy Spirit” (1 Thessalonians 4:3-8).

Satan - The adversary of God and accuser of believers.

Originally a Holy angel who rebelled and suffered a Divine judgment. Though retaining some of his original attributes, he is awaiting his certain destiny in the lake of fire. He is often mistakenly thought of in connection with heinous acts of immorality but these are merely the fruit of man’s sinful nature. Satan’s goal was, and is, to be like the Most High God and is manipulating world events to that end (up to the extent that God allows). His present work involves arranging a counterfeit to Christ’s Kingdom on earth in which he will deceptively offer world peace but will end up demanding worship. He showed his hand in the temptation of Christ where he offered all he possessed, the kingdoms of the world, in exchange for worship (Luke 4:5-8). Jesus declined, but the nations of the world will rally around the antichrist hoping for solutions to the world problems and Satan will receive the worship he so strongly craves. He is a wolf in sheep’s clothing. He works through men and women who fit in as fine upstanding members of society and churches. He would have his minions in all walks of life even promoting high morals, church attendance, and preaching and serving. However, he would stop just short of faith in the gospel, the key to salvation. He has an innumerable host of fallen angels, also known as demons, to assist with his worldwide manipulation. With many years of collective experience with a rather predictable mark, mankind, Satan is very adept at his art of deception. Satan doesn’t need to tempt

man any longer as that was taken care of in the Garden of Eden. The sinful nature from within lures us into sin now. He is referred to as the prince of the power of the air, the god of this age, and is obviously powerful. Angels and fallen angels are able to perform supernatural acts and they seem to be organized in ranks with various abilities and authority. If size equated to power and an average man was six feet tall, an average angel may be say ... ten feet tall to represent the greater powers they possess. Some angels that are more powerful or would possess greater authority may be much larger. In this hypothetical analogy, Satan would probably be as big as planet earth. The exaggeration is to suggest that we probably underestimate the power and authority of Satan much more than we should. "The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God" (2 Corinthians 4:4; cf. Ephesians 2:1-2, 6:12; John 12:31).

Scapegoat - While Israel was following the Law of Moses, two goats were chosen on the Day of Atonement. The sin of the people was ritually transferred to these animals and one was killed to demonstrate the penalty of sin which is death. The other was led out to the desert never to return again demonstrating that as sin is paid for it is also removed. The goat led to the desert was known as the scapegoat (Leviticus 16).

Scripture - The Bible contains a complete library of sixty-six books which form the whole counsel of the Word of God. "All

Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

Second Coming - The first coming of Christ was when He was born in a manger and later died on the cross. The Second Coming is when He will establish an earthly kingdom and reign for 1000 years in the same place He was rejected. “Coming out of his mouth is a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. “He will rule them with an iron scepter.” He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: king of kings and lord of lords” (Revelation 19:15-16).

Second Death - A description of a conscious eternal existence in the lake of fire. The term death represents the contrast to second life which is for believers in the New Jerusalem serving the Lord with purpose, meaning, worship, and communion with all the Saints forever. Fire often is used by the Holy Spirit to refer to judgment. Probably not a literal lake of fire, the existence will invoke weeping, gnashing of teeth, and the knowledge of God’s wrath and judgment (Revelation 20).

Second Life - Life in heaven after we experience glorification. Second life technically begins when we are born again in this life by believing the gospel but effectively starts when our resurrected body is reunited with our spirit. Used as an intentional antonym for the second death. “Then death and

Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death” (Revelation 20:14).

Sin - Anything done by man that falls short of the perfection of God. Adam sinned first and the guilt of that one sin is imputed to all mankind. Simultaneously Adam earned a sinful nature which was transmitted to the entire race. The sinful nature manifests itself in various ways and to varying degrees. Sin may be an action such as lying or stealing, an inaction such as failing to care for the helpless, or an internal desire such as lust or pride. God established the standard that sin must be paid for by death to teach us of His perfect righteousness. “Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires” (Romans 6:12).

Sinful Nature - The innate desire to sin. The sinful nature signifies our separation from God and has been judged at the cross but not eradicated from existence. We must choose to follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit bearing spiritual fruit rather than following our sinful desires bearing sin and consequences (Galatians 5:13-26).

Solomon - The King of Israel during its greatest historical expansion. He was granted great wisdom by God and was also blessed with wealth and fame. He authored much of the Book of Proverbs in addition to Ecclesiastes and a couple of Psalms. A synopsis of Solomon can be found in 1 Kings 3:5-28.

Spirit - The immaterial part of man. God formed Adam from the dust of the earth and breathed life into him. The former speaks of the body and the latter speaks of the spirit. The body will die

and return to the earth while the spirit will continue on. While there may be a difference between soul and spirit in certain scriptural texts, it does not seem to be consistent enough to draw definitive conclusions. The material and immaterial parts of man will be reunited in eternity. “Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed—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” (1 Corinthians 15:51-52).

Spiritual Baptism - Believers have been baptized with Christ into death and raised with Christ to newness of life. This isn't something we experience but rather we accept it by faith (Romans 6:1-14).

Spiritually Blinded - The inability to see the truth no matter how clear it may be. This condition is more likely after a period of willful rejection or rebellion. “The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God” (2 Corinthians 4:4).

Standing (Sin or Righteousness) - God maintains an official standing for each individual at any given time. We are born in the standing of sin and move to a standing of righteousness when we believe the gospel. This may be in contrast to a person's present state. For example, a believer may have a righteous standing but be caught up in a sinful practice. We must remember that we are saved initially though we don't deserve it (because of sin) and we are kept safe though we

don't deserve it (because of sin). "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith —and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast" (Ephesians 2:8-9).

Substitutionary Sacrifice - God's revealed law states that sin requires death. In order to allow the guilty one to live, a substitute for death is required. The qualification is that the substitute must be blameless. In the Old Testament times, animals were used as innocent substitutes for man's sin. Ultimately, Jesus Christ became the substitute for the human race. "God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement, through the shedding of his blood —to be received by faith. He did this to demonstrate his righteousness, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished — he did it to demonstrate his righteousness at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus" (Romans 3:25-26).

T

Thessalonians - Recipients of two letters from the Apostle Paul. These two letters became two books of the New Testament.

Temple - The place where God met mankind during the Old Testament era. This was originally a traveling tent or tabernacle and later became a more permanent structure. Over the years the temples were destroyed, rebuilt, and changed in various ways as noted in both the Old and New Testament. Presently one does not exist but after the Rapture, one will be

established and sacrifices will resume (2 Thessalonians 2:1-12).

Temple Veil - A curtain within the Temple that separated the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place. This curtain was torn as Christ died which indicated that access to God was available to all through Christ, not through the old way of the Law established by Moses. "The curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom" (Mark 15:38).

Temptation in the Desert - Satan tempted Jesus in the desert. Jesus resisted and never sinned there or anywhere. The fact that God raised Jesus from the dead and seated Him at His Right Hand validates the fact that Jesus had been a pure and blameless Sacrifice. "Through him you believe in God, who raised him from the dead and glorified him, and so your faith and hope are in God" (1 Peter 1:21).

Timothy - A missionary companion of Paul. He is the recipient of two letters from Paul known as 1 and 2 Timothy. "But as for you [Timothy], continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus" (2 Timothy 3:14-15).

Tower of Babel - The descendants of Noah foolishly disobeyed God and erected a tower. As punishment, God confused their languages (Genesis 11:1-9).

Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil - One of the two special trees in the Garden of Eden. Adam and Eve ate the fruit of this tree and gained Knowledge of Good and Evil. This sinful act resulted in a pattern of sin that will continue until the end of the world (Genesis 2:9).

Tree of Life - One of the two special trees in the Garden of Eden. Apparently Adam had access to it until he sinned. Theoretically, if he had eaten from the Tree of Life, there would be no death and consequently no deterioration of the body (Genesis 2:9).

Trespass - Another term for sin which refers to the willful disobedience of an established command. "But the gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God's grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many!" (Romans 5:15).

Tribulation - A seven year period which includes many things including a severe judgment of the present world. The details are revealed in the Seven Seals, Seven Trumpets, and Seven Bowls which span a large portion of the book of Revelation. (Revelation 6 - 19:10)

True Church - Authentic believers of the gospel as opposed to fake believers. Fake believers exist for several reasons including financial gain, social relationships, intentional deception instigated by Satan, and a delusion from God. "For this reason God sends them [those who pretend to believe] a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie and so that all

will be condemned who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness” (2 Thessalonians 2:11-12).

True Tabernacle of God - The writer of Hebrews compared the earthly Tabernacle and Temple used by the Israelites to a Heavenly Tabernacle where God really resides (Hebrews 8:1-2). The emphasis was on the superiority of Jesus as He took His own blood to the True Tabernacle and not the earthly facsimile. The earthly tabernacle was used to instruct sinful man how to properly approach The Holy God. Since Jesus’ Sacrifice, the only way is through Jesus. “Jesus answered, ‘I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me’” (John 14:6).

U

Universe - All of creation including man, animals, planets, stars, and suns. “In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe” (Hebrews 1:1-2).

V, W

World (sinful) - On planet earth, where man resides, everything has fallen under the curse of sin. Satan is the ruler of this world and manipulates events under the permissive will of God. The system that Satan rules through his network of demons and men is considered the world. Believers are in the world but not of it. “I have come into the world as a light, so that

no one who believes in me should stay in darkness” (John 12:46).

X, Y, Z

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Glossary

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About the Author

Born the son of a pastor, I was raised in a strong Christian home where faith was central to our lives. Now at 60 years old, I continue to live out my faith actively alongside my wife, two married daughters, and five wonderful grandchildren. Throughout my life, I have made my living working with my hands, yet my greatest growth has come through studying the Word of God. I have a deep appreciation for scholars like Walvoord, Ryrie, Chafer, and Scofield, whose works have greatly shaped my understanding of Scripture.

I completed the Scofield Correspondence Courses administered through Moody Bible Institute. This comprehensive training, which provided a full survey of both the Old and New Testaments, greatly enhanced my biblical knowledge. However, I still consider myself an ordinary working man—just like the disciples, who were fishermen and laborers called by Christ to follow Him. As it is written: “When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus” (Acts 4:13).

In addition to my books, I host a Bible-themed blog, The Grace and Knowledge Series Blog, which covers a wide range of Bible themes and topics. You can visit it at woody-brohm.online. My hope is that both the books and the blog will inspire others to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Dispensationalism: The Key to Understanding the Bible

If there is one thing I have come to see clearly throughout my study, it is that dispensationalism provides the most consistent and clear framework for understanding the Bible.

This perspective has personally transformed my study and teaching of Scripture. Once I understood dispensationalism, it brought clarity and passion that I long to share with others through Bible studies, books, my blog, and conversations. It is my hope that this book has brought that same clarity and passion to you.

Check out my entire Series of Books on Amazon, or find hundreds of Bible Themed Essays on my Blog:

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ChatGPT assisted me with research, outlining, cohesive wording and proofreading. As the author, I have reviewed, edited, and adapted AI-generated content to ensure accuracy, originality, and alignment with the book's purpose.

Note: The Last Adam was originally published in 2012 and revised in 2025 to expand the main points and strengthen the biblical support throughout. While the overall structure remains the same, each chapter now includes fuller explanations and additional commentary. A new appendix—*Appendix C: The Believer's Oneness with Christ*—has also been added.