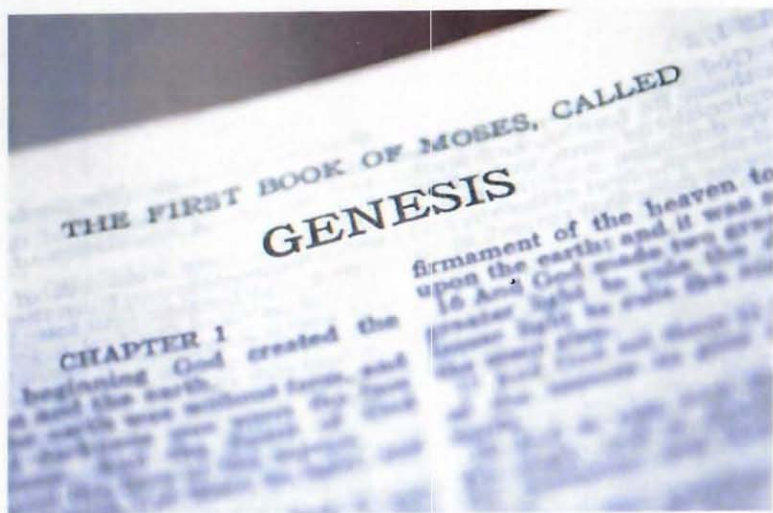


# Systematic Bible Study Course



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# Systematic Theology

Bible Study Course

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These lessons are adapted from the book "Systematic Theology," by Alva G. Huffer. The lessons are complete in themselves, but much additional material on each lesson may be found in the book. You may obtain the full version of "Systematic Theology" at this low cost:

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# THE BIBLE

The Bible is the sole authority for Christian doctrine and conduct. It is the only infallible rule of faith and practice; it is the test for truth. The Word of God is the final authority to which theological questions must be referred. It is the only measure one can use to formulate true doctrines concerning God and His relationship with the universe.

## I. Theology and Truth

Christianity is based upon facts. The theology of the true Christian religion is accurate; it embodies the truth; it conforms to reality. The doctrines of Bible theology are in agreement with the mind of God, who is the truth and the source of all truth.

Heathen religions are characterized by ignorance, superstition, and fanciful speculation. Christianity is founded upon facts, faith, and God's revelation of truth. Pagan mythologies are filled with stories that never happened and the adventures of heroes who never existed. The Christian religion, in contrast, is based upon historical facts. The Biblical narrative describes men who really lived and events which actually occurred.

The Founder of Christianity is a real person. His supernatural birth, earthly ministry, crucifixion, resurrection to immortality, and ascension to heaven are historical events. The theology which explains the true doctrinal significance of His life and works is conformable to fact and in accord with reality. A Bible synonym for the gospel message of salvation is *the truth*. When one believes the gospel he acknowledges the truth.

## II. Importance of Truth

Is truth important? Does it make any difference what one believes? Is there any direct connection between one's religious belief and his eternal destiny? Is accurate knowledge essential to salvation? Many persons assert that religious belief is unimportant, that theology is nonessential. They declare that it makes no difference what one believes as long as he is sincere and has good intentions. They insist that all religious roads lead to God, that the roads men travel may be varied, but the ultimate destiny for all is the same. They teach that all religious men are going to the same place.

Some men feel that heathen religions are as valid as Christianity. They think Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, and Mohammedanism are just as good as Christianity. They suggest that Christianity should combine with the best



elements of all religions in order to create one universal religion. Christianity, however, is not merely one religion among many; it is *the* religion. Jesus is the only Saviour; Christianity is the only way to God. All other religious roads are dead-end streets. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." Paul declared, "There is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." Peter taught, "There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Redemptive contact with God can be established only through Christ.

What one believes is important. Sincerity alone is not sufficient. It is essential that one believes the truth. Sincerely thinking that a bottle of poison taken from the medicine cabinet is a bottle of medicine does not change its contents. Sincerely thinking that one is on the right road when actually he is traveling the wrong direction does not enable him to reach his destination. Millions of heathen persons who worship idols and sincerely believe that they thereby will attain salvation actually are lost and doomed to destruction.

Faith is essential to salvation, and knowledge of truth is essential to faith. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17). The four F's of Christianity are facts, faith, feeling, and fruit. The first two are requirements; the last two are results. Faith must be based upon facts; belief must result from information. The one authoritative source for this information is the Bible.

What one believes does make a difference. It made an important difference for Adam and Eve who believed the lie of the serpent instead of the truth of God. One's salvation is dependent upon his believing the gospel. The gospel is "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth" (Rom. 1:16). The importance of believing the gospel is emphasized in Christ's missionary commission. "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:15, 16).

### **III. Final Authority for Truth**

Seeing that Christianity is based upon truth and that knowledge of truth is vital to salvation, one is led to inquire concerning the test for truth. What measure can one use to determine what is true and what is false? What standard can one use to formulate true doctrines concerning God?

Some men seek to determine divine truth by consulting the positions of stars in the sky, cloud formations, flights of birds, lines in one's hands, bumps on one's head, tea leaves, shuffling of cards, throwing of dice, and the analysis of dreams. These and similar superstitions cannot be valid sources of information concerning God's will and truth.

The ultimate test of truth, moreover, is not human reason, subjective experiences of Christians, tradition, sacred books of heathen religions, creeds, church councils, or popes.



The Bible alone is the final authority for Christian doctrine. The church has no right to formulate any doctrine which is not taught in the Bible. God's Word is the measure one can use to determine what is true and what is false. It is the authoritative source of truth

#### **IV. Inspiration of the Bible**

The sixty-six books of the Bible constitute the inspired Word of God. It is not that the Bible *contains* the Word of God; the Bible is the Word of God.

The Bible is *genuine*. The books of the Bible are authentic. They are not forgeries. The books actually were written by the men to whom they are ascribed. For example, the Gospel of Mark was written by Mark, the Epistle to the Romans was written by Paul, and the Revelation was written by John. They are not spurious. They were not written by men in later centuries. They are genuine.

The Bible is *credible*. The books of the Bible relate events that actually happened and describe men who really lived. The doctrinal teachings recorded in the Bible are true. The men who wrote the Bible were honest. Their writings harmonize with each other perfectly. History and archaeology confirm the truthfulness of the Bible. They show that the Bible is not fictitious but credible.

The sixty-six books of the Bible are *canonical* and constitute the completed canon of the Holy Scriptures. They are the only books that qualify as the authoritative embodiment of the divine revelation.

The Bible is *inspired*. It had a supernatural origin. It is the Word of God, the message of God to man. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God" (2 Tim. 3:16). "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Pet. 1:21).

By *verbal* inspiration is meant that, in the original writings, the Spirit guided in the choice of the words used. However, the human authorship was respected to the extent that the writers' characteristics are preserved and their style and vocabulary are employed, but without the intrusion of error.

By *plenary* inspiration is meant that the accuracy which verbal inspiration secures, is extended to every portion of the Bible so that it is in all its parts both *infallible* as to truth and *final* as to divine authority. (Chafer, *Op. Cit.*, Vol. I, p. 71.)

The inspiration of the Bible is evidenced from the fact that the Bible itself claims to be the inspired Word of God. Old Testament writers, for example, used such statements as "thus saith the Lord" more than 3,800 times. Jesus and the apostles recognized the Old Testament as being inspired and authoritative. The apostles claim to have received the Spirit and to have spoken under its influence and authority.

The amazing unity of the Bible written by almost forty men over a period of time of more than sixteen centuries shows its divine origin.

The exact fulfillment of prophecies, the lofty standards of conduct required for men, the tremendous influence it has exerted in the lives of men, its survival through centuries of opposition, and its confirmation by archaeology, history, and true science are among the many evidences of the Bible's inspiration.

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## Test Questions

## THE BIBLE

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1. What is the only authoritative source of truth for Christian doctrine?

2. (Christianity, Heathen Religion) is characterized by ignorance, superstition, and speculation.

3. (Christianity, Heathen Religion) is founded upon God's revelation of truth.

4. "The truth" is a Bible synonym for the \_\_\_\_\_

5. What relation has one's religious belief to his eternal destiny? \_\_\_\_\_

6. Do all religious roads lead to God? (Yes, No)

7. "There is \_\_\_\_\_ God and \_\_\_\_\_ mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. 2:5).

8. Christianity is (one of many ways, the only way) to God.

9. Why cannot a person's sincerity save him apart from the truth?

10. "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the \_\_\_\_\_ of God" (Rom. 10:17).

11. The four F's of Christianity are (1) \_\_\_\_\_, (2) \_\_\_\_\_, (3) \_\_\_\_\_, (4) \_\_\_\_\_.



12. Name some wrong ways in which men seek to discover divine truth. \_\_\_\_\_

13. What is the difference between the two statements: "The Bible is the Word of God" and "The Bible contains the Word of God?" \_\_\_\_\_

14. MATCHING:      a. Genuine      b. Credible      c. Canonical  
                            d. Inspired

\_\_\_\_\_ The Bible is the Word of God, His message to man.

\_\_\_\_\_ Books of Bible are not forgeries, but are authentic.

\_\_\_\_\_ Bible is not fictitious; events really happened.

\_\_\_\_\_ The sixty-six books belong in the Bible.

15. Does the Bible claim to be the inspired Word of God? (Yes, No)

16. Give evidences of the inspiration of the Bible. \_\_\_\_\_

17. "All scripture is given by \_\_\_\_\_ of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Tim. 3:16).

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# BEGIN WITH GOD

God has made the human mind in such a way that it is natural for man to want to organize acquired information. This organizing instinct within man provides a necessity for a systematic study of theology.

System and order are characteristics of God and His works. God always works in an orderly way. One can observe system and order everywhere throughout nature from the structure of atoms to the movements of stars. God's work of creation, recorded in the first chapter of Genesis, reveals the progressive realization of a definite plan and program. God instructed Noah to build the ark in an orderly manner according to specific dimensions. The construction of the tabernacle was according to a definite divine blueprint. The unfolding of God's plan of salvation has been progressive, orderly, and systematic. A systematic study of theology, therefore, finds its basis and necessity, not only in man's organizing instinct, but also in God's nature and work. Paul exhorted: "Let all things be done decently and in order" (I Cor. 14:40).

Systematic Theology is an organized, intensive study of revealed facts concerning God and His plan of salvation for mankind. Systematic Theology considers all Bible doctrines arranged and studied in a scientific, orderly manner.

## **I. The Starting Point**

The first four words of the Bible describe not only the origin of this planet, but also the starting point of Systematic Theology -- "In the beginning God."

Systematic Theology begins with the doctrine of God and concludes with the doctrine of the future. One division of Systematic Theology naturally leads into, and lays the groundwork for, the succeeding divisions. Our thoughts travel in a logical order from doctrine to doctrine--God, man, sin, Christ, salvation, the church, and the future.

To begin with God, is to begin with the Ultimate. To start one's journey into the light with Him is to begin with the Fountainhead of truth. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge" (Prov. 1:7). Belief in God and the study of revealed facts concerning Him are the first requirements of Christian theology.

An understanding of the doctrine of God forms the basis for true spirituality. Although some men have head religion without heart religion, genuine heart religion is produced by proper head religion. Religion apart from God is man-

centered and void. Men have inadequate faith in God because they have insufficient knowledge concerning God. They find it difficult to pray because they do not consider the nature of the one to whom they pray. Men's hearts seldom bow in true worship because they do not recognize God's transcendent wonder and infinite worth. To have an adequate Christian faith and a vigorous spiritual life, one must begin with God.

The doctrine of God is the most important thought man can consider. It is the loftiest subject one can study. Facts concerning God's nature and work constitute the most significant realities in the universe. Jesus said, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent" (John 17:3). It is of major importance that believers be fully informed concerning the nature, characteristics, and works of God. Christians will spend eternity with God; they should desire to become acquainted with Him today.

## **II. Men Normally Believe in God**

God created man with an inborn ability to recognize His existence. It is normal for man to believe in God; it is abnormal for him to be an atheist.

One is not surprised to discover, therefore, that belief in the existence of a supreme being or beings is found among all men. Heathenism has corrupted the glory of God into idolatry and the truth of God into mythology, but the recognition of His existence is still there. The counterfeit proves the reality of the true.

The existence of God is recognized as a fact by the writers of the Bible. It is regarded as a reality that requires no proof. The opening words of the Bible announce the fact and existence of God: "In the beginning God" (Gen. 1:1). The writer of Hebrews insisted, "He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb. 11:6).

Dr. William Newton Clarke wrote:

The Christian doctrine of God does not begin with proof, it begins with the announcement that is made by Christian faith in pursuance of the Christian revelation. Faith does not set out to find an unknown God, or to assure itself that God exists: it has heard His voice, and begins in confidence in His reality. It assumes the existence of God as its first certainty, and then proceeds to learn about Him all that can be learned. . . . There may be other ways of approaching the knowledge of God, but the Christian way is the way of recognition rather than of demonstration. (Clarke, William Newton. *The Christian Doctrine of God*. New York: Scribners, 1909, p. 56.)

## **III. Classical Arguments for God's Existence**

There are three classical arguments for the existence of God. These arguments, derived from man's observation of nature and his reasoning concerning God, have been used by religious thinkers since ancient time. They are the Cosmological argument, the Teleological argument, and the Anthropological argument.



The Cosmological argument reveals God as the eternal, self-existent First Cause. The Teleological argument reveals that this great First Cause possesses intelligence and will. The Anthropological argument leads one another step further. It reveals this personal, intelligent First Cause as one who possesses holiness, justice, and truth.

1. *The Cosmological Argument.* Existence of creatures requires the existence of a Creator. Every effect must have an adequate cause. The universe has not always existed. There was a time when the universe did not exist. The universe must have had an origin. The Originator, the Source, the First Cause of all existence is God. Of all existence, God alone is uncaused, without a beginning. Before God created the universe, He existed alone. God is the First Cause of the universe.

The writer of Hebrews stated this argument when he said, "Every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God" (Heb. 3:4).

2. *The Teleological Argument.* God has left His fingerprints on everything He has made. Everywhere one looks in nature he can see the fingerprints of God. Order and design everywhere in nature identify the universe as the handiwork of God.

"The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork" (Psalm 19:1). "The invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead" (Rom. 1:20). "He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see?" (Psalm 94:9). "O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches" (Psalm 104:24). "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him?" (Psalm 8:3, 4).

3. *The Anthropological Argument.* The first two arguments consider proofs derived from the universe as a whole. The Anthropological argument considers indications of God's existence as derived from man himself.

Conscience in man testifies that a Moral Governor, Lawgiver, and Judge exists. Apart from God's existence, man's conscience cannot be explained.

#### **IV. The Witness of the Supernatural**

God's revelation of Himself to mankind through supernatural events constitutes additional indications of His existence. God has left witness of His existence not only in the material universe and man's moral nature, but also in the history of men's lives. God's revelation of Himself through the supernatural implies His existence.

The Bible as a divine book proves God's existence. Apart from the existence of a divine Author, the Bible cannot be explained. The fact that this amazing Book itself exists proves the existence of its Author. The Bible records God's

revelation of Himself to mankind. The Bible, therefore, is an authentic source of material for proof of His existence.

Fulfillment of countless Bible prophecies in minute detail proves the existence of the One who foretold these events. (Isa. 45:21; 46: 9-11.) Miracles, which have occurred in history and have been recorded in the Bible, can be explained satisfactorily only as the working of God's supernatural power.

The supernatural life of Christ, including His unique birth, His ability to perform miracles, and His resurrection to immortality, indicates God's existence. An atheist remarked that it was not the Bible so much as it was the Christ of the Bible which he could not explain away.

Christian conversion and the tremendous influence Christianity has exerted in the world can be explained only by the existence of God. The testimony of thousands of persons who have experienced remarkable transformations indicates Christ's supernatural work and God's existence. As a blind man is assured that the sun exists by feeling the warmth of the sunshine, so Christians are assured that God exists because they feel the transforming effects of His power.

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## Test Questions

## BEGIN WITH GOD

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1. What is Systematic Theology? \_\_\_\_\_

2. What is there about the method in which God works that provides a basis for a systematic study of theology? \_\_\_\_\_

3. "Let all things be done \_\_\_\_\_ and in \_\_\_\_\_" (1 Cor. 14:40).

4. The first four words of the Bible are: " \_\_\_\_\_ ."

5. How does one's understanding of the doctrine of God influence his spiritual life? \_\_\_\_\_

6. Writers of the Bible recognize God's existence as a fact that (required, required no) proof.

7. It is (normal, abnormal) for man to believe in a supreme being;  
it is (normal, abnormal) for him to be an atheist.

8. The (Cosmological, Teleological, Anthropological) Argument infers the existence of God as the First Cause.





# GOD'S ATTRIBUTES

## Natural Attributes of God

God's natural attributes are: infinity, eternity and immortality, immutability, omniscience, omnipresence, and omnipotence.

### I. Infinity

God is *infinite*. He has no limitations nor imperfections. Man is limited by relations of time and space. He has mental and physical limitations and imperfections. Man is finite; God is infinite. God's powers are unlimited. He has universal and perfect relations with all other existence.

God is unsearchable. Finite man cannot comprehend the fullness of the infinite God. Man can know God and much about God, but he cannot know everything there is to know about God in all details of His total perfections. Man can know God because He has revealed Himself to man. The infinite God is unsearchable. (Job 11:7; Psalm 145:3; Isaiah 40:28; Rom. 11:33-36.)

### II. Eternity and Immortality

God is *eternal*. There never was a time when God did not exist. He always was, always is, and always will be. Eternity is infinite time.

Eternity extends in both directions. It is just as far backward into eternity as it is forward into eternity. For the believer, eternal life has a beginning but will have no ending. God, however, not only will live forever in the future, but also has lived forever in the past.

God is *immortal*. He is not subject to death. That which is immortal is deathless, imperishable, incorruptible, indestructible, indissoluble. It never fades, never dies, never ends. It does not depreciate, decay, or corrode. It results in unending existence; it is exempt from death.

1 Timothy 1:17      Now unto the King immortal  
Romans 1:23      The uncorruptible God  
1 Timothy 6:16      Who only hath immortality

The fact that God is eternal refers to His endless duration of existence. The fact that God is immortal refers to the type of physical nature He has that enables Him to have that eternal existence. God's eternity and immortality are linked together.

### III. Immutability

God is unchangeable. What He now is He always has been and always will be. God cannot change for the better because He is already best. He cannot change for the worse because He thereby would cease to be perfect. Infinite perfection is unchangeable.

Psalm 102:26, 27      Earth changes, God is the same  
Malachi 3:6      I am the Lord, I change not  
James 1:17      No variableness  
Hebrews 6:17, 18      Immutability of His counsel  
Exodus 3:14      Always in present tense

All created things are subject to change and deterioration, but God remains always the same. Stars burn out, mountains wear away, buildings crumble; plants wither, flowers fade, animals die; metal rusts, food decays, machinery wears out. Mankind changes, suffers, and dies. In our changing universe, only God is unchangeable.

#### **IV. Omniscience**

*God is perfect in knowledge.* God's mind is perfect. His knowledge is infinite, eternal, and complete.

Job 37:16      Perfect in knowledge  
Psalm 147:5      His understanding is infinite  
Acts 15:18      All His works from beginning  
1 John. 3:20      God knoweth all things  
Hebrews 4:13      All things opened unto His eyes  
Psalm 139:1-6, 23      Hast searched me and known me  
Isaiah 40:13, 14, 28      Who hath taught Him?  
Romans 11:33, 34      O the depths of the riches

#### **V. Omnipresence**

*God is everywhere present.* Wherever we are we can say, "God is here!" He is our nearest environment. One is no nearer to the presence of God on a mountain than he is in a cavern. Nearness to God is not a matter of geography. No point is nearer to God's presence than any other point. One needs not shout across the empty miles to an absent God. God is here; He can hear your faintest whisper.

Psalm 139:7-12      Whither flee from thy presence  
Jeremiah 23:23, 24      His presence fills heaven, earth  
Acts 17:24-28      Not far from every one of us  
Psalm 23:4      Thou art with me  
1 Kings 8:27      Heaven cannot contain thee

God is not everywhere present in the same sense. God is in heaven, His dwelling place (1 Kings 8:30); Christ is in heaven at God's right hand (Eph. 1:20); God's throne is in heaven (Rev. 21:2; Isa. 66:1). Heaven is a real place. Although God is in heaven, through His power and presence He is everywhere present and acting.



## **VI. Omnipotence**

*God is all powerful.* He is almighty. His power is infinite. There is nothing that He cannot do. With Him all things are possible.

Revelation 19:6      The Lord God omnipotent  
Revelation 21:22      The Lord God Almighty  
Job 42:2      Thou canst do everything  
Genesis 18:14      Is anything too hard for the Lord  
Luke 1:37      With God nothing impossible  
Matthew 19:26      All things are possible  
Genesis 17:1      I am the Almighty God

The power of God is designated in the Bible as God's Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the impersonal power of God. The Bible uses the words *power* and *spirit* interchangeably. Every work that God does is performed through His power or Spirit.

## **Moral Attributes of God**

God's moral attributes describe His character. They designate the properties within God's nature that determine His moral relationships with mankind. What God does is determined by what God is. The works of God are based upon the character of God.

The three fundamental moral attributes of God are holiness, love, and truth. Holiness includes righteousness and justice. Love includes mercy, grace, lovingkindness, and goodness. Truth includes veracity and faithfulness.

### **I. Holiness**

*God is holy.* Holiness refers to God's moral perfection. The holiness of God involves a positive aspect and a negative aspect. The positive aspect of God's holiness is the fact that in Him all goodness dwells. The negative aspect is the fact that in Him no moral evil exists. The first thought is designated by the word *excellence*. The second is designated by the word *purity*.

The Bible presents God's power in contrast to man's weakness, God's wisdom in contrast to man's ignorance, and God's holiness in contrast to man's sin.

### **II. Love**

*God is love.* Love is an outstanding moral attribute of God. Love has no existence apart from God; God performs no work apart from His holy love. Love is a basic characteristic of His nature. The truth is not merely that God loves, but that God is love. Love is not simply something God does; it is His nature. His love is neither occasional nor limited. There are no times when God does not love, and there are no spheres which His love does not cover. The glorious truth is that God is love. "He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love" (1 John 4:8). "And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him" (1 John 4:16).

The fact that God is love means that He desires and delights in the welfare of His creatures. Through desire God longs for us, seeks after us, and claims us as His own. Through delight God rejoices in us and bestows upon us His richest treasures.

God's love fills the universe. Every particle of creation is submerged in the love of God. The circle of His affection compasses all His creatures. "For God so loved the world." Although life may be filled with disappointments, one knows that God is love and His love eventually will triumph.

### **III. Truth**

*God Is Truth.* This means that what God knows agrees perfectly with what God is. He is divinely self-consistent. He is real, genuine, true to His nature. The truth of God is the guarantee of reality, the stability of existence, the foundation of certainty. Men can discover scientific facts and truths in history only because God is truth and is the source of all truth.

We trust in God because He is trustworthy. We depend upon Him because He is dependable. We have faith in God because He is faithful. We believe in God because He has revealed Himself as Truth through His Word.

---

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1. MATCHING:      a. Infinite      b. Eternal      c. Immutability  
                         d. Omniscience      e. Omnipresence      f. Omnipotence

\_\_\_\_\_ God is all powerful  
\_\_\_\_\_ God is unchangeable  
\_\_\_\_\_ God is unlimited  
\_\_\_\_\_ God is everywhere  
\_\_\_\_\_ God knows everything  
\_\_\_\_\_ God always lives

2. What is meant by the fact that God is infinite? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Was there ever a time when God did not exist? (Yes, No)

4. What is God's immutability? \_\_\_\_\_

5. What is omniscience? \_\_\_\_\_

6. "Known unto God are all his works from the \_\_\_\_\_ of the world" (Acts 15:18).

7. What is omnipresence? \_\_\_\_\_



8. What is omnipotence? \_\_\_\_\_

9. What are the three primary moral attributes of God?

(a) \_\_\_\_\_

(b) \_\_\_\_\_

(c) \_\_\_\_\_

10. "The Bible presents God's power in contrast to man's weakness, God's wisdom in contrast to man's ignorance, and God's holiness in contrast to man's \_\_\_\_\_."

11. If God approved of sin, would He continue to be holy? (Yes, No)

12. Name some ways in which God has revealed His love. \_\_\_\_\_

13. What is meant by the fact that God is truth? \_\_\_\_\_

Please fill in your name and address here:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

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# ONE GOD

God is one. There is only one person who is God. Before the universe came into being, the living, personal, self-existent God was alone. This one infinite and perfect Being is unique. He has no identical. He is in a class of His own. In His nature, personality, and attributes God is undivided and indivisible.

The unity of God includes two primary thoughts: the oneness of God and the unity of God's character. The oneness of God refers to the fact that there is only one person in the universe who is the supreme source and ruler of all things. The unity of God's character refers to the truth that His nature is undivided.

Christianity is based on monotheism. The God of the Old Testament is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Christianity in the Roman Empire constantly conflicted with paganism. The unity of God naturally became a fundamental doctrine of the apostolic church. Wherever they went, the early missionaries of the church proclaimed the truth of God's oneness. Their converts "turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God" (1 Thess. 1:9).

In writing to the church in the idolatrous city of Corinth, Paul asserted: "We know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one. For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,) but to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him" (1 Cor. 8:4-6).

"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time " (1 Tim. 2:5, 6).

There is one God, one human race, and one mediator between the two. The one God is a unity who alone is the source of all created things. His character is holiness, love, and truth. The one human race has descended from its common ancestors, Adam and Eve. The human race had a common origin and constitutes a unity. The entire human race is in sin and needs salvation. The one mediator is Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God.

## **I. Major Bible Truth**

The fact that there is only one God is an outstanding teaching in the Bible. It was the basic message of the prophets and apostles. It is the foundation truth of

the gospel.

1. *One God.* The Bible clearly states that there is one God. Bible writers show that God is a sole individual, a unique being. God is one; there is one person who is God.

Ephesians 4:6      One God and Father of all  
1 Timothy 2:5      There is one God  
1 Corinthians 8:4      None other God but one  
1 Corinthians 8:6      There is but one God, the Father  
James 2:19      There is one God  
Galatians 3:20      God is one  
Matthew 19:17      None good but one, that is, God  
Mark 10:18      None good but one, that is, God  
Mark 12:29      The Lord our God is one Lord  
Deuteronomy 6:4      The Lord our God is one Lord

2. *The Only God.* The Bible teaches God's simple unity not only by stating that He is one, but also by affirming that He is the only God. The word "only" means alone, by one's self, apart, to be solitary.

John 17:3      Thee the only true God  
1 Timothy 1:17      The only wise God  
1 Timothy 6:15      The blessed and only Potentate  
Jude 4      Denying, the only Lord God  
Jude 25      To the only wise God  
2 Kings 19:15      Thou alone  
2 Kings 19:19      Thou only  
Nehemiah 9:6      Thou art Lord alone  
Psalm 83:18      Whose name alone is Jehovah  
Psalm 86:9, 10      Thou art God alone  
Isaiah 44:24      Stretcheth forth the heavens alone

3. *There Is None Other.* All, others are excluded. There is none else. God is alone; beside Him none other exists.

Mark: 12:32      There is none other but he  
1 Corinthians 8:4      There is none other God but one  
Deuteronomy 4:35      There is none else beside him  
Deuteronomy 4:39      There is none else  
Deuteronomy 32:39      There is no god with me  
1 Samuel 2:2      There is none beside me  
1 Kings 8:60      There is none else  
Isaiah 43:10      Before me no God, neither after  
Isaiah 43:11      Beside me there is no saviour  
Isaiah 44:6      Beside me there is no God  
Isaiah 44:8      I know not any  
Isaiah 45:5      There is no God beside me  
Isaiah 45:6      There is none beside me  
Isaiah 45:14      There is none else



Isaiah 45:18      There is none else  
 Isaiah 45:21      There is no God beside me  
 Isaiah 45:22      I am God, there is none else  
 Isaiah 46:9      I am God, there is none else  
 Jeremiah 10:10    The Lord is the true God  
 Joel 2:27      None else

## II. Indications of God's Oneness

1. *God's Infinite Attributes.* The oneness of God is required by the fact that God is infinite. Reality permits the existence of only one person who is absolutely perfect. There can be only one person who is supreme. Pre-eminence excludes all but one. When one speaks of the original, the source, the first cause, the greatest, the highest, the supreme, the ultimate, the final, he refers to a position that only one person can occupy. God's infinite superiority requires Him to be a single unit, a sole individual, a unique being.

For more than one infinite God to exist would be a contradiction of thought. If several persons existed as God, they would limit each other. They would need to be finite. None would be all in all--the one supreme God.

The idea of God is appropriated to an individual, and does not admit of application to more than *one*. There cannot be any thing above God, or equal to Him, or which is not dependent upon Him. He is not only the *first* and the *best*, but the *greatest* of beings; and, consequently, He stands alone in the universe. What do we mean by the term *God* but a being who is infinitely and absolutely perfect? The idea of two equal gods is therefore a chimera. There may be more kings than one, because royalty only implies that each is vested with sovereign authority in his own dominions; but there cannot be a plurality of gods, because, from the nature of things, only one can be possessed of all possible perfections. (Wakefield, Samuel. *Christian Theology*. New York: Nelson & Phillips, 1873, pp. 140, 141.)

2. *The Unity of Nature.* The unity of nature reveals the unity of God. All created things form not a multiverse but a universe. The universe evidences itself as the work of one mind, one power, one will--one God. Each new scientific discovery emphasizes the truth of the unity of nature and the oneness of God.

3. *Man's Psychological Nature.* Man finds a oneness of life in the oneness of God. Unity of personality and purpose is discovered in loyalty to one God. "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart and with all thy soul, and with all thy might" (Deut. 6:4, 5). Because God is supreme, men are to worship Him supremely. Because God is one, men are to love Him with oneness of person. The one God who is all in all insists on total loyalty in His creatures.

Psychology recognizes the need for an organizing principle in man's life. Every circle needs a center. Every solar system needs a sun. Every life needs a supreme loyalty to give it unity and purpose. The oneness of God fills this basic psychological need within man. In supreme loyalty to the one God, man

finds a center for his circle and an adequate purpose for his life.

Sinful men cannot worship, obey, and love God in an acceptable way until they become properly related to God through the mediatorial work of Jesus Christ. The sinner must turn his back to sin in repentance before he can turn his face toward God in *worship*. He must exercise trust in Christ as Sacrifice before he can yield proper *obedience* to Him as Lord. He must surrender to God's saving grace and transforming power before he can be filled with Christ's imparted righteousness which is *love*. Only through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, therefore, can man properly fulfill his threefold responsibility of worship, obedience, and love.

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Church of God General Conference  
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## Test Questions

## ONE GOD

Please fill in the answers on this question sheet and return to:

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ First Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

or to:

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McDonough, GA 30253  
(678) 833-1839

1. What is meant by the unity of God? \_\_\_\_\_

2. The unity of God includes two primary thoughts: the \_\_\_\_\_  
of God and the unity of God's \_\_\_\_\_.

3. "There is \_\_\_\_\_ God, and one \_\_\_\_\_  
between God and \_\_\_\_\_, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. 2:5).

4. "To us there is but \_\_\_\_\_ God, the \_\_\_\_\_,  
of whom are all things, and we in him" (1 Cor. 8:6).

5. "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is \_\_\_\_\_ Lord" (Deut. 6:4).

6. Name one text which states that the Father is "one God."

7. Name one text which states that He is the "only" God.

8. Name one text which states that there is "none other."

9. How do God's infinite attributes show His oneness? \_\_\_\_\_



10. "When one speaks of the original, the source, the first cause, the greatest, the highest, the supreme, the ultimate, the final, he refers to a position that only \_\_\_\_\_ person can occupy."

11. How does the unity of nature reveal the unity of God? \_\_\_\_\_

12. How does man find a oneness of life in his relation to the oneness of God? \_\_\_\_\_

13. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with \_\_\_\_\_ thine heart, and with \_\_\_\_\_ thy soul, and with \_\_\_\_\_ thy might" (Deut. 6:5).

14. What must sinful man do before he can worship, obey, and love God in an acceptable way? \_\_\_\_\_

Please fill in your name and address here:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

# THE SON OF GOD

The Word of God teaches that there is but one God, the Father, who is one in essence and person. There is only one person who is God. It teaches that Jesus is not God but the Son of God. He is divine but not deity. Jesus is the most highly exalted person in the universe next to God. Christ eternally will be subject to His Father, the one supreme God. The Holy Spirit is the impersonal power of God through which He performs His works.

1. *Only One Person Who Is God.* Jesus is not God because there is only one person who is God. This one person has been identified as the Father. Jesus, therefore, cannot also be God. There is no other person who can be God in the same sense in which the Father is God. "To us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in Him" (1 Cor. 8:6). "One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all" (Eph. 4:6). Jesus is divine but not deity. He is the divine Son of God, but He is not the deity, the Supreme Being.

John 17:3      Thee the only true God  
Romans 15:6    God, even the Father  
1 Corinthians 8:6    One God, the Father  
1 Corinthians 15:24    To God, even the Father  
2 Corinthians 1:3    God, even the Father  
Ephesians 1:17    God of our Lord Jesus Christ  
Ephesians 4:6    One God and Father of All  
1 Thessalonians 3:13    God, even our Father  
2 Thessalonians 2:16    God, even our Father  
James 3:9    God, even the Father  
2 John 3    From God the Father

The unity of God is not compound. One God means one person. This one person is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

2. *Jesus As Mediator Cannot Be God Himself.* "There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. 2:5). Jesus is mediator between God and men. Jesus, therefore, is not God Himself. If Jesus Himself were God and equal with God, as trinitarians assert, He would not be in a position to serve as mediator. As mediator one must be a third party. If Jesus were God and equal with God, He would be one of the two parties and could not serve as mediator between the two--God and man. (Gal.3:20.) The fact that Jesus is a mediator nullifies the possibility of His being part of a trinity.

Jesus insisted that He and His Father are not identical. He and His Father are separate in personality, essence, and being. He declared that He and His Father constitute two separate witnesses. "It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true. I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me" (John 8:17, 18).

3. *Jesus Is the Son of God.* Jesus is not God Himself nor part of a triune God because He is the Son of God. He cannot be both God and the Son of God. The Father and the Son are neither equal nor identical. The Father lived before the Son. The Son received His life from the Father. The Father is greater than the Son. Jesus was begotten of His Father and born of Mary. He is the Son of the living God. The New Testament abounds with scriptures stating that Jesus is the Son of God.

4. *God Is the God of Jesus.* Jesus recognized the Father, the one true God, as His God. Jesus never claimed to be God Himself. He did not pretend to be equal with God. He always regarded the Father to be superior to Him, His God. In the following scriptures, Jesus refers to the Father as His God, or God is described as the God of Jesus.

|                     |                                  |
|---------------------|----------------------------------|
| John 20:17          | To my God and your God           |
| Revelation 3:12     | My God, my God, my God, my God   |
| Matthew 27:46       | My God, my God, why hast thou    |
| Mark 15:34          | My God, my God, why hast thou    |
| Psalms 22:1         | My God, my God, why hast thou    |
| 2 Corinthians 11:31 | The God and Father of our Lord   |
| Ephesians 1:3       | The God and Father of our Lord   |
| Ephesians 1:17      | The God of our Lord Jesus Christ |
| 1 Peter 1:3         | The God and Father of our Lord   |
| Hebrews 1:8, 9      | God, even thy God, hath anointed |
| Psalms 45:6, 7      | God, thy God hath anointed thee  |
| Revelation 1:6      | Unto his God (R.S.V., Diaglott)  |
| 2 Corinthians 1:3   | God of our Lord Jesus (R.S.V.)   |

5. *Jesus Prayed to His God, the Father.* Jesus revealed that He was not Himself God when He prayed to His Father as God. If Jesus were equal with God, why did Jesus pray to God? Trinitarians claim that God, Jesus, and the Spirit all have one intelligence and one will. If Jesus and God share one will, the power of decision, it would seem like mockery for one person of a trinity to pray to another person of a trinity. Jesus showed that He is inferior to His Father and that His Father alone is God by the fact that He prayed to Him.

|                   |                                    |
|-------------------|------------------------------------|
| Hebrews 5:7, 8    | Offered up prayers unto him        |
| Luke 6:12         | All night in prayer to God         |
| Matthew 11:25     | O Father, Lord of heaven and earth |
| John 17:1         | Father, the hour is come           |
| Matthew 26:39, 42 | O my Father, if it be possible     |

6. *Jesus Is Inferior to God.* Jesus occupies the most highly exalted position in



the universe next to God. Jesus is not equal with His Father. God is greater than His Son; the Son is inferior to His Father. Jesus, therefore, is not God. Recognizing this fact is not failing to give proper glory to Christ; it is recognition of the true relationship between God and His Son.

Jesus declared, "My Father is greater than I" (John 14:28). When Jesus said, "I and my Father are one" (John 10:30), He did not teach that He and His Father were one in essence or being (as trinitarians assert) or one in person (as Sabellians teach). He referred to the unity of purpose and perfect accord that exists between Himself and His Father. Jesus prayed that this same unity would become a reality among His followers. (John 17:11, 21-23.) Jesus always realized that His Father is greater than He. This clearly shows that Jesus cannot be part of a triune God.

John 14:28      The Father is greater than I  
John 10:29      My Father is greater than all  
I Corinthians 11:3      The head of Christ is God  
1 Corinthians 3:23      Christ is God's  
Matthew 20:23      Not mine to give but my Father  
1 Corinthians 15:24-28      Son himself subject to Father

After Christ's redemptive rulership has been completed and God has put all enemies under His feet, Jesus will continue to be subject to God. God will be supreme. He will be all in all. "For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all." (1 Cor. 15:24-28.)

Jesus lived as God's servant. He yielded perfect obedience to His Father. He always did those things that pleased God. This showed that Jesus recognized Himself to be inferior to God.

Zechariah 3:8      My Servant the Branch  
Matthew 12:18      Behold my servant  
Philippians 2:7, 8      The form of a servant  
Hebrews 10:7, 9      I come to do thy will, O God  
John 4:34      I do the will of him  
John 5:30      The will of him that sent me  
John 6:38      Not to do mine own will  
John 8:29      Those things that please him  
Luke 22:42      Not my will, but thine  
Romans 5:19      Through the obedience of one

*7. Jesus Inferior to God in Attributes.* The New Testament reveals Jesus Christ as inferior to God in attributes. This is definite indication that Jesus is not God Himself. He is neither equal with God nor identical with God. He is not part of a triune God.

God is infinite and perfect in all His attributes. In all these things God is



unchangeable. His infinite perfection can neither increase nor decrease. What He has been, that shall He always be. Jesus showed Himself to be inferior to God in His attributes.

*Inferior in Knowledge.* God is omniscient. He is perfect in knowledge. "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world." His knowledge is infinite, eternal, and complete. Jesus, on the other hand, was not omniscient. Jesus "increased in wisdom" (Luke 2:52). If Jesus were God with infinite knowledge, how could He have increased in wisdom?

God's knowledge is underived and unacquired. His knowledge originates within Himself. "Who hath taught him?" (Isa. 40:13, 14.) Jesus, on the other hand, received His knowledge from God. (John 8:28.)

God's knowledge includes all things past, present, and future. He knows all things. Jesus, on the other hand, was limited in knowledge in regard to the date of His return. (Mark 13:32.) Jesus is not God.

|            |                                 |
|------------|---------------------------------|
| Luke 2:52  | Jesus increased in wisdom       |
| John 5:19  | What he seeth the Father do     |
| John 8:28  | As the Father hath taught me    |
| Mark 13:32 | Did not know date of His return |
| Acts 1:7   | In Father's authority           |

*Inferior in Power.* God is omnipotent. He is almighty. He has infinite power. "With God all things are possible." God's power originates within Himself. Through His power God performs all His works. Jesus, on the other hand, was not omnipotent. The power Christ exercised in performing miracles was received from God. He said, "The Son can do nothing of himself" (John 5:19). The power which Christ uses to accomplish His work in the church today and which He will use in ruling the earth in His future kingdom has been received from God. God's power originated within Himself; Jesus received power from God. Jesus is not God.

|            |                               |
|------------|-------------------------------|
| John 5:19  | Son can do nothing of himself |
| John 5:30  | Of mine own self do nothing   |
| John, 8:28 | I do nothing of myself        |
| John 14:10 | He doeth the works            |

*Inferior in Life.* God has always existed. There never was a time when God did not exist. God not only will live forever in the future, but also has lived forever in the past. God's life was without beginning. Christ's life, on the other hand, had a definite beginning. There was a time when Jesus did not exist. Jesus will live for all eternity in the future, but He has not lived for all eternity in the past. Jesus is inferior to God in regard to age and previous length of life.

God is the source of all life. He derived existence from no one; He possesses life within Himself. Jesus, on the other hand, received life from God. If it were not for God, Jesus never would have existed. Jesus was begotten of the Father. His life was derived from God. The power of God caused Mary to conceive

and bring forth a son. If it were not for the holy power of God, Jesus never would have been born. "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:35). Jesus said, "The living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father" (John 6:57).

Jesus also received resurrection life from the Father. God raised Jesus from the dead through His power, the Spirit. (Acts 10:40; 13:30; Rom. 10:9.) Jesus voluntarily laid down His life as a sacrifice. He had authority to lay it down and He had authority to receive it again. (John 10:17, 18.) Jesus did not raise Himself from death. He was raised from death through the power of God. God is the source of all life; Jesus received life from God. Jesus is not God.

*God Cannot Die.* God is immortal. He is not subject to death. God always has been immortal and always will be immortal. It is impossible for God to die. Jesus, on the other hand, was born mortal. He died. Jesus had the characteristics of mortal man. He experienced hunger (Matt. 4:2), thirst (John 19:28), weariness (John 4:6), temptation (Matt. 4:1), and suffering (Luke 24:46). Jesus died (John 19:33; 1 Cor. 15:3). God cannot die; Jesus died. Jesus is not God.

Jesus became immortal when God raised Him from the grave. Jesus received immortality from God. Jesus can never die again. (Rom. 6:9.) When Jesus comes, all true believers will be made immortal like Him. (1 Cor. 15:52, 53; Phil. 3:20, 21.)

*8. Divine Attributes and Positions Received from God.* Some men argue that Jesus must be God and a part of the trinity because He exercises certain divine authority and reveals certain divine attributes. Exalted at God's right hand, Jesus has received divine authority and power from God. This, however, does not prove that Jesus is equal with God, God Himself, nor a part of God.

The fact that Jesus has been exalted by the Father shows that the Father is greater than Jesus. The fact that Jesus receives divine positions and works from God shows that Jesus is inferior to God. Today, Jesus has been exalted to the highest position in the universe second only to God Himself.

*Authority Received from God.* Jesus said, "All power (authority) is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Matt. 28:18). Jesus always realized that His Father was superior to Him in authority. He lived in perfect obedience to God. After His resurrection, Jesus received divine authority from God. God's authority is derived from no one; it originates within Himself. God is greater than Jesus; Jesus is inferior to God. Jesus is not God.

*Kingship Received from God.* Jesus is designated King of kings. God has always been King of the universe; Jesus received His kingly authority from God. The basis of Christ's kingship is the fact that He is the Son of David (Luke 1:31-33) and also the Son of God (Psalm 2:6-9; Dan. 7:14). Jesus did not become Son of David and Son of God until He was born of Mary.



*Work of Judgment.* God has authorized Jesus to be Judge of mankind. God has committed judgment unto His Son. God will judge mankind through the work of Christ, the Judge. Jesus has received this position and work from God. (John 5:22, 27; Acts 10: 42; 17:31.) The fact that Jesus received this prerogative from the Father shows that the Father is superior to Him. Jesus is not God.

*His Invisible Presence.* Although Jesus is in heaven, He is able to be everywhere present with His followers. He said, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. 28:20). Jesus is able to do this through God's power, the Spirit. Jesus received this power from God. (John 15:26; Acts 2:33.)

9. *Four Trinitarian Arguments Considered.* Trinitarians object to the truth that Jesus is not God. The four main arguments they use to teach that Jesus is God Himself are: (1) divine attributes are ascribed to Christ; (2) divine prerogatives are ascribed to Christ; (3) certain scriptures state that Jesus was in the image or fullness of God; (4) Jesus is given the title "God" in certain scriptures.

We have already considered the first argument and observed that Jesus was inferior to God in attributes of knowledge, power, and life during His earthly ministry. He was dependent upon God in all things. Instead of proving that Jesus is God, His attributes prove that He is not God.

The second argument also has been considered. The fact that Jesus exercised or will exercise certain divine authority and perform divine works (King, Judge, etc.) does not indicate that Jesus is God. On the contrary, we notice that Jesus received all these positions and works from God, showing that Jesus is inferior to God.

The third argument used by trinitarians against the truth that Jesus is not God is the fact that certain scriptures state that Jesus is in the image of God. These scriptures are as follows:

|                   |                                 |
|-------------------|---------------------------------|
| Philippians 2:6   | Being in the form of God        |
| Colossians 1:19   | In him all fulness dwell        |
| Colossians 2:9    | In him dwelleth all the fulness |
| Colossians 1:15   | The image of the invisible God  |
| 2 Corinthians 4:4 | Christ, who is the image of God |
| Hebrews 1:3       | Express image of his person     |
| John 12:45        | He that seeth me seeth him      |
| John 14:9         | Seen me hath seen the Father    |

These scriptures do not teach that Jesus is God. They do not indicate that Jesus is part of a trinity. The word "image" means *likeness or impressed character*. Jesus was the moral likeness of God. His character reflected God's moral attributes--holiness, love, and truth. Men could know what God's character or image was like by looking at the lovely life of Jesus. His life revealed holiness, righteousness, justice, love, mercy, lovingkindness, truth, veracity, and faithfulness. Jesus was godly; He was God-like in character and conduct. Jesus was not God Himself; He reflected God's character in His perfect life.



The fourth argument used by trinitarians is that Jesus is given the title "God" in a few scriptures. Three principal scriptures are: John 20:28; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 1:8.

This argument is answered by the fact that the word "God" (Hebrew *elohim* and Greek *theos*) sometimes is applied to men and to angels in the Bible. When used in this secondary sense, the word "God" indicates someone who is a *representative* of the one true supreme God.

The term God is employed in the Scriptures chiefly in two senses. The former of these is when it designates Him who so rules and presides over all things in heaven and on earth, that He acknowledges no superior ... in this sense the Scriptures assert that God is one. The latter sense is when it denotes a Being who has received from that one God some kind of superior authority either in heaven or on earth among men, or power superior to all things human, or authority to sit in judgment upon other men, and is thus rendered in some sense a partaker of the Deity of the one God. (*The Racovian Catechism*. Section III, Chapter I.)

Moses was designated as God in relation to Aaron (Ex. 4:16) and to Pharaoh (Ex. 7:1). Moses was called God (*elohim*) but he was not the one supreme God nor part of any trinity. Moses was God's representative. Human judges, representatives of the one true God, are designated as God. In Exodus 22:28 the word "gods" refers to human judges. In Exodus 21:6; 22:8, 9; and 1 Samuel 2:25, the word "judges" is translated from the Hebrew *elohim* or God. Psalm 97:7 is quoted in Hebrews 1:6. The "angels" of Hebrews 1 are the "gods" in Psalm 97. Angels are representatives of God, but not God Himself.

Israelites were called "gods" in Psalm 82:6, 7. Jesus quoted this verse to show this fact. "Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken; say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?" (John 10:34-36.)

The fact that the word "God" is used in the secondary sense as a representative of God in Hebrews 1:8 is shown by the next verse. In Hebrews 1:9 the one true supreme God is described as the Son's God. "Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." (Hebrews 1:8, 9 is a quotation of Psalm 45:6, 7.)

Jesus is not God Himself. He is not part of a trinity. Jesus is the Son of God.

---

(Adapted from *Systematic Theology*, by Alva Huffer, published by Church of God General Conference, Oregon, Illinois 61061, U.S.A.)

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## Test Questions

## THE SON OF GOD

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1. The Word of God teaches that there is but \_\_\_\_\_ God, the Father, who is one in essence and person.

2. Jesus is not God, but the \_\_\_\_\_ of God.

3. Christ eternally will be (greater than, subject to) His Father, the one supreme God.

4. "To us there is but one God, the \_\_\_\_\_, of whom are all things, and we in him" (1 Cor. 8:6).

5. How does the fact that Jesus is mediator between God and men show that He is not God Himself? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. List four of the eight reasons why we know that Jesus is not God.

(1) \_\_\_\_\_

(2) \_\_\_\_\_

(3) \_\_\_\_\_

(4) \_\_\_\_\_

7. Jesus declared, John 14:28, My Father is \_\_\_\_\_ than I."

8. In what way is God greater than Jesus in knowledge ?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



9. In what way is God greater than Jesus in power? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

10. How does that fact that Jesus was able to die prove that He is not God?

\_\_\_\_\_

11. When did Jesus become immortal? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

12. Moses, judges, angels, and Israelites were called “gods” in the Bible to show that they were (God Himself, God’s representatives).

13. Jesus, the Son of God, is given the title “God” in a few Bible verses to indicate that He is (God’s representative, God Himself).

14. Jesus is not God; Himself. He (is, is not) part of a trinity. Jesus is the Son of God.

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# THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit is not a person distinct from the Father and the Son. The Holy Spirit is impersonal. It is not part of a trinity. It is the divine energy through which God performs His works.

1. *The Spirit Is the Power of God.* The Spirit is not a person distinct from the Father and the Son because it is the power of God. The Holy Spirit is the impersonal power of God. Every work that God does is performed through His power or Spirit.

Spirit is translated from the Hebrew words *ruach* and *neshamah* and from the Greek word *pneuma*. *Pneuma* is in Greek scriptures what *ruach* is in Hebrew. Spirit means air, breath, wind, power, animation, and the manifestation of one's power.

The Holy Spirit is the power of God. The terms *power* and *spirit* can be used interchangeably. God performs His mighty works through His power. Through His Spirit, God created the universe (Job 26:13) and gave life to mankind (Job 33:4). Through His Spirit, God gave strength to Samson (Judges 14:6; 15:14), wisdom to Solomon, and inspiration to writers of Scripture (2 Pet. 1:21). God's Spirit gave life to Jesus (Luke 1:35; Matt. 1:20) and enabled Him to perform miracles (Matt. 12:28; John 3:34). Through that power, God raised Jesus from the dead to immortality (Rom. 1:4; Eph. 1:19, 20). These divine works were different in purpose, but the one Spirit of God was the unchanging medium for performing these works.

2. *The Word "Spirit" Is Neuter.* The Spirit is not a personality because the Greek word *pneuma*, translated Spirit, is neuter in gender. Articles and pronouns referring to it also are neuter.

3. *Impersonal Symbols.* God's impersonal power, the Holy Spirit, is designated in the Bible by impersonal symbols. Some of these are wind (John 3:8; Acts 2:2), fire (Matt. 3:11), water (John 7:37-39), oil (Psalm 45:7; Isa. 61:1), seal (Eph. 1:13), dove (Matt. 3:16), lamps (Rev. 4:5), and breath.

4. *Impersonal Characteristics.* The impersonal characteristics of the Spirit reveal it as the power of God and not as a personality. The Spirit is mentioned as poured out (Isa. 32:15; 44:3; Joel 2:28; Acts 2:17; 10:45), shed (Titus 3:5, 6), breathed (John 20:22), and filling people (Acts 2:2, 4; Eph. 5:18). Jesus was anointed with this power (Acts 10:38). Men were baptized in it (Matt. 3:11; Acts 1:5; 1 Cor. 12:13) and drank of it (1 Cor. 12:13). It is compared to the blowing wind (John 3:8). The Holy Spirit is impersonal.

5. *No Personal Name.* The Spirit is shown to be impersonal in that it has no personal name. God is a person; His name is Jehovah. Our Saviour is a person; His name is Jesus. The Spirit is not a person; it has no personal name. If the Spirit is a person, why does it have no personal name? The word "name" in Matthew 28:19 does not refer to a personal name. The word "name" in this verse means *authority* or as a *representative of*. The Holy Spirit is not a personality.

6. *Never Addressed in Prayer.* "The Holy Spirit is not a person, because in all the Bible there is not one prayer or song or exclamation addressed to it; nor is there one precept in all the Bible authorizing such prayer or song." (Gifford. *Op. cit.*, p. 172.) Miles Grant wrote:

Another important fact is worthy of notice, that nowhere in the Bible are we taught to love, honor, or worship the Holy Spirit, or to pray to it for assistance. Why not, if it is a person, like the Father and His Son? (Grant, Miles. *Positive Theology*. Boston: Advent Christian Publication Society, p. 287.)

The Spirit is not mentioned in the hymns of adoration in Revelation. (Rev. 5:13; 7:10.) If the Spirit is a third person of a trinity, why is reference to it omitted?

7. *Not Included in Apostolic Salutations.* The power of God, the Spirit, is not usually mentioned together with God and Jesus in the greetings and salutations in New Testament letters.

The Spirit is not mentioned in any of the salutations in Paul's epistles. (Rom. 1:7; I Cor. 1:3; 2 Cor. 1:2; Gal. 1:3; Eph. 1:2; Phil. 1:2; Col. 1:2; 1 Thess. 1:1; 2 Thess. 1:2; 1 Tim. 1:2; 2 Tim. 1:2; Titus 1:4; Philemon 3.) God and Jesus are mentioned together repeatedly, but the Spirit is seldom mentioned with them.

Notice also the opening words of letters written by the other apostles. (James 1:1; 2 Peter 1:2; 1 John 1:3; 2 John 3; Jude 1.) These all mentioned God and Jesus but not the Spirit. The Spirit is mentioned in 1 Peter 1:2 but not as a person.

8. *Not Mentioned As Enthroned or Reigning.* The Bible pictures God the Father sitting upon His throne and Jesus sitting or standing at His right hand. The Father and the Son are associated together in judgment and redemption. The coming kingdom is the kingdom of God and His Christ. There is no mention of the Spirit's being a person or as one sitting upon a throne.

9. *Not Related to Father as One Person to Another.* The Spirit's relation to the Father is not that of one person to another person. The Spirit's relation to the Father is that of a power to a person. The Spirit is God's power. God's power is no more a person distinct from Himself any more than is His wisdom or love. The Father and the Son are persons but the Spirit is not a person.

The Father says "Thou" to the Son and the Son says "Thou" to the Father, but neither ever says "Thou" to the Spirit. The Father loves the Son and the Son loves the Father, but neither is mentioned as loving the Spirit.



The Spirit is never denominated "the third" or "the third person" in any way. Moreover, the Father is never called "the first person" and the Son is never called "the second person."

10. *Objections Considered.* Trinitarians claim, on the basis of Acts 5:3, 4 and 2 Corinthians 3:17, that the Spirit is God. They insist that since the Spirit is directly identified with God, the Spirit must be God and a separate personality. There is nothing in these two verses to warrant such a claim. Merely because the Bible states "God is love" (1 John 4:8, 16) one is not authorized to say that love is a separate personality distinct from the Father and a member of a trinity.

The Spirit is God's power. The working of the Spirit is the working of God and His Son. When one is filled with the Spirit, he is filled with the invisible power of God and Christ. The fruit of the Spirit is the result of Christ's working in the believer's life through His power.

When the Bible describes the Spirit as speaking (Rev. 2:7), it refers to the work of God speaking through His power. When the Spirit is described as making intercession (Rom. 8:26, 27), it refers to the intercession that Christ our High Priest makes for us through His power (Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:25). Jesus is our *only* intercessor; He is our one mediator. When Ananias lied to the Holy Ghost, he lied to God who worked through that holy power. When men "grieve" (Eph. 4:30) the Holy Spirit of God, they grieve God Himself who works through His Holy Spirit.

The Spirit is described as eternal and holy because God is eternal and holy. When the Spirit, God's power, is pictured as having certain characteristics and performing certain works, reference is made to the one eternal God who has those characteristics and performs those works.

11. *Masculine Pronouns in Greek no Proof of Personality.* Our Lord promised His disciples that after He ascended to heaven He would send them God's power, the Holy Spirit. Through this power, Jesus would continue His work with and within His disciples.

This power was called the Comforter, Paraclete, Advocate, or Helper, because Jesus intended to work through that power in behalf of believers. Jesus is the one who would be the Paraclete or Advocate Himself. (1 John 2:1.) He is the one who promised to be with them always (Matt. 28:20) and be their source of comfort and help. Jesus said, "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you" (John 14:18). The work of Christ's Spirit as Comforter, Advocate, and Helper was nothing other than the work of Christ Himself as Comforter, Advocate, and Helper through that divine power.

The Greek word for Comforter *Parakletos* is masculine in gender. (John 14:16, 17, 26; 15:26; 16:7, 8, 13-15.) Therefore, translators used masculine pronouns to refer to the power of God in this portion of John even though that power itself was neuter and impersonal. The impersonal power of God was indicated by a masculine word "Comforter" because it was going to be used by the person, Jesus Christ. Jesus is a person, but the power, the Holy Spirit, through which He worked as Comforter was impersonal. The use of masculine pronouns in the

verses cited is no indication of personality.

Spirit in the Greek is a neuter noun and is always represented by neuter pronouns in that language. The Comforter in Greek is a masculine noun and it is therefore represented by masculine pronouns. But this proves nothing as to personality; for the use of masculine pronouns in Greek is no proof of personality. The Greek, unlike the English, uses masculine and feminine pronouns with reference to things and qualities as well as to persons.

Wisdom in Proverbs is personified and referred to as *she* and *her*. This, however, does not indicate that wisdom is a woman or a person. It does not mean that she is part of a triune God. The fact that the Comforter is called he and him is no indication that it is a personality.

The Bible correctly teaches that there is but one God, the Father, who is one in essence and person. There is only one person who is God. It teaches that Jesus is not God but the Son of God. He is divine but not deity. Jesus is the most highly exalted person in the universe next to God. Christ eternally will be subject to His Father, the one supreme God. The Holy Spirit is the impersonal power of God through which He performs His works.

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## Test Questions

## THE HOLY SPIRIT

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1. The Holy Spirit (is, is not) a person.

2. The Spirit is God's \_\_\_\_\_

3. What are some of the works God has performed through His power, the Spirit? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. The Bible shows that the Spirit is not a person by using impersonal symbols, like the wind, in referring to it. Name some other impersonal symbols used in reference to the Spirit. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. God is a person; His name is Jehovah. Our Savior is a person; His name is Jesus. Why does the Spirit have no personal name? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

6. Is the Spirit addressed in prayer in the Bible? (Yes, No)

7. Is the Spirit mentioned together with God and Jesus in the opening salutations of Paul's Epistles (for example, Romans 1:7)? (Yes, No)



8. Does the Bible ever picture the Holy Spirit as a person sitting upon a throne? (Yes, No)
9. The Father says "Thou" to the Son, and the Son says "Thou" to the Father, but neither ever says "Thou" to the \_\_\_\_\_.
10. The Spirit (is, is never) called "the third person" in the Bible.
11. Are impersonal objects ever referred to as "he" or "she" in the Greek language? (Yes, No)
12. Do masculine or feminine pronouns in the Greek language necessarily prove that something is a personality? (Yes, No)
13. The Bible teaches that there is but \_\_\_\_\_ God, the Father, who is one in essence and person.
14. Jesus is not God; He is the \_\_\_\_\_ of God.
15. The Holy Spirit is not a person; it is the \_\_\_\_\_ of God.

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# NATURE OF MAN

Man's physical nature consists of two essential elements: (1) the dust of the ground and (2) the breath of life. The combination of the dust of the ground and the breath of life results in a living soul or person.

The historical record of God's formation of man provides the key to an understanding of man's physical nature. "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (Gen. 2:7).

## I. The Dust of the Ground

Man is made of "the dust of the ground." (Gen. 2:7.) God said unto Adam, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return" (Gen. 3:19).

The phrase *the dust of the ground* refers to the chemical elements that constitute man's body. God has made all things by using various combinations of approximately one hundred basic ingredients that men have named *chemical elements*.

A chemical analysis of man's body reveals that it consists of 72 parts oxygen, 13.5 parts carbon, 9.1 parts hydrogen, 2.5 parts nitrogen, 1.3 parts calcium, 1.15 parts phosphorus, and small amounts of potassium, sulfur, sodium, chlorine, magnesium, iron, silicon, iodine, and fluorine. The first six elements listed in this paragraph, therefore, make up more than ninety-nine per cent of man's body.

These chemical elements are found in soil in various compounds. They are absorbed into plants, where through chemical action they are prepared to be assimilated into man's body. When man eats food, some of these elements become incorporated into his physical nature.

After death man's body decomposes and the chemical elements return to the earth. "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return" (Gen. 3:19). "Man shall turn again unto dust" (Job 34:15). "His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth" (Psalm 146:4). "Thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust" (Psalm 104:29). "All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again" (Eccl. 3:20). "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was" (Eccl. 12:7).

## II. The Breath of Life

The dust-formed man was inanimate until he received life from God. "And the Lord God . . . breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (Gen. 2:7).

The breath of life is that vital force which enables man's body to function. The remarkable workings of man's brain and nervous system are possible only because this divinely given vital force is constantly present in his body.

The English Bible sometimes refers to man's breath of life as his spirit. Man's spirit is his breath of life. Spirit is translated from the Hebrew words *ruach* and *neshamah* and the Greek word *pneuma*. *Pneuma* is in Greek what *ruach* is in Hebrew. Spirit means air, breath, wind, power, animation, and the manifestation of one's power. The English words "pneumonia" and "pneumatic" are derived from the Greek word *pneuma*.

Man receives his breath of life or spirit from God's power, the Holy Spirit (Job 33:4; 27:3). Animals also have breath of life (Gen. 7:21, 22). Animal's breath is the same as man's (Eccl. 3:19). At death man's breath of life returns to its Giver (Psalm 104:29, 30; 146:4; Eccl. 12:7; Job 34:14, 15).

Man's breath of life or spirit is not a being or an entity in itself. It enables man's mind to work, but it does not possess a mind independent of man's brain. The breath of life causes the brain and nervous system to function, but it has no ability to think, feel, or will in itself.

The breath of life is not something that has consciousness apart from man's body. The breath of life leaves man's body at death. "His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth, in that very day his thoughts perish" (Psalm 146:4). When the spirit leaves man's body it continues to be the impersonal, unconscious power of God that causes man to live. Man's brain and nervous system are parts of man's body. They are buried in the grave and return to the earth. When the breath of life has left his body, man is dead. When his brain and nervous system are separated from that power of life which caused them to function, man becomes unconscious. "In that very day his thoughts perish."

### III. Man Is a Living Soul

Man's dust-formed body animated by the breath of life (spirit) constituted a living soul. Read Genesis 2:7 again: "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." The word "soul" in this verse means creature or being. To say that a person is a soul is to say that he is a creature. In other words, Adam became a living creature.

The existence of the living creature required the union of the dust-formed body and the breath of life. The creation equation is as follows: the dust-formed body plus the breath of life equaled a living creature. Before Adam received the breath of life, he was an *inanimate* (soul) creature. After he received the breath of life, he was a *living* (soul) creature. When he died and the breath of life left his body, he became a *dead* (soul) creature.

1. *Meaning of the word "Soul."* The words translated "soul" in the Bible mean primarily *life* and secondarily *creatures that possess that life*.



2. *Animals Designated as Souls.* The Hebrew and Greek words translated soul are applied to animals as well as men. These words refer to the life possessed by both men and animals. Some of these verses are: Genesis 1:20, 21, 24; 2:19; 9:10, 16; Leviticus 11:46; Numbers 31:28; Proverbs 12:10; Ezekiel 47:9; Revelation 8:9; 16:3.

3. *Man the Soul Is Mortal.* The soul is never mentioned in the Bible as being "immortal," "undying," or "eternal." The soul is mortal. It is subject to death and destruction. It can be killed. It can die. The fact that the soul can die proves that it is not immortal. The doctrine of the immortality of the soul has no scriptural support.

When Jesus said, "What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" He referred to the man's life. Christ's soul was His life. Christ's soul died. He gave His life as a sacrifice. "Thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin" (Isa. 53:10). "He hath poured out his soul unto death" (Isa. 53:12). "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption" (Acts 2:27). "His soul was not left in hell" (Acts 2:31). This shows that Christ did not have an immortal soul. If Jesus had been immortal, He could not have died. He who is immortal cannot die. Jesus poured out His soul or life in death. He was unconscious in death until God raised Him to immortality.

Man's soul, therefore, refers to the man himself and to the life that he possesses. The soul is not an entity distinct from man himself. It has no conscious existence apart from man's body. The soul is mortal. The soul, referring to man as a creature, goes to the grave at death. It can be utterly destroyed and will be destroyed in the second death if the person is non-Christian.

It will be observed that *life* was all that was added to man after his creation to make him "a living soul" or man; and consequently, all that was taken away at death. He was perfectly formed, having eyes, ears, mouth, hands, feet, lungs, heart, arteries, veins, nerves, muscles and brain; but this wonderful formation, in the likeness of his Creator, was useless and helpless without *life*; as would be a water wheel without water, a sailing vessel without wind, or a steamship without steam; but no one calls the water a water wheel, the wind a sailing vessel, or the steam a steamship. When the water is shut off from the wheel, we do not say the wheel is gone; when the wind closes, we do not say the ship is taken away; nor when the steam is removed, that the steamship is gone. Why, then, say the *man* has gone to his reward or punishment; when only his *life* has been taken away? After a careful search, I have not been able to find any proof in the Bible, the facts of science, psychology, the eternal principles of pure reason, or common sense, to show that anything else leaves man at death but life, expressed in Hebrew by the words *nephesh*, *ruach*, and *n'shah-mah*; in the Greek by *psyche*, *zoe*, and *pneuma*; and in English by "soul," "spirit," and "breath." (Grant, Miles. *Positive Theology*, pp. 265, 266.)

#### IV. Man Is a Unity

Man is a unity. His physical nature is undivided and indivisible. The union of man's body and the breath of life forms one living unit. The living unit is a living person having a multiplicity of endowment. He possesses many powers and

abilities. He can do many different things. He can think, feel, and choose. He has a conscience and possesses character. His personality, however, is one undivided whole.

Man's mental nature and physical nature are not two separate entities within the individual. They are linked together. They form two inseparable parts of one unit. Man's mental nature really is a part of his physical nature. Man's mind results from the functioning of his brain. Without a brain, man cannot possess a mind. The brain is a part of man's body, his physical nature. The thinking, conscious part of man, therefore, results from the functioning of the physical part of man. Man is a unit.

As we have observed, the Bible very clearly teaches that the spirit is man's breath of life, the God-given vital force of life. The soul is man himself and the life he possesses. The Word of God, moreover, presents abundant testimony that neither the spirit nor the soul is a conscious personality which can exist apart from man's body. We have noticed that man is a unity, that no part of man continues to live after man dies. All men are mortal; all of man is mortal.

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## Test Questions

## NATURE OF MAN

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1. COMPLETE: "And the Lord God formed man of the \_\_\_\_\_ of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the \_\_\_\_\_ of life; and man became a \_\_\_\_\_ soul" (Genesis 2:7).
2. To what does the "dust of the ground" refer? \_\_\_\_\_
3. "Dust thou art, and unto \_\_\_\_\_ shalt thou return" (Gen. 3:19).
4. The word (spirit, soul) is translated from the Hebrew word *ruach* and the Greek word *pneuma* and refers to man's breath of life.
5. According to Ecclesiastes 3:19, the breath of animals (is, is not) the same as man's breath of life.
6. Man's breath of life (is, is not) a being or an entity in itself which could have consciousness apart from man's body.
7. "His \_\_\_\_\_ goeth forth, he returneth to his earth, in that very day his thoughts perish" (Psalm 146:4).
8. The soul refers to man himself and to his mortal life. (True, False)
9. Animals (are, are not) called souls in the Bible.
10. What does the word "immortal" mean? \_\_\_\_\_
11. Is man mortal or immortal? \_\_\_\_\_
12. Man (does, does not) have an immortal, immaterial entity within himself



which can have consciousness during death.

13. According to the Bible, can souls die? (Yes, No)

14. When did Jesus become immortal? \_\_\_\_\_

15. How are man's thinking and feeling dependent upon his brain and nervous system? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

16. Can man think or feel while he is dead? (Yes, No)

Please fill in your name and address here:

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Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

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# IMMORTALITY

Job, the ancient religious philosopher, asked, "If a man die, shall he live again?" (Job 14:14). To this question three answers have been given. Two answers are false; one answer is true.

*Atheism's* answer is that man will never live again. When man dies, according to this theory, his existence is ended for all eternity. Atheism denies the reality of God, the supernatural life of Jesus, and man's hope for eternal life. It asserts that there is no future life for any man.

*Paganism's* answer is that there is an immortal future life for all men. It declares that men naturally are immortal and cannot be destroyed. All men, according to its teachings, must continue to live in some form and in some place throughout eternity. It asserts that there is an eternal future life for all men.

*The Bible* alone gives the correct answer. The answers of atheism and paganism are incorrect. The Bible's answer to Job's question is that all men will live again, but only those who meet God's requirements will be given immortality and eternal life. Men who fail to meet God's requirements will be raised to judgment in the final resurrection and then will be destroyed. The Bible teaches that men naturally are mortal. It asserts that future eternal life for man is conditional.

Atheism believes in no gods. Paganism believes in many gods. The Bible teaches the existence of one God. Atheism is the denial of the true. Paganism is the *perversion* of the true. The Bible is the *revelation* of the true. Atheism believes in no immortality. Paganism believes in natural immortality. The Bible teaches conditional immortality.

## **I. Atheism—No Immortality**

Atheism explains all existence in terms of matter. Whatever cannot be perceived by man's physical senses is declared not to exist. God's existence, the Bible's inspiration, and man's future life are denied. According to atheists, man's candle of life is extinguished at death and will never be lighted again. Man's obituary, they say, forms the permanent concluding chapter of his biography. They explain that man came out of darkness, lives a few years in the sunlight, and then enters eternal darkness again.

Atheism is doomed to ultimate failure. Men normally believe in God's existence. Atheism is abnormal. Atheism fights a losing battle; it travels the

wrong way on a one-way street. When men regain normalcy, they return to belief in the existence of God.

## **II. Paganism—Natural Immortality**

Legends and myths of the pagan world are filled with accounts of what is imagined to happen to man after death. Paganism has perverted the worship of God into idolatry and the truth of God into mythology. The truth that God created man with a desire for immortality has been perverted by paganism. God promised immortality to man if he met God's requirements. Having turned his back to the light, fallen man plunged into darkness. Dwelling in paganism, man continued to have a desire for immortality, but he forgot that God's promise of immortality is conditional. Pagan religion, accordingly, began to teach that all men naturally have immortality. It insisted that death is not death at all but only the continuation of life in a new form and in a new place.

Belief in natural immortality can be found in many pagan religions. It was formulated into a philosophy by the pagan Greek Plato. Through the influence of his followers, Plato's doctrine of natural immortality entered the theology of some sections of Christendom during the early centuries of the church age.

## **III. The Bible—Conditional Immortality**

The Bible answers the false teaching of atheism by promising immortality and future life to men properly related to Christ. These blessings are included in God's gift of salvation. They will be bestowed upon those in Christ when He returns.

The Bible answers the perverted theology of paganism by teaching that man is mortal and at death ceases to live. Future life is dependent upon resurrection. Christians will be resurrected to immortality and glory in the first resurrection. Sinners will be resurrected to mortality and judgment in the final resurrection. The Bible is the only authoritative source of information concerning man's future.

The history of conditional immortality begins with the Bible. The men who wrote books of the Bible taught consistently that man does not now have immortality. They revealed that man is totally mortal, that he is a dying creature. Immortality and eternal life are pictured in the Bible as gifts of God, which can be acquired only through Christ. Apart from Christ, there is no hope of eternal life. Sin will result in death; the wicked will experience final destruction. Conditional immortality was the belief of the New Testament Church. It was the original, official, orthodox teaching of the Christian religion. Any contrary belief has resulted as a departure from this truth.

## **IV. The Brevity of Man's Life**

In the Bible, God is compared to mountains which endure from generation to generation, and eternal life is compared to a river which flows on and on, century after century. Man, however, is never compared to anything durable. His life is brief, transient, momentary. He is subject to change, suffering, and death. If the mighty Pacific Ocean represented eternity, man's present life



would be merely as a grain of sand on a seashore.

Teach me the measure of my days,  
Thou Maker of my frame:  
I would survey life's narrow space,  
And learn how frail I am.

A span is all that we can boast,  
An inch or two of time;  
Man is but vanity and dust,  
In all his flower and prime.  
—Isaac Watts.

## **V. The Mortality of Man**

Man is mortal; he is subject to death. All men are mortal, and all of man is mortal. Mortality is not only universal among men, but also total within man. No part of man is immortal. Not one verse in the entire Bible teaches that man or any part of man is immortal.

The Bible constantly reveals that man is mortal, not immortal. Job asked, "Shall mortal man be more just than God?" (Job 4:17). David wrote, "What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death?" (Psa. 89:48). "It is appointed unto men once to die" (Heb. 9:27).

1. *God Is Immortal.* God alone is the original source of immortality. All creatures are subject to corruption, change, and decay. Men today are mortal. Believers will not receive immortality until the resurrection at Christ's return.

The word "immortal" occurs only one time in the entire Bible. The word in that verse refers to God. "Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen" (I Tim. 1:17). Paul described the Creator as "the uncorruptible God" (Rom. 1:23). God is immortal; He can never die.

Reading 1 Timothy 6:16, one observes that God "only hath immortality." God is the only one who has always had immortality. Immortality originates with Him. It can be received only from Him through His Son.

2. *Jesus Mortal Until His Resurrection.* Jesus was born mortal in the physical likeness of man. If Jesus had been immortal, He could not have died. One who is immortal cannot die. In His glorious resurrection our Saviour rose from the dead to immortality.

3. *Christians Seek Future Immortality.* All men today are mortal. Immortality is one of the blessings promised through the gospel. Today, Christians "by patient continuance in well doing seek for...immortality" (Rom. 2:7). The fact that believers are seeking immortality is definite proof that they do not yet possess it. If men today already were immortal, there would be no need for them to seek for it.

The believer's physical change will occur when Christ returns. "This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality" (1 Cor. 15:53). When man has experienced a change from mortality to immortality, he will have a suitable physical nature for God's perfect eternity.

## **VI. Promise of Immortality Conditional**

Immortality is not a natural possession of man. Through His grace and mercy God has promised immortality to believers as the crowning part of salvation. In order to receive immortality, man must meet God's conditions of salvation.

Immortality and eternal life can be received only by believers who are properly related to God's Son. Christ was raised from death to immortality by the power of God and became the medium through whom God will bestow immortality upon believers. Jesus became the authorized agent to give immortality and eternal life to men who meet God's requirements.

"God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" (1 John 5:11, 12). The gift of God is eternal life *through* Jesus Christ our Lord. (Rom. 6:23.) They who reject God's Son reject the only door to eternal salvation.

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Church of God General Conference  
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McDonough, GA 30253  
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## Test Questions

## IMMORTALITY

Please fill in the answers on this question sheet and return to:

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Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

or to:

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McDonough, GA 30253  
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1. (The Bible, Atheism, Paganism) teaches *no* immortality.
2. (The Bible, Atheism, Paganism) teaches *natural* immortality.
3. (The Bible, Atheism, Paganism) teaches *conditional* immortality.
4. In contrast to God, man is (mortal, immortal); his life is (eternal, brief).
5. The length of man's life is compared in the Bible to (dust, mountains) and (rivers, water vapour).
6. Mortality means that one (can, cannot) die.
7. All men are (mortal, immortal), and all of man is (mortal, immortal).
8. Is any part of man immortal today? (Yes, No)
9. How many times does the word "immortal" occur in the Bible? \_\_\_\_\_
10. "Now unto the King eternal, \_\_\_\_\_, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen" (1 Tim. 1:17).
11. Jesus was born (mortal, immortal).
12. Could Jesus have died if He had been immortal? (Yes, No)
13. Jesus became immortal at His (baptism, death, resurrection, ascension).
14. How does the fact that believers today seek for immortality prove that they are not already immortal? \_\_\_\_\_



15. When will Christians become immortal? \_\_\_\_\_

16. What is meant by the fact that immortality is conditional? \_\_\_\_\_

Please fill in your name and address here:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

# DEATH

Death is the termination of life. It is the end of conscious existence. Death and life are opposites. To die is to cease to live. "Thou shalt die, and not live" (Isa. 38:1). In death man's mind and body cease to function.

## I. What Happens at Death

What happens to man at death is the opposite of what happened when God made man. In creation the breath of life was united with the dust-made body and life resulted. In death the breath of life is withdrawn; the person dies and returns to the dust. "Thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust" (Psa. 104:29).

Dust plus breath equals a living person. This was the process of creation. Dust minus breath equals a dead person. This is the process of death.

Psalm 104:29      Takest away breath, return dust

Psalm 146:4      Breath goeth forth, return earth

Ecclesiastes 12:7      Dust return to earth, spirit

James 2:26      Body without spirit is dead

In the verses here listed the word "spirit" refers to man's breath of life that returns to God who gave it. The breath of life is impersonal. It is that vital power that enables man to live.

## II. Nature of Man in Death

Man is without conscious existence in death. He has no life. His brain and nervous system cease to function. Without a brain, man cannot think; without a nervous system, he cannot feel pain or pleasure. Intellect, sensibilities, and will can be exercised only when man's brain can function. The dead, therefore, are unconscious. Study the following verses.

Job 3:13-19      There the weary be at rest

Job 14:7-15      Dead not like sprouting tree

Psalm 6:5      In death there is no remembrance

Psalm 88:11, 12      Grave, destruction, forgetfulness

Psalm 115:17      Dead praise not the Lord

Psalm 146:4      His thoughts perish

Ecclesiastes 9:5, 6      The dead know not anything

Ecclesiastes 9:10      No knowledge in the grave

Isaiah 38:18      The grave cannot praise thee

### **III. Death Compared to Unconscious Sleep**

Death is like unconscious sleep. There is no knowledge of the passing of time. Death will not seem to last a moment longer to a person who has been dead one thousand years than it will to one who has been dead one second. After a person has fallen asleep in death, his next conscious experience will be his standing before Christ. If he is a believer, he will stand before Christ, the Bridegroom, on the cloud of glory at the first resurrection. If he is a sinner, he will stand before Christ, his Judge, at the last resurrection. Much time may pass between a person's death and his resurrection, but he will have no knowledge of it. Believers, therefore, need not fear to fall asleep in death; they have hope of resurrection to immortality.

### **IV. Dead Remain in Grave Until Resurrection**

Where do men go at death? What happens to men after they die? Do they go to a "happy hunting ground"? Do they fly away to dwell in some celestial mansion? Do they ride a ferryboat across the River Styx? Do they return to this world and become reincarnated in some animal or another person? Does some portion of man linger on earth to haunt the living or to converse with friends? Do dead men go to a burning hell, where they are kept alive and tortured in inconceivable agony for all eternity?

According to the Bible, the dead do not "go" anywhere except to the grave in which they are buried. Dead men remain unconscious until the resurrection. At death men go neither to heaven nor to a burning hell. They go to the grave. In John 3:13 we read, "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven." No man except Jesus has gone to heaven. Paul, Peter, and Mary are not in heaven; they are dead and buried in their graves. They will be resurrected when Jesus comes.

When our Lord raised Lazarus from the grave, Lazarus was dead and buried in the tomb. "He that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go" (John 11:44). Where was Lazarus while he was dead? Was he in a burning hell, in heaven, or in the tomb? When Jesus cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth," He was not calling Lazarus to leave the celestial bliss of heaven and come down to the earth. He was not calling for the soul of Lazarus to come up from a burning torture hell and to get back into his decayed body. Our Saviour was calling for Lazarus to come forth from the tomb, where he was buried.

How about David? Did David go to heaven? Paul said, "David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption" (Acts 13:36). In his Pentecost sermon Peter said, "Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day" (Acts 2:29). "For David is not ascended into the heavens" (Acts 2:34). According to these clear statements, it is certain that David did not go to heaven when he died. Those theologians who claim that Jesus took the dead Old Testament saints with Him when He ascended to heaven should observe



that the above statements were made by Peter and Paul *after* Jesus had ascended to God's right hand. Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, Daniel, and all other ancient heroes of faith are dead and are waiting in their graves until the resurrection.

All dead men remain in their graves until the resurrection. Believers will be raised in the first resurrection at Christ's return. They will be immortal and glorified. Sinners will stay buried in their graves until after Christ and the Christians raised in the first resurrection have reigned one thousand years upon the earth. Sinners will be raised mortal in the last resurrection. At that time they will be judged. If their names are not recorded in the book of life, they will be destroyed in the second death.

## **V. Death Not Time of Reward**

Men are not rewarded at the time of their death. Judgment is not at the time of death but *after* death (Heb. 9:27) has ended, at resurrection. To receive a reward, one must have knowledge. The dead, however, are unconscious. They abide in the unconscious sleep of death until resurrection. While a man is dead, he cannot experience joy or sorrow, pleasure or pain, reward or judgment. Man must be resurrected so that he may receive his reward or punishment.

Christians are not rewarded as soon as they die. They will be rewarded at the resurrection when Jesus comes. Resurrection, not death, is the believer's hope. Jesus said, "Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is *with me*, to give every man according as his work shall be" (Rev. 22:12).

The wicked are not punished at the time of the first death. They will be judged after they are raised in the last resurrection and stand before the Judge.

All men alike lie down in death to sleep together in the dust. In the two resurrections, however, each man will be raised to his own eternal destiny. Death is not the time of judgment. Resurrection is the time of reward and punishment.

## **VI. Two Deaths**

Two deaths are mentioned in the Bible. The first death is for all men; the second death is for only the wicked. The first death is temporary; the second death will be eternal. The first death will end in resurrection; the second death will never end.

1. *The First Death.* The first death comes to all men alike. It makes no distinctions. All men, the righteous and the wicked, poor and rich, small and great, must surrender to the power of the first death. "There is no discharge in that war" (Eccl. 8:8). "It is appointed unto men once to die" (Heb. 9:27). "The small and great are there" (Job 3:13-19).

Men die the first death because they are mortal. All men die the first death because of the results of Adam's sin. Even believers who have had all their sins washed away in the blood of Christ must die the first death. Men die the first death, therefore, not in payment for their personal sins. If the first death were

the payment of the penalty for man's personal sins, Christians should not die the first death, since their sins have been forgiven and they stand before God without condemnation. This truth shows the need for the second death, in which the wicked will pay the penalty for their personal sins.

2. *The Second Death.* The wicked will be destroyed in the second death. In the last resurrection, they will be raised for judgment. (Rev. 20:11-13.) "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Rev. 20:15). "And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death" (Rev. 20:14). "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death" (Rev. 21:8). The lake of fire mentioned in these verses does not refer to any burning hell that exists today. It refers to the final destruction of the wicked after they have been raised to judgment.

Jesus died as the believer's Substitute so that the believer will not need to die the permanent eternal second death. The second death will have no power over believers, who will be made immortal. "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power" (Rev. 20:6).

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## Test Questions

## DEATH

Please fill in the answers on this question sheet and return to:

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ First Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

or to:

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1. Death is the termination of life. Death and \_\_\_\_\_ are opposites. To die is to cease to live.
2. Dust of the ground (plus, minus) the breath of life equals a living person. This was the process of creation.
3. Dust of the ground (plus, minus) the breath of life equals a dead person. This is the process of death.
4. "Thou takest away their \_\_\_\_\_, they die, and return to their dust" (Psalm 104:29).
5. What is man's nature in death? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. "His \_\_\_\_\_ goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his \_\_\_\_\_ perish" (Psalm 146:4).
7. According to Ecclesiastes 9:10, does man have any knowledge while in the grave? (Yes, No)
8. "The living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing" is recorded in (Proverbs 9:5; Ecclesiastes 9:5; Job 9:5).
9. In the Bible, death is compared to unconscious, dreamless \_\_\_\_\_. There is no knowledge of the passing of time.
10. Death will not seem to last a moment longer to a person who has been dead one thousand years than it will to one who has been dead one second. (True, False)



11. Where do men go at death? \_\_\_\_\_

12. According to Acts 2:29, 34, did David go to heaven when he died?  
(Yes, No)

13. Where is David today? \_\_\_\_\_

14. (Death, Resurrection) is the time of man's reward.

15. What is the difference between the first death and the second death? \_\_\_\_\_

Please fill in your name and address here:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

# HELL

The Bible doctrine of hell is a subject which is much misunderstood. A prevalent false theory is that hell is a place burning with fire and brimstone, where sinners are tortured after they die. According to this view, when the sinner dies, his invisible, immaterial, immortal "soul" goes to this place of unending agony. The sinner, men who teach this theory assert, experiences indescribable pain and misery in hell fire torture during all eternity. This theory is untrue; it is unscriptural.

The doctrine of the endless torture of sinners is based upon the false teaching of the immortality of the soul. Man does not have a conscious, immaterial nature which continues to live after death. Man is unconscious in death. A person must be alive to experience torture and pain. If such a burning hell existed and a dead person were placed in it, he would not know anything about it, because "the dead know not any thing." A living man can experience pain through the function of his nervous system and brain, parts of his body which are buried in the grave after death. The sinner cannot feel any torture if his brain and nervous system do not function.

The Bible mentions "everlasting punishment" (Matt. 25:46), but not "everlasting punishing." The wicked will be destroyed for all eternity in the second death. They will be "punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord" (2 Thess. 1:9).

## I. The Bible Hell Is the Grave

Scripturally speaking, hell is the grave. Hell is an English word derived from the Anglo-Saxon word *helan*, which means "to cover" or "to hide out of sight."

The Old Testament was originally written in the Hebrew language; the New Testament was originally written in the Greek language. In order for the Bible to be read in English, therefore, it was necessary for Bible scholars to translate the Bible from the Hebrew and Greek languages into English.

The English word *hell* was used by these translators to translate Hebrew and Greek words that were originally used by Bible writers to refer to the grave. The men who originally wrote the Bible, of course, never heard of the word *hell*, since this is an English word and the English language was not spoken in Bible times. In order to understand the nature of the Bible hell, we must determine the meaning of the words used by Bible writers.

The Hebrew word for grave is *sheol*. The Greek word for grave is *hades*. Old

Testament writers, like Moses, Job, David, Solomon, and Isaiah, recorded the fact that dead men are buried in *sheol*. New Testament writers, like Matthew, Luke, Paul, and John, taught that the dead are buried in *hades*.

The Hebrew *sheol* and the Greek *hades* have the same meaning. Both words refer to the grave. One can observe this truth by comparing Acts 2:27-31 and Psalm 16:10. Acts 2:27 is a direct quotation of Psalm 16:10. In Psalm 16:10, the word "hell" is translated from the Hebrew *sheol*. When this verse is quoted in Acts 2:27, the word is translated from the Greek *hades*. This fact is proof that the two words have the same meaning.

In the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, the words *sheol* and *hades* are not translated; they are carried over into the English Bible. This practice avoids confusion which has resulted from the modern unscriptural meaning which has been associated with the word "hell."

## II. The Hebrew Word "Sheol"

The word *sheol* occurs in the Hebrew scriptures 65 times. In the Authorized Version of the Bible, this one word was translated by three different English words. It was translated "grave" 31 times, "hell" 31 times, and "pit" 3 times.

The verses containing this Hebrew word translated "grave" follow: Gen. 37:35; 42:38; 44:29, 31; 1 Sam. 2:6; 1 Kings 2:6, 9; Job 7:9; 14:13; 17:13; 21:13; 24:19; Psalm 6:5; 30:3; 31:17; 49:14 (twice), 15; 88:3; 89:48; 141:7; Prov. 1:12; 30:16; Eccl. 9:10; Song of Sol. 8:6; Isa. 14:11; 38:10, 18; Ezek. 31:15; Hosea 13:14 (twice).

The verses in which *sheol* has been translated "hell" are: Deut. 32:22; 2 Samuel 22:6; Job 11:8; 26:6; Psalm 9:17; 16:10; 18:5; 55:15; 86:13; 116:3; 139:8; Proverbs 5:5; 7:27; 9:18; 15:11, 24; 23:14; 27:20; Isaiah 5:14; 14:9, 15; 28:15, 18; 57:9; Ezekiel 31:16, 17; 32:21, 27; Amos 9:2; Jonah 2:2; Hab. 2:5.

The three verses in which this word has been translated "pit" are: Num. 16:30, 33; Job 17:16.

By reading these 65 verses, one can readily see that the evident meaning of *sheol* is the grave.

## III. The Greek Word "Hades"

In the Greek scriptures the word *hades* occurred 11 times. In the Authorized Version of the English Bible this one word was translated by two English words. It was translated "hell" 10 times and "grave" one time. In all eleven verses *hades* should have been translated "the grave." The eleven occurrences of *hades* in the New Testament are listed here.

|               |                                 |
|---------------|---------------------------------|
| Matthew 11:23 | Capernaum brought down to hell  |
| Matthew 16:18 | Gates of hell shall not prevail |
| Luke 10:15    | Capernaum thrust down to hell   |
| Luke 16:23    | In hell he lifted up his eyes   |
| Acts 2:27     | Not leave my soul in hell       |



Acts 2:31 His soul was not left in hell  
 1 Corinthians 15:55 O grave, where is thy victory  
 Revelation 1:18 Have the keys of hell and death  
 Revelation 6:8 Hell followed with him  
 Revelation 20:13 Hell delivered up the dead  
 Revelation 20:14 Death and hell cast into lake

The Greek word tartaruts occurs only once in the Bible. (2 Pet. 2:4.) It also is translated "hell."

#### IV. Some Facts About Hell

1. *Who Goes to Hell.* Everyone who is dead is in the Bible hell, the grave. He will remain in hell, the grave, until resurrection. The Bible declares that both the righteous and the wicked are in *sheol* or *hades*.

Jacob went to hell. He said, "I will go down into the grave (*sheol*) unto my son mourning" (Gen. 37:35). Job went to hell. He said, "O that thou wouldest hide me in the grave (*sheol*), that thou wouldest keep me secret, until thy wrath be past" (Job 14:13). He also said, "If I wait, the grave is mine house: I have made my bed in the darkness" (Job 17:13). Hezekiah, a godly man, said, "I shall go to the gates of the grave (*sheol*): I am deprived of the residue of my years" (Isa. 38:10).

Even our Saviour, according to the Bible, went to hell. "Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption" (Acts 2:27, 31).

Jacob, Job, Hezekiah, and Jesus did not go to a burning hell. They died and were buried. They were in the grave, the Bible hell.

2. *What Hell Is Like.* The fact that the Bible hell is the state of death, or the grave, is evident from descriptions of *sheol* or *hades*. After reading the 65 occurrences of *sheol* in the Old Testament and *hades* in the New Testament, we observe that hell is down in direction. (Gen. 37:35; Num. 16:33; Isa. 14:15.) It is in the ground (Num. 16:30, 33), and beneath us (Isa. 14:9). Men are described as being able to dig into hell (Amos 9:2).

The bodies of men and animals are in *sheol*. Certain kings are described as taking their weapons of war with them to hell. (Ezek. 32:27.) All men go to the Bible hell at death. Men in *sheol* or *hades* are unconscious. Job prayed for God to hide him in hell, the grave. (Job 14:13.) Man cannot experience suffering while he is dead. "There the wicked cease from troubling; and there the weary be at rest" (Job 3:17).

The Bible hell, therefore, is not a place of agony and torture. The righteous as well as the wicked dead are in hell. They are unconscious. They are in their graves waiting for resurrection.

3. *Duration of Hell.* The grave, the Bible hell, is the temporary resting place of

the dead until resurrection. The Bible hell is not eternal. Christians will be raised from the grave at the first resurrection. Sinners will be raised from the grave at the last resurrection. At the last or general resurrection, hell (the grave) will be completely emptied.

"And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works" (Rev. 20:13). Notice that the wicked dead will be judged *after* they are resurrected out of hell. Does this mean that God tortures sinners in a burning hell for thousands of years and then finally resurrects them so that He can judge them? Hell is simply the grave, or the state of death. Sinners do not receive their eternal punishment at the time of death. They die and are unconscious in the Bible hell until this last resurrection. In this last or general resurrection, sinners return to life in their mortal, physical bodies. After their judgment they will be punished by being destroyed. The wicked will not return to hell or the grave after the final judgment. They will receive their eternal punishment by being destroyed in the lake of fire, the second death. "And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Rev. 20:14, 15).

## **V. Gehenna Fire**

Outside the walls of Jerusalem in the day of the apostles was a burning rubbish heap named "the valley of Hinnom," or "Gehenna." Gehenna was the city garbage incinerator for ancient Jerusalem. Rubish, refuse, and dead animals were thrown into this valley to be consumed in the fire. The fire continued burning as long as there was material for it to consume. The rubbish itself was consumed, but the fire continued to burn as it consumed additional rubbish. There is no fire in the valley of Gehenna today. It was extinguished centuries ago. The valley is no longer used as an incinerator.

During our Lord's earthly ministry, criminals who died after crucifixion were cast into this Gehenna fire to be destroyed. It was thought that crucified ones did not deserve a decent burial. Many Bible scholars feel that Jesus would have been cast into this burning rubbish pile to be consumed if Joseph of Arimathea had not gone to Pilate and begged permission to bury the dead Jesus in his own tomb.

Gehenna fire was regarded as symbolic of judgment and destruction. Jesus used Gehenna fire as an illustration of the final destruction of the wicked. Gehenna fire refers to the lake of fire, which is the second death.

"And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire.



This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Rev. 20:11-15).

The Greek word *Gehenna* occurs in twelve verses in the New Testament. It was used eleven times by our Lord and once by James. The English translators used the word "hell" to translate the word *Gehenna*. It is unfortunate that they did so. It has added much confusion to the subject. *Sheol* and *hades* translated "hell" refer to the grave. *Gehenna*, however, does not refer to the grave. It refers to the lake of fire, which will be the agent for the final destruction of the wicked.

|               |                                  |
|---------------|----------------------------------|
| Matthew 5:22  | Shall be in danger of hell fire  |
| Matthew 5:29  | Whole body be cast into hell     |
| Matthew 5:30  | Whole body be cast into hell     |
| Matthew 10:28 | Destroy soul and body in hell    |
| Matthew 18:9  | Two eyes cast into hell fire     |
| Matthew 23:15 | Twofold more the child of hell   |
| Matthew 23:33 | Escape the damnation of hell     |
| Mark 9:43     | Having two hands to go into hell |
| Mark 9:45     | Having two feet cast into hell   |
| Mark 9:47     | Two eyes cast into hell fire     |
| Luke 12:5     | Hath power to cast into hell     |
| James 3:6     | Tongue is set on fire of hell    |

In all these twelve verses the word "hell" is from the Greek word *Gehenna*. This word does not refer to a burning hell, to which sinners go today at the time of death. It does not refer to the grave. It refers to the future destruction of the wicked in the lake of fire.

Notice in these verses that man's "whole body," "eyes," "hands," and "feet" are mentioned as being cast into *Gehenna* fire. Men who believe in the immortality of the soul and the torture of the wicked in a burning hell today cannot use these verses to support their false theory. According to their theory, the sinner's body is buried in the grave, and only his disembodied soul goes to the burning hell.

*Gehenna* hell fire refers to the future lake of fire, in which sinners in their mortal bodies will be destroyed by being consumed.

## **VI. Destruction of the Wicked**

Contrary to the teaching of the endless torture of the wicked, the Bible clearly teaches that the wicked will be completely destroyed in the lake of fire. Sinners will not experience eternal torture; they will be punished by being destroyed. The Bible hell, *sheol* and *hades*, refers to the grave in which both sinners and believers are buried. The lake of fire does not refer to the Bible hell. The Bible hell will be emptied when sinners are restored to life in the final resurrection. If they are judged unworthy of life, sinners will not be returned to the Bible hell or the grave; they will be cast into the lake of fire to be destroyed. The fire of destruction is described as "everlasting" and "unquenchable" because it cannot be extinguished until its work of destruction is completed. Sinners will be



consumed in the fire, but the fire itself will continue to burn until it has consumed all of the sinners. No one will be able to put out the fire in order to escape its destruction.

|                  |                                  |
|------------------|----------------------------------|
| Psalm 37:20      | Into smoke shall they consume    |
| Malachi 4:3      | Wicked shall be ashes under feet |
| Psalm 37:38      | Transgressors shall be destroyed |
| Psalm 73:18      | Casteth them into destruction    |
| Psalm 92:7       | Shall be destroyed forever       |
| Psalm 145:20     | The wicked will he destroy       |
| Proverbs 10:29   | Destruction workers of iniquity  |
| Isaiah 1:28      | Destruction of the transgressors |
| Matthew 7:13     | Way leadeth to destruction       |
| Philippians 3:19 | Whose end is destruction         |
| 2 Peter 2:12     | Shall utterly perish             |
| Matthew 3:12     | Will burn up the chaff           |
| Malachi 4:1      | Shall burn them up               |
| Obadiah 16       | Be as though they had not been   |
| Psalm 37:10      | His place shall not be           |
| Proverbs 10:25   | So is the wicked no more         |

The Bible teaches that eternal life will be given only to the redeemed and that the wicked will not live forever. God's Word states repeatedly that the wicked will "perish" (Psa. 1:6; 9:3; 37:20; Prov. 19:9; Luke 13:3; John 3:15, 16; Rom. 2:12; 1 Cor. 1:18; 2 Thess. 2:10; 2 Pet. 2:12). They will be "consumed" (Psa. 37:20; 59:13; 104:35; Isa. 1:28). They will be "cut off" (Psa. 37:9, 22, 28, 34, 38; Prov. 2:22). They will be "burned up" (Mal. 4:1, 3; Matt. 3:12; 13:42). They will be "destroyed" (Psa. 37:38; 73:18; 92:7; 145:20; Prov. 10:29; 21:15; Isa. 1:28; Matt. 7:13; Rom. 9:22; 1 Cor. 6:13; Phil. 3:19; 2 Thess. 1:9). The wicked will "be as though they had not been" (Obadiah 16). "The wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be" (Psa. 37:10).

Dr. Richard Francis Weymouth (1822-1902), an English Baptist layman and New Testament translator, wrote:

My mind fails to conceive of a grosser misrepresentation of language than when five or six of the strongest words which the Greek tongue possesses signifying *destroy* or *destruction* are explained to mean "maintaining an everlasting but wretched existence." To translate black as white is nothing to this. (Cited by Pettingell, *The Unspeakable Gift*, p. 322.)

John Nelson Darby (1800-1882), one of the founders of the Plymouth Brethren Church in England, wrote in *Hopes of the Church*:

We would express our conviction that the idea of the immortality of the soul has no source in the Gospel; that it comes, on the contrary, from the Platonists and that it was just when the Coming of Christ was denied in the Church or at least began to be lost sight of, that the doctrine of the

immortality of the soul came in to replace that of the resurrection.

Clement Moore Butler (1810-1890), an American Episcopalian, was rector in various churches, chaplain of the U. S. Senate (1849-1853), chaplain of the U. S. embassy at Rome (1861-64), and professor of church history in the Protestant Episcopal Divinity School, Philadelphia (1864-84). He wrote:

Since I have reached and rested in the conclusion that the ultimate doom of the impenitent is death, and not eternal life in agony, a great black cloud seems to have rolled away from the face of God, and I see Him, not only as my loving Father, but as the Father of all His creatures. (Cited by Pettingell, *Op. cit.*, p. 328.)

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## Test Questions

## HELL

Please fill in the answers on this question sheet and return to:

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1. According to the Bible, hell is (paradise, the grave, a place of torture).
2. The word "hell" is an (English, Egyptian) word derived from the Anglo-Saxon word *helan* which means to cover or hide out of sight.
3. The Hebrew word for hell is (hades, sheol).
4. The Greek word for hell is (hades, sheol).
5. The Old Testament was originally written in the (Greek, Hebrew) language.
6. The New Testament was originally written in the (Greek, Hebrew) language.
7. Did Jesus go to the Bible hell? (Yes, No)
8. Is sheol (or hades) a place of torture? (Yes, No)
9. Name some righteous persons mentioned in the Bible as going to the Bible hell, the grave. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. When will Christians come forth from the Bible hell, which is the grave? \_\_\_\_\_
11. When will sinners come forth from the Bible hell? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
12. Gehenna was a valley outside the walls of Jerusalem which was used for what purpose in the apostles' day? \_\_\_\_\_

- 
13. Gehenna fire was symbolic of (torture, destruction).
14. Gehenna does not refer to the grave nor to a burning hell today; it refers to the future destruction of the wicked in the lake of (fire, water).
15. Name some parts of the body which our Lord described as being cast into Gehenna fire. \_\_\_\_\_
- 
16. The destruction of sinners will occur in the (first, second) death.
17. The punishment of sinners will be (endless torture, destruction) in the lake of fire, which is the second death.

Please fill in your name and address here:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

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# SIN

## I. The Reality of Sin

Sin is a tragic reality. It is not an illusion; it has actual existence. This fact is recognized by the Bible, conscience, religions of mankind, histories of nations, governments, and literature.

The Bible is a book written largely about sinners. It relates the story of the first man's sin, the terrible consequences of sin in human history, and the final triumph over sin and its removal from the universe. The Bible describes the individual man and the total human race as being in sin and under condemnation.

Photographers sometimes touch up photographs to remove scars, wrinkles, and warts, but the Bible pictures man just as he is. It does not attempt to hide the faults of its heroes. It records Noah's drunkenness, Abraham's lie, David's murder and adultery, and Peter's denial. It shows men just as they are.

The Bible is a book written for sinners. The gospel message of repentance and salvation is addressed to sinners. It points men to the Lamb of God, who gave Himself to save the lost. The Bible everywhere pictures sin as something real and tragic.

The fact that sin is a reality is acknowledged by the testimony of conscience and the general judgment of mankind. Most people realize that they are not what they should be. In moments of complete honesty they know themselves to be sinners. Man judges himself and finds guilt and condemnation.

The religions of mankind presuppose the existence of sin. This truth can be seen from the fact that blood sacrifices, priesthoods, and penances have always been important factors in the great religions of the world. The recognition of sin can account for the great sense of sadness that characterizes heathen religions. The heathen know sin but not its remedy.

Is sin something real? Ask historians. The history of nations is largely a record of human sinfulness and sin's dreadful consequences. The fact that war has existed at all indicates that someone has sinned. If one removed from historical records every incident that was related in some way to human sin, little history would remain.

Human governments know that sin exists. They recognize the sinfulness of man's nature. Accordingly, they enact laws and impose penalties in efforts to



curb sin's influence in social relationships. If there were no sin, there would be no need for laws, locks, policemen, or prisons; there would be no need for self-protection against crime.

Literature depicts sin as a reality. The general sinfulness of humanity is portrayed in fiction and non-fiction, poetry and prose. Some human sin is associated with the plot of almost every drama or story. It may be greed or jealousy. It may be murder or lust. It may be selfishness or revenge. The fact of sin is recognized by every type of literature, whether it be Greek mythology, Shakespeare, or modern fiction.

The reality of sin, moreover, is an observed fact of daily life. One can look almost anywhere at any time and see some evidence or result of sin. Sin is a tragic reality.

## **II. The Universality of Sin**

Sin is universal. All men are sinners; all of man is sinful. Sin is universal among men; it is total within man. If one drew a circle to indicate the righteous, it would be empty. All would be excluded. If one drew a circle to indicate sinners, it would be filled. All would be included.

The universality of sin is clearly taught by direct statements in the Bible. All men by natural birth are sinners. It is apparent, of course, that Jesus is an exception. "We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away" (Isa. 64:6). "The whole world lieth in wickedness" (1 John 5:19).

The fact that sin is universal is implied in the Bible teaching that all men outside of Christ are under condemnation and wrath. "He that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John 3:36). "By nature the children of wrath, even as others" (Eph. 2:3). "Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things" (Rom. 2:1). All men are under condemnation before God because all men are sinners.

The need for repentance is universal because sin is universal among men. "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent" (Acts 17:30). The fact that God commands all men to repent reveals that all men are sinners.

The truth that Christ died for all men shows that all men are sinners and need the atonement He provided. Jesus is "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). "He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for our's only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (1 John 2:2). "Who gave himself a ransom for all" (1 Tim. 2:6). The fact that the gospel was to be preached "to every creature" (Mark 16:15) shows that all men are sinners and need to hear the gospel.

### III. The Guilt of Sin

Sin involves guilt. As sinners all men are guilty before God. Sin is a factor in their lives for which they are responsible and chargeable. They deserve condemnation and punishment. They are "worthy of death" (Rom. 1:32).

Guilt, therefore, designates the transgressor's relation to God's moral government. It refers to the sinner's position and condition in view of the fact that he has violated God's moral standards. Moral laws are expressions of God's own moral attributes: holiness, love, and truth. Sin contradicts the very nature of God. The divine attitude toward sin must be condemnation and wrath. God's holy government of the universe, therefore, requires that the penalty of sin be death.

To say that a sinner is guilty before God is to say that he is subject to God's disapproval and condemnation. He is exposed to the wrath of God that is revealed from heaven through the gospel against all ungodliness and unrighteousness. (Rom. 1:18.) He deserves punishment; he is obligated to satisfy God's justice.

The sinner's guilt can be removed only through the payment of sin's penalty which is death. Sin's penalty can be paid *personally* by the sinner's being destroyed in the second death, or it can be paid *vicariously* through Christ's sacrifice.

The first death does not remove the sinner's guilt. The complete payment for sin's wages will be effected by the sinner when he is destroyed in the second death. Raised to life in the final resurrection, sinners will still be under God's condemnation and wrath. The fact of their guilt will not have changed. They still will be chargeable for the sins they committed in this life. They will be judged according to the sinful works they have committed today. In the second death sin's penalty will be paid, but the sinner will have been destroyed.

### IV. Forgiveness of Sin

Through His plan of salvation, God provided a means whereby sin's penalty could be paid and the forgiven sinner could live for eternity. Jesus, the sinless Son of God, voluntarily became the sinner's Substitute. Being without sin, Jesus was without personal guilt. The fact that He is the perfect Son of God gave infinite value to His sacrifice. His death, therefore, could be a substitution for not merely one sinner, but for an infinite number of sinners. In other words, the Lamb of God *potentially* bore the guilt and paid sin's penalty for the entire human race. The benefits of His sacrifice *actually*, however, become effective in the sinner's life only when he becomes properly related to Christ through conversion. Christ's sacrifice provided the basis whereby God could remove our guilt and declare us righteous. When we become united to Christ, God actually removes our guilt and imputes Christ's righteousness to us. "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor. 5:21).

God's forgiveness of sinners is based upon Christ's sacrificial death. Sin's penalty must be paid before sin can be forgiven. "Without shedding of blood is

no remission" (Heb. 9:22). Forgiveness is found through the sacrifice of Christ, the sinner's Substitute, whose blood was shed for the remission of sins. Paul explained, "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Eph. 1:7). God can retain His holiness while forgiving sinners because the penalty of sin was paid through Christ's vicarious sacrifice. (Rom. 3:24-26.) God was under no obligation to provide a sacrifice, for sinners; forgiveness of sins, therefore, results from God's love, mercy, and grace.

Forgiveness of sins is related to Christian baptism. The sinner's conversion is the condition upon which forgiveness of sins is bestowed. Conversion, which includes repentance, faith, and baptism, is the means whereby the sinner enters into a redemptive relationship with God through Christ. Through repentance, faith, and baptism, remission of sins becomes effective in the sinner's life. "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38). "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16).

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## Test Questions

## SIN

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1. Sin is a tragic reality. It (is, is not) an illusion.

2. How does the Bible recognize the reality of sin? \_\_\_\_\_

3. How is the reality of sin shown by the testimony of man's conscience? \_\_\_\_\_

4. In what ways do heathen religions show the existence of sin? \_\_\_\_\_

5. How is the reality of sin recognized by human governments? \_\_\_\_\_

6. What is meant by the universality of sin? \_\_\_\_\_

7. How does man's need for repentance show that sin is universal? \_\_\_\_\_

8. How does Christ's sacrifice on the cross show that sin is universal? \_\_\_\_\_

9. How does the great Commission (Mark 16:15) show that all men are sinners? \_\_\_\_\_

10. Guilt means that the person who committed sin deserves (punishment, praise).

11. To say that a sinner is guilty before God is to say that he is subject to God's (approval, disapproval) and condemnation.

12. The sinner's guilt can be removed only through the payment of sin's penalty which is \_\_\_\_\_.

13. The sinner will pay the complete wages of sin by being destroyed in the (first, second) death.

14. In what way was Jesus the sinner's Substitute? \_\_\_\_\_

15. How is Christian baptism related to forgiveness of sins? \_\_\_\_\_

Please fill in your name and address here:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

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# RESULTS OF SIN

## **I. Sinner's Relation to God**

Sin has its most significant result in its effect upon the sinner's relation to God. Sin is primarily against God. The lost son confessed, "I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight." Although David had committed adultery and murder, he acknowledged, "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight" (Psa. 51:4).

Sin separates man from God. God in His holiness cannot approve sin. Because of its anti-God nature, sin naturally separates the sinner from God. Sin is a barrier, a blockade, a black iron curtain thrown across the path of fellowship between man and God. In consequence of their sin Adam and Eve were separated from the Tree of Life, their Edenic home, and God's blessed fellowship. They had no vital contact with God. They were "dead in sin."

Sin results in guilt. The sinner is responsible and chargeable before God. Sin calls forth God's disapproval and condemnation. The sinner deserves punishment and must satisfy the requirements of God's justice by paying the penalty of sin. Sin results in the sinner's becoming a debtor, a criminal, an enemy, a slave, defiled and unholy, dead, and a poor stranger. Sin disrupts the relationship between God and man.

## **II. The Wages of Sin**

The final result of sin is death and destruction. "The wages of sin, is death" (Rom. 6:23). Adam was warned, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Gen. 2:17). Adam the sinner was told, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return" (Gen. 3:19). Sinners deserve death. Paul said, "They which commit such things are worthy of death" (Rom. 1:32). Because all men sinned, death passed upon all men. (Rom. 5:12.)

The results of sin must be death, the opposite of life, because sin is anti-God and God is life. Sinners will pay the penalty of sin by being destroyed in the second death. Sinners will be raised for judgment in the final resurrection. (Rev. 20:12-15.) He who has lived in sin during this life (Rev. 21:8) and he whose name is not written in the book of life (Rev. 20:15) will be cast into the lake of fire to be destroyed. In His sacrifice Jesus took the believer's place. He paid the wages of sin in their behalf. Instead of eternal death, therefore, Christians look forward to eternal life. They will be raised in the first resurrection. The second death will have no power upon them because they



will have been made immortal. (Rev. 20:6.)

### III. Sin's Results Within the Sinner

Sin has tragic results within the sinner himself. Severed from God, the sinner exists in an abnormal state. He is incomplete. Life is filled with emptiness. Without God, he is like a circle without a center, a solar system without a sun. Under the despotic rule of self, the sinner's normal, God-given instincts of self-preservation, self-expression, hunger, love, and self-improvement are twisted and perverted. To sin may be natural for the sinner, but sin itself is abnormal. It is contrary to the way that man was intended to be. Man is so made that he is incomplete apart from God. As the planets in the solar system revolve around the sun as their center, so man is made to be centered in God. As flowers reach maturity, beauty, and fulfillment of purpose through their response to the sunshine, so man finds heart satisfaction, life sufficiency, and completion of personality through his relationship with God.

The essence of sin is selfishness. Sin equals self *versus* God and self *apart from* God. Sin is the affirmation of self in antagonism to God's authority and contrary to His law. Man sins because he is self-centered instead of God-centered. Self within man usurps God's position of authority. Man's personality is ruled by self, the tyrant, instead of by God, the King.

In the center of the word *sin* is the word *I*. Remove the *I*—the egotism, pride, and selfishness -- from sin and no word is left. Count the personal pronouns (*I*, *my* *me*) in the parable of the rich fool (Luke 12:15-21) and the parable of the elder brother (Luke 15:25-32).

That which produces sin within man is the human selfexisting apart from God, independent of God's authority, and in antagonism to Him.

*Misery of Selfishness.* Man's unhappiness results from the fact that he is self-centered instead of God-centered. Man's inward life is filled with misery because the tyrant, self, is on the throne. Sin is abnormal. It is foreign to God's original plan for man. The tyranny of self results in chaos. A disrupted divine relationship produces perverted human relationships. Man cannot have a proper horizontal relationship with mankind unless he has a right vertical relationship with God. Man cannot live righteously until he is living godly. Sociology must result from theology. Man's right relationship with his neighbor should be the social expression of his redemptive relationship with God. One can love his neighbor as himself in the proper way only when he loves the Lord his God supremely.

The misery of selfishness can be removed only through the dethroning of self and the yielding of life to the rulership of God through His Son, Jesus Christ. This transformation cannot be produced through a mere human effort or a psychological adjustment. Salvation originates in God's grace; it is based upon Christ's sacrifice; it is effected through Christ's power. One must enter into Christ before Christ can enter into him. One must establish the proper redemptive relationship with Christ through conversion before Christ can enter into his life and become Lord and Ruler.

#### **IV. Sin's Relation to Environment**

Man is dependent upon his environment for continued life. Man's needs for oxygen, water, food, and protection are met through his relation with the physical planet. After Adam sinned, God placed a curse upon the earth. God said to our guilty ancestors, "Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee" (Gen. 3:17, 18)." We know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now" (Rom. 8:22). The earth has suffered because man has sinned.

Man's normal life span has been shortened from nearly one thousand years (before the Flood) to less than a century. The fertility of the earth has been decreased. Weeds, thorns, and thistles form a handicap in cultivating the soil. There is fear among animals and between animals and men. Disease, sickness, and physical limitations plague the human race.

God subjected the earth to the Adamic curse as an indirect punishment of man. This curse also serves as a safety check to limit man in sin. Consider the possible extent that a sinner could go if he did not have these limitations.

The fact that Christians are subject to these limitations is not an indication that they are sinners. A believer may find weeds growing in his garden, contract a disease, or have his home destroyed in a storm. These adversities, however, would not mean that he is a sinner or suffers tragedies as punishment for personal sins. Even Christians experience the effects of the Adamic curse.

The earth will be redeemed from the curse and restored to the purity and perfection of Eden through the work of Christ when He returns to earth. "The earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God" (Rom. 8:19, 21).

The earth will be restored to its fertility (Isa. 35:1, 2, 6, 7; 55: 13; Amos 9:13, 14). Animals will become harmless (Isa. 11:6-9). Sickness and sorrow will be removed (Isa. 35:5, 6; Rev. 21:4). "There shall be no more curse" (Rev. 22:3).

#### **V. Penalty, Power, and Presence of Sin**

The penalty, power, and presence of sin are related. The penalty of sin is condemnation and death. The power of sin is the influence that sin and a sinful habit exert upon the sinner. The presence of sin is the evidence of sin in one's environment. Three additional words beginning with the same letter of the alphabet as the trio we now are considering are the pollution, the perversion, and the practice of sin.

The gospel contemplates a threefold salvation for the sinner. There is a past salvation which is an accomplished fact; there is a present salvation which is a progressive process; and there is a future salvation which is a promised hope.

1. *Salvation From the Penalty of Sin.* Through His sacrificial death, Jesus has saved us from the penalty of sin. He paid the wages of sin for us. He removed

our guilt and condemnation in relation to God. When the sinner accepts the sacrifice of Christ through conversion, he is saved from the penalty of sin. He has, therefore, now no condemnation; he is justified before God.

*2. Salvation from the Power of Sin.* When Christ dwells in our lives through His power, He progressively saves us from the power of sin. The power of Christ counterbalances the power of self, the carnal mind. By walking in the Spirit, the believer does not fulfill the lust of the flesh. (Gal. 5:16.) Only the power of Christ can liberate from the power of sin. As one surrenders to Christ's transforming power and lives in obedience to Him as Lord, he is progressively saved from the power of sin.

*3. Salvation From the Presence of Sin.* When Jesus returns to earth and begins His new earthly ministry, He will save us from the presence of sin. All evidence of sin eventually will be removed. He will redeem our bodies, changing us from mortality to immortality. Through His rulership, He will transform our environment so that "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" (Isa. 11:9).

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*(Adapted from Systematic Theology, by Alva Huffer, published by Church of God General Conference, Oregon, Illinois 61061, U.S.A.)*

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## Test Questions

## RESULTS OF SIN

Please fill in the answers on this question sheet and return to:

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1. Why does sin separate man from God? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Why must sin result in death, the opposite of life? \_\_\_\_\_

3. When will sinners pay the final penalty of sin? \_\_\_\_\_

4. What results does sin produce within the sinner himself? \_\_\_\_\_

5. To sin may be natural for the sinner, but sin itself is (normal, abnormal).

6. Man is so made that he is (complete, incomplete) apart from God.

7. The essence of sin is \_\_\_\_\_

8. Why does self-centeredness produce misery? \_\_\_\_\_

9. How can the misery of selfishness be removed? \_\_\_\_\_

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10. How can a person establish the proper redemptive relationship with Christ?

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11. What effect has man's sin had upon his environment? \_\_\_\_\_

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12. In what ways will Christ change man's environment when He returns to earth and establishes His future Kingdom? \_\_\_\_\_

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13. Through His sacrificial death, Jesus has saved us from the (presence, penalty, power) of sin.

14. When Christ dwells in our lives through His power, He progressively saves us from the (presence, penalty, power) of sin.

15. When Jesus returns to earth and begins His new earthly ministry, He will save us from the (presence, penalty, power) of sin.

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# CHRIST THE MEDIATOR

"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time" (1 Tim. 2:5, 6).

There is one God, one human race, and one mediator between the two. The one God is a unity who alone is the source of all created things. His character is holiness, love, and truth. The one human race has descended from its common ancestors, Adam and Eve. The human race had a common origin and constitutes a unity. The entire human race is in sin and needs salvation. The one mediator is Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God. He is the only person who could ever have served as mediator between the one God and the one human race. If Jesus had never fulfilled His work as mediator, that work never would have been accomplished. Included in this truth, therefore, are the facts of the unity of God, the unity of the human race, and the uniqueness of Christ.

## **I. Man's Need for a Mediator**

Before Adam sinned the human race had no need for a mediator. Man's character reflected the moral likeness of God; he lived in submission to God's rulership; he obeyed God's will. Man walked in fellowship with God. A satisfactory divine-human relationship was sustained between Creator and creature.

Adam and Eve, however, rebelled against God's authority; they refused to obey His will. The original divine-human fellowship was broken. Fallen man walked alone. In choosing self Adam erected a barrier between himself and God. He slammed shut the door of fellowship and locked it from within. The windows of his heart that had been open heavenward now were closed. His heart was filled with darkness. His vertical contact with God had been destroyed. The posterity of Adam, therefore, was born with unlikeness to God's character, opposition to His government, and a predisposition to transgress God's laws.

Sinners stand before God as criminals under condemnation, as enemies estranged from God's fellowship, and as dead ones having no vital contact with Him. Consider the dark picture of the sinner's position before God as revealed in Ephesians 2:12, "At that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world." What a contrast there is between the one God in His holiness and the one human race in its sin!



Visualize a modern highway on a high mountain plateau suddenly coming to an abrupt end at the edge of a deep chasm. Across the wide gorge one can see the high steep slope of a great bluff that forms the opposite wall of the canyon. There on the mountain top he can see the continuation of the highway. To reach the other side of the canyon one would need to descend a vertical wall of solid rock, hack his way through a dense tropical jungle, and then scale the great bluff on the opposite side.

This is a picture of the immense gulf between God and man. Man's deliberate revolt from God produced an impassable gulf between creature and Creator. One mountain bluff pictures God in His holiness. The other bluff on the opposite side of the chasm represents the human race in its sin.

God in His infinite holiness cannot forgive sinners unless His justice is satisfied by sin's penalty being paid. Man in his sin cannot experience eternal life, self-realization, spiritual light, and true freedom apart from an adequate fellowship with God. There must be a bridge across the chasm so that there can be a continuous two-lane highway between man and God. Apart from such a structure sinners cannot find salvation, and God's blessings cannot flow into the lives of men.

Man through his own efforts could never build a bridge between himself and God. Salvation does not originate in man; it is not based upon human works. Salvation originates in God. It is planned by His wisdom, prompted by His love, and performed through His power. Jesus Christ as Mediator is the bridge between God and men. That bridge is a reality because of the divine initiative. "God so loved the world that he gave." God is the one who has erected the bridge between Himself and man.

## **II. Christ the Only Mediator**

Jesus is the one and only Mediator between the one God and the one human race. He is the only Saviour, the all-sufficient Sacrifice, the perfect and eternal High Priest. He alone is qualified to serve as Mediator. He is the only one required. He excludes all others. No other person could ever have occupied His position or performed His mediatorial work. No angel, no animal, no sinner could have served as mediator. Jesus stands alone in His ability to fulfill the requirements of a mediator between God and men.

There is a growing sentiment among modern thinkers which suggests the creation of one universal religion for all humanity. They feel that heathen religions are as valid as Christianity. They may agree that Christianity is superior to other religions, but they deny that it is the exclusive means of salvation. They insist that all religions have some good elements. They suggest that Christianity give up all claims to being supernatural and supreme. They suggest that it should combine with the best elements of all religions in order to create one world faith and one world church.

Men who are working for a union of all religions point out the fact that all religions are alike in that each one has some variation of the Golden Rule.

Hinduism says: "The true rule is to guard and do by the things of others as you do by your own." Buddhism teaches: "One should seek for others the happiness one desires for oneself." Confucianism: "What you do not wish done to yourself, do not do it to others." Zoroastrianism: "Do as you would be done by." Islam: "Let none of you treat your brother in a way he himself would dislike to be treated" or "No one of you is a believer until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself." Judaism teaches: "Whatsoever you do not wish your neighbor to do to you, do not to him." The Christian Golden Rule is: "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them."

The Golden Rule, however, is not the sole factor which brings salvation. A man can keep the Golden Rule and yet be a lost sinner. Salvation cannot result from man's self-efforts. Men cannot be saved by their own works. Salvation can come only through a redemptive relationship with Jesus Christ.

Christianity is not merely one religion among many. It is the religion. Jesus is the only Saviour. Christianity is the only way to God. All other religious roads are dead-end streets. Leaders of heathen religions may have been "saintly men," but they are lost sinners apart from Christ. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6). Peter declared, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). Paul wrote, "There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. 2:5). Jesus is the only redemptive link between heaven and earth. He is the only bridge between Creator and creature. He is the only door between God and man. If man shuts that door, there is no other opportunity for salvation.

Christianity is the perfect religion of God for the whole human race. It is *the* end of all religions, and will itself have no end. It is the final revelation of God to men. All further religious progress will be a growth of humanity in (but not beyond) Christianity, or a more complete apprehension and application of the spirit and example of Christ. The Kingdom of God on earth is intended to embrace all nations and to last forever.

Christianity is the most rational of all religions, and is consistent with the highest culture. Its doctrines and facts are indeed above, but not against reason, and the more reason is elevated and purified, the nearer it approaches revelation. The Christian religion commands the homage of the greatest intellects, as well as of the humblest child. . . . Other religions cannot bear the touch of criticism, nor survive an advanced stage of intellectual culture.

Christianity is the religion of humanity. It is catholic or universal, i.e., adapted to the whole human race, while all other religions in capacity and extent are ethnic, i.e., limited to one or more nations.

Christianity is universal not only as to extent, but also internally, in that it is suited to all classes, states and conditions of man. It brings the same blessings to all, it requires the same duties from all. It is compatible with every form of

government, with every kind of society, with every grade of culture, with the largest progress and development, physical, intellectual, and moral. It can never be replaced or superseded.

Christianity is pleromatic. It is the fullness and harmony of all the truths which are scattered through the different religions without their corresponding errors and defects. It is the central truth which comprehends all other truths. (Schaff, Philip. *Theological Propaedeutic*. New York: Scribners, 1904, pp. 59-62.)

### **III. The Only Mediator Needed**

Jesus is the only mediator required; His work is complete, allsufficient, and eternally effective. There is only one bridge across the chasm between God and man; there is no need for any other. Nothing should stand between the believer and God except Jesus Christ. When He stands between the two, He is not a barrier nor a blockade; He is a window through whom one can see God and an open door through whom one can enter into a fellowship with God.

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## Test Questions

## CHRIST THE MEDIATOR

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1. "For there is one God, and one \_\_\_\_\_ between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. 2:5).
2. In what way is the human race a unity? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Before Adam sinned did the human race need a mediator? (Yes, No)
4. How does Ephesians 2:12 describe sinners? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Why does man need a mediator? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. Salvation originates in (man, God)
7. Could an angel, an animal, or a sinner have served as a mediator between God and men? (Yes, No)
8. Christianity is the only religion which teaches the Golden Rule. (True, False)
9. Jesus is the only Saviour; Christianity is the only way to God. (True, False)
10. Jesus said. "I am the \_\_\_\_\_, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by \_\_\_\_\_" (John 14:6).
11. Why is Christianity the perfect religion of God for the whole human race?  
\_\_\_\_\_

---

12. Are the doctrines and facts of Christianity against reason? (Yes, No)

13. Christianity is the fullness and harmony of all the truths which are scattered through the different religions, without their corresponding errors and defects. (True, False)

14. \_\_\_\_\_ should stand between the believer and God except Jesus Christ.

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# NATURE OF JESUS

Jesus is the only begotten Son of God. Born of the virgin Mary, He sustains a special relationship with God and a special relationship with man. He is both Son of God and Son of Man. Having this unique nature, He is able to serve as mediator between God and mankind. He is a "daysman betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both" (Job 9:33). Jesus is without sin. In His purity and perfection, He is able to do what no other individual can do. He alone is qualified to be the bridge between God and man.

## **I. Jesus in God's Eternal Plan**

Jesus had His origin in the mind and plan of God. His life and work were foreknown and planned by God from the beginning of time. "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world" (Acts 15:18). Devised by His wisdom, prompted by His love, and performed through His power, God's plan of salvation finds its center in the person and work of our Lord Jesus Christ. (Eph. 1:9, 10; 3:11.)

Before Adam sinned or was even created, God knew that the human race would need a Saviour. The Lamb of God, therefore, "verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world" (1 Peter 1:20). His sacrifice was so certain and such an important factor in God's plan of salvation that He is described as "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev. 13:8). This is an example of God's calling "those things which be not as though they were" (Rom. 4:17). Jesus did not exist as a person until He was born at Bethlehem. Nevertheless, He existed in the mind and plan of God from eternity. With this thought in mind, Jesus referred to "the glory which I had with thee before the world was" (John 17:5), and He said, "Thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world" (John 17:24).

Gospel benefits made possible by Christ's sacrifice were known to God from the beginning and were included in His plan of salvation. Hope of eternal life was promised "before the world began" (Titus 1:2); the Kingdom was prepared "from the foundation of the world" (Matt. 25:34); and saving grace was given in Christ "before the world began" (2 Tim. 1:9).

Jesus Christ is the focal point of all divine works. Everything God has done in relation to man and the earth has been performed with Christ in mind. All things were created "for him" (Col. 1:16). God has appointed His Son heir of all things and through Him has prepared the ages. (Heb. 1:2.) When God created our planet, He knew that some day His Son would be born here, give Himself as man's Sacrifice, rise from the dead, ascend to heaven, and later



return to rule over all nations. It is God's intention that redeemed sinners will be "conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren" (Rom. 8:29). He plans for His Son to stand at the summit of His works "that in all things he might have the preeminence" (Col. 1:18). He is "the beginning, the firstborn from the dead" (Col. 1:18), "the firstborn of every creature" (Col. 1:15), and "the beginning of the creation of God" (Rev. 3:14). Many men lived before Jesus was born, but He is superior to them all. As the last Adam, Jesus is superior to the first man Adam. (1 Cor. 15:45, 46.) Although younger in age, Jesus is superior to John the Baptist. (John 1:15, 30.) Although Abraham was father of the faithful and founder of the nation, Israel, Jesus is superior to any position that Abraham ever occupied. (John 8:58.) "He is before all things" (Col. 1:17); no man is greater than He.

## **II. The Humanity of Christ**

Jesus is the Son of Man. He possesses true humanity. During His earthly ministry, He was like all other men except He lived without sin and maintained a supernatural, unique relationship with God. Through His vital relationship with mankind, Jesus identified Himself with the problems, sorrows, and sufferings of the human race. (Heb. 2:14-18.)

Although Jesus had a miraculous conception, He had a human birth. (Gal. 4:4; Luke 2:7; Gen. 3:15; Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:1; Rom. 1:3.) He had an earthly mother but not an earthly father. Through His mother, His ancestry is traced to Adam. (Luke 3:23-38.) Through her, He is the son of Abraham and the son of David. Being the descendant of Abraham, He came to fulfill God's covenant with Abraham. Being the seed of David, He came to fulfill God's covenant with David.

Jesus had a normal human development. "And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him" (Luke 2:40). "And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man" (Luke 2:52).

Jesus had the physical appearance of a man. He had a real body. (Matt. 26:12; John 2:21; Heb. 10:10; John 1:14; Col. 1:22; Heb. 2:14 - 17.) He was made in the likeness of men. (Rom. 8:3; Phil. 2:7.) Before His resurrection to immortality, He was mortal and was subject to the sinless infirmities of man's mortal nature. He became hungry (Matt. 4:2; 21:18), thirsty (John 19:28), weary (John 4:6). He was tempted (Matt. 4:1; Heb. 2:18; 4:15); He wept (John 11:35); He slept (Matt. 8:24); He suffered (Heb. 2:9, 18; Isa. 53:3,4); He died (John 19:30, 33). When Jesus died, the breath of life left His body and returned to God who gave it. He was buried and remained unconscious in the grave until His resurrection. After His resurrection, He showed the disciples that He had a real, literal, material body in immortality. (Luke 24:39-43.)

Our Lord was repeatedly called a man in the New Testament. (John 1:30; 8:40; Acts 2:22; 13:38; Rom. 5:15; 1 Cor. 15:21, 47; Phil. 2:8.) As the Mediator, He is "the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. 2:5). He will return to earth as a man (Matt. 16:27, 28; 25:31; 26:64), and as a man will judge the world in righteousness (Acts 17:31).

The importance of Christ's humanity can be seen in that He is able to reveal God's character to mankind, to represent man as the Second Adam, to be man's Kinsman-Redeemer, to be a "merciful and faithful high priest," to be the example and pattern for His people, to be Head of the new creation, and to sit on David's throne.

### **III. Christ's Divine Relationship**

Jesus is the only begotten Son of God. (John 1:14, 18; 3:16, 18; 1 John 4:9.) He has a unique relationship with God. This relationship is one which no other man has experienced. Christ's life among men was a revelation of God's character. He reflected God's holiness, love, and truth; He showed what God is like. (John 1:18; 14:9.) Christ is an expression of God's ideal for mankind. He is the living Word, the embodiment of the divine Idea. His spotless life revealed man's sinfulness. The character of Jesus is the moral standard for mankind.

1. *The Son of God.* The Bible clearly teaches that Jesus is the Son of God. Our Saviour referred to God as His Father and to Himself as God's Son. Among the many witnesses who declared that Jesus is the Son of God are: God (Matt. 3:17; 17:5) ; Jesus Himself (John 9:35-37; 10:36); Gabriel, the archangel (Luke 1:32, 35) ; John the Baptist (John 1:34); Nathanael (John 1:49); the disciples (Matt. 14:33); Peter (Matt. 16:16); Martha (John 11:27); the centurion (Matt. 27:54); John (John 20:31; 1 John 4:15); and Paul (Acts 9:20; Rom. 1:4; 2 Cor. 1:19).

2. *Importance of His Divine Sonship.* Christ's divine sonship gives infinite value to His sacrificial death. This fact explains Christ's ability to be a Substitute for many sinners. One silver dollar is smaller in number than ninety-nine pennies, but it is of greater value. Jesus is only one person, but His death is of greater value than the deaths of an infinite number of sinners. As the Son of God, Jesus is able to be God's authoritative spokesman and to reveal the divine will for mankind; He has the authority to forgive sins, to judge mankind, to raise the dead, and to give eternal life. His divine sonship entitles Him to be heir of all things; it gives Him the right of sovereignty over the nations. Our Lord's unique divine relationship enables Him to serve as the sinner's Mediator and High Priest.

As the Son of God, our Lord is worthy of man's trust, obedience, adoration, and praise. "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:9-11).

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## Test Questions

## NATURE OF JESUS

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1. Jesus is Son of God but not Son of Man. (True, False)
2. Jesus is Son of Man but not Son of God. (True, False)
3. Jesus is both Son of God and Son of Man. (True, False)
4. Jesus was born of the virgin, Mary. (True, False)
5. Jesus had an earthly mother (but not, and) an earthly father.
6. "Known unto God are all his works from the \_\_\_\_\_ of the world" (Acts 15:18).
7. What is meant by the fact that Jesus existed in the mind and plan of God from eternity? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. Did God plan for Christ's sacrificial death before Christ was born? (Yes, No)
9. Name some ways in which Jesus was like other members of the human race.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. Why is the fact of Christ's humanity important? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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11. Name three persons mentioned in the Bible who declared that Jesus is the Son of God. \_\_\_\_\_

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12. Why is the fact that Jesus is the Son of God important? \_\_\_\_\_

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# THE CROSS

Christianity, unlike other religions, is based primarily upon the death of its Founder. Christ's sacrifice is a fundamental theme of the gospel. (1 Cor. 15:1-4.) Paul declared, "For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified" (1 Cor. 2:2). He explained, "The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God" (1 Cor. 1:18). The story of salvation flows forth from a wooden cross and an empty tomb.

The cross was the goal of Christ's earthly ministry. Jesus was born to die. In a certain sense, He was "born crucified." The shadow of the cross extended across the years to the manger of Bethlehem. "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1 Tim. 1:15). "He was manifested to take away our sins" (1 John 3:5). "Now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself" (Heb. 9:26). At the beginning of His ministry, He was revealed as "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). Our Saviour explained, "The Son of man came ... to give his life a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45).

The death of Christ is unique. It stands alone, a solitary event in the history of men. There has never been another death like His. His sacrifice can never be duplicated; His sufferings can never be equaled. The uniqueness of His death consists in its purpose, importance, and His infinite worth as the Son of God. Others have suffered crucifixion; many have experienced agonizing torture. Countless innocent men, moreover, have been executed unjustly. The death of Christ is unique, not because He died as a martyr or experienced a humiliating death, but because He alone is the Lamb of God who died for the sins of the world. His death was not merely martyrdom; it was a sacrifice.

## **I. Basis of Salvation**

Christ's sacrificial death is the basis of salvation. Through the infinite value of His sacrifice, Jesus paid sin's penalty. His death removed the barrier created by man's sin in its relation to God's holiness. It provided a basis whereby God could bestow His blessings of grace upon sinners without violating His own nature of holiness and justice. Jesus is the only Saviour; there is no other way to God. If man is to be saved, he must be saved on the basis of Christ's sacrifice. Apart from His death, there can be no salvation.

## **II. The Sinner's Substitute**

Jesus died as the sinner's Substitute. He took the sinner's place and bore the penalty of sin in His sufferings and death. He died on the cross so that



believers would not die the second death.

"The wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23). God's holy nature requires that the penalty for every sin committed in the universe must be paid. The death of His Son upon the cross was payment of sin's penalty for believers. Being without sin, Jesus did not need to die for Himself. Through love, Jesus voluntarily sacrificed Himself and died as the believer's Substitute. Believers who are united with Christ through conversion, therefore, are free from condemnation (Rom. 8:1) and are exempt from the second death (Rev. 2:11; 20:6), in which the wicked will pay sin's penalty. Christ's righteousness is *imputed* to believers at conversion and is actually *imparted* to them as they permit Christ to exercise an influence in their lives.

1. *Why Sin Must Result in Death.* The wages of sin must be death, the opposite of life, because sin is anti-God and God is life. Sin violates God's moral laws, which are expressions of His own moral attributes: holiness, love, and truth. God Himself is the standard of right and wrong. Godliness is God-like-ness. To be godly is to be God-like in character and conduct. God is holy, and He said, "Be ye holy; for I am holy" (1 Pet. 1:16). God is love, and Jesus explained that love summarizes God's commandments (Matt. 22:37-40). When believers have been transformed according to God's plan, they have become reflections of the character of God and Jesus.

God's moral laws are not arbitrary. They did not result from arbitrary will nor divine whim. God's laws express not only His will, but also His holy character. Sin is contrary to the inward nature of God. God's holiness, righteousness, and justice require that sin result in death. Sin is anti-God. God must either condemn sin or violate His own character. Sin must result in destruction. The penalty for every sin must be paid. (Rom. 6:23; Gen. 2:17; 3:19; Rom. 1:32; 5:12.)

2. *Second Death will Pay Sin's Penalty.* Sinners will pay the penalty for their sins by being destroyed in the second death. (Rev. 20:15; 21:8.) The first death is not the final payment of sin's penalty. If it were the final payment, Christians, whose sins have been forgiven, would not die the first death. All men die the first death; only sinners, however, will die the second death. Why did not God destroy the human race the moment Adam and Eve sinned? Through mercy, grace, and longsuffering, God postponed the date when sin's penalty would be executed. He has "stayed" the execution until the second death so that sinners may have opportunity to repent.

The first death does not remove the sinner's guilt. Complete payment of sin's wages will be effected by the sinner when he will be destroyed in the second death. Raised to life in the final resurrection, sinners will still be under God's condemnation and wrath. The fact of guilt will not have changed. They will be chargeable for sins committed in this life. They will be judged according to sinful works they commit today. In the second death, sin's penalty will be paid; sinners will be destroyed.

3. *Why a Substitute Is Needed.* Eternal death and eternal life are mutually

exclusive. If one pays for his own sins by being destroyed in the second death, he cannot live eternally. The second death will be destruction, extinction of life. Since God's holy nature requires that sin's penalty be paid, and since the sinner cannot pay that penalty himself and still experience eternal life, it is evident that if one is to be saved, sin's penalty must be paid by a substitute.

Through His plan of salvation, God provided a means whereby sin's penalty could be paid and the forgiven sinner could live for eternity. Jesus, the sinless Son of God, voluntarily became the sinner's Substitute. In His sacrificial death, He paid the wages of sin for believers. He took their place. Jesus is the only person who could have served as man's Substitute. He alone was without sin. If Jesus had not become man's Sacrifice, man would have been without salvation.

4. *God's Holy Nature Maintained.* Christ's vicarious sacrifice makes it possible for God to retain His holiness, righteousness, and justice while He forgives and justifies the sinner who believes in Christ. In forgiving the sinner, God does not act contrary to His holy character. Paul explained: "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (Rom. 3:24-26). Through His death, Jesus satisfied the demands of law and requirements of God's holy government of the universe. God can continue to be holy while He justifies sinners because the demands of His holiness were met at Calvary.

5. *Only Two Alternatives.* The wages of sin can be paid in either one of two ways. The sinner may pay the penalty of his sin himself by being destroyed in the second death, or he may accept the benefits of Christ's sacrificial death. In each way, the wages of sin would be paid and the claims of God's holiness would be satisfied. If man paid the penalty of his own sin in the second death, he would be making *personal* satisfaction for his sin. If he became vitally united with the Lamb of God and accepted the benefits of His sacrifice, he would be making *vicarious* satisfaction for his sin. The sinner, therefore, has only two alternatives. He must accept Christ's sacrifice or be destroyed in the second death. There is no other possible choice. Apart from Christ, sinners face destruction.

### III. Condition of Salvation

Christ's sacrifice is infinitely sufficient for every sinner; it is effective, however, only for those who accept it through faith. Provision of salvation has been made for all; application of salvation is made only to those who accept it. The Lamb of God *potentially* bore the guilt and paid sin's penalty for the entire human race. The benefits of His sacrifice, however, *actually* become effective in the sinner's life only when he becomes properly related to Christ through conversion.

Salvation is conditional. Originated in God's grace and based upon Christ's sacrifice, salvation can become a reality in the sinner's life only if God's

requirements are met. Man's acceptance is the condition upon which salvation is bestowed. God has provided salvation; man must accept that salvation. Man has the responsibility; God receives the glory. At conversion, the sinner acknowledges Jesus as his Sacrifice, Substitute, and Saviour. By trusting in Christ, the believer reaches forth and accepts God's gift of salvation. He identifies himself as one for whom Jesus died. He thereby claims as his own all the spiritual benefits effected by Christ's sacrifice. What God has promised, he accepts as fact. He recognizes that he himself has been forgiven, justified, reconciled, redeemed, made holy, given newness of life, and adopted. He acknowledges the truth that he has entered into Christ and that Christ has entered into him. He knows he has a new legal standing and a vital relationship with God through Christ. Conversion includes the three elements: repentance, faith, and baptism. These are things man must do in order to accept God's gift of salvation.

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## Test Questions

## THE CROSS

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1. "Christianity, unlike other religions, is based primarily upon the \_\_\_\_\_ of its Founder."
2. "The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the \_\_\_\_\_ of God" (1 Cor. 1:18)
3. How is Christ's death unique? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Christ's sacrificial death is the (origin, basis) of salvation.
5. How did Christ's death provide a basis for salvation? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. How was Jesus the sinner's Substitute? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. Jesus died on the cross so that believers would not die the (first, second) death.
8. Why must the wages of sin be death, the opposite of life? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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9. God's holiness and justice require that (sin, righteousness) must result in death.

10. Is the first death the final payment of sin's penalty? (Yes, No)

11. Jesus, the sinless Son of God, (willingly, unwillingly) became the sinner's Substitute.

12. The sinner has only two alternatives: he must accept Christ's sacrifice or be destroyed in the \_\_\_\_\_ death.

13. Salvation can become a reality in the sinner's life only if God's requirements are met. (True, False)

14. Conversion includes the three elements: repentance, faith, and \_\_\_\_\_.

Please fill in your name and address here:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

# THE EMPTY TOMB

Christianity is the religion of the Empty Tomb. The central person in Christianity is one who died a sacrificial death, was buried, and after three days experienced a glorious resurrection to immortality. He who became man's Substitute and died for the sins of the world has risen from the dead. He is living today at God's right hand in glory and immortality. He said, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore" (Rev. 1:18).

## I. Importance of His Resurrection

1. *Fundamental Theme of the Gospel.* Our Lord's resurrection is a fundamental theme of the gospel. Paul indicated that Christianity rises or falls on the truthfulness of the fact that Jesus is risen from the dead. (1 Cor. 15:12-20.) It is a vital part of the gospel message. "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures" (1 Cor. 15:1-4).

2. *Essential to Salvation.* Belief in Christ's resurrection is essential to salvation. Paul said, "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Rom. 10:9).

3. *Application of Salvation Made Possible.* The resurrection of Christ is of major importance in regard to the application of salvation. The sacrifice of Christ provided the basis of salvation; the resurrection of Christ makes possible the application of salvation. God has raised His sacrificial Lamb from the dead and has exalted Him at His own right hand so that Christ might be Head of the Church and Lord of believers. The power of the risen Christ indwells believers and applies the benefits and results of salvation to their hearts. As the living High Priest at God's throne, He makes intercession and acts as advocate for the believer.

4. *Message of the New Testament Church.* Our Saviour's resurrection was the outstanding message of the New Testament Church. Faith in His resurrection transformed the lives of the apostles and made the Church a tremendous influence in winning thousands to Christ. The resurrection of Christ was an important message of the Apostle Peter. (Acts 2:24, 32; 3:15, 26; 4:10; 5:30; 10:40; 1 Pet. 1:21.) In his sermons and letters, Paul gave special emphasis to



the truth that Christ has risen from the dead. (Acts 13:30, 34; 17:3, 31; Rom. 1:4; 4:24, 25; 6:4, 9; 7:4; 8:11; 10:9; 1 Cor. 6:14; 15; 2 Cor. 4:14; Gal. 1:1; Eph. 1:20; Col. 2:12; 1 Thess. 1:10; 4:14; 2 Tim. 2:8.)

## **II. Old Testament Prophecies**

The Old Testament contains five major prophecies concerning Christ's resurrection: Psalm 16:9, 10; 22:22-31; 118:22-24; Isa. 53:10; Job 19:25. Psalm 16:9, 10 is referred to by Peter (Acts 2:25-31) and by Paul (Acts 13:33-37) in proclaiming Christ's resurrection. Psalm 22:22 is quoted in Hebrews 2:12, and Psalm 118:22 is quoted in Acts 4:10, 11 as proof of the resurrection of Christ.

## **III. Old Testament Types**

1. *Jonah in the Great Fish.* Our Saviour taught that Jonah's being in the great fish three days and three nights was a picture of His own death, burial, and resurrection. He said, "For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" (Matt. 12:40).

2. *Feast of the Firstfruits.* The second religious feast of Israel was the Feast of the Firstfruits. (Lev. 23:9-14.) It was preceded by the Feast of Passover. At the Feast of the Firstfruits, Israelites brought the first fruits of the spring harvest unto the Lord and offered them before Him. The Israelites recognized that everything they possessed came from God. They offered the first of the harvest in recognition of His complete ownership. The Feast of Passover typified Christ's death; the Feast of the Firstfruits pictured His resurrection. "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept" (1 Cor. 15:20). Christ is the first to be raised from the dead to immortality.

3. *Sacrifice of Isaac.* Abraham believed in God's power to raise the dead. God had promised Abraham that he would be a father of many nations, and Abraham had faith in God's faithfulness to fulfill His covenant. When Abraham, in obedience to God's instructions, offered his only son, Isaac, as an offering, he knew that God could raise Isaac from the dead. Abraham indicated this belief in his words to the two young men, "I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you" (Gen. 22:5). Isaac, of course, did not die as a burnt offering; a ram was offered in his place. The offering of Isaac pictured Christ's sacrifice; Isaac's return with Abraham typified Christ's resurrection. "By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac; and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure" (Heb. 11:17-19).

4. *Aaron's Rod That Budded.* To prove that Aaron was authorized to be Israel's high priest, God performed a miracle in which Aaron's rod budded. (Num. 16:1-17:13.) "And it came to pass, that on the morrow Moses went into the tabernacle of witness; and, behold, the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi was budded, and brought forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds" (Num. 17:8). The fact that life came forth from Aaron's rod pictures Christ's resurrection from death. The budding of Aaron's rod vindicated his

high priesthood; our High Priest, Jesus Christ, has risen from the dead and serves as our Lord, Advocate, and Intercessor.

#### **IV. Our Lord's Predictions**

Jesus told His followers that He would rise from the dead. The disciples, however, did not comprehend the meaning of His words until after His resurrection. "When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said" (John 2:22).

Christ's predictions concerning His resurrection follow: "From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day" (Matt. 16:21; also, Mark 8:31; Luke 9:22). "And they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again. And they were exceeding sorry" (Matt. 17:23; also, Mark 9:31; Luke 9:43). "And shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him: and the third day he shall rise again" (Matt. 20:19; also, Mark 10:34; Luke 18:33). "For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" (Matt. 12:40). "And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead" (Matt. 17:9; also, Mark 9:9). "Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? But he spake of the temple of his body" (John 2:19-21). "Saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again" (Matt. 27:63).

#### **V. Proof of Christ's Resurrection**

The resurrection of Christ is one of the best established facts of history. There is more evidence to prove the certainty of His resurrection than there is any other event. The historical account of His resurrection is recorded by all four biographers of His earthly ministry: Matt. 28:1-15; Mark 16:1-14; Luke 24:1-48; John 20:1-29; 21:1-25.

The two major proofs of Christ's resurrection are: (1) the empty tomb and (2) the appearances of Christ to His disciples after His resurrection. The changed lives of the apostles, the formation and continued existence of the Church, and the writing of the New Testament are additional evidences of His resurrection and heavenly ministry.

1. *The Empty Tomb.* One major proof of our Lord's resurrection is that the tomb in which He was buried became empty. This fact was discovered by the women who came to the tomb on Easter morning. The disciples, Peter and John, verified this truth when they entered the empty tomb and saw the clothes in which Jesus was buried. The angel proclaimed the fact that the tomb was empty: "He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay" (Matt. 28:5, 6). The soldier guards reported to the Sanhedrin that the tomb was empty. (Matt. 28:11-15.) The chief priests did not investigate the



guards' report; they apparently had no doubt that the tomb was empty.

An interesting account of the location of the tomb of Jesus has been written by Henry H. Halley in his *Pocket Bible Handbook*, pp. 491-493.

2. *Christ's Appearances After Resurrection.* Our Lord's resurrection is proved by the fact that He appeared to His disciples after His resurrection. Jesus remained on earth forty days after His resurrection. During this time, He appeared to His disciples on at least eleven different occasions. At one time He was seen by more than five hundred witnesses. Forty is a Bible number which denotes testing and proving. During the forty days between Christ's resurrection and ascension, He proved that He had risen from the dead.

The risen Christ appeared to: (1) the women who came to the tomb and were returning after they saw the angel who announced Christ's resurrection (Matt. 28:9, 10); (2) Mary Magdalene at the tomb (Mark 16:9; John 20:11-17); (3) Peter (Luke 24:34; 1 Cor. 15:5); (4) two disciples who were walking to Emmaus on Easter afternoon (Luke 24:13-31); (5) the ten apostles at the time of the evening meal on Easter (John 20:19-23; 1 Cor. 15:5; Luke 24:36-48); (6) the eleven, including Thomas, one week later (John 20:26-29); (7) seven disciples who were fishing at the Sea of Galilee (John 21:1-14); (8) the eleven disciples on an appointed mountain in Galilee (Matt. 28:16-20); (9) more than five hundred brethren (1 Cor. 15:6); (10) James, probably the half-brother of Jesus (1 Cor. 15:7); and (11) all the apostles on the Mount of Olives immediately before His ascension (Luke 24:50, 51; Acts 1:3-9; 1 Cor. 15:7).

After His ascension, Jesus appeared to Stephen (Acts 7:55, 56), to Paul on the Damascus Road (Acts 9:3-8; 26:16-18; 1 Cor. 15:8; 1 Cor. 9:1), to Paul in Arabia, to Paul in the temple at Jerusalem (Acts 22:17, 18), to Paul in prison (Acts 23:11), and to John at Patmos (Rev. 1:10-18).

## **VI. False Theories Concerning His Resurrection**

1. *The Swoon Theory.* Some men teach that Jesus did not really die; He only swooned. They declare that He became unconscious and was mistakenly considered dead. They say the cool air of the tomb and the aroma of spices revived Him after a short time. Men who advocate this theory forget that Jesus was officially pronounced dead at the cross. His death was so certain that the soldiers did not bother to break His legs. "When they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs; but one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water" (John 19:33, 34).

2. *The Stolen Body Theory.* Other men who deny our Saviour's resurrection teach that His body was stolen. Some say that His enemies stole His body; others, that His friends stole His body. Why should Christ's enemies have wanted to steal His body? If they had done so, they certainly would have produced Him to disprove the apostles' teaching of His resurrection. If His disciples had attempted to steal His body, the Roman guards would have killed them.



3. *The Wrong Tomb Theory.* One of the most absurd false theories concerning Christ's resurrection is that the women went to the wrong tomb. Men who hold this theory explain that the women were so filled with sorrow that they mistakenly went to the wrong tomb. The women who were present when Jesus was buried, however, would not easily have forgotten that tomb. (Matt. 27:61; Mark 15:46, 47; Luke 23:55, 56.) Moreover, Peter and John later visited the same empty tomb. They expressed no doubt about the place of burial. The presence of the angels and linens was proof that they visited the correct tomb.

4. *The Vision Theory.* Another false theory advocated by skeptics is that what people thought was the risen Christ was only a vision. They say the disciples wanted Jesus to rise again so intensely that they imagined they saw Him. Our Lord's appearance to the disciples was not the product of their imaginations. Although Jesus foretold His resurrection, the disciples through unbelief were not expecting Him to rise from the dead. His many appearances to them after His resurrection proved that He had literally risen from the dead and changed their unbelief into implicit faith.

5. *The Disembodied Person Theory.* Men who believe Plato's teachings concerning the sinfulness of matter assert that Christ's body remained dead, only His "spirit" arose. This view, held by many modern cults, rejects the bodily resurrection of Christ. Our Lord, however, experienced a bodily resurrection. He proved to His disciples that He had a real body of flesh and bones. (Luke 24:37- 43.) The Bible's teachings concerning the resurrection disprove false theories concerning the sinfulness of matter and the soul's immortality.

## **VII. Nature of Christ's Resurrection**

1. *An Actual Resurrection.* Jesus experienced a real death and a real resurrection. He actually died. Like other men, He was unconscious in death; His brain ceased to function. There was no part of Him that continued to have conscious existence while He was dead. He remained buried in the grave until His resurrection. The theory that Jesus went to preach to dead people during the time He was in the grave is based upon a completely false interpretation of Scripture. As was His death, so was His resurrection. Jesus actually rose from the dead. He experienced a literal resurrection. The Lamb who died was raised to life through the power of God. His resurrection was not merely the survival of some immaterial essence; it was a real, literal return to life.

2. *A Bodily Resurrection.* The risen Christ has a real, literal, material, physical body. The Bible knows of no resurrection unless it is a bodily resurrection. Resurrection miracles of the Old Testament and New Testament were physical resurrections. When raised at Christ's return, Christians will have real, material bodies. When raised in the final resurrection, the wicked will have real bodies. In their mortal physical bodies, the wicked will be cast into the lake of fire to be destroyed in the second death. Scripture knows of no resurrection unless it is bodily in nature.

Jesus had a material body after His resurrection. He could be seen by men's eyes. (Luke 24:40.) He could be touched with their hands. (Luke 24:39; John

20:27; Matt. 28:9.) He declared that He had a real body of flesh and bones. (Luke 24:39.) As proof, He ate honey and fish in their presence. (Luke 24:41-43; Acts 10:41.) He had the same body He had at death. The nail prints were in His hands and feet, and the wound was in His side. (John 20:25-27.) They who saw Him recognized Him as the same Jesus who had been crucified and buried in the tomb.

3. *Raised to Immortality.* Our Saviour rose from death to immortality. He is no longer subject to death. "Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him" (Rom. 6:9). He said, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen" (Rev. 1:18). Jesus is the first person to be raised from the dead with an immortal body. He is described as "the firstborn from the dead" (Col. 1:18) and "the firstfruits of them that slept" (1 Cor. 15:20). "He should be the first that should rise from the dead" (Acts 26:23). Jesus was the first to rise from the dead never to die again. In the Bible resurrection miracles, men were restored to the mortal nature they had before death; they all died again. Jesus, on the other hand, was raised immortal and can never die again. Believers will be raised to immortality when Christ returns.

### **VIII. Results of Christ's Resurrection**

1. *Proved His Divine Sonship.* Christ's resurrection proved that He is the Son of God. "Concerning his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Rom. 1:3, 4). Jesus became the Son of God at His birth. His resurrection proved the fact which was already a reality.

2. *His Sacrifice Accepted.* God showed that He accepted Christ's sacrifice by raising Him from the dead. "Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification" (Rom. 4:25). As Erich Sauer wrote: "The cross is the victory, the resurrection the triumph; but the victory is more important than the triumph, although the latter necessarily follows from it. The resurrection is the public display of the victory, the triumph of the Crucified One" (*The Triumph of the Crucified*, p. 32).

Spiritual blessings based upon the merits of Christ's sacrificial death can be bestowed upon believers because He has risen from the dead. Having been raised from the dead, He has become Head of the Church, Lord of believers, and the source of newness of life for Christians. He can work through His transforming power and give them the riches of salvation.

3. *Resurrection for Believers Guaranteed.* Christ's resurrection guarantees the Christian's future resurrection. He said, "Because I live, ye shall live also." Believers can declare with confidence, "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory" (Col. 3:4). Because Christ, the Head of the Church, was raised to immortality on that first Easter, one can be assured that the Church, the Body of Christ, will be raised to immortality when He returns. He stands alone as an illustration and a preview of what God will do to all believers when Jesus comes again. No scoffer can deny God's ability to raise the dead nor object to the reality of the believer's future

immortal nature. God demonstrated the working of His mighty power when He raised Christ from the dead (Eph. 1:19, 20) and revealed the nature of immortality in the resurrection body of our exalted Lord.

4. *A Day of Judgment Made Certain.* The fact that God raised His Son from the dead makes certain a future day of judgment. The Lamb of God, whom God raised from the dead, some day will perform His work as King and Judge. "The times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; where of he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead" (Acts 17:30, 31).

5. *Assures Christ's Final Triumph Over Death.* The resurrection of Christ assures His final triumph over all enemies, including death. After the wicked have been destroyed and all sin has been removed from earth, death itself will be destroyed. "For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death" (1 Cor. 15:25, 26).



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## Test Questions

## THE EMPTY TOMB

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1. Jesus said, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am  
\_\_\_\_\_ for evermore" (Rev. 1:18)

2. What is the importance of Christ's resurrection? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Name one Old Testament type or incident that pointed forward to Christ's resurrection. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Did Jesus tell His followers that He would rise from the dead? (Yes, No)

5. The two major proofs of Christ's resurrection are:

(1) \_\_\_\_\_

(2) \_\_\_\_\_

6. How do we know that the tomb in which Christ was buried became empty?

\_\_\_\_\_

7. Name one of Christ's eleven appearances after His resurrection and before His ascension. \_\_\_\_\_

8. Did Jesus experience a real death and a real resurrection? (Yes, No)
9. The risen Christ has a real, literal, material, physical body. (True, False)
10. How did Jesus show that He had a material body after His resurrection?

11. Our Saviour rose from death to immortality. What is immortality? \_\_\_\_\_

12. When will believers be raised from the dead to immortality? \_\_\_\_\_

13. What are some of the results of Christ's resurrection? \_\_\_\_\_

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# CHRIST'S THREEFOLD WORK

An adequate presentation of the gospel must reveal Christ in all His fullness as Sacrifice, Power-giver, and Coming King. Theologians and preachers must emphasize equally the blood of Christ, the transforming power of Christ, and the coming kingship of Christ.

## 1. Christ's Three Ministries

Our Lord's three ministries are His earthly ministry, His heavenly ministry, and His new earthly ministry. Our Saviour had an earthly ministry in the past; He has a heavenly ministry at the present; He will have a new earthly ministry in the future.

1. *Work of Christ's Earthly Ministry.* The outstanding work Christ performed during His earthly ministry is that He provided the basis for salvation through His perfect obedience, His sacrificial death, and His glorious resurrection. Christ's earthly ministry makes possible His heavenly and new earthly ministries. Jesus could not save men from the power of sin and the presence of sin until He had made it possible for them to be saved from the penalty of sin.

2. *Work of His Heavenly Ministry.* Through His heavenly ministry, our Lord makes possible the *application of salvation*. The application of salvation is made possible by means of His power and presence, the Holy Spirit, through which He dwells within the believer. Through His power, Christ transforms the trustful, surrendered, obedient believer into His moral likeness. This is the work Christ is performing today during His heavenly ministry.

God plans for every believer to be conformed to the image of His Son. God intends for new creatures in Christ Jesus to be moral reflections of His Son, who is the Beginning of the new creation. Through resurrection to immortality, believers will share in Christ's physical likeness. Through transformation of character and reformation of conduct today, they share in His moral likeness. Man's character change must precede his physical change. One must have a Christlike mind before he can have a Christlike body. One must partake of the benefits of Christ's earthly ministry (His sacrifice) and heavenly ministry (His indwelling power) before he can partake of the benefits of His new earthly ministry (resurrection to immortality and glory).

3. *Work of His New Earthly Ministry.* In His new earthly ministry, Christ will make possible the *consummation of salvation* in the lives of glorified saints. When Jesus returns, He will transform the believer's body from mortality to

immortality. The true Church will be completed, assembled, and glorified with Christ. Our planet will experience a redemptive transformation. The earth will be restored to its original Edenic purity and will become the eternal paradise of God.

## II. Three Pictures of Christ

The three ministries of Christ present three pictures of our glorious Lord. In His earthly ministry, He was the suffering Sacrifice; in His heavenly ministry, He is Intercessor and transforming Lord; in His new earthly ministry, He will be the King of kings, reigning on His throne of glory. In His earthly ministry, we see Jesus, the spotless Lamb of God, on the cross and beside the empty tomb. In His heavenly ministry, we see a picture of Jesus at God's right hand. In His new earthly ministry, we see the King on His throne.

1. *Three Appearings.* The threefold ministry of Christ is described in Hebrews 9 by the threefold occurrence of the word "appear." Hebrews 9:26 refers to His earthly ministry: "Now once in the end of the world hath he *appeared* to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." Hebrews 9:24 describes His heavenly ministry: "Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to *appear* in the presence of God for us." Hebrews 9:28 refers to His new earthly ministry: "Unto them that look for him shall he *appear* the second time without sin unto salvation." Christ's first appearing was as a sacrifice for sin. His second appearing is in heaven in the presence of God as Advocate and Intercessor. His third appearing will be His second coming, when He returns to earth.

2. *Three Shepherds.* The threefold ministry of Christ is pictured in the New Testament by three adjectives which describe Him as Shepherd.

Jesus said, "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep" (John 10:11). In His earthly ministry, He showed Himself as the *Good Shepherd* when He gave Himself in sacrificial death for His sheep.

The benediction recorded in Hebrews 13:20, 21 presents Jesus as the *Great Shepherd* in His heavenly ministry today: "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." The risen Christ is the Great Shepherd who, through His Spirit, works in the lives of believers. He transforms them into His likeness and produces in their lives that which is well pleasing in God's sight. Notice that Christ's work as Good Shepherd was external to the Christian. He did something *for* the Christian. His work as Great Shepherd, on the other hand, is internal within the Christian. Today, He does something *in* the Christian. As Good Shepherd, Jesus created the proper legal relationship between the believer and God; as Great Shepherd, He makes possible the proper vital relationship. Through Him, Christians have a living contact with God.

In His future new earthly ministry, Jesus is described as *Chief Shepherd*.



"When the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away" (1 Pet. 5:4).

### III. Threefold Salvation

The gospel of salvation, centered in the person and work of Christ, can readily be designated "The Threefold Gospel." The sinner's salvation is dependent upon Christ's work in His three ministries. The threefold ministry of Christ results in the threefold salvation of the believer. In Christian experience, there is a past salvation, which is an accomplished fact; there is a present salvation, which is a progressive process; and there is a future salvation, which is a promised hope. Therefore, the believer can truthfully say, "I have been saved, I am being saved, and I shall be saved."

1. *Salvation From Penalty of Sin.* Through His sacrificial death, Jesus has saved us from the penalty of sin. He paid the wages of sin for us. He removed our guilt and condemnation. When the sinner accepts the sacrifice of Christ through conversion, he is saved from the penalty of sin. He has therefore now no condemnation (Rom. 8:1); he is justified before God.

2. *Salvation From Power of Sin.* When Christ dwells in our lives through His power, He progressively saves us from the power of sin. The power of sin is the influence that sin and a sinful habit exert upon the sinner. The power of Christ counterbalances the power of self, the carnal mind. By walking in the Spirit, the believer does not fulfill the lust of the flesh (Gal. 5:16). Only the power of Christ can liberate from the power of sin. As one surrenders himself to Christ's transforming power and lives in trustful obedience to Him as Lord, he is progressively saved from the power of sin.

3. *Salvation From Presence of Sin.* The presence of sin is the evidence of sin in one's environment. When Christ returns to earth and begins His new earthly ministry, He will save us from the presence of sin. All evidence of sin eventually will be removed; sinners will be destroyed. He will transform our environment, this planet, so that "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea."

### IV. Threefold Relationships

The earthly ministry of Christ was characterized by what He did *for* us. Christ died for sinners. The heavenly ministry of Christ is indicated by what He does *in* us. Christ dwells in believers through His transforming power. The new earthly ministry of Christ will be characterized by what He will do *to* us and *with* us. Christ will change believers' bodies and make glorified saints joint-heirs with Him.

What Christ did for us in His crucifixion and resurrection is *external* to us. What He is doing in us through His transforming power is *internal* within us. What Christ is going to do to us and with us in God's glorious tomorrow will be *eternal* for us.

The work of Christ's earthly ministry makes possible our change of *standing before God*, our justification. The work of Christ's heavenly ministry makes



possible transformation of our *character* and reformation of our *conduct*. The work of Christ's new earthly ministry will result in the redemption of our *bodies* from mortality to immortality. His three ministries can be summarized by the words: justification, transformation, and glorification.

When the believer accepts the benefits of Christ's earthly ministry through repentance, faith, and baptism, he enters into Christ. (Gal. 3:27.) He is *in Christ*; he has a new standing before God. When he enters into the benefits of Christ's heavenly ministry and permits Christ to transform his life, *Christ is in the believer*. When the believer takes part in the results of Christ's new earthly ministry through resurrection to immortality, he will be *with Christ*.

Christ, the sacrificed Lamb, brings *peace with God*. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 5:1). Christ, the indwelling Lord, gives the *peace of God*, a fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22; Phil. 4:7). Peace with God refers to a divine-human relationship in which all enmity is removed. Peace of God refers to inner calm and poise. Christ, the coming King, will bring *peace among nations*. (Micah 4:3.)

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# Test Questions      CHRIST'S THREEFOLD WORK

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1. One should emphasize equally the blood of Christ, the transforming power of Christ, and the coming Kingship of Christ. (True, False)
2. Our Lord's three ministries are His \_\_\_\_\_ ministry, His heavenly ministry, and His new earthly ministry.
3. Christ's sacrificial death during His earthly ministry provided the (application, basis, consummation) of salvation.
4. Christ's transforming power during His heavenly ministry makes possible the (application, basis, consummation) of salvation.
5. In His new earthly ministry, Christ will make possible the (application, basis, consummation) of salvation in the lives of glorified saints.
6. Jesus said, "I am the \_\_\_\_\_ shepherd: the \_\_\_\_\_ shepherd giveth his life for the sheep" (John 10:11).
7. "When the \_\_\_\_\_ Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away" (1 Pet. 5:4).
8. In Christian experience, there is a past salvation, which is an accomplished fact; there is a present salvation, which is a progressive process; and there is a future salvation, which is a promised hope. (True, False)
9. How is salvation from the penalty of sin related to Christ's sacrificial death?  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. How is salvation from the power of sin related to Christ's indwelling power today?

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11. How is salvation from the presence of sin related to Christ's new earthly ministry in the future?

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12. What is the difference between "peace with God" and the "peace of God"?

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# GOD'S GRACE

Salvation originates in the grace of God. God's plan of salvation flows forth from His heart to find its fulfillment in the lives of sinful men. God was under no obligation to save men from sin and to bestow upon them His spiritual blessings. Sinners do not deserve to be saved; they are worthy of death. God could have destroyed the entire human race, and sinners thereby would have received what they deserved. When sinners are saved and receive blessings of salvation, therefore, they receive what they do not deserve within themselves. Salvation is undeserved and unmerited by mankind. It is the gift of God. (Rom. 3:24; 5:15-21; 6:23; Eph. 2:8; Isa. 55:1, 2; Rev. 22:17.) The motivating cause of God's grace lies wholly within Himself. There is nothing within the recipient of God's grace to merit or to deserve His gift of salvation. Grace is God's freely given love in its relation to the needs of man in his state of sin and guilt.

## I. Salvation Not By Works

Grace and merit are mutually exclusive. They cannot co-exist; one eliminates the other. Works performed by the sinner cannot be the basis of salvation. Man can neither earn nor merit salvation. Man's natural "goodness" is without merit in God's sight. "All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags" (Isa. 64:6). Righteousness produced by self is self-righteousness, and that produced by the flesh is a work of the flesh. All men are sinners, and all of man is sinful. Man cannot save himself.

Sinners cannot attain salvation through keeping the law. Righteousness which counts with God cannot be acquired by keeping the Old Testament law. The law was given to Israel to define and to reveal sin. (Rom. 3:19, 20; 7:7.) The law was not intended to be a means whereby men could be saved and attain eternal life. (Gal. 3:21; Rom. 8:3.) The law was designed to show men their need of the Saviour. (Gal. 3:24.) The *entrance* of sin came through Adam; the *knowledge* of sin came through Moses; the *remission* of sin came through Jesus. Through Christ's death, believers have been redeemed from the law. (Rom. 7:4; Eph. 2:14, 15; Col. 2:14, 20.) The law to which believers are dead includes the ten commandments as well as the ceremonial laws of the Old Testament. Paul included number ten of the ten commandments, "Thou shalt not covet," as part of that law to which Christians are dead (Rom. 7:7). Christians, therefore, are not under the law, but under grace. (Rom. 6:14; 7:6; Gal. 4:30, 31; 5:18.) Christians are warned to "stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage" (Gal. 5:1). Paul declared, "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace" (Gal. 5:4), and "I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law,

then Christ is dead in vain" (Gal. 2:21).

The basic difference between Christianity and all other religions (including perverted forms of Christianity) is that non-Christian religions are religions of law, whereas true Christianity is a religion of grace. Non-Christian religions are characterized by man's efforts to please the deity through his own works (moral exercises, good works, ascetic practices, prayers, pilgrimages, sacrifices, etc.). The Christian religion, on the other hand, is characterized by man's humble response to what God has done, is doing, and will do for him. Max Mueller wrote:

In the discharge of my duties for forty years as professor of Sanskrit in the University of Oxford, I have devoted as much time as any man living to the study of the Sacred Books of the East, and I have found the one keynote, the one diapason, so to speak, of all these so-called sacred books, whether it be the Veda of the Brahmans, the Puranas of Siva and Vishnu, the Koran of the Mohammedans, the Zend-Avesta of the Parsees, the Tripitaka of the Buddhists—the one refrain through all—*salvation by works*. They all say that salvation must be purchased, must be bought with a price, and that the sole price, the sole purchase money, must be our own works and deservings. Our own Holy Bible, our sacred Book of the East, *is from beginning to end a protest against this doctrine*. Good works are, indeed, enjoined upon us in that sacred Book of the East far more strongly than in any other sacred book of the East; but they are only the outcome of a grateful heart -- they are only a thank-offering, the fruits of our faith. They are never the ransom money of the true disciples of Christ. (Cited by Pieper. *Op. cit.*, Vol. I, pp. 15, 16.)

If salvation could be earned by man, it would cease to be a gift. Eternal life would be God's payment of a debt to man. "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt" (Rom. 4:4). Paul reasoned, "And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work" (Rom. 11:6). If man earned, or even partially earned, eternal life, salvation would cease to be a gift.

If salvation were based upon human works, man would boast of his achievements. In the Kingdom man would pat himself on the back and proudly announce, "I am here because of what I have done. Worthy am I to receive praise and glory because I accumulated sufficient merit through my own works to deserve eternal life." Pride, however, is sin, and sinners will be excluded from God's eternal Kingdom. Paul explained, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not by works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works" (Eph. 2:8-10). "Where is boasting then? It is excluded" (Rom. 3:27). God's plan of salvation through grace produces true humility within man. In responding to God's grace, the sinner comes to God just as he is, without one plea of personal worthiness. He recognizes that he does not deserve salvation, that he merits nothing but destruction. To receive God's gift, the sinner must come to God with empty hands. With Augustus M.



Toplady, he says: "Nothing in my hand I bring, Simply to Thy cross I cling." One cannot cling to the Christ of the cross if his hands are filled with works of self. Hands filled with self-righteousness have no room to receive that righteousness which is of God.

Many sinners reject God's offer of salvation because they are too proud to accept a gift. Through pride, they assert their self-sufficiency and independence from God. They boast that they need no outside help, that they can stand on their own two feet, and that they can take care of themselves. They insist that they can fight their own battles and that they never ask anyone for anything. They want to be left alone to live their own lives without any interference from God. If God would permit them to purchase eternal life in some way, they would gladly accept God's offer. Since God insists that salvation is entirely a gift, however, and since man cannot in any way merit that gift, proud sinners want nothing to do with the gospel. Jesus indicated that pride is a major barrier to conversion: "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 18:3).

Salvation is not of works, lest any man should boast; it is all of grace, so that man will eternally glorify God. Conversion does not merit salvation. Repentance, faith, and baptism are not the origin nor basis of salvation. Through them, one does not accumulate merit to earn eternal life. The sinner is saved through repentance, faith, and baptism because these requirements must be met before he can accept God's gift of salvation. God's grace is the origin of salvation, and Christ's sacrifice is the basis of salvation. Conversion is the instrumental cause or condition of salvation, but it is not the meritorious basis of salvation. Man has the responsibility for accepting God's gift, but God receives all the glory for providing that gift. Even after sinners have accepted God's saving gift, and even after they have permitted Jesus to produce the fruit of the Spirit within their lives, they have no reason for pride; they have no basis for boasting. After having fulfilled all of God's requirements, humble believers will acknowledge that they are only "unprofitable servants" (Luke 17:10). Every saved sinner in God's future Kingdom will constitute an illustration of the working of God's grace. (Eph. 2:7.) Although immortal and a joint-heir with Christ, the glorified believer will be a testimony of God's grace. He will say, "I am here in God's perfect eternity, but I do not deserve to be here. I deserve destruction. I have experienced salvation because of God's saving grace and the Lamb's vicarious sacrifice." He will always be "only a sinner saved by grace."

## **II. God's Search for Man**

Man's search for God is merely his response to God's search for man. God searches for the sinner until the sinner finds Him. The sinner's finding God is merely his response to God's finding him. New Testament salvation pictures God and Jesus searching for man. Jesus said, "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10). He told about the shepherd who searched for the lost sheep, the woman who swept her house to find the lost coin, and the lost son who realized his lost condition and returned home. The sinner should place himself at the foot of the cross so that God in grace can find him.



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## Test Questions

## GOD'S GRACE

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1. God was (under, under no) obligation to save men from sin and to bestow upon them His spiritual blessings.
2. Sinners (do, do not) deserve to be saved; they are worthy of death.
3. Salvation is (deserved, undeserved) and (merited, unmerited) by mankind.
4. What is God's grace? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. The entrance of sin came through Adam; the knowledge of sin came through Moses; the \_\_\_\_\_ of sin came through Jesus.
6. Paul declared, "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are \_\_\_\_\_ from grace" (Gal. 5:4).
7. The basic difference between Christianity and all other religions is that non-Christian religions are religions of law, whereas true Christianity is a religion of \_\_\_\_\_.
8. Good works are emphasized in the Bible as the (purchase price, thank offering) of salvation.
9. If salvation could be earned by man, it would cease to be a gift. (True, False)
10. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should \_\_\_\_\_" (Eph. 2:8, 9).
11. God's plan of salvation through grace produces (humility, pride) within man.

12. Why do many sinners reject God's gift of salvation? \_\_\_\_\_

13. Through conversion: repentance, faith, and baptism, man (earns, accepts) God's gift of salvation.

14. How will immortal Christians in Christ's future Kingdom be illustrations of God's grace? \_\_\_\_\_

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# CONVERSION

The process of salvation includes three participants: God, man, and Jesus Christ. "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. 2:5). Salvation is a matter between the one God in His holiness and love, and the one human race in its sin. It is accomplished through the one, wonderful Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Three factors, related to the three participants in salvation, are God's grace, Christ's death, and man's faith. God's grace is the *origin* of salvation; Christ's death is the *basis* of salvation; man's faith is the *condition* of salvation. Accordingly, the Bible teaches that man is saved by God's grace (Eph. 2:8), by Christ's blood (Rev. 5:9), and by man's faith (Acts 16:31).

## I. Origin of Salvation

Salvation originates in God's grace. Planned by His wisdom, prompted by His love, and performed through His power, salvation begins in the heart of God. Sinners do not deserve to be saved; they cannot merit salvation. Salvation is a gift of God. Human religions are characterized by man's search for God; the true Christian religion is revealed as God's search for man.

## II. Basis of Salvation

Christ's sacrificial death is the basis of salvation. Through the infinite value of His sacrifice, Jesus paid sin's penalty. His death removed the barrier created by man's sin in its relation to God's holiness. It provided a basis whereby God could bestow His blessings of grace upon sinners without violating His own nature of holiness and justice. Jesus is the only Saviour; there is no other way to God. If man is to be saved, he must be saved on the basis of Christ's sacrifice. Apart from His death, there can be no salvation.

## III. Condition of Salvation

Man's acceptance of salvation through faith is the condition upon which salvation is bestowed. Salvation can become a reality only when the sinner meets God's requirements. God has provided salvation; man must accept salvation through conversion. Man's acceptance is the condition or instrumental cause of salvation. Man has the responsibility; God receives the glory. Conversion, including repentance, faith, and baptism, is neither the origin nor the basis of salvation. Conversion is not the meritorious basis of salvation; it is the means whereby man accepts God's saving gift.

## IV. Conversion Involves Decision

Salvation is dependent upon man's decision to accept God's loving gift. Created in God's image, man has ability to choose; he has been entrusted with

power to make decisions. Man's power of decision is one of three elements of personality: intellect, sensibilities, and will. These are three functions of man's mind. *Intellect* is the mind's ability to know; *sensibilities* is the mind's ability to feel; *will* is the mind's ability to choose and act. The power of decision, therefore, is a function of man's will.

Man's will is the controlling element of his personality. His will is the spring of all actions, the governing power of moral nature. Intellect provides the target, sensibilities pull the trigger, but it is the will which shoots the arrow. Man's will is of major importance in conversion.

Christian life begins with a decision. The Lost Son decided, "I will arise and go to my father" (Luk.- 15:18). Rebecca, consenting to marriage with Isaac, announced, "I will go" (Gen. 24:58). Saul of Tarsus asked, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" (Acts 9:6). In conversion, the sinner voluntarily surrenders his will to the will of God. He chooses God's choice. He says "yes" to God for eternity.

Man's choice of God's saving gift must be voluntary. Christ stands at the heart's door and knocks, but the locked door can be opened only from within. The sinner must lift the latch and open the door, or the door is never opened. Through infinite love, God inspires the sinner to open the door, to tear down the barricade, and to lift the black iron curtain so that salvation can become a reality in his life.

## **V. Three Elements of Conversion**

The three elements of conversion are repentance, faith, and baptism. They are essential to salvation. Conversion, of course, is not the *basis* of salvation; it is the *condition* of salvation. Man cannot earn salvation. Repentance, faith, and baptism do not accumulate merit so that God is obligated to give salvation as payment of a debt. Man cannot experience salvation apart from conversion, but the three elements of conversion *in themselves* do not save man. Jesus is Saviour; His sacrificial death provides the merit and basis of salvation. Repentance, faith, and baptism are essential *conditions* for salvation. They are required for salvation because they place the sinner in the proper position so that Jesus can perform His saving work. An illustration of this truth is that a diseased man's visit to a doctor's office may be required for restored health, but it is not the visit itself, it is the doctor who performs the cure.

Repentance, faith, and baptism are closely related. In the Bible, when one element of conversion is mentioned, the other two are included or implied in the context.

Repentance is turning away from sin; faith is turning toward Christ; baptism is entering into Christ. In one sense, repentance is negative and faith is positive. In repentance, one gets rid of sin; in faith, he receives Christ. In repentance, he says no to the world; in faith, he says yes to Christ. In repentance, one is "crucified with Christ" (Gal. 2:20); in baptism, he is "buried with Christ" (Rom. 6:4); through faith, he is "risen with Christ" (Col. 2:12).



|                |                |           |          |
|----------------|----------------|-----------|----------|
| Hebrews 6:1, 2 | Repentance     | Faith     | Baptism  |
| Mark 1:15      | Repent         | Believe   | _____    |
| Acts 20:21     | Repentance     | Faith     | _____    |
| Mark 16:16     | _____          | Believeth | Baptized |
| Acts 2:38      | Repent         | _____     | Baptized |
| Acts 16:31, 33 | Washed Stripes | Believe   | Baptized |

## VI. Complete Conversion

The sinner's conversion from sin to righteousness and from self to Christ must be complete. It must involve his total life. If repentance and faith are genuine, they will involve all three elements of personality: intellect, sensibilities, and will. Conversion involves a change of thinking, a change of feeling, and a change of purpose in the sinner's life. The relation of repentance and faith to the three elements of personality is pictured in the following chart.

|                | <i>Repentance</i> | <i>Faith</i>     |
|----------------|-------------------|------------------|
| Intellect:     | Recognition       | Belief           |
| Sensibilities: | Regret            | Confidence       |
| Will:          | Renunciation      | Trust, Surrender |

1. *Complete Repentance.* True repentance includes recognition of sin, regret for sin, and renunciation of sin. Recognition of sin is related to man's intellect; regret for sin is related to his sensibilities or feelings; renunciation of sin is related to his will or power of decision. Complete repentance, therefore, affects the sinner's total life. The real heart or essence of repentance is renunciation of sin and amendment of life. It is a matter of the will. Recognition of personal sin and heart sorrow for sin do not constitute true repentance unless they lead to the renunciation of sin.

2. *Complete Faith.* True faith includes belief, confidence, and trust and surrender. Like repentance, faith is related to the three elements of man's personality. Belief is related to man's intellect; confidence is related to man's sensibilities; trust and surrender are related to man's will. Having true faith, the Christian will believe in God, Jesus, and essential truths of the Bible; he will have complete confidence in God and Jesus; he will surrender himself to Christ as Lord and will trust in Christ as Saviour. Belief and confidence must precede trust and surrender. Faith is based upon facts. Alone, however, belief and confidence do not constitute true faith. True faith results in trust and surrender. One might know all facts about Christ and salvation, and he might have complete confidence in Christ's ability to save, but he would not experience that salvation unless he personally went to Christ and surrendered himself entirely into His hands.

## VII. Baptism



Baptism is that outward act whereby the believer reveals his obedience to Christ and his desire to enter into the benefits of salvation made possible by Christ's sacrifice. Like repentance and faith, baptism saves us (1 Pet. 3:21) because it brings us into the required position so that Jesus can save us.

Baptism is the immersion of a believer in water. It symbolizes his belief that Christ has died for his sins, was buried, and rose again. It indicates that the believer has entered into a personal, vital relationship with Christ, and that he has appropriated to himself the benefits of Christ's sacrificial death. Baptism is that symbolic rite wherein the believer pictures the fact that his old life has been counted as dead and buried, and that he has risen to newness of life in Christ.

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## Test Questions

## CONVERSION

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1. The process of salvation includes three participants: God, \_\_\_\_\_, and Jesus Christ.

2. MATCHING    a. God's grace    b. Christ's death    c. Man's faith

\_\_\_\_\_ basis of salvation  
\_\_\_\_\_ condition of salvation.  
\_\_\_\_\_ origin of salvation

3. Man's acceptance of salvation through faith is the condition upon which salvation is bestowed. God has provided salvation; man must accept salvation through conversion. (True, False)

4. How is man's decision to accept God's gift related to salvation?

5. Intellect is the mind's ability to (choose, feel, know).

6. Sensibilities is the mind's ability to (choose, feel, know).

7. Will is the mind's ability to (choose, feel, know).

8. How is man's will related to conversion? \_\_\_\_\_

9. Does God compel sinners to accept His gift of salvation? (Yes, No)

10. Three elements of conversion are: \_\_\_\_\_,

\_\_\_\_\_, and baptism.

11. Are repentance, faith, and baptism closely related in the Bible? (Yes, No)

12. What is included in complete repentance? \_\_\_\_\_

13. What is included in complete faith? \_\_\_\_\_

14. What is baptism and what does it symbolize? \_\_\_\_\_

Please fill in your name and address here:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

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# BAPTISM

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water. It symbolizes his belief that Christ died for his sins, was buried, and rose again. It indicates that the believer has entered into a personal, vital relationship with Christ, and that he has appropriated to himself the benefits of Christ's sacrificial death. Baptism is that symbolic rite wherein the believer pictures the fact that his old nature has been put to death and buried, and that he has risen to newness of life in Christ.

## 1. Authority for Baptism

Baptism is one of the three elements of conversion. Repentance from sin and faith in Christ must be accompanied by baptism into Christ. Apart from baptism, the process of conversion is incomplete. Christian baptism is not an optional provision; it is a divine requirement.

1. *An ordinance of Christ.* Baptism is an ordinance of Christ. The command to baptize is included in the Great Commission. Christ instructed His disciples to teach and to baptize all nations. Our Lord's command that sinners should be baptized is as binding as is His command that they should be taught. "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:15, 16). "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" (Matt. 28: 18-20).

Having received all authority, our Lord authorized His disciples to carry His message of salvation to all nations. In fulfilling His instructions, the missionary disciples served as His representatives. They received their authority to teach and baptize from Him. The phrase "in the name of" means "in the authority of" or "as an agent of." The disciples, therefore, baptized "in the name of Jesus Christ" (Acts 2:38) and "in the name of the Lord" (Acts 10:48). They taught and baptized with authority received from Jesus, God, and the Holy Spirit. The phrase "in the name of Jesus Christ" conveys the same declaration of authority as do the words of Matthew 28:19. This verse does not teach that believers should be immersed three times during the act of baptism. Jesus died, was buried, and was resurrected *only once*.

2. *Example of New Testament Church.* The example of the New Testament Church indicates that baptism is an ordinance which must be observed by believers today. Apostles and early disciples taught and practiced baptism.

Members of New Testament churches were baptized believers.

|                  |                              |
|------------------|------------------------------|
| Acts 2:38, 41    | Three thousand on Pentecost  |
| Acts 8:12        | People of Samaria            |
| Acts 8:13        | Simon the sorcerer           |
| Acts 8:38, 39    | Ethiopian eunuch             |
| Acts 9:18; 22:16 | Saul of Tarsus               |
| Acts 10:47, 48   | Cornelius                    |
| Acts 16:14, 15   | Lydia                        |
| Acts 16:30-34    | Jailer at Philippi           |
| Acts 18:8        | Crispus at Corinth           |
| Acts 19:5        | Believers at Ephesus         |
| Romans 6:3-5     | Christians at Rome           |
| Galatians 3:27   | Christians of Galatia        |
| Colossians 2:12  | Christians at Colosse        |
| 1. Peter 3:21    | Christians scattered in Asia |

The Acts of the Apostles tells about sinners becoming Christians. The epistles were written to men who had already been baptized and had become Christians. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that baptism is mentioned more frequently in the Acts than in the epistles.

3. *Example of Jesus.* The importance of baptism is revealed by the fact that Jesus requested baptism. (Matt. 3:13-17.) Our Lord's baptism by John marked the beginning of His earthly ministry. His immersion in the Jordan River pointed forward to His immersion in suffering and death. (Matt. 20:22, 23; Luke 12:50.) Jesus rose from the waters of baptism and walked in the shadow of the cross. The baptism of believers points backward to Christ's death, burial, and resurrection.

## II. Manner of Baptism

1. *Baptism Means Immersion.* Sprinkling or pouring water upon a person is not Bible baptism. The word "baptism" means immersion. It is translated from the Greek word *baptizo*, to dip, to immerse, to sink. It is never translated "to sprinkle" or "to pour." The Greek word for sprinkle is *rhantizo*, and for pour is *ekcheo*. It is significant that the Greek Orthodox Church has never used anything but immersion. In the Greek language, the language of the New Testament, baptism means immersion.

2. *Revealed by Bible Baptisms.* Bible baptisms were immersions in water. This fact is indicated by the truth that John performed this sacred service where there was *much water*. "And John also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, because there was much water there" (John 3:23). If John the Baptist had been sprinkling water upon the people who came to him, there would have been no need for him to seek a place where there was much water. Jesus was immersed in the Jordan River. "And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water" (Matt. 3:16). The Ethiopian was immersed by Philip. They both went down into the water, and they came up out of the water. "And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water,



both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip" (Acts 8:38, 39).

3. *Proved by What Baptism Symbolizes.* Baptism is an external rite which symbolizes burial and resurrection. Immersion alone pictures that which baptism symbolizes. Sprinkling or pouring does not picture burial and resurrection in any way. "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection" (Rom. 6:4, 5). "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead" (Col. 2:12).

Baptism and immersion are interchangeable words. Wherever "baptism" occurs in the Bible, the word "immersion" can be substituted. This fact is not true of the words "sprinkling" and "pouring." The meaning of the text is retained if one read, "We are buried with him by immersion." The verse would be without meaning if one read, "We are buried with him by sprinkling." Sprinkling and pouring do not picture burial. Immersion alone presents a picture of burial and resurrection.

4. *Authorities Admit Baptism Is Immersion.* Lexicographers, authors of Bible dictionaries and encyclopedias, reformers, church historians, Bible commentators, and other scholars admit that Bible baptism is immersion. They acknowledge that New Testament baptisms were immersions in water.

Lexicographers, including H. G. Liddell and Robert Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon* (Oxford, 1843), Joseph Henry Thayer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (New York, 1886), Samuel Bagster's *The Analytical Greek Lexicon* (New York: Harpers), Sophocles, *Lexicon of Greek Usage in the Roman and Byzantine Periods*, and many others, unite in stating that the Greek word *baptizo* means "to dip, to immerse, to submerge, or to put under water." Prof. Goodwin of Harvard said:

The classical meaning of *baptizo*, which seldom occurs, and of the more common *bapto*, is dip (literally and metaphorically), and I never heard of its having any other meaning anywhere. Certainly I never saw a lexicon which gives either sprinkle or pour, as meanings of either. I must be allowed to ask why I am so often asked this question, which seems to me to have but one perfectly plain answer. (Strong, *Op. Cit.*, p. 933.)

A. H. Strong refers to the Appendix of the American Bible Union's Version of Matthew, which was edited by Thomas J. Conant (1802-1891). In this work, Conant lists examples of the usage of words for baptism

drawn from writers in almost every department of literature and science; from poets, rhetoricians, philosophers, critics, historians, geographers; from writers on husbandry, on medicine, on natural history, on grammar, on theology; from almost every form and style of composition, romances,



epistles, orations, fables, odes, epigrams, sermons, narratives; from writers of various nations and religions, Pagan, Jew, and Christian, belonging to many countries and through a long succession of ages.

In all, the word has retained its ground-meaning without change. From the earliest age of Greek literature down to its close, a period of nearly two thousand years, not an example has been found in which the word has any other meaning. There is no instance in which it signifies to make a partial application of water by affusion or sprinkling, or to cleanse, to purify, apart from the literal act of immersion as the means of cleansing or purifying. (*Ibid*, p. 933.)

The truths that baptism means immersion and that immersion was the New Testament mode of baptism are stated in many Bible dictionaries, e.g., William Smith, *A Dictionary of the Bible*; and James Hastings, *A Dictionary of the Bible* (New York: Scribners, 1903), and *A Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels* (New York: Scribners, 1906). These facts are presented also in Hastings, *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* (New York: Scribners, 1910, Vol. II, pp. 375, 378); *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (Chicago, 1958, Vol. 3, p. 83); *Encyclopedia Americana* (New York, 1958, Vol. 3, p. 218); *Edinburgh Encyclopedia*; *Catholic Encyclopedia*; *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*; Brande's *Encyclopedia*; John Kitto's *Cyclopaedia of Biblical Literature*; et. al. *The Catholic Encyclopedia* (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1907), for example, states:

The most ancient form usually employed was unquestionably immersion. This is not only evident from the writings of the Fathers and the early rituals of both the Latin and Oriental churches, but it can also be gathered from the Epistles of St. Paul, who speaks of baptism as a bath (Eph. 5:26; Rom. 6:4; Titus 3:5). In the Latin Church, immersion seems to have prevailed until the twelfth century. After that time it is found in some places even as late as the sixteenth century. Infusion and aspersion, however, were growing common in the thirteenth century and gradually prevailed in the Western Church. (Vol. II, pp. 261, 262.)

Martin Luther recognized immersion as the true mode of baptism. Philip Schaff, the church historian, observed, "Luther sought to restore immersion, but without effect" (*History of the Christian Church*. Vol. II, p. 251). Martin Luther wrote: "Baptism is a sign both of death and resurrection. Being moved by this reason, I would have those that are baptized to be altogether dipped into the water, as the word means and the mystery signifies" (*Babylonian Captivity of the Church*, Section 103). Although John Calvin, another leader of the Reformation, believed that other forms of baptism were as valid as immersion, he admitted that immersion was the Bible mode. He wrote: "The very word baptize, however, signifies to immerse; and it is certain that immersion was the practice of the ancient Church" (*Institutes of the Christian Religion*. Book IV, Chapter XV). John Wesley, founder of Methodism, practiced baptism by immersion. Commenting on Romans 6:4, in his *Explanatory Notes on the New Testament* (1755), he wrote: "We are buried with him--alluding to the ancient manner of baptizing by immersion."

Church historians record the fact that immersion was the New Testament manner of baptism. Philip Schaff wrote: "The usual form of the act was immersion, as is plain from the original meaning of the Greek *baptizein* and *baptisma*" (Op. cit., Vol. I, p. 122). Johann Neander (1789-1850) wrote: "In respect to the form of baptism, it was, in conformity with the original institution and the original import of the symbol, performed by immersion, as a sign of entire baptism into the Holy Spirit, of being entirely penetrated by the same" (*Church History*). George P. Fisher, in his *The Beginnings of Christianity* (1877), observed: "Baptism, it is now generally agreed among scholars, was commonly administered by immersion." Mosheim, the German Lutheran church historian (1694-1755), wrote: "Baptism was performed in the first century by immersing the whole body" (*Ecclesiastical History*. London, 1765). W. J. Conybeare and J. S. Howson, in their standard work, *The Life and Epistles of St. Paul*, made the following comment on Romans 6:4, "This passage cannot be understood unless it be borne in mind that the primitive baptism was by immersion."

The Greek Orthodox Church has always practiced immersion. In the Greek language, of course, that word for baptism means immersion. For many centuries, the Roman Catholic Church practiced immersion also. Some of the earliest church buildings erected by the Roman Church included large baptistries. Sprinkling and pouring began to be substituted for immersion as the church gradually drifted away from teachings of the Bible. Sprinkling, at first, was used only in exceptional cases. Centuries later, sprinkling became a common practice. At first, sprinkling was employed only in such cases as in the baptism of infirm or sick persons. These cases were called "clinical" or sickbed baptisms. Philip Schaff wrote:

The validity of this baptism was even doubted by many in the third century. According to ecclesiastical law clinical baptism at least incapacitated for the clerical office. Pouring and sprinkling were still exceptional in the ninth century according to Walafrid Strabo (*De Rel. Eccl.*, c. 26), but they made gradual progress with the spread of infant baptism, as the most convenient mode, especially in northern climates, and came into common use in the west at the end of the thirteenth century. (*Op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 249, 250.)

**5. Manner of Baptism Is Important.** When advocates of sprinkling or pouring are confronted with the overwhelming proof that Bible baptism is immersion, they retreat to the theory that the manner of baptism is without importance. They assert that any form may be used provided the believer's heart is right. This theory is without merit; it seeks to evade the issue.

The fallacy of this theory is easily recognized when its reasoning is applied to other symbols. A nation's flag is also a symbol, being of importance because of the country it represents. One might remark that the identity of the cloth waving from the flagpole is without importance, just so the citizen's heart is filled with patriotism. This is not true. The structure of the flag is of major importance because of the things for which it stands. One cannot alter a flag



without changing its meaning. What if the reasoning of the advocates of sprinkling were applied to the Communion service? If one can change the manner of baptism, why cannot one change the manner of the Communion service? Instead of having bread, why cannot some other food be used? Instead of having the fruit of the vine, why cannot some other beverage be used? The two great symbolic ordinances of the Church, baptism and Communion, cannot be changed. The outward forms of these ordinances cannot be changed because they are pictures of spiritual realities. It is important that baptism by immersion be unchanged. The immersion of a believer in water pictures his burial and resurrection with Christ into newness of life.

### **III. Essential Conditions for Baptism**

Baptism must be preceded by repentance and faith. He who is to be baptized must first turn his back to sin through repentance and turn his face toward Christ through faith. When Peter said, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you" (Acts 2:38), he taught that repentance must precede baptism. When Jesus said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:16), He showed that man must believe before he is baptized. Baptism is the sinner's outward testimony that he is a repentant believer. As the burial of the old life, baptism reveals that the believer has died to his old nature. As entrance into Christ, baptism reveals that the repentant sinner has exercised faith in Christ.

Some men seem to have the idea that baptism is magical. They indicate that there is supernatural virtue in the water itself, apart from any meaning it might have for one being baptized. According to this thought, if a person were baptized and did not realize its meaning, he would still receive all the spiritual benefits of the rite. The Bible clearly teaches that immersion in water has spiritual significance only if the symbolic rite has proper meaning for the person being baptized.

### **IV. Subjects for Baptism**

The proper subjects for baptism are individuals who have been converted to Christ and who have indicated their desire to repent from sins and to enter into a vital relationship with Christ.

No precise minimum age can be established for baptism because individuals differ in personal development, religious training, and ability to understand the gospel message. It is certain, however, that subjects for baptism should be sufficiently mature to understand the meaning of baptism.

Infants cannot be scripturally baptized. Infant baptism is not valid. Infants cannot possess the essential conditions for baptism, namely, repentance and faith. Conversion is a personal matter; conversion by proxy does not exist. Parents cannot exercise faith as a substitute for a child's faith. Baptism of infants and baptism for the dead are useless and without value. Infant baptism is harmful. It gives false assurance to the individual in later years. It indicates that a change of heart is unnecessary. Infant baptism is not taught in the Bible. There is no example of such practice in the New Testament Church.

### **V. Results of Baptism**



Baptism is that outward act whereby the believer reveals his obedience to Christ and his desire to enter into the benefits of salvation made possible by Christ's sacrifice. Like repentance and faith, baptism saves us (1 Pet. 3:21) because it brings us into the required position so that Jesus can save us.

1. *Remission of Sins.* One of the results of baptism is remission of sins. Forgiveness of sins was made possible by Christ's sacrifice. (Rom. 3:25; 1 John 1:7; Rev. 1:5.) Remission of sins becomes effective in the sinner's life through repentance, faith, and baptism. "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38). "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16). As the Egyptians were drowned in the Red Sea (Ex. 14:13-31), so the sins of believers were drowned in the waters of baptism (1 Cor. 10:1, 2, 11).

2. *Entrance Into Christ.* Believers are baptized *into* Christ. "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ" (Gal. 3:27). They acquire a new standing before God in Christ. Through conversion, man establishes a personal, vital relationship with Christ. The sinner enters into Christ through conversion; Christ enters into the believer through His power. The sinner becomes a believer, a branch, a body, a building, and a bride. The *believer* casts himself upon Christ, his Sacrifice. The *branch* is grafted into Christ, the Vine (John 15:1-5). The *body* is united to Christ, the Head (Eph. 1:22, 23; 1 Cor. 11:3). The *building* is placed upon Christ, the Foundation (Eph. 2:20-22; 1 Pet. 2:5). The *bride* is linked with Christ, the Bridegroom (Eph. 5:23-32).

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Church of God General Conference  
2020 Avalon Parkway, Suite 400  
McDonough, GA 30253  
678-833-1839  
coggc.org

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## Test Questions

## BAPTISM

Please fill in the answers on this question sheet and return to:

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ First Name \_\_\_\_\_  
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or to:

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(678) 833-1839

1. Christian baptism is the \_\_\_\_\_ of a believer in water.
2. Baptism symbolizes a person's belief that \_\_\_\_\_ died for his sins, was buried, and rose again.
3. Baptism indicates that the believer has entered into a personal, vital relationship with Christ, and that he has appropriated to himself the benefits of Christ's sacrificial death. (True, False)
4. "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is \_\_\_\_\_ shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:15, 16).
5. Baptism means immersion. Sprinkling or pouring water upon a person (is, is not) Bible baptism.
6. The Greek word "baptizo" means to \_\_\_\_\_.
7. How do details of New Testament baptisms show that they were immersions in water? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. What does baptism symbolize? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. (Immersion, Sprinkling, Pouring) symbolizes burial and resurrection.
10. Lexicographers, authors of Bible dictionaries and encyclopedias, reformers, church historians, Bible commentators, and many other scholars admit that Bible baptism is immersion. (True, False)



11. Does man have the right to change the manner of baptism from immersion to some other form? (Yes, No)

12. Baptism must be preceded by \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

13. Infants (can, cannot) be scripturally baptized. They cannot have the essential conditions for baptism, namely, repentance and faith.

14. A person must be old enough to know the meaning of baptism before he can be scripturally baptized. (True, False)

15. What are the results of baptism? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please fill in your name and address here:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

# DOCTRINES OF SALVATION

The sinner occupies a sevenfold position before God. He is a debtor, a condemned criminal, an enemy, a slave, defiled and unholy, dead, and a poor stranger.

Man in his sevenfold position as sinner needs the sevenfold salvation God has provided through His Son. As debtors, sinners need forgiveness. As condemned criminals, they need justification. As enemies of God, they need reconciliation. As slaves to sin, they need redemption. As defiled and unholy, they need sanctification. As dead, they need newness of life. As poor strangers, they need adoption. The seven doctrines of salvation are forgiveness, justification, reconciliation, redemption, sanctification, newness of life, and adoption.

The seven elements or doctrines of salvation are divine works; they designate the divine side of salvation. The human side of salvation, as we have seen, is conversion, which includes repentance, faith, and baptism. The seven doctrines of salvation are works which God performs when the sinner properly enters into Christ. When the sinner accepts God's gift of salvation through repentance, faith, and baptism, God lifts him out of the world, places him in Christ, and bestows upon him spiritual riches indicated by the seven doctrines of salvation.

## I. Forgiveness

An outstanding blessing included in God's gift of salvation is the forgiveness of sins. The forgiven sinner's past life, regardless of what might have been included, exists no more. Bridges are burned behind him; gates of yesterdays are closed. He is dead to the past. His life history previous to conversion is considered non-existent. He is treated as if the day he became a Christian were the first day of his life.

Through divine forgiveness, man's sins have been washed away (Acts 22:16); he has become as "white as snow" (Isa. 1:18; Psalms 51:7). His sins have been removed from him "as far as the east is from the west" (Psalms 103:12). His iniquities have been subdued, and his sins have been cast into the depths of the sea. (Micah 7:19.) They have been "blotted out" (Isa. 44:22), "sought for . . . and not found" (Jer. 50:20), cast behind God's back (Isa. 38:17), and remembered no more (Jer. 31:34).

## II. Justification

The scene is the supreme court of the universe. The sinner, on his own merit, stands before his holy Judge as a condemned criminal, guilty of sin and worthy

of destruction. God's holy nature requires Him to condemn and to punish the sinner.

As an act of grace, however, God has ordered a stay in the execution of sin's penalty, eternal death. Sinners, therefore, do not fall dead the moment they sin today. The execution of sin's penalty has been postponed until the second death so that sinners can have opportunity to accept God's plan of salvation. Apart from God's grace, the total human race would have been destroyed. Through infinite love, God provided that His sinless and perfect Son, Jesus Christ, would become the sinner's Substitute. As the sinner's Substitute, Christ perfectly satisfied all the requirements of the law. He obeyed the law's precepts and suffered the law's penalty. This He did, not for Himself, but for sinners. "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor. 5:21). The believer's sin is imputed to Christ, and Christ's righteousness is imputed to the believer.

When repentant believers receive Jesus as their Substitute, they become vitally united to Him. They enter into Christ, and Christ enters into them. The saving work that Christ performed for them is then actually applied to them. In consequence of this vital relationship with Christ, God can justly treat the sinner as if he himself had done those things which his Substitute did for him. The sinner is treated as if he himself had obeyed the law's precepts, and as if he himself had suffered the law's penalty.

In view of the sinner's relation to his Substitute, God imputes Christ's righteousness to the sinner. On the basis of this imputed righteousness, which the sinner receives through faith, God as Judge declares that the sinner is righteous in relation to the law. He is justified; he is without condemnation.

### **III. Reconciliation**

Sinners are enemies of God. They live in opposition to God's government. Man, in sin, asserts self in active hostility and antagonism to the Ruler of the universe. Self and God move in opposite directions. There can be no fellowship between man and God as long as man is determined to live contrary to Him. "Men are at war among themselves, and man is at war within himself because there is no peace with God." Enemies of God need reconciliation. "When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son" (Rom. 5:10). "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God" (Rom. 8:7, 8). "And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled" (Col. 1:21).

Christ's sacrifice provided the basis of reconciliation of God, the King of the universe, and His enemies. God is propitiated; sinners are reconciled. Sinners have peace with God through the Lord Jesus Christ. No longer are they God's enemies; they are His friends.

### **IV. Redemption**

Redemption is liberation of a slave from bondage by payment of a price. The



word "redeem" is translated from three Greek words: *agorazo*, to acquire at the forum (Rev. 5:9; 14:3, 4), *exagorazo*, to acquire out of the forum (Gal. 3:13; 4:5), and *lutroo*, to loose by a price (Luke 24:21; Titus 2:14; 1 Pet. 1:18). God, the Redeemer, performs His work of redemption through Jesus, the Redeemer. The scene is the agora, the market place. Slaves of sin are in bondage, "sold under sin" (Rom. 7:14). God, the Redeemer, purchases slaves of sin in the market place with the precious blood of His Son, who voluntarily gave His life as a ransom price for sinners. Having paid the purchase price, the Redeemer removes the redeemed from the market place so that they will never again be exposed to sale. The Redeemer, then, sets the prisoners free; they are given perfect freedom. Out of appreciation and love for the Redeemer, the redeemed give themselves to Him as His servants. (1 Pet. 2:16.)

In forgiveness, God is Creditor; in justification, He is Judge; in reconciliation, He is King; in redemption, He is Redeemer. The debtor is in the banking house with indebtedness. The criminal is in the law court with condemnation. The enemy is in the king's palace with enmity. The slave is in the market place under bondage. The debtor receives forgiveness; the criminal, righteousness; the enemy, peace; the slave, freedom.

## **V. Sanctification**

Sinners need sanctification. They are unholy, desecrated, polluted, and profane. (1 Tim. 1:9; 2 Tim. 3:2.) In that condition, they cannot abide in God's holy presence nor be used in His sacred service. Like old silverware in a rubbish heap, they were made for the Master's use, but, in their present condition, they are not suited for that purpose. They need to be separated from sin, dedicated to God, and consecrated for service.

Sanctification originates in God's grace; it is based upon Christ's sacrifice (Heb. 10:10, 14, 29; 13:12); it is conditional upon man's faith (Acts 26:18). God performs this work of sanctification through His Son, Jesus Christ. "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption" (1 Cor. 1:30). Christ is the sinner's sanctification. In other words, Christ's holiness is imputed to the believer at conversion. Through his vital relationship with Christ, the believer is holy before God. When a person enters into Christ, he stands on holy ground. He is separated from the world and is dedicated unto God. He has been sanctified; he is a saint.

## **VI. Newness of Life**

Sinners are dead in sin. They are "dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph. 2:1, 5), "without God in the world" (Eph. 2:12), and "alienated from the life of God" (Eph. 4:18). They are dead to the spiritual realm of life. There is no redemptive contact between the sinner and God. Blind men are dead to the realm of sight; deaf men are dead to the world of sound; paralyzed men are dead to the realm of touch; sinners are dead to the things of God. The windows of the heart are closed heavenward. Sinners have horizontal existence, but no vertical life. For them, life is without a third dimension.

When sinners enter into Christ, they become new creatures. When Christ enters

into them, they receive newness of life. Having established a union with Christ, believers receive a special quality of life from Him. They are on a new level of existence. Life for them acquires a new dimension; to the horizontal is added the vertical. They sustain relationships not only with men, but also with God. Life is not merely extended to the *around*; it is lifted to the *above*. Windows of heart and mind are flung open Godward, and through them enters the sunshine of God's life, light, and love.

## **VII. Adoption**

Adoption is that act of God in salvation wherein He, as Father, places His begotten child in the position of an adult son with all the privileges of legal inheritance. He who is adopted is an heir. Newness of life and adoption are linked together. Newness of life gives the *nature* of sonship; adoption gives the *position* of sonship.

As begotten children and adopted sons, believers are heirs of God. "He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son" (Rev. 21:7). "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ" (Rom. 8:16, 17).

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## Test Questions

SEVEN DOCTRINES OF  
SALVATION

Please fill in the answers on this question sheet and return to:

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1. Man in his sevenfold position as sinner needs the sevenfold salvation God has provided through His Son. (True, False)

2. The seven doctrines of salvation are works which (God, man) performs when the sinner properly enters into Christ.

3. The seven doctrines of salvation designate the (divine, human) side of salvation; conversion refers to the (divine, human) side of salvation.

4. Name the seven doctrines of salvation. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. What is forgiveness of sins? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

6. In justification, God declares that the believer is (righteous, guilty) in relation to the law in view of Christ's righteousness which has been imputed to the believer.

7. What is reconciliation? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

8. (Reconciliation, Redemption) is liberation of a slave from bondage by payment of a price.



9. (Redemption, Sanctification) means that the believer stands on holy ground before God. He has been separated from sin, dedicated to God, and consecrated for service.

10. When sinners enter into Christ, they become new \_\_\_\_\_. They receive newness of life.

11. What is adoption? \_\_\_\_\_

12. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and \_\_\_\_\_ with Christ" (Rom. 8:16, 17).

13. Can each believer experience the benefits of all seven doctrines of salvation? (Yes, No)

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# CHRISTIAN LIVING

Christian living must be Christ-centered. It is determined by a vital, redemptive relationship between believer and Christ. Conversion is the process whereby the believer establishes contact with this glorious person. Christian living is the normal result of the functioning of this vital relationship.

The Christian walk includes activities such as prayer, Bible study, overcoming temptations, church attendance, being a good citizen, being strangers and pilgrims, witnessing for Christ, etc. A person is not a Christian, however, simply because he prays, reads the Bible, attends church, and is a good citizen. A person is a Christian because he is properly related to God through Christ. Although one prays, reads his Bible, and attends church services, he is not a Christian unless he has the redemptive relationship with God through the sacrifice of Christ. The various factors included in the Christian walk should be viewed as flowing forth from the vital relationship the Christian has with Christ.

Believers present their bodies as living sacrifices, walk in newness of life, and are zealous unto good works as normal responses to the vital contact they maintain with their risen Lord.

Christians live in righteousness and are careful to maintain good works not in order that they might be redeemed, but because they have been redeemed. They do good not in order that they might be justified, but because they have been justified. They walk the Christian way not in order that they might stand on holy ground, but because they already stand on holy ground. Good works are not the *purchase price* of salvation; they are the *thank offering*. We love God because He first loved us. We live for Him because we have experienced His grace and mercy. What Christ has done for us becomes the motivating influence for us to perform what we should do for Christ.

The Christian walk includes every area of one's life. "Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and Man" (Luke 2:52). Our Lord's growth was mental (wisdom), physical (stature), spiritual (favour with God), and social (favour with man). The believer also should experience this fourfold growth. The child of God should become like Christ in every area and relationship of life.

1. *Relationship With God.* The Christian's relationship with God includes the important factors of worship, prayer, Bible study, love for God, trust,

obedience, and humility.

2. *Relationship With Himself.* As he walks the Christian way, the believer sees himself as a child of God. He belongs to God; therefore he seeks to glorify God in his body and mind. (1 Cor. 6:19, 20.) He gives his body the proper care through food, rest, exercise, and cleanliness. As a child of God, he has a proper self-respect. He seeks to develop his mind and personality and seeks to use his time, talents, and possessions in the right manner.

3. *Relationship Toward Sin.* In the Christian walk, the believer faces temptations. Temptation is not sin itself. Temptation becomes sin when one yields to it. The believer can overcome temptation through filling his mind and heart with the Word of God, depending upon the overcoming power of Christ, and crowding out temptations with works of righteousness. The Christian should confess his own sins and forgive the sins of others. Sins of Christians are forgiven through the blood of Jesus Christ, the Advocate. (1 John 2:1, 2.) The Christian's responsibility is to confess his sins to God and to accept His forgiveness. (1 John 1:7-9.)

4. *The World.* Christians are not "of the world" (John 15:19; 17:16). The world is crucified unto them. (Gal. 6:14.) They "love not the world, neither the things that are in the world" (1 John 2:15). (John 8:23; Rom. 12:2; Eph. 2:2, 12; 5:11; Phil. 3:19, 20; Col. 3:2; Jas. 1:27; 4:4; 1 John 2:15-17; 4:4; 5:4, 5, 19.) "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor. 6:17, 18). Christians are strangers and pilgrims in the world. (1 Pet. 2:11; Heb. 11:13-16.) Christians are hated by the world and persecuted by it. (John 15:18-20; 16:33; 17:14-16; 1 John 3:13; 4:4-6.)

5. *The Mass of Humanity.* The Christian, in relation to the mass of humanity, seeks to "do good unto all men" (Gal. 6:10). He becomes a channel through whom Christ can show His love for mankind. The child of God seeks to relieve the suffering, hunger, ignorance, and loneliness which the mass of humanity experiences. He has a compassion for the lost. He becomes a personal evangelist, a witness for the gospel. He obeys the Lord's command, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark. 16:15). The Christian is the "salt of the earth" (Matt. 5:13), and the "light of the world" (Matt. 5:14-16; Phil. 2:15, 16; 1 Pet. 2:9). He is a "living epistle" read by men (2 Cor. 3:2, 3), an ambassador for Christ. (2 Cor. 5:20)

6. *Earthly Governments.* Our Saviour taught the separation of church and state when He said, "Render, therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's (Matt. 22:21). The Christian will be a good citizen, will pay his taxes, and will pray for those in authority. (Roin. 13:1-7; Titus 3:1; 1 Pet. 2:13-15.) "I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty" (1 Tim. 2:1, 2). When the laws of men conflict with the instructions of God, the Christian must obey God rather



than men even though he must die for Christ. (Acts 4:19; 5:29.)

7. *The Christian Home.* In relation to his family, the believer who walks the Christian way will seek to maintain a Christian home. Christ will be exalted as Head of the home. Teachings of the Bible will determine the basis and nature of family life. Worship, prayer, and Bible study will occupy an important place in the home. "Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled" (Heb. 13:4). The unmarried state, contrary to the Roman teaching, is not superior to the married state. Paul warned that in "the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; forbidding to marry and commanding to abstain from meats" (I Tim. 4:1-3). He who is married can attain as high a degree of spirituality as he who is unmarried. Sex, as expressed in marriage, is not sinful; it is God-given. It is a means for expressing true love between husband and wife. In walking the Christian way, each member of the family will follow instructions given in the Bible concerning himself. The Bible gives instructions for husbands (I Pet. 3:7; Col. 3:19; Eph. 5:25, 28-33; 1 Cor. 11:3; 7:3-6), for wives (I Pet. 3:1-6; Col. 3:18; Eph. 5:22-24; Titus 2:4, 5; 1 Cor. 7:3-6; 11:7-12), for parents (Eph. 6:4; Col. 3:21; 1 Thess. 2:11; 1 Tim. 5:8; Luke 11:11-13; 2 Cor. 12:14; Prov. 13:24; 22:6; 29:15; 1 Tim. 3:4, 5, 12; Titus 1:6; Heb. 12:7; Psalms 103:13), and for children (Eph. 6:1-3; Col. 3:20; Ecclesiastes 12:1).

8. *Fellow Christians.* Christians will encourage, exhort, and be examples for one another. (1 Tim. 4:12.) They will love one another. (John 15:12; 1 John 3:14.) They will forgive one another. (Eph. 4:32.) They will bear one another's burdens. (Gal. 6:1-5.) "If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others" (Phil. 2:1-4). Believers will recognize themselves as members of one body. (Rom. 12:3-13; 1 Cor. 12:12-27.) "With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love," believers will seek "to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:2, 3).

9. *The Church.* The believer who maintains the Christian walk will attend church services regularly. "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching" (Heb. 10:25). Christian love, fellowship, and service can be found in the social relations which are expressed in the services, activities, and work of the church. The believer will contribute "as God hath prospered him" to the financial support of the Lord's work. (1 Cor. 16:2; 2 Cor. 9:6, 7.) The Bible presents the tithe (one tenth of the increase) and offering basis as the systematic method for supporting the Lord's work. (Gen. 14:20; Heb. 7:2-6; Gen. 28:22; Matt. 23:23; Luke 11:42; Mal. 3:8, 10.) The believer will use his talents willingly in the service of the Lord. (Rom. 12:3-8; Eph. 4:7, 11-16.)

In relation to God, Christ, and man, the Spirit-filled life is love. Love is the chief of the fruit of the Spirit and summarizes all spiritual graces. In response to sorrow, sadness, and suffering, the Spirit-filled life is joy. In response to unrest, confusion, and turmoil, it is peace. In the believer's relation to persecution, difficulties, imperfections in others, and factors which cannot now be changed, the fruit of the Spirit is longsuffering or patience. In response to irritation, injustice, and insults, the Christ-directed life is gentleness or kindness. In response to the needs of others, it is goodness or generosity. In the believer's relation to truth, justice, and the Lord's work, the fruit of the Spirit is faithfulness. In one's attitude toward himself and others, it is meekness or gentleness. In one's relation to temptations and God-given instincts, the Spirit-filled life is temperance or self-control. Proper self-control results when one is Christ-controlled.

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*(Adapted from Systematic Theology, by Alva Huffer, published by Church of God General Conference, Oregon, Illinois 61061, U.S.A.)*

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## Test Questions

## CHRISTIAN LIVING

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1. A Christian is a person who has the proper redemptive relationship with \_\_\_\_\_ through Christ.

2. Is a person a Christian simply because he prays, reads the Bible, attends church, and is a good citizen? (Yes, No)

3. What should God's blessings of salvation cause the believer to do in regard to Christian living? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. What are some things a person should do in order to grow in the Christian life? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. How can the believer overcome temptations? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

6. What responsibility does the Christian have toward the mass of humanity?

\_\_\_\_\_

7. Should a Christian be a good citizen, pay his taxes, and pray for those in authority? (Yes, No)



8. What are some characteristics of a Christian home?

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9. What attitude should a believer have toward other believers?

---

10. The believer (need not, should) attend church services regularly.

11. Should the believer contribute to the financial support of the Lord's work?  
(Yes, No)

12. What is the fruit of the Spirit? \_\_\_\_\_

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# GOD'S TOMORROW

## I. Future Aspect of Salvation

God's plan of salvation includes promises for the future as well as provisions for the past and the present. Although the gospel provides many blessings for the present life, the goal of the gospel is eternal salvation for man in Christ's future Kingdom. Paul emphasized the fact that future resurrection is essential to man's salvation when he wrote, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable" (1 Cor. 15:19). "Godliness is profitable unto all things" in that it has the promise not only of "the life that now is," but also of "that which is to come" (1 Tim. 4:8). He who forsakes all things and all persons for the name of Christ is promised not only that he will "receive an hundredfold," but also that he will "inherit everlasting life" (Matt. 19:29).

The future is included in the threefold salvation which the gospel provides for man. In Christian experience, there is a past salvation, which is an accomplished fact; there is a present salvation, which is a progressive process; and there is a future salvation, which is a promised hope. The believer can truthfully say, "I have been saved, I am being saved, and I shall be saved."

Through the work of our Saviour, the sinner has the prospect of salvation from the presence of sin as well as from the penalty of sin and the power of sin. The sinner receives salvation from the *penalty of sin* at his conversion. Jesus paid the penalty of sin in His sacrificial death. The believer receives salvation from the *power of sin* progressively as he permits Christ to dwell in his mind and heart. The power of Christ counterbalances the power of the carnal mind. The believer will acquire salvation from the *presence of sin* in Christ's future Kingdom. The presence of sin is the evidence of sin in one's environment. When Christ returns, He will transform man's environment, this planet, so that "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" (Isa. 11:9). The believer's body will be transformed from mortality to immortality. The earth will be purified and restored as the paradise of God.

Salvation from the penalty of sin refers to the past; salvation from the power of sin refers to the present; and salvation from the presence of sin refers to the future. Considering this threefold salvation, the believer can pray: "Lord, *cleanse* my past, *consecrate* my present, and *clarify* my future." Christ cleanses man's past through His blood; He consecrates man's present through His power, the Spirit; He clarifies man's future through the promises of His future Kingdom.

## II. The Future Can Be Known

God foreknows the future, and, through divine prophecy, He has revealed His secrets to man. Agnosticism teaches that the future cannot be known, that God has hidden Himself in obscurity, and that man must remain in perpetual ignorance concerning His nature and plans. Christian theism, on the other hand, asserts that God has planned an eternal future and that He has communicated facts about the future to man.

Man is able to know about the future because God, through divine prophecies, has revealed His plans to man. Apart from divine revelation, man cannot know what the future holds. Man cannot acquire information about the future through fortune tellers, spiritualist mediums, or the oracles of Delphi. He cannot learn what the future holds by observing cloud formations, flights of birds, position of stars in the sky, lines in a person's hand, bumps on one's head, tea leaves, shuffling of cards, throwing of dice, casting of lots, analysis of dreams, and similar superstitions. Divine revelation is man's only source of knowledge concerning the future.

### **III. What the Future Holds**

Human speculation has produced many false theories concerning the future. Atheists deny the existence of God and insist that man has no future life. Hinduism holds that the human "soul" transmigrates from one body to another, that at death man is reincarnated as an animal or another human being. Buddhism teaches that the goal of life is to attain Nirvana, a state of nothingness, where the soul is absorbed into the divine nature. American Indians visualized man's future life as a "happy hunting ground." Classical mythology pictured the dead as crossing the river Styx in a ferryboat; the Romans placed a coin in the dead person's hand or mouth to be used to pay the fare. Plato, the pagan Greek philosopher, formulated the theory of the soul's natural immortality. He taught that man has an immaterial nature which can have conscious existence apart from man's body, and that this immaterial nature is immortal. He taught that death is not death at all; it is the continuation of life in a new form and in a new place. According to Plato, matter is evil; the body and the earth contaminate the soul. Purification and true happiness, he taught, can be attained only when man's soul is released from the body and when man dwells apart from the earth. Many theological systems of Christendom embody Plato's theory and teach that man at death goes either to heaven or to a burning hell. These theories are false.

The Bible alone presents an accurate picture concerning what God has planned for the future. Contrary to Greek dualism, the Bible teaches that the earth and man's body are not evil in themselves. God created the earth and man's body, and He rejoiced in His finished work. God's plan of redemption includes the changing- of the believer's body from mortality to immortality and the transforming of the earth into the paradise of God. The redeemed Christian will have a real, material, immortal physical body, and he will dwell on this planet, cleansed, transformed, and restored to its original purity and perfection.

God's plan of salvation will result in the revelation of His glory. A principal goal of God's redemptive plan is the establishment of His rule over man and the earth. When this goal is accomplished, the famous prayer taught by the



Lord will have been answered: "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven" (Matt. 6:10). Then, "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" (Isa. 11:9). The most important subject associated with God's plan for the future is the Kingdom of God.

The medium through whom God will accomplish His work of establishing His Kingdom is Jesus Christ. Jesus is the Kingdom of God personified. Through Christ, God is "reconciling the world unto himself" (2 Cor. 5:19), and is subduing all things unto Himself. Jesus is the beginning of the new creation, the Life-giver, the Judge, and the King. When Christ's work has been completed, He will present the Kingdom to God as an accomplished task. "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all" (1 Cor. 15:24, 25, 28).

Major factors included in the study of the future are the second coming of Christ, the resurrections, the coming Kingdom of Christ, the restoration of Israel, future divine judgments, and the new earth.

#### **IV. The Believer's Hope**

The second coming of Christ is the blessed hope of believers. "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:13). Christians have many hopes for the future. The one hope which supersedes all other hopes, however, is the return of Christ, because it will make all other hopes possible. The blessed hope, our Lord's return, is the open door to God's Tomorrow.

The believer's hope is centered not in a thing, but in a person, the Lord Jesus Christ. "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col. 1:27). "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven" (1 Thess. 4:16). The believer is looking not so much for the *coming* of Christ as he is for *Christ* to come. He is looking not for the event, but for the person. The hope which the gospel holds forth to the mass of humanity today is this glorious person, Jesus Christ. He is the world's only hope. Christ alone is the answer; He is the "only way out," the only solution to the world's problems. As earth's rightful King, He alone can transform the world's chaos and bring righteousness, peace, and true happiness to mankind. Jesus is the man of the hour; He is just the person whom the world needs today.

#### **V. Preparing for the Future**

Bible writers use the hope of God's Tomorrow as a motivating influence to inspire men to accept Christ as sacrifice, to permit Him to change their lives today, and to prepare for His future Kingdom. "Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure" (1 John 3:3). "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness? Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot,

and blameless" (2 Pet. 3:11, 14). Because Christians look for "that blessed hope" (Titus 2:13), they deny "ungodliness and worldly lusts" and live "soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world" (Titus 2:12).

Man's life today is a trust. All time belongs to God. Every minute we live is God's minute; every breath we breathe comes from Him. God tests man today in preparation for the life of tomorrow. As the oak is in the acorn, and the song is in the note of music, eternity is in the minutes we live today. How we live in man's today will determine whether we will be privileged, through the grace of God, to live in God's Tomorrow.

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## Test Questions

## GOD'S TOMORROW

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1. Does God's plan of salvation include promises for the future as well as provisions for the past and the present? (Yes, No)
2. The goal of the gospel is eternal salvation for man in Christ's future \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Paul wrote, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most \_\_\_\_\_" (1 Cor. 15:19).
4. What is the threefold salvation which the gospel provides for man?
  - a) \_\_\_\_\_
  - b) \_\_\_\_\_
  - c) \_\_\_\_\_
5. The believer can pray: "Lord, (cleanse, consecrate, clarify) my past; (cleanse, consecrate, clarify) my present; and (cleanse, consecrate, clarify) my future."
6. How is man able to know about the future? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. (Human speculation, The Bible) alone presents an accurate picture concerning what God has planned for the future.
8. In God's Tomorrow, will the redeemed Christian have a real, material, immortal physical body? (Yes, No)



9. According to the Bible, where will the redeemed Christian dwell during Christ's future Kingdom?

10. What important part of the Lord's Prayer will be answered in God's Tomorrow?

11. What is the "blessed hope" of believers?

12. Why is the second coming of Christ so important to the Christian?

13. What effect should the hope of God's Tomorrow have upon men today?

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# SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

## I. The Fact of His Coming

The second coming of Christ is as certain as God's Word is true. He who acknowledges the authority and accuracy of the Bible must recognize the fact of Christ's return to earth. The second coming of Christ is a definite event that will occur in the future. Future events predicted by human philosophers are based upon speculation and are open to question. Future events described by prophets of God and recorded in the Bible are certain to occur. God's infinite wisdom and power guarantee that His promised blessings will be bestowed and that His predictions concerning the future will come to pass.

Prophecies concerning the fact of Christ's future return to earth are presented clearly in the Bible. "And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:10, 11). "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thess. 4:16, 17). "Unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation" (Heb. 9:28).

Bible prophecies concerning Christ's first coming and second coming are linked together. During His earthly ministry, prophecies concerning His first coming were fulfilled in minute detail. During His new earthly ministry in the future, therefore, we are assured that prophecies concerning His second coming will be literally fulfilled. At His first coming, Jesus was the suffering Sacrifice; at His second coming, he will be the reigning Sovereign. At His first coming, He was the Lamb of God who was crucified on the cross; at His second coming, He will be the Lion of Judah reigning on His throne. The reality of Christ's future return to earth is definite and sure.

## II. The Importance of His Coming

1. *Open Door to God's Tomorrow.* The second coming of Christ is the open door to God's Tomorrow. The fulfillment of almost every Bible promise concerning the future of man and the earth is dependent upon this glorious event. Apart from the second coming of Christ, the Church would not be completed, the dead would not be raised, the Kingdom would not be established, the wicked would not be judged, and there would be no peace

upon earth. Wonderful blessings resulting from Christ's future rulership will become realities only because of the fact of His return to earth. The second coming of Christ, therefore, will mark the end of man's today and the beginning of God's Tomorrow.

2. *Blessed Hope of the Church.* The return of Christ is the blessed hope of the Church. "Looking, for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:13). It is the one outstanding event to which all believers look forward with desire and expectation. (I Cor. 1:7; Phil. 3:20; 1 Thess. 1:10; 2 Thess. 3:5; 2 Tim. 4:8; Heb. 9:28; 2 Pet. 3:11-14.) Appropriating scriptural promises, believers have many hopes for the future. They desire and expect resurrection to immortality, reunion with loved ones, freedom from sickness and death, and an environment of perfect righteousness and peace. The one hope which supersedes all other hopes, however, is the second coming of Christ. The blessed hope makes all other hopes possible.

3. *Incentive to Christian Living and Service.* The hope of Christ's return is an important motive for Christian living. Expecting the Bridegroom's return, the believer seeks to be "all glorious within" and to be arrayed in garments of righteousness. Devout Christians so order their conduct that they would not be ashamed if He should appear at any moment.

|                      |                                 |
|----------------------|---------------------------------|
| 2 Peter 3:11, 12, 14 | What manner of persons ought ye |
| 1 John 3:3           | This hope purifieth himself     |
| Colossians 3:4, 5    | Mortify therefore               |
| Titus 2:12, 13       | Denying ungodliness, looking    |

The second coming of Christ is an appeal to watchfulness and faithfulness. When Jesus returns, true believers will be found watching for His coming. (Matt. 24:42-46; Mark 13:32-37; Luke 12:35-40; 21:36; 1 Thess. 5:6.) His return is an incentive to Christian service and a stimulus to missionary work. (Luke 19:13; Matt. 24:45-51.) The outstanding work of the Church today is to warn men in all nations of Christ's return and future judgment.

### III. The Nature of Christ's Second Coming

Many men have acknowledged the Bible's teaching concerning the *fact* of Christ's coming, but they have rejected its teaching concerning the *nature* of His coming. The Bible clearly describes the second coming of Christ as personal, physical, visible, sudden, glorious, and triumphant.

1. *Personal Coming of Christ.* The second coming of Christ refers to the personal return of Christ to earth. "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11). "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God;" (1 Thess. 4:16). It is not merely an event that will occur; it is a person who will appear. Jesus Himself is coming back to earth.

2. *Physical Coming of Christ.* The second coming of Christ will be a physical



return of Christ to earth. When Jesus ascended to God's right hand in heaven, He had a real, literal, material body. When He returns to earth, He will have that same physical nature. He will "so come *in like manner* as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11). "When he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (1 John 3:2). "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him" (Rev. 1:7). Christ ascended from the Mount of Olives. When He returns, "his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives" (Zech. 14:4). When He ascended, clouds received Him out of their sight. (Acts 1:9.) When He descends, He will come with clouds. He will return in like manner as He ascended. His coming will be real, literal, material, and physical.

3. *Visible Coming of Christ.* The second coming of Christ will be a visible return of our Lord to earth. "Every eye shall see him" (Rev. 1:7). "And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory" (Luke 21:27). If men say that Christ's coming is invisible and refers merely to His presence, Christians are warned by their Lord to believe it not. (Matt. 24:23-26.) "For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be" (Matt. 24: 27). Christ's second coming, therefore, cannot refer to the coming of Christ's power on Pentecost, the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D., or the influence of Christianity in the world. Christ's future return is an event which will be personal, physical, and visible.

4. *Sudden and Unexpected Return of Christ.* Sinners in the world scoff at the teaching of Christ's second coming. (2 Pet. 3:3-5.) They are not expecting Him to return. His coming, therefore, will overtake them as a thief comes unexpectedly in the night; it will take them by surprise. (1 Thess. 5:2-5; Matt. 24:37-44.)

Believers, on the other hand, are watching for His return. Although they do not know the date of His coming, they constantly are alert for His return. They may be grinding at the mill or working in the field (Matt. 24:40, 41), but they are always ready for the return of their Lord. They will gladly cease all activity in order to be united visibly with their returning Saviour.

5. *Glorious and Triumphant Return.* The second coming, of Christ will be glorious and triumphant. The King of kings will come in power and glory. He will subdue all enemies and rule in triumph over the earth. The triumphant return of Christ is described in the following verses: Matt. 24:30; 25:31; Col. 3:4; 2 Thess. 1:7-10; Rev. 11:15; 17:14; 19:11-16; Psalms 2:6-9; Daniel 2:44, 45; 7:13, 14, 27; Psalm 72: 8-11; 1 Cor. 15:25.

#### **IV. The Purpose and Results of His Coming**

Christ's second coming will mark the beginning of His new earthly ministry. As King of kings, He then will sit upon His throne of glory, establish His Kingdom, and rule the earth with Jerusalem as His capital city. His rulership will result in the earth's transformation. He will remove the presence and results of sin from this planet. In His future Kingdom, the earth will be full of the glory of the Lord, and God will be revealed in His true character as

holiness, love, and truth. As the open door to God's Tomorrow, Christ's return will result in fulfillment of prophecies concerning the future of the Church, Israel, nations, and the earth.

*The Church.* The second coming of Christ will result in physical redemption for believers. (Rom. 8:23.) Dead Christians will be resurrected to immortality. (1 Thess. 4:16; 1 Cor. 15:52.) Living Christians will be changed instantly from mortality to immortality. (1 Cor. 15:51-53; Phil. 3:21.) Living and resurrected believers will be caught up to meet Christ in the air. (1 Thess. 4:17; 2 Thess. 2:1.) Believers will be glorified with Christ (Col. 3:4) ; they will be made joint-heirs with Him. (Rom. 8:17.) The glorified Church will be with Christ when He rules over Israel and the nations. Members of the completed Church will become kings and priests and will reign on the earth. (Rev. 1:6; 5:10; 20:6; 2 Tim. 2:12.)

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## Test Questions

## SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

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1. How do Bible believers know that Jesus is coming again? \_\_\_\_\_

2. "For the Lord \_\_\_\_\_ shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first" (1 Thess. 4:16).

3. How are Christ's first coming and second coming linked together?

4. In what way is the second coming of Christ the "open door" to God's Tomorrow? \_\_\_\_\_

5. How does the hope of Christ's return provide a motive for Christian living?

6. The second coming of Christ refers to the (impersonal, personal) return of Christ to earth.

7. Will Jesus have a real, literal body when He comes again? (Yes, No)

8. The second coming of Christ will be a (visible, invisible) return of our Lord



to earth.

9. Sinners in the world scoff at the teaching of Christ's second coming; they (are, are not) expecting Him to return.

10. When Jesus comes again, He will (reign as King, die as a Sacrifice).

11. What will be the capital city of Christ's future Kingdom on earth?

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12. What will happen to dead Christians when Jesus comes again?

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13. What will happen to living Christians when Jesus comes again?

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14. What position will glorified Christians have in Christ's future Kingdom?

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

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# THE FIRST RESURRECTION

Christians can never see each other for the last time. Although they may be separated by years of time, distance of miles, or the shadow of death, they know that they will meet again because they have the promise of resurrection to immortality. The believer's blessed hope is to be raised from the dead to immortality when Jesus comes.

When Jesus comes, all true Christians, "the dead in Christ," will be resurrected to immortality. This raising of believers from death will constitute the first resurrection. Believers who have died are unconscious in their graves; they will remain in death until the resurrection. In the first resurrection, all believers will be raised from the dead to immortality and will receive their rewards at the same time. Living Christians will be changed instantly from mortality to immortality at the time of the first resurrection, and, with the resurrected Christians, they will be caught up to meet Christ in the air. They will be glorified with Christ and will be made joint-heirs with Him.

1. *Time of First Resurrection.* The first resurrection will occur at the second coming of Christ. "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thess. 4:16, 17).

2. *Participants in First Resurrection.* The first resurrection is for Christians. Dead sinners will remain in their graves until the final resurrection. Those who take part in the first resurrection are designated as: "the dead in Christ" (1 Thess. 4:16), "they that are Christ's" (1 Cor. 15:23), "they that have done good" (John 5: 29), and "the just" (Acts 24:15).

When Jesus comes, all Christians will have been divided by life and death into two groups. First, believers who have fallen asleep in death during the centuries will be waiting unconsciously in their graves until Christ's return. Second, some believers will be alive when Jesus comes. The benefits of Christ's return will be bestowed upon both groups of Christians, those who are living and those who are dead. "Whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him" (1 Thess. 5:10).

*Dead Christians.* During the apostolic age, believers began to die as martyrs in the persecutions which Christians experienced. Believers in the church at Thessalonica began to wonder whether dead Christians would receive any

benefit from Christ's second coming. By falling asleep in death, would Christians miss immortality, glory, and joy which will result when Christ returns? Paul wrote his first church letter, a letter to the church at Thessalonica, to explain that living Christians will have no priority over dead Christians when Jesus comes. He said, "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep" (1 Thess. 4:13-15). Living Christians will have no advantage over dead Christians when Jesus comes. In fact, dead Christians will be resurrected before living Christians are transformed. "The dead in Christ shall rise first" (1 Thess. 4:16). Believers, therefore, need to have no fear to fall asleep in death because they have hope of resurrection to immortality. Death is like dreamless sleep; one has no knowledge of the passing of time. After death, the Christian's next conscious experience will be his resurrection from death. It matters not how long one has been dead nor where he may be buried. God knows the resting place of each saint. One may be buried in some obscure cemetery; his grave may be covered with weeds; his tombstone may have crumbled to dust; men may have forgotten his name. But that matters not. God has not forgotten; He will always remember. At the appointed time, He will raise that believer from the dead to immortality.

*Living Christians.* Christians who are living when Jesus comes will be glorified with those raised from the dead. Living Christians will be transformed, transfigured, changed from mortality to immortality. This change will occur instantly when Christ returns. Paul explained this fact: "Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed" (1 Cor. 15:51, 52). Living Christians will be transformed before they realize what has happened. The transforming change will occur "in the twinkling of an eye." Whether believers are walking down a street, working in a factory, washing dishes in a kitchen, sitting at a desk in school or an office, or fishing in a boat on a lake, they will be changed instantly from mortality to immortality and will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. Jesus said, "I tell you, in that night there shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be taken and the other shall be left. Two women shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left" (Luke 17:34-36).

3. *Nature of First Resurrection.* When resurrected or changed, believers will possess immortality. Immortality is inability to die. An immortal person is one who is not mortal, not subject to death. He cannot be tempted, cannot experience suffering, and cannot die.

Man needs to experience a physical change in order to dwell in God's eternal Kingdom. Paul wrote, "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot



inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption" (1 Cor. 15:50). Suppose one were mortal during eternity and one's body were still subject to disease, deterioration, and decay. Before a person were six hundred years of age, he would be weak and frail; his sight would be poor; and he would be unable to get around very well. He would not be in proper physical condition to enjoy the coming Kingdom. Men, therefore, need more than extended duration of life; they need a new physical nature.

What will believers be like after they have been made immortal? Will they be transformed into angels? Will they have bodies? If they have bodies, will they be immaterial, invisible, and ghostly? Will the redeemed become like some science fiction mythical creature from another solar system? Will they be reincarnated in another person? Speculation is unneeded. The Bible reveals what immortal believers will be like. In immortality, believers will have real, literal, material bodies of flesh and bones. They will be like the glorified Christ. "We know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (1 John 3:2). He "shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body" (Phil. 3:21).

One can know what Christians will be like in immortality by knowing what Christ is like. After His resurrection, Jesus had the same body He had before He died, except it had been changed from mortality to immortality. When Jesus appeared to His disciples, they recognized Him as their beloved Master who had risen from the dead. During the forty days between His resurrection and ascension, Jesus appeared to His disciples many times and revealed Himself in His resurrection nature. He wanted the disciples to know that He had really risen from the grave and that He had a real body. He told them that He was not immaterial, indistinct, and ghostly, but that He had a real body of flesh and bones. (Luke 24:36-39.) The disciples, saw Him (Luke 24:40) and touched Him. (Luke 24:39.) He walked among them and talked with them. He ate fish and honey in their presence. He showed them the nail prints in His hands and feet.

When believers become immortal in the first resurrection, they, too, will have real bodies. They will be able to walk and talk; they will recognize one another and will be reunited with loved ones. Suffering, sorrow, and sadness will be removed. The redeemed will have eternal joy in God's perfect eternity. God's plan of salvation for believers includes not a redemption *from* the body, but a redemption *of* the body. The believer's body will not be *exchanged*; it will be *changed*. Christians will be glorified, not apart from their bodies in some indistinct, misty, immaterial condition, but in their bodies which will be transformed from mortality to immortality.

God intends for Christians to be "conformed to the image of his Son" (Rom. 8:29). He plans for them to become like Christ today in their thoughts, attitudes, and actions. He plans for them to become like Christ in His immortal physical nature at the resurrection. (1 John 3:2; Phil. 3:21.) If a person wants to experience a change in physical nature at the resurrection, he must experience a change in standing before God and a change in character and conduct today. Outward transformation in God's Tomorrow depends upon inward

transformation in the Christian life today. One's having a spiritual body at the resurrection depends upon his having a spiritual mind today.

If a person wants to be *with Christ* (1 Thess. 4:17; Rev. 3:21; 17:14; 20:6) at His return and in His future Kingdom, he must be *in Christ* (Rom. 8:1; 2 Cor. 5:17; John 15:4, 7; 1 Thess. 4:16) and permit Christ to dwell *in him*. (Gal. 2:20; John 15:4; Rev. 3:20; Rom. 8:9, 10; Col. 1:27; 2 Cor. 13:5.) The believer enters into Christ at conversion; Christ enters into the believer when He dwells in Him through His Spirit.

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# Test Questions THE FIRST RESURRECTION

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1. Christians will be raised from the dead in the (first, second) resurrection.
2. The first resurrection will occur when (Jesus comes, the Christian dies).
3. Persons who take part in the first resurrection are the (dead in sin, dead in Christ).
4. In the first resurrection, all believers will be raised from the dead to immortality and will receive their rewards at the same time. (True, False)
5. Will all Christians be dead when Jesus comes? (Yes, No)
6. What will happen to living Christians when Jesus comes?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. "Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be \_\_\_\_\_" (1 Cor. 15:51).
8. "In a moment, in the twinkling of an \_\_\_\_\_, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the \_\_\_\_\_ shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed" (1 Cor. 15:52).
9. Dead Christian will be raised before living Christians are changed. (True, False)
10. Living Christians will be changed before dead Christians are raised. (True, False)



11. When resurrected or changed, believers will be immortal. An immortal person (can, cannot) die.

12. In immortality will believers have real, literal, material bodies? (Yes, No)

13. Immortal Christians will be like what glorified person? \_\_\_\_\_

14. What one person has been raised from the dead to immortality and has given believers a preview of what they will be like in immortality?

\_\_\_\_\_

15. God's plan of salvation for believers includes not a redemption (from, of) the body, but a redemption (from, of) the body.

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# THE KINGDOM OF GOD

The return of Christ will result in the establishment of His Kingdom upon earth. When Christ rules as King of kings, the hopes of humanity will be realized. Christ has the right to rule this planet as King of kings because He is the Son of God. He has the right to sit on David's throne and to rule over Israel because He is the Son of David.

God's redemptive kingdom had its principal beginning in His promises to Abraham and his family. The nation, Israel, was God's kingdom on earth during the Old Testament era. Because of Israel's wickedness, God's kingdom was overturned and suspended until the rightful King, Jesus Christ, should come. During His earthly ministry, Jesus presented Himself to Israel as its King, but He was rejected and was crucified. God's kingdom over Israel will be reestablished when Christ returns and sits upon the throne of David. As His redemptive kingdom, Israel constituted a special sphere of God's rulership. "Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation" (Ex. 19:5, 6). David said, "He hath chosen Solomon my son to sit upon the throne of the kingdom of the Lord over Israel" (1 Chron. 28:5).

Israel became a nation and a kingdom under the leadership of Moses. The kingdom of Israel was a theocracy. God ruled as King over the nation through judges. During the days of Samuel, the last of the judges, Israel rejected the theocracy and demanded an earthly kingdom to rule over them. (1 Sam. 8:5-22.) Saul was selected by Israel to be king. (1 Sam. 10; 11:15; 12:1.) Because of Saul's disobedience, God rejected Saul as king (1 Sam. 13:13, 14) and chose David as His king (1 Sam. 16:1-13; Acts 13:17-22).

1. *God's Covenant with David.* God, who cannot lie, promised David an eternal seed, an eternal throne, and an eternal kingdom. His seed would rule over the kingdom of Israel forever. This kingly covenant was confirmed and repeated to Solomon, David's son. (1 Chron. 22:8-10; 2 Chron. 7:17, 18.)

2 Samuel 7:12-16  
1 Chronicles 17:7-14  
Psalm 89:3, 4, 27-37  
Psalm 132:11, 12  
Jeremiah 33:15-26  
Jeremiah 23:5, 6  
Isaiah 11:1-12

Thy throne established for ever  
Stablish his throne for ever  
David's seed and throne  
David's children sit on throne  
Covenant with David certain  
Unto David a righteous Branch  
Stem of Jesse, a Branch

God's covenant with David is eternal because God's Word is sure. "Thus saith the Lord; If ye can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, and that there should not be day and night in their season; then may also my covenant be broken with David my servant, that he should not have a son to reign upon his throne" (Jer. 33:20, 21).

2. *Kingdom Temporarily Suspended.* For many centuries, the dynasty of David reigned in Jerusalem over Israel. Most of the rulers who sat on David's throne, however, were wicked. They followed the nation in disobeying God and in worshiping idols. In punishment for disobedience, God permitted Babylon to carry Israel into captivity. The kingdom was temporarily suspended; David's throne was unoccupied. "And thou, profane wicked prince of Israel, whose day is come, when iniquity shall have an end, thus saith the Lord God; Remove the diadem, and take off the crown: this shall not be the same: exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high. I will overturn, overturn, overturn, it: and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him" (Ezek. 21:25-27). The kingdom was suspended. The throne was overturned until One should come whose right it is to occupy that throne.

3. *Jesus, the Seed of David.* Jesus is He whose right it is to sit upon David's throne and to rule Israel for eternity. Jesus is the Son of David and the Son of God. Jesus will fulfill the eternal covenant God made with David. "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder....Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever" (Isa. 9:6, 7). "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke 1:32, 33).

Jesus was born to be King. (John 18:36, 37.) The wise men asked, "Where is he that is born King, of the Jews?" (Matt. 2:2). During His earthly ministry, Jesus "went throughout every city and village, preaching and shewing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God" (Luke 8:1). He revealed His kingly authority in His message and miracles. His miracles of healing and resurrection were prophetic foretastes of future conditions when He reigns as King. He offered Himself to Israel as King, but Israel rejected Him. (John 1:11; Matt. 23:37-39.) Pilate said unto the Jews, "Behold your King! But they cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar" (John 19:14, 15).

Shortly before His ascension, the disciples questioned the risen Christ, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" (Acts 1:6). The kingdom was not to be restored at that time. It would not be restored until the Church Age was completed at Christ's return. Today, Christ is sitting with the Father on the Father's throne. Jesus said, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne" (Rev. 3:21). Jesus will sit on His own throne, the throne



of David, when He comes again. "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory" (Matt. 25:31).

4. *The Premillennial Return of Christ.* The Bible teaches that Christ's coming will precede the Millennium, that He will come personally before the Millennium and establish His Kingdom upon earth. As King of kings, He will sit upon His own throne of glory and rule the earth with Jerusalem as His capital city.

The Bible teaches that the resurrection of Christians will occur prior to the Millennium. During the Millennium, resurrected saints will reign with Christ upon earth. "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years" (Rev. 20:6). "And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth" (Rev. 5:9, 10). The first text, Revelation 20:6, depicts the *duration*, and the second text, Revelation 5:9, 10, explains the location of the believers' future reign with Christ. The first text tells *how long*; the second text tells *where*. Christians will reign with Christ one thousand years upon earth. Since the resurrection of Christians will occur when Jesus comes, our Lord's coming must precede the Millennium.

Christ's Kingdom will not be established until He returns. Jesus taught the parable of the nobleman to the disciples "because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear" (Luke 19:11). Jesus pictured Himself as the nobleman who goes into "a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return" (Luke 19:12). Jesus ascended to heaven to receive His Kingdom from His Father. (Luke 1:32, 33; Dan. 7:13, 14.) Christ's Kingdom will be inaugurated when He returns. (Luke 19:15.) Christ is not sitting upon His own throne today. Today, He is sitting with God on God's throne. "I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne" (Rev. 3:21). Jesus will sit upon His own throne of glory when He returns. "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory" (Matt. 25:31). Christ's Kingdom is linked with His appearing. (2 Tim. 4:1.)

The coming of Christ will result in the smiting of the nations, which will precede the establishment of His Kingdom. (Dan. 2:34, 35, 44, 45; Rev. 19:11-21; Psalms 2:8, 9.) The smiting of the nations does not refer to a gradual conversion of humanity through the gospel today, but it refers to the future judgment of Christ when He comes. Earthly rulers will be compelled to yield their authority to Christ. His Kingdom will replace all earthly kingdoms.

Christ's Kingdom on earth and the Millennium are yet future. Blessings associated with the Kingdom are not realities today. During Christ's future Kingdom, nations will live in peace (Isa. 2:4; Micah 4:3); men will walk in righteousness; animals will be harmless (Isa. 11:6-9; 65:25); there will be no

more sickness (Isa. 33: 24; 35:5, 6) ; and the fertility of the earth will be restored. (Isa. 35:1, 2, 6, 7; 41:18, 19; 55:12, 13; Amos 9:13, 14.) These blessings are not realities today because Christ's Kingdom has not been established.

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## Test Questions

## THE KINGDOM OF GOD

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1. When will the Kingdom of God be established upon earth?

2. Why does Christ have the right to rule this planet as King of Kings?

3. The nation, (Egypt, Israel, Babylon), was God's Kingdom on earth during the Old Testament era.

4. God promised (Saul, Ahab, David) an eternal seed, throne, and kingdom.

5. "I will overturn, overturn, overturn, it: and it shall be no more, until he come whose \_\_\_\_\_ it is; and I will give it him" (Ezek. 21:27).

6. What person has the right to sit upon David's throne and to rule Israel for eternity? \_\_\_\_\_

7. "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father \_\_\_\_\_: and he shall reign over the house of \_\_\_\_\_ for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke 1:32, 33).

8. During His earthly ministry, Jesus offered Himself to Israel as King; Israel (accepted, rejected) Him.

9. When will Jesus sit upon His own throne, the throne of David?



10. The Millennium refers to Christ's future reign of (100, 1,000, 10) years on earth.

11. The Bible teaches that Christ's coming will (precede, follow) the Millennium.

12. Where will resurrected Christians be during the Millennium?

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13. What are some of the blessings associated with Christ's future Kingdom on earth?

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Please fill in your name and address here:

Name 

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Address 

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State 

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# ISRAEL'S FUTURE

The restoration of Israel to Palestine and that nation's future conversion to Christ occupy an important place in Bible prophecy. Israel's return to the Holy Land is an event which is occurring today, and it is an outstanding sign that the second coming of Christ is near.

## I. God's Covenant With Abraham

The land of Palestine belongs to the Jews. God, who is owner of the universe, has promised that land to Israel for an everlasting possession. To many observers, the future destiny of Palestine is a matter of speculation. To students of the Bible, however, there is no need for guesswork. Palestine is the Holy Land of the Bible, and God's Word is very definite in stating to whom the land belongs. The land belongs to Israel.

|                    |                                 |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| Genesis 12:1-3, 7  | Promised land, seed, blessing   |
| Genesis 13:14-17   | All the land he could see       |
| Genesis 15:5-7, 18 | Unto thy seed given this land   |
| Genesis 17:1-8     | An everlasting possession       |
| Genesis 22:16-18   | In thy seed all nations blessed |
| Romans 4:13        | Heir of the world               |

God called Abraham from the city of Ur of the Chaldees to the land of Canaan. In a solemn covenant, God gave the land to Abraham and to his descendants after him for an everlasting possession. Genesis 17:7, 8 can be described as a warranty deed to the promised land, through which Abraham's eternal ownership is assured: "And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God."

God's covenant promises were repeated to Abraham's son, Isaac (Gen. 26:2-5), to Isaac's son, Jacob (Gen. 28:13-15; 35:10-12), and to Jacob's twelve sons (Ex. 2:23-25). The descendants of Jacob's twelve sons constituted the nation, Israel. (1 Chron. 16:13-19.)

1. *Promises Yet to Be Fulfilled.* God's promises to Abraham and Israel have not been completely fulfilled. These promises will be fulfilled in Christ's Kingdom. Stephen, in his historic sermon, mentioned that Abraham had not inherited these promises during his lifetime. "Then came he out of the land of the Chaldeans, and dwelt in Charran: and from thence, when his father was

dead, he removed him into this land, wherein ye now dwell. And he gave him none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on: yet he promised that he would give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him, when as yet he had no child " (Acts 7:4, 5). "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth" (Heb. 11:13). Abraham and other faithful believers will be raised from the dead and will inherit these eternal promises in Christ's future Kingdom. Jesus said, "Many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 8:11). "There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out" (Luke 13:28).

2. *Blessings Conditional.* God warned the Israelites that their privilege of dwelling in the promised land was dependent upon their obedience to Him. As punishment for their sins, God would drive them from the land. (Lev. 26:27-34; Dent. 28:1-67; Josh. 24:13-20.) The covenant nation and the promised land are linked together. Whenever Israelites have dwelled in the land of Palestine, they have received blessing. Whenever they have left the land, they have received bondage (Egypt), captivity (Babylon), and persecution (world dispersion).

## **II. Three Departures and Returns**

Three times, the Israelites have left the promised land. Three times they have returned or are returning home. Each departure and each return to the land have been prophesied in God's Word.

1. *Egypt.* Israel's first departure from the promised land occurred during the time of Joseph, when Jacob and his family went to Egypt to escape famine conditions in Canaan. During their residence in Egypt, Jacob's descendants were subjected to extreme bondage by the Egyptians. Through Moses, God liberated the Israelites from Egyptian bondage and enabled them to return to the land of Canaan. Israel's bondage in Egypt (Gen. 15:13; Acts 7:6) and the nation's return to the promised land (Gen. 15:14, 16; Acts 7:7; Gen. 50:24-26; Heb. 11:22) had been prophesied. These prophecies were fulfilled.

2. *Babylon.* Israel's second departure from the land of promise occurred during the time of Daniel, when the Babylonian king, Nebuchadnezzar, carried the people to Babylon as captives. All of the Jews, of course, were not deported to Babylon; many persons were left in rural areas to care for the land. It was to these Jews that Jeremiah, the prophet, ministered. The deportation of Jews to Babylon began in 606 B.C. The Babylonian captivity lasted seventy years. The captivity was prophesied (Jer. 25:8-11; Ezek. 21:18-27) and was fulfilled. (2 Chron. 36:15-21.) The return of the Jews after seventy years was foretold also (Jer. 25:12-14; Isa. 44:28; 45:1-4), and these prophecies were fulfilled. (2 Chron. 36:22, 23; Ezra 1:1-11; Dan. 9:1, 2.) The return of the Jews under Ezra and Nehemiah did not fulfil the many prophecies concerning Israel's future return to Palestine. These prophecies are beginning to be fulfilled today, and they will be fulfilled when Jesus comes. Many Jews living in Babylon never



returned to Canaan. Moreover, a great company of Jews who escaped deportation to Babylon went to Egypt and started an important Jewish colony there.

3. *World Dispersion.* The third departure of the Jews from Palestine began in 70 A.D. and was completed in 135 A.D. This departure resulted in world dispersion for God's chosen nation. Today, after almost two millennia, the restoration of Israel is beginning to be fulfilled. Israel's dispersion was prophesied and became a reality. Israel's restoration to the promised land likewise was prophesied, and these prophecies also will be fulfilled.

### III. World Dispersion of Israel

1. *World-wide Dispersion Predicted.* Throughout His Word, God warned the Israelites that He would scatter them among all nations as punishment for disobedience.

|                       |                                  |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| Deuteronomy 4:27      | Scatter you among the nations    |
| Deuteronomy 28:63, 64 | Scatter among all people         |
| Jeremiah 9:16         | Scatter them among the heathen   |
| Jeremiah 31:27        | Sow Israel with seed of man      |
| Ezekiel 11:16         | Scatter them among the countries |
| Ezekiel 37:1, 2, 11   | Like valley of dry bones         |
| Ezekiel 39:23-28      | Dispersed because of sin         |
| Hosea 3:4             | Abide many days without king     |
| Zechariah 10:9        | Sow them among the people        |
| Matthew 23:35-39      | Your house is left desolate      |
| Matthew 24:1, 2       | Destruction of temple            |
| Luke 21:20-24         | Jerusalem trodden by Gentiles    |

2. *Persecution of Israel Foretold.* Scattered among the nations, God's chosen people would experience extreme persecution. They would flee from country to country; they would find no rest for the sole of their feet. God told Abraham: "I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee" (Gen. 12:3). Nations which have favored the Jews have been blessed; they have prospered. Nations which have persecuted the Jews, however, have experienced curse, difficulty, and tragedy. The persecution of the Jews was foretold in God's Word.

|                      |                             |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Deuteronomy 28:65-67 | No rest for sole of foot    |
| Leviticus 26:33-45   | Faintness in their hearts   |
| Psalms 44:14         | Become a byword and a curse |

3. *World-Wide Dispersion Fulfilled.* During the New Testament era, large colonies of Jews were living in all major cities and provinces of the Roman Empire. The number of Jews living outside the promised land was greater than the number who lived in the land. Many Jews who went to Babylon and Egypt during the time of Daniel, Ezekiel, and Jeremiah never returned home. In fact, during our Lord's earthly ministry, Babylon and Alexandria were the two major centers of Jewish thought and culture. Jews of the dispersion who were represented by Babylon spoke the Aramaic language and kindred dialects, and

they interpreted the Old Testament through the Chaldean paraphrases, the Targums. The Jews represented by Alexandria in Egypt, on the other hand, spoke the Greek language and had produced the Septuagint, or Greek translation, of the Old Testament. Countries and languages of the Roman world represented by Jews in Jerusalem on Pentecost (Acts 2:8-11) reveal the extent of Jewish dispersion at that time. When Paul went forth on his missionary journeys, he found a group of Jews in nearly every city he visited. Although these Jews resided in various areas of the Roman Empire, Jerusalem was their center of religious and political unity.

The great world-wide dispersion of Jews from Jerusalem and Palestine began in 70 A.D. and was completed in 135 A.D. In 70 A.D., forty years after Jesus was crucified, Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans, under the leadership of Titus. The collapse of the Jewish national state occurred in 135 A.D., when the Roman general, Julius Severus, defeated Simon Bar Kochba, who led a revolt against Rome. More than 500,000 Jews were killed in battle. Jews were dispersed from Judaea and were scattered throughout the nations of earth. By order of the Roman emperor, Hadrian, the very name of the Jewish province was discarded, and was changed to Syria Palestine. Jerusalem was made a pagan city, and Jews were forbidden to enter its gates under the penalty of death. Persecution of Jews became common throughout the empire.

During centuries that followed, the Jews were not permitted to live in the land which belonged to them. The faithful in Israel, however, could never be satisfied until they could return to their ancient home. Each year they dreamed of returning to the land which God had promised Abraham and his seed. At each Passover Feast they would say, "Next year in Jerusalem! Next year in Jerusalem!" For nearly nineteen centuries, however, that "next year" did not come. They continued to be scattered over the earth while the promised land was being ruled by the Romans, the Moslems, and the Turks. Wherever the Jews went, they brought blessing and prosperity to the nations. The Jews suffered almost constant persecution however, as they fled from country to country. During the Church Age, the Jews have been sown among the seed of men. They have resided in almost every country on earth. Bible prophecies concerning the world dispersion and persecution of God's chosen people have been literally fulfilled.

#### **IV. Israel's Restoration to Promised Land**

##### *1. Restoration Promised.*

|                     |                                 |
|---------------------|---------------------------------|
| Deuteronomy 30:3-5  | Will bring thee into the land   |
| Isaiah 11:11, 12    | From four corners of earth      |
| Isaiah 27:12, 13    | Shall be gathered one by one    |
| Isaiah 60:21        | Shall inhabit the land for ever |
| Isaiah 61:3-11      | Shall build the old wastes      |
| Isaiah 65:17-25     | Jerusalem and her people a joy  |
| Isaiah 66:5-23      | Bring all your brethren         |
| Jeremiah 23:3-8     | Overshadow the Exodus           |
| Jeremiah 24:5-7     | Never leave the land again      |
| Jeremiah 30:3, 7-11 | Return to the land              |



|                          |                               |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Jeremiah 30:17-22        | City shall be builded         |
| Jeremiah 31:7-12         | Great company shall return    |
| Jeremiah 31:23-37        | Captives brought to land      |
| Jeremiah 32:37-44        | Out of all countries          |
| Jeremiah 33:7-14         | Judah and Israel to return    |
| Ezekiel 11:17-21         | Give you the land of Israel   |
| Ezekiel 20:34, 40-44     | Bring you into the land       |
| Ezekiel 28:25, 26        | Gather the house of Israel    |
| Ezekiel 34:11-16         | As shepherd seeketh sheep     |
| Ezekiel 34:23-31         | Shall dwell safely            |
| Ezekiel 36:8-12          | Bring you into your own land  |
| Ezekiel 36:16-38         | For God's holv name's sake    |
| Ezekiel 37:1-14          | Dry bones revived             |
| Ezekiel 37:15-28         | One nation, one king          |
| Ezekiel 38:8, 11, 12, 14 | Gathered out of nations       |
| Ezekiel 39:25-29         | The whole house of Israel     |
| Hosea 1:10, 11           | Be gathered together          |
| Hosea 3:5                | Children of Israel return     |
| Joel 3:1, 17-21          | Bring again Judah             |
| Amos 9:11-15             | No more pulled up out of land |
| Micah 2:12               | Regathered as sheep           |
| Zephaniah 3:20           | Bring you again               |
| Zechariah 8:7, 8         | From east and west countries  |
| Zechariah 8:13, 23       | Ye shall be a blessing        |
| Zechariah 10:10-12       | I will bring them again       |
| Psalms 102:16            | When the Lord builds up Zion  |
| Matthew 24:31-34         | The fig tree nation           |
| Romans 11:11-27          | All Israel shall be saved     |

2. *Restoration Begins.* During the middle of the nineteenth century, a few Jews throughout the world began to lift their voices in an appeal for their brethren to return to Palestine. On August 25, 1897, the First Zionist Congress met at Basle, Switzerland. This meeting of Jews was called by an Austrian Jew, Theodor Herzl, who was the father of modern Zionism. For the next fifty years, the Zionist organization planned and worked to achieve its ambition, which was finally realized in the formation of the new state of Israel.

England, on November 2, 1917, issued the famous *Balfour Declaration*, named for the British Foreign Secretary, Arthur James Balfour. This document read, in full:

Dear Lord Rothschild,

I have much pleasure in conveying to you, on behalf of His Majesty's Government, the following declaration of sympathy with Jewish Zionist aspirations which has been submitted to, and approved by, the Cabinet.

His Majesty's Government view with favor the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavors to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that



nothing will be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country.

I should be grateful if you would bring this declaration to the knowledge of the Zionist Federation.

Yours,  
(Signature) Arthur James Balfour.

During the First World War, General Edmund Allenby, as commander in chief of the British-Egyptian Expeditionary Force, invaded Palestine and, on December 9, 1917, captured Jerusalem without gunshot. Turkish rule over Palestine came to an end. In the Treaty of Sevres, on August 10, 1920, Turkey renounced her former rights over Palestine to the Allies. In the same year, the League of Nations gave Great Britain jurisdiction over the holy land, which became effective September 29, 1923. The way thereby was opened for the Jews to go home. Since that time, the restoration of Israel has begun to become a reality. During the Second World War, Jews living in Europe suffered extreme persecution, which resulted in an intensive desire within the Jews to go home. In 1939, because of Jewish-Arab hostilities, Great Britain renounced her Balfour Declaration and sharply curtailed Jewish immigration to Palestine. On November 29, 1947, the United Nations adopted the Partition Plan of Palestine, assuring certain territories to the Jews, and certain others to the Arabs. On December 11, 1947, Great Britain announced that she would end her mandate over Palestine on May 15, 1948.

At midnight, May 14, 15, 1948, the Jews in Palestine announced the formation of the new Jewish state of Israel, with Mr. David Ben Gurion as prime minister and Dr. Chaim Weizmann as the first president. Since that time, major nations of the world recognized the new government. On May 11, 1949, Israel was accepted as the fifty-ninth member nation of the United Nations. Jews were welcomed to the new Jewish state from all nations of the world. In 1900, there were about 50,000 Jews in Palestine; by 1936, the number had risen to 375,000 persons. The Jewish population in Palestine today is more than one million persons. As the Jews are returning home, the promised land is being rebuilt; deserts are being transformed into gardens. Rainfall in Palestine has more than doubled in recent years. The land is receiving blessing because the people of the land are returning home. The restoration of Israel to Palestine is becoming a reality. The final and complete restoration, of course, will occur when Jesus comes.

## **V. Future Conversion of Israel**

Israel's return to Palestine and her return to God are linked together. As a nation, Israel is returning to Palestine in unbelief. "Blindness in part" is still present over Israel, because the Church has not yet been completed; "the fulness of the Gentiles" is not yet accomplished. (Rom. 11:25, 26.) The Great Tribulation, the "time of Jacob's trouble" (Jer. 30:7), will fall upon the Jews as their last great persecution. The national conversion of Israel is yet future. When Jesus returns to earth as King of kings, Israel will accept Him as the

long-awaited Messiah. When they see Him, they will repent from their sins and will be converted to God and Christ. God will cleanse repentant Israelites from their sins, give them a new heart, and establish a new covenant with them.

|                      |                           |
|----------------------|---------------------------|
| Deuteronomy 30:1-6   | Circumcise thine heart    |
| Isaiah 4:3, 4        | Wash away the filth       |
| Isaiah 59:20, 21     | Turn from transgression   |
| Isaiah 60:21         | Shall all be righteous    |
| Jeremiah 23:6        | Judah shall be saved      |
| Jeremiah 24:7        | Return with whole heart   |
| Jeremiah 31:9        | Come with weeping         |
| Jeremiah 31:31-34    | New covenant with Israel  |
| Jeremiah 32:37-40    | Give them one heart       |
| Jeremiah 33:8        | Cleanse from all iniquity |
| Ezekiel 11:17-20     | A new spirit within you   |
| Ezekiel 36:24-38     | I shall have cleansed you |
| Ezekiel 37:23, 26-28 | Will cleanse them         |
| Daniel 9:24          | To make an end of sins    |
| Hosea 3:5            | Return unto the Lord      |
| Zephaniah 3:13, 15   | Shall not do iniquity     |
| Zechariah 12:10-14   | Mourning for sins         |
| Zechariah 13:1, 2    | Fountain for cleansing    |
| Romans 11:25, 26     | All Israel shall be saved |

#### **VI. Future Position and Work of Israel**

After Christ has returned to earth as King of kings and rules the nations with His glorified Church, Israel will be exalted above all nations and will fulfill God's original missionary purpose. Jerusalem will be the capital city of Christ's future Kingdom. Israel, who through the centuries has been a byword and a curse among the Gentiles, will be honored as God's chosen nation in Christ's Kingdom.

|                   |                            |
|-------------------|----------------------------|
| Deuteronomy 14:2  | Above all nations on earth |
| Isaiah 60:1-22    | Gentiles come to thy light |
| Isaiah 61:5, 6    | Ministers of the Lord      |
| Isaiah 66:19-21   | Declare among Gentiles     |
| Zechariah 8:20-23 | We will go with you        |
| Revelation 21:12  | Twelve gates of Holy City  |

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*(Adapted from Systematic Theology, by Alva Huffer, published by Church of God General Conference, Oregon, Illinois 61061, U.S.A.)*

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## Test Questions

## ISRAEL'S FUTURE

Please fill in the answers on this question sheet and return to:

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1. God has promised the land of Palestine to Israel for  
(a temporary, an everlasting) possession.

2. What promises did God make in His covenant with Abraham?

3. God's promises to Abraham and Israel (have, have not) been completely fulfilled.

4. Abraham and other faithful believers will be raised from the dead and will inherit these eternal promises in Christ's future \_\_\_\_\_.

5. Was the world-wide dispersion and persecution of the Jews foretold in the Bible? (Yes, No)

6. Name one of the many Bible prophets who foretold the restoration of Israel to the Promised Land. \_\_\_\_\_

7. The return of the Jews to Palestine in recent years (is, is not) a sign that Jesus is coming soon.

8. When Jesus returns to earth as King of Kings, Israel (will, will not) accept Him as the long-awaited Messiah.

9. God will cleanse repentant Israelites from their sins, give them a new heart, and establish a new covenant with them. (True, False)

10. As a nation, Israel is returning to Palestine today in (belief, unbelief).

11. The Great Tribulation, the "time of \_\_\_\_\_ trouble" (Jer. 30:7), will fall upon the Jews as their last great persecution.

12. After Christ has returned to earth as King of Kings and rules the nations with His glorified Church, what position will Israel occupy?

---

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Please fill in your name and address here:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

# JUDGMENT

God's judgment of mankind is an important factor in Eschatology. Before God's redemptive work with man and earth is completed, sin must be removed; sinners must be destroyed; God's character must be vindicated. God's Kingdom will be glorious, not merely because of what will be *included*, but also because of what will be *excluded*. The Bible describes God's Tomorrow by listing, not only what the future will contain, but also that which it will not contain. Sin, the cause of all imperfection, must be removed before the perfect age can be a reality. In the new earth, therefore, there will be no more sin.

## I. Necessity of Judgment

The necessity of divine judgment is based upon the character of God and the nature of sin. God's holiness, righteousness, and justice require that sinners must be judged and that sin must result in death. Because God is holy, He cannot sin, approve sin, nor tolerate sin. If God were to approve sin, He thereby would cease to be holy. Sin is contrary to God's nature; therefore, sin is anti-God. God is life; sin, consequently, is anti-life. The result of sin must be death. This fact is not an arbitrary divine arrangement; the universe is constructed on this principle. God must either condemn sin or violate His own character. God cannot change His character, however, because He is unchangeable. Sin, therefore, must result in death.

The penalty for every sin committed in the universe must be paid. Sinners will pay the penalty for their own personal sins by being destroyed in the eternal second death. The penalty for the believer's sins was paid by the sinless Jesus in His sacrificial death.

When God forgives the believing sinner who is properly related to Christ through conversion, He does not act contrary to His own holy character. The wages of sin were met through the sacrifice of Christ, the sinner's Substitute. (Rom. 3:24-26.) God can continue to be holy and just while He forgives and justifies the believing sinner because the demands of His holy nature were met at the cross.

|                   |                                   |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Romans 1:32       | Worthy of death                   |
| Romans 2:6        | Render according to his deeds     |
| Romans 6:23       | Wages of sin is death             |
| Romans 8:6, 13    | To be carnally minded is death    |
| Galatians 5:19-21 | Excluded from kingdom of God      |
| Galatians 6:7-9   | Reap what we sow                  |
| Revelation 21:8   | Sinners destroyed in second death |



Future judgments will vindicate God's holiness. They will reveal Him in His true nature. Today, through His grace and long-suffering, God withholds complete punishment of sin so that sinners may have opportunity to accept His plan of salvation. (2 Pet. 3:9; Rom. 2:4-6.) Because God does not strike sinners dead today the moment sin is committed, some persons think that sin will never be punished. (Eccl. 8:11-13.) War, crime, social injustice, prosperity of the wicked, and persecution of the saints cause some men to question the holiness and justice of God. They ask, "How can God be holy and permit these things to happen on earth?" This question can be answered by the fact that today we are living in the age of grace. Punishment of sin is postponed until the future judgment so that man today can repent and experience salvation. Some day, however, the age of grace will be succeeded by the age of judgment. Sinners will be judged and punished; the righteous will be rewarded. God's "books" will be balanced; wrongs will be made right. God's character will be revealed in its true nature. (2 Thess. 1:6; 2 Tim. 4:8; Rev. 15:3, 4; 16:5, 7; 19:1, 2.) The key phrase of the book of Ezekiel is "that they may know that I am God." Through future judgments, Israel and the nations will recognize God in His true nature.

## II. Certainty of Judgment

Future judgment is certain. Paul warned, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting" (Gal. 6:7, 8). In Athens, Paul declared: "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead" (Acts 17:30, 31).

|                      |                                 |
|----------------------|---------------------------------|
| Psalms 103:8, 9      | He will not always chide        |
| Ecclesiastes 8:11-13 | Sentence not executed speedily  |
| Ecclesiastes 11:9    | Bring thee into judgment        |
| Ecclesiastes 12:14   | Bring every work into judgment  |
| Matthew 12:36, 37    | Words basis of judgment         |
| Acts 17:30, 31       | An appointed day                |
| Acts 24:25           | Judgment to come                |
| Romans 2:2-11        | No respect of persons           |
| Romans 14:10, 12     | Give account of self to God     |
| 1 Corinthians 4:5    | Bring to light hidden things    |
| 2 Corinthians 5:10   | We must all appear              |
| Hebrews 9:27         | After this the judgment         |
| Hebrews 10:27        | Fearful expectation of judgment |
| 1 Peter 4:5          | Give account to him             |
| 2 Peter 2:1-9        | Unjust reserved unto judgment   |

## III. Historic Divine Judgments

Although the final judgment of sinners will not occur until the last resurrection and the second death, God has visited the earth with judgment at various times.

The eviction of Adam and Eve from their Edenic home was a divine judgment. The Flood during the life of Noah revealed God's wrath against sin. The dispersion of nations and the changing of languages at the Tower of Babel were divine judgments. The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, the plagues against Egypt, and the captivity of Israel were historic judgments of God. The prophets of Israel predicted and recorded God's judgments against various ancient nations. Christ's death for sinners (John 12:31, 32) revealed God's judgment against sin. Calvary is the *judgment seat* for sin and the *mercy seat* for sinners. The reality of future judgments is assured by these historic revelations of God's judgment of sin. (2 Pet. 3:3-10.)

#### **IV. Earth's Future Judge**

God, the Judge (Isa. 33:22; Heb. 12:23), will perform His work of judgment through His Son, Jesus Christ. God will judge the world in righteousness *by that man* whom He hath ordained. (Acts 17:31.) The fact that God raised His Son from the dead makes certain a future day of judgment. In Romans 2:16, Paul warned men concerning "the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ." In the home of Cornelius, the centurion, Peter preached that the risen Christ "is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead" (Acts 10:42). Our Saviour explained, "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son. For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me" (John 5:22, 26, 27, 30). Prophecies concerning details of the future picture Jesus in the position of Judge. Jesus has the right to be man's Judge because He is the sinless Son of man and Son of God. By His constant submission to His Father's will, by His spotless life, and by His sacrificial death, Jesus showed that He is worthy to judge mankind.

#### **V. Future Periods of Judgment**

The major time period around which prophecies concerning the future center is the Millennium. The Millennium is a period of one thousand years during which Christ and His glorified Church will reign on the earth in the future. Postmillennialists and Amillennialists advocate the erroneous view that there will be a general resurrection and a general judgment of all mankind when Jesus comes. They picture the future judgment as a single event, which will occur after the Millennium. The Bible, however, teaches that the second coming of Christ will occur before the Millennium and that Christ's future redemptive work will include many aspects and will require a period of time for its completion. Future judgments can be classified as those judgments which will occur before or at the beginning of the Millennium and as those which will occur after the Millennium. Judgments before the Millennium include the rewarding of believers, the judgment of Israel, the judgment of the Beast and False Prophet, and the judgment of the nations. Judgments after the Millennium include the judgment of the revolting nations, the judgment of Satan, and the judgment of the wicked dead.

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## Test Questions

## JUDGMENT

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1. God's Kingdom will be glorious, not merely because of what will be included, but also because of what will be \_\_\_\_\_.

2. God's holiness requires that sinners must be judged and that sin must result in (life, death).

3. If God were to approve sin, He thereby would (cease, continue) to be holy.

4. The penalty for (every, no) sin committed in the universe must be paid.

5. Sinners will pay the penalty of their own personal sins by being destroyed in the eternal (first, second) death.

6. Through whose sacrificial death has the penalty for the believer's sins been paid? \_\_\_\_\_

7. When God forgives the believing sinner who is properly related to Christ through conversion, does He act contrary to His own holy character? (Yes, No)

8. Why does God not strike sinners dead today the moment sin is committed?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

9. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man \_\_\_\_\_, that shall he also reap" (Gal. 6:7).

10. God has judged mankind at various times in the past. Give two examples of historic divine judgments.

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11. Christ's death for sinners revealed God's judgment against sin. Calvary is the (mercy, judgment) seat for sin and the (mercy, judgment) seat for sinners.

12. What person has God ordained to be the one through whom He will judge the world in righteousness? \_\_\_\_\_

13. The Millennium is a period of one thousand years during which Christ and His glorified Church will reign on the earth in the future. (True, False)

Please fill in your name and address here:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

# THE NEW EARTH

The new earth will be the eternal home of the redeemed. God's plan of salvation includes the transformation of the earth as well as the redemption of man. Christ and His glorified saints will dwell upon this planet which will be cleansed, purified, and transformed into the paradise of God.

The Bible contains many prophecies concerning the new earth and God's plan for this planet. "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband" (Rev. 21:1, 2). "For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy" (Isa. 65:17, 18). "For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord" (Isa. 66:22, 23). "Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (2 Pet. 3:13).

## I. The Earth Will Abide Forever

The Bible pictures the earth as the future home of the redeemed and teaches that the earth will abide for eternity. God created this planet for a specific purpose, and His plan eventually will be realized. Isaiah wrote, "For thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: I am the Lord; and there is none else" (Isa. 45:18). "One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the earth abideth forever" (Ecl. 1:4). "Who laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed for ever" (Psa. 104:5). "Thy faithfulness is unto all generations: thou hast established the earth, and it abideth" (Psa. 119:90). According to these verses, the earth will abide forever. This planet will be purified and transformed, but it will not be destroyed.

## II. The Inheritance of the Saints

In His Word, God promises believers that they will inherit the earth. Jesus taught, "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth" (Matt. 5:5). "His seed shall inherit the earth" (Psa. 25:13). The major refrain of Psalm 37 is that the wicked will be destroyed and the righteous will inherit the earth. "For evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit



the earth" (Psa. 37:9). "The meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace" (Psa. 37:11). "The Lord knoweth the days of the upright: and their inheritance shall be for ever" (Psa. 37:18). "For such as be blessed of him shall inherit the earth; and they that be cursed of him shall be cut off" (Psa. 37:22). "The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein for ever" (Psa. 37:29). "Wait on the Lord, and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land: when the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see it" (Psa. 37:34). "The heaven, even the heavens, are the Lord's: but the earth hath he given to the children of men" (Psa. 115:16). "The righteous shall never be removed: but the wicked shall not inhabit the earth" (Prov. 10:30). "Behold, the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth" (Prov. 11:31). Jesus taught the disciples to pray: "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven" (Matt. 6:10). Christ's Kingdom will be on earth; the saints will dwell in that Kingdom with Christ. "And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him" (Dan. 7:27). "And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth" (Rev. 5:10).

Inheritance of the earth has been promised to believers through the Abrahamic Covenant. God promised Abraham and his seed the land of Canaan (Gen. 13:14, 15; 17:7, 8) and the world (Rom. 4:13) for an everlasting possession. Christ is the one specific Seed of Abraham (Gal. 3:16), and through Him the promises will be fulfilled. Through conversion to Christ, believers become Abraham's seed also, joint-heirs with Christ, and heirs to the promises. "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Gal. 3:29).

### **III. Christ's Kingdom Will Be on the Earth**

This planet, earth, belongs to God. "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein. For he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods" (Psa. 24:1, 2). God has the right to give the earth to whomever He desires. God has given this planet to His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, as His inheritance and possession. "Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession" (Psa. 2:6-8). The earth will be the inheritance of Christ not only because He is the Seed of Abraham and the Heir of the Abrahamic Covenant, but also because He is the Son of God.

Christ's future Kingdom will be upon earth. He will occupy David's throne (Luke 1:32, 33; Isa. 9:6, 7; Acts 2:30), with Jerusalem as His capital city. (Matt. 5:35; Isa. 2:2, 3; Zech. 14:16; Rev. 21: 2-27; 22:1-5.) Christ's future Kingdom is described as being "under the whole heaven" (Dan. 7:27) and as covering the entire earth. "And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed" (Dan. 7:14). "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall

reign forever and ever" (Rev. 11:15). "He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth" (Psa. 72:8; also Zech. 9:10). As King, Christ will reign on the earth and will execute judgment in the earth. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth" (Jer. 23:5). Our Saviour, according to these verses and many other texts, will reign on this planet as its Owner and King. Glorified believers will be joint-heirs with Him and will reign with Him on earth. (Rom. 8:17; 2 Tim. 2:12; Rev. 3:21; 5:10; 20:4, 6; 22:5.)

#### IV. The Earth Made New

The new earth will be this planet which will be cleansed and transformed. The earth in its present condition is referred to as "the first earth" (Rev. 21:1) and "the heavens and the earth, which are now" (2 Pet. 3:7). Through future divine judgment, the earth will be renewed and transformed. The earth needs to be purified because it has been polluted and misused by sinful mankind. Man's spiritual disruption is the cause of earth's physical disruption. We know that, because of man's sin, "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now" (Rom. 8:22). God's plan of salvation, however, includes the redemption of the earth, and, eventually, this planet will be transformed into a paradise. "For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God" (Rom. 8:19-21).

"He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new" (Rev. 21:5). Note that God said, "I make all things new." He did not say that He will make all *new things*, but all *things new*. The earth will not be annihilated; it will be renewed. God will not burn up this planet, remove the ashes from this spot in the solar system, and then put a different planet in its place. God will not make a new planet; He will make this planet new. In redemption, God will take the things which man has misused, perverted, and twisted, and make them new. God will take this planet and will purify and transform it.

#### V. God's Glory in the New Earth

The new earth will be the setting for the eternal revelation of God's glory. This planet, which was scene of paradise lost, is destined to be the scene of paradise restored. Earth will be made heavenly; it will be pervaded through and through with glory. Unbelievers complain that Bible prophecies make *heaven earthly*; according to God's plan, however, He will make *earth heavenly*. These persons assert that these prophecies make *glorious things materialistic*; God's Word teaches, however, that some day He will make *material things glorious*.

As sinners, saved by the blood of the Lamb, will be testimonies of God's amazing grace (Eph. 2:7) through ages of eternity, so this planet, purified and transformed into the paradise of God, will be the "theater of the universe," the setting or scene for the revelation of His eternal glory.

God promised, "But as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory

of the Lord" (Num. 14:21). Habakkuk, the prophet, predicted, "For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" (Hab. 2:14). After describing the glory of Christ's future Kingdom, David, the psalmist, exclaimed: "Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things. And blessed be his glorious name for ever: and let the whole earth be filled with his glory; Amen, and Amen" (Psa. 72:18, 19).

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*(Adapted from Systematic Theology, by Alva Huffer, published by Church of God General Conference, Oregon, Illinois 61061, U.S.A.)*

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## Test Questions

## THE NEW EARTH

Please fill in the answers on this question sheet and return to:

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ First Name \_\_\_\_\_

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1. What will be the eternal home of the redeemed? \_\_\_\_\_

2. What place does the earth have in God's plan of salvation?

3. According to the Bible, how long will the earth abide?

4. "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the \_\_\_\_\_" (Matt. 5:5).

5. The (righteous, wicked) will be destroyed, but the (righteous, wicked) will inherit the earth.

6. Inheritance of the earth has been promised to believers through God's covenant with (Abraham, Ishmael, Lot) and his seed.

7. God has given this planet to His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, as His inheritance and possession. (True, False)

8. Christ's future Kingdom will be (upon earth, in heaven).

9. What will be the capital city of Christ's Kingdom?

10. Why does the earth need to be cleansed and transformed?

11. Will the new earth be this earth made new or an entirely different planet?

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12. "For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" (Hab. 2:14).

Please fill in your name and address here:

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