

STUDIES IN CONTRAST

12 Lessons

**Produced by:
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2005

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Lesson One

“Old Law versus New Law”

The term “law” can be a good term or a bad one—depending upon one’s attitude towards the concept of law. The lawless do not respect law and would like to do away with law. Those who see the need of law and try to live by its directions would think of law as something good for mankind. It should be obvious that this lesson will uphold law and call upon men to respect and strive to live by law. However, when it comes to the Bible, you have not only the concept of law, but a contrast being drawn in Scripture between two separate laws given by God.

The Hebrew word for “law” in the Old Testament is “Torah.” The Greek word for “law” in the New Testament is “Nomos.” Both terms carry with them the ideas of: (1) Giving directions for men to follow; (2) Authoritative instructions given by God; and (3) A standard for administering justice. Law can be written down and accepted as a right way for man to conduct himself or it can be an unwritten code of ethics by which a person directs his or her life.

There are two terms that are closely identified with Law: Testament or Covenant. They are not necessarily the same—and yet, they are used as one. For the Jew, the Covenant that God made with Israel at Mount Sinai also contained the “Law of Moses.” For the Christian, the Covenant that all men come under when we accept God’s Grace in His appointed way also contains the “Law of Christ.”

The word “law” in the New Testament can have reference to several different things as can be seen in the following Scriptures:

- a) To the principle of Law in General (Romans 2:12-14).
- b) To the Ten Commandments in the Old Covenant (Romans 7:7).
- c) To the Pentateuch (1st five books of the Old Testament) (Luke 24:44).
- d) To all of the Old Testament Scriptures (John 10:34; 12:34; 15:25).
- e) To the Gospel and/or the teachings of Christ (Galatians 6:2; James 1:25; 2:8; Romans 8:2).

The context needs to be looked at carefully to be able to make a proper distinction as to the meaning of use of the word. But our study in this lesson is about the Contrast between the Old and New Laws given by God. We will look at the weaknesses of the Old Law and how the New Law is superior to the Old Law and deals with these weaknesses.

FOUR MAJOR WEAKNESSES OF THE OLD LAW GIVEN THROUGH MOSES**1. It could not give righteousness or life.**

- a) Rom. 7:10—*“And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death.”*
- b) Gal. 3:21—*“Is the Law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law.”*
- c) Gal. 2:21—*“I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness came by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.”*

- d) Rom. 3:21—*“But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets.”*
- e) Rom. 8:3—*“For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh...”*
- f) Heb. 8:7—*“For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second.”*

The Law itself is not weak and sinful, but holy, just, and good (Rom. 7:12). Some parts of the law were too high for weak man to live up to. Also, some parts were elementary, shadowy, or representations of that which was to come. The law was never meant to give life, but to control life. It was not give to confer life or restore life, but to regulate life. It was not to impart righteousness, but to show the way to live a righteous life. The law merely showed man how truly sinful he was (Rom. 3:19-20).

2. It would not fully convey the terribleness of sin. It could name what actions were wrong, such as: Theft, Adultery, Murder, etc (Exo. 20). It was clear that such actions were offensive to God. And as well, such actions were seen to be hurtful to man by his own experiences. He may have also understood that sin deserved death, but none of these things showed the terribleness of sin for man.

3. It did not have an example of perfect obedience to follow. Many great men and women are mentioned in the Old Testament. Hebrews chapter eleven gives a long list of names of the great men and women of faith in God. But none of them are presented as perfect in their lives. The good in them was held up to view with the thought of us following their example.

4. It was not a suitable law for all men and nations. The Old Law was given to the Israelite Nation at Mount Sinai (Exodus 20:1-2, Romans 3:1-2; 9:4) and not to other nations (Psalm 147:19-20). This law was sufficient for the Jewish people, but it was not a sufficient law for all peoples and nations.

THE STRENGTHS OF THE NEW LAW GIVEN THROUGH CHRIST

1. Christ’s law could give righteousness and life. Not law in the sense of moral conduct, for no one could live the law perfectly; but law in the sense of the Gospel of Grace that was extended to all men through Christ (Rom. 6:23; 2 Cor. 5:21; James 1:25). Righteousness and life is still not attained by “Law Keeping,” but by Grace through an obedient faith in Christ. But unless man strives to keep the law of Christ, he will not be saved eternally (Heb. 5:8-9).

2. The New Law (Covenant) reveals the terribleness of sin. The Old Law had exemplified God’s hate of sin by:

- a) What happened to man in the fall and driven from the Garden of Eden (Gen. 2:16-17).
- b) The destruction of the world by the Flood (Gen. 6:5-7).
- c) The confusion of man’s languages at the tower of Babel (Gen. 11:5-9).
- d) The destruction of the cities of Sodom & Gomorrah (Gen. 19:24-25).
- e) And the thousands upon thousands that died and destroyed by God at different times.

But none of these were sufficient to show the terribleness of sin and its eternal consequences. God’s New Law (Covenant) makes this very clear! The coming of God in the flesh, to live among us, and to be rejected, mocked, falsely accused, ridiculed, and nailed to the cross where

he hung in agony of mind, body, and spirit. He tasted of death for every man (Heb. 2:9). It was physical death, but more----it was a spiritual death (separation from God) that Jesus experienced when He cried out, ***“My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?”*** Such a statement gives insight to how terrible sin’s consequences really are.

3. The New Law also furnished us with a perfect life of obedience to God. Jesus spoke as no other man spoke (John 7:46). He lived as no other man lived (1 Peter 2:22). There is none greater than Jesus, for he did not sin (1 Peter 2:22)! And to imitate Jesus is to be obedient to God’s Law in all things!

4. The New Law becomes a Universal Law for all men and nations! All the limited characteristics of the Law of Moses have been removed. All the Religious Leaders’ false interpretations have been rejected and removed. Only those laws that are of a universal nature were retained in this New Law or New Covenant that God wants to make with men.

VALUABLE LESSONS TO BE LEARNED

1. Justification before God today:

- a) Is not found by going back to the Old Law or Old Covenant.
- b) It is going to the New Law, the New Covenant, the Gospel of Grace.
- c) There we need to go to study and understand how we can be saved and come into a covenant relationship with God. We learn how to be righteous before God.

2. God has not commissioned his people to go and preach the Old Law!

- a) He wants us to teach the Gospel message to the world (Matt. 28:18-20).
- b) He wants men to abide in the teaching of Christ (Law of Christ) (2 John 9).

3. Practices of the Old Law are not to be bound upon Christians today:

- a) Such as paying tithes to Priest.
- b) Instrumental Music in worship to God.
- c) Observing the Jewish holy days & Sabbath days.
- d) Or any other Jewish custom or practice commanded under the Old Law.

4. We are to highly esteem Christ, our deliverer, our Savior, our Law-giver, King.

- a) He is our only Lord... ***“Hear him only.”*** (Matt. 17:5).
- b) We are to hear Him or be cut off (Acts 3:23).
- c) To learn the Truth from Him to be set free (John 8:32).
- d) To no longer have a strong attachment to Moses and the Prophets—for they have all laid their mantles at the feet of Jesus, the Son of God (Matt. 17).
- e) To accept Christ’s authority and reject all others.
- f) To adorn our lives by keeping the doctrine of Christ (His Law).

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Both the Old and New Testaments are the Word of God—inspired by Him (2 Tim. 3:16-17). Both have their place and value to the Christian (Rom. 15:4). But it is the New Testament (Covenant or Law) that has superseded the Old as a rule for our actions or conduct. Remember... Law, as such, cannot save—Jesus Saves! But our lives are to be governed or guided by the Law of Christ to be able to maintain our relationship with God!

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

True or False

- ___ 1. The words “Covenant” and “Law” are often used with reference to the same thing.
- ___ 2. The word “Law” can have reference to the teachings of Christ.
- ___ 3. The Old Testament was incapable of making a person righteous before God.
- ___ 4. The Old Law is holy, just, and good—but incapable of saving a person.
- ___ 5. The Old Law tells us about a lot of great men and women, but no one that was perfect.
- ___ 6. The Old Law was only given to the Israelite Nation.
- ___ 7. Man has to obey the New Law in order to be saved by Jesus.
- ___ 8. The terribleness of sin is seen in what was required of Jesus in order to redeem man.
- ___ 9. The New Law is universal for all men.
- ___ 10. God has commissioned us to go and preach the Old Law to the world.

Lesson Two

“Old Day versus New Day”

In the first lesson we look at the contrast between two Laws (Covenants). Did this change to a new Law or Covenant affect the observance of the Sabbath Day? The following quotation from a “7th Day Adventist” book will give their view of the observance of this Day: *“Jesus did not change the Sabbath....Neither the disciples of Christ nor the early Christian churches ever heard of such a thing as a divine change in Sabbath observance. Hence the observance of any other day than the seventh as the Sabbath is unknown in the New Testament. Sunday observance by Christian believers is of later origin than the times of the Bible”* (page 19). For one who has not studied this question, the above quote presents quite a challenge! Such a quote is advocating that the Sabbath was given by God to all men to be observed for all time—and that such has never been changed. Those worshipping on another day are wrong and not pleasing to God. In this lesson we will try to deal with this question briefly in trying to show a contrast between the two days—the Sabbath and Sunday.

THE BIBLE TELLS US OF THREE DIFFERENT SYSTEMS

It is critical to know that the Bible (Old Testament) was not given until around 1500 BC. Thus, for hundreds of years men were not given a written revelation that we know about. It also becomes apparent from the Bible that the “Gentile World” (in contrast to the “Jewish World”) was never given a written revelation even down to the time of Christ. God seems to have dealt with mankind by the rule of the Patriarchs in the family. Adam, Noah, Abraham, etc., were all under some kind of patriarchal system of worship to God. The Apostle Paul stated in Romans that they were judged by the “law written in their hearts” (Romans 2:12-14). There is no indication from Scripture that these “Gentiles” (even down to the time of Christ) observed the Sabbath Day as a day of rest.

The second Religious System had its beginning around 1500 BC when God gave His Law (Covenant) to the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob at Mount Sinai. This Covenant (Law) was never given to the Gentile nations (Psalm 147:19-20). This Covenant (Law) was in force down to the time of the death of Christ. This Covenant applied only to the Jews, not to the Gentiles.

The third Religious System had its beginning just after the death, burial, resurrection, and ascension of Christ. Jesus ascended back to the Father, sat down on the throne of David at God’s right hand, and began His reign over His church or kingdom (Acts 2). He sent the Holy Spirit back to the Apostles and they began to put His Testament (Covenant—Law) into force (Hebrews 9:16). This System is for all nations or all peoples (Matthew 28:18-20).

With the above things understood, it is easy to see that the question of Sabbath observance from the beginning may be an “opinion” rather than an actual command of God.

THE OBSERVANCE OF THE SABBATH BY ISRAEL ONLY

The observance of the Sabbath became a command for the Israelite Nation when the Covenant was given at Sinai (Exodus 20:8-11). God said that the Sabbath observance was a sign between Him and Israel throughout their generations. Before this time, there is no command nor example of anyone keeping the Sabbath as a day of rest. Nehemiah 9:13-14 states that God made known to Israel His holy Sabbath when He gave the Law (Covenant) to them through Moses. The question could be asked.... *"When did God hallow the Sabbath?"* Did He hallow it at the end of Creation, or did He hallow it when He gave it for Israel to keep? It seems to have been hallowed for God at the end of Creation (Genesis 2:2-3), but Israel as a nation was to keep it as a hallowed day when the Law was given to them at Mt. Sinai. There is no statement that I know of in Scripture that says it was to be observed by Israel before this time, must less all men! There is no indication that Gentiles were ever commanded to observe the Sabbath, nor any statements of their doing so. The observance by Israel of the Sabbath is tied in with their deliverance from bondage. Just as God rested from His labors on the 7th day, so Israel got her rest from Egyptian Bondage. The Sabbath rest was a reminder of their deliverance (Deuteronomy 5:15).

ARE CHRISTIANS COMMANDED TO KEEP THE SABBATH?

There is no verse of Scripture that commands anybody (Jew or Gentile) to keep the Sabbath Day.... after the death of Christ. Naturally, you can find unconverted Jews keeping the Sabbath. And you can read about the Apostle Paul going into the Synagogues on the Sabbath in order to preach to the unconverted Jews—to convert them! But there is no command for Christians to observe the Sabbath Day.

The word "Sabbath" occurs some 60 times in the New Testament. 43 of those times are in connection with the life of Jesus Christ. Jesus was a Jew—born under the Law (Gal. 4:4-5). He kept the Law and observed the Sabbath Day (Matthew 5:17-18). But all of this was before the New Covenant (Law of Christ) went into force. The word occurs some 17 times following the death of Christ. 16 of those times they refer to the worship of unconverted Jews. 1 other time, it is telling Christians not to keep it (Colossians 2:16). Jesus nailed all of these ordinances, observances to the cross—they are no longer binding upon anyone!

CHRISTIANS HAVE A SPECIAL DAY ON WHICH TO DO WORSHIP?

The Sabbath, as a day of rest, was done away with the Old Covenant (Jeremiah 31:31-34; Hebrews 8:6-13). A New Covenant has been given in its place for all men to come under. Then, is there a New Day for the Christian to consider as special? The answer is obvious...it was the first day of the week (Sunday). They met for worship, not as a day of rest like the Sabbath was (1 Corinthians 11:18-25; 16:1-2; Acts 20:7). They were warned not to forsake assembling on this day.

Why have a special day of worship for Christians? As the Sabbath was to remind the Jew of his deliverance from Egyptian bondage; so, with the Christian, we also are to meet for worship and remember our deliverance from the bondage of sin through the forgiveness of Jesus through

His shed blood. This is accomplished primarily in observing the Lord's Supper. But even more, as a reminder of the great event that makes all of this meaningful—Jesus' resurrection from the dead! Jesus was raised on the first day of the week! His resurrection is our assurance of our own resurrection someday—for us, it is a resurrection unto eternal life (John 5:28-29). The first sermon was preached on Sunday. The first response to the preaching was on Sunday. The church had its beginning on Sunday. The doors to the kingdom were opened by Peter on Sunday (Matthew 16:16-19; Acts 2:38-47). And there is abundant historical evidence that the early Christians met on Sunday for worship (both in Scripture and writings of early Christians. Three of these quotes are given below:

Ignatius: “...no longer observing the Sabbath but living according to the Lord's Day.”

Justin: “...And on the day called Sunday there is a gathering together in the same place of all who live in a city or a rural district....We all make our assembly in common on the day of the Sun, since it is the first day...”

Tertullian: “...Others, suppose that the Sun is the god of the Christians, because it is well-known that we regard Sunday as a day of joy—to us Sabbaths are foreign.”

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

The observance of the Sabbath by the Jew was connected with two important events: (1) The Creation of the world and (2) Their deliverance from Egyptian Bondage. Worshipping God on the first day of the week is also connected with two great events: (1) The remembering of the Lord's death for our redemption and (2) the resurrection of Jesus from the grave. It is quite obvious that the Sabbath was temporary and only given to the Jewish Nation. It was a sign between them and God. They no longer exists as God's chosen people today—they have been cut off because of their unbelief (Romans 11:7-21). The Old Covenant with the Sabbath has been abolished...nailed to the cross (Heb. 8:13; Col. 2:14). Christians are to respect and worship God in a special way on the first day of the week. For us to fail to do so will cause our souls to be cut off also.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

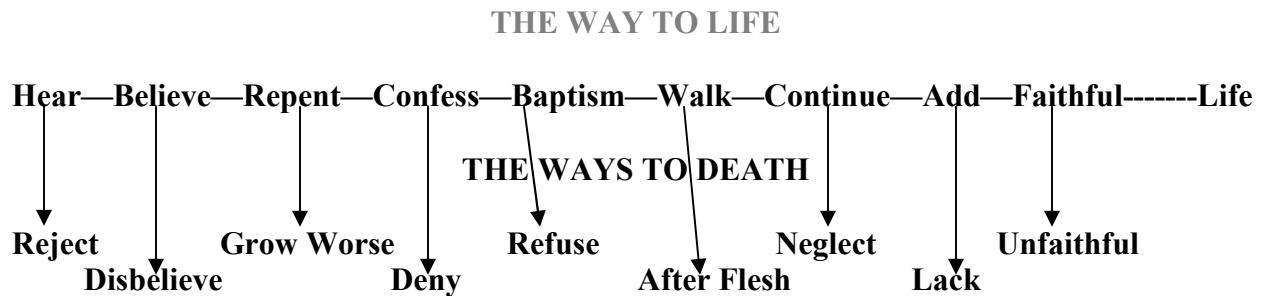
True or False

- _____ 1. There are people who insist that all people should observe the Sabbath.
- _____ 2. There is no indication in Scripture of Sabbath observance before the Law was given.
- _____ 3. The Sabbath was a special sign between God and Israel.
- _____ 4. The Sabbath was a remembrance of Israel's deliverance from Egypt.
- _____ 5. The word “Sabbath” occurs some 60 times in the New Testament books.
- _____ 6. Jesus observed the Sabbath Day.
- _____ 7. The Sabbath was not given as a Day of Worship, but a Day of Rest!
- _____ 8. All historical evidence shows that Christians met for worship on Sunday.
- _____ 9. Our worship on Sunday is tied in with remembering Jesus' death and His resurrection.
- _____ 10. To fail to worship on Sunday shows disrespect for what Jesus has done.

Lesson Three

“The Way to Life versus the Ways to Death”

God has provided for mankind a “Way” of righteousness that leads to life eternal! Isaiah foretold of such when he said: *“And a highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness...”* (35:8). Jesus spoke of the contrast between two ways: *“Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.”* (Matthew 7:13-14) Jesus later added this expression in regards to the way: *“I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man comes unto the Father but by me.”* (John 14:6). All men need to be aware of these two ways and make the proper choice of how they will walk.

**1. The necessity of Hearing the Message!**

- a) The Way to Life is to be open to hearing the Message (Matt. 17:5; Jn. 6:45).
- b) The Way to Death is to refuse to hear or reject the Message (Jn. 12:48; Acts 3:23).

2. The Necessity of Believing the Message!

- a) The Way to Life is to be willing to put our trust in the Message (Mk. 16:15-16; Heb. 11:6).
- b) The Way to Death is to disbelieve the Message (Mark 16:16)

3. The Necessity of Repenting of sins!

- a) The Way to Life is a changed heart towards God! (Acts 17:30; 2 Peter 3:9).
- b) The Way to Death is to refuse to make the choice to turn to God (Luke 13:3; 2 Tim. 3:13).

4. The Necessity of open Confession!

- a) The Way to Life is to be willing to openly confess Jesus as Lord and the Son of God (Rom. 10:9-10; Acts 4:12).
- b) The Way to Death is to Deny Jesus (Matthew 10:32-33).

5. The Necessity of being Baptized!

- a) The Way to Life is to express our faith by being obedient in Baptism (Mark 16:15-16;

1 Pet. 3:21; Acts 2:38; 22:16; Matt. 28:19-20).

- b) The Way to Death is to reject the counsel of God against ourselves by not being baptized (Luke 7:30).

NOTE: When a person Baptized into Christ:

- a) He has access to the promises of God (Gal. 3:27; 2 Cor. 1:20).
- b) He has access to all Spiritual Blessings (Eph. 1:3).
- c) He has been given life (2 John 5:11).
- d) He has been reconciled to God (2 Cor. 5:19).
- e) He has been forgiven (Eph. 1:7).
- f) He has been saved from past sins (2 Tim. 2:10).
- g) But this is just the beginning of running the race (the way) (Heb. 12:1).

6. The Necessity of Walking after the Spirit.

- a) The Way of Life is to continue walking in the teachings of the Spirit (Rom. 8:1).
- b) The Way of Life is to turn from walking after the Spirit and walk after the flesh again (Rom. 8:5-6).

7. The Necessity to Continue in Christ.

- a) The Way of Life is to continue steadfastly in the Will of God (Acts 2:42; James 1:25).
- b) The Way of Death is to neglect to continue in God's Will (Heb. 2:1-3).

8. The Necessity to Add Christian Virtues to our Lives.

- a) The Way of Life is to add the Christian Virtues (2 Pet. 1:5-10; Col. 3:10).
- b) The Way of Death is to fail to add these things (2 Peter 1:10).

9. The Necessity to be Faithful.

- a) The Way of Life is to be faithful...even unto death (Rev. 2:10; 2 Tim. 4:6-8).
- b) The Way of Death is to become unfaithful (2 Pet. 2:20-22).

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

It is not enough to become a Christian, but we must also strive to live the Christian life if we expect to receive that crown of reward at the end of our lives (Rev. 14:13). There are many roads (ways) that lead to death or condemnation (Rev. 20:11-15), but there is only one way that leads to eternal life. Which way are you walking?

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

True or False

- 1. The way to heaven is clearly spelled out in the Word of God, but men often refuse to believe it.**
- 2. Men can neglect even what they have learned and be lost.**
- 3. 44 different Scriptures are used in this lesson to show the contrast between ways to live.**
- 4. If a person does not choose to hear the message, he is not responsible.**
- 5. Jesus contrasted three different ways a person can travel in Matt. 7.**
- 6. Without faith in God, a man cannot travel the way that leads to life.**
- 7. Repentance is not really necessary before one becomes a Christian.**
- 8. Confession of one's sins is required in order to be forgiven by God.**
- 9. To reject baptism is to reject God Himself.**
- 10. Once we get into Christ, He keeps us from falling away.**

Lesson Four

“Man’s Fall versus Man’s Redemption”

Man’s Fall, as well as his redemption has many things in common: (1) Both involve free exercise of man’s will; (2) Both involve a process of progression; and (3) Both processes, if followed to the end, will end in obedience to Satan or God! In both instances emphasis is being given to either: (1) What Satan says; or (2) What God says! Man is being called upon to make his choice. In this lesson, we want to see the contrast between what leads to man’s fall versus what leads to man’s redemption from his fall.

1ST COMPARISON**1. Satan uses Deceit to bring about man’s fall.**

- a) Gen. 3:1—“*Now the serpent was more subtle.....*”
- b) He questions at first, and then he tells a bold-face lie—“*You shall not surely die!*”
- c) Man believes Satan’s lie and then tries to place the blame on others for his bad decision (Gen. 3:12-13).
- d) Deceit, falsehood, lies are typical of Satan’s devices.
- e) It is still being used effectively today.
- f) He gets people doubting what God has said and then they disobey.

2. God’s answer for man is Truth!

- a) John 8:32—“*The Truth shall make you free!*”
- b) God told man the true about eating of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.
- c) He did not deceive man!
- d) Man must be willing to accept God’s Word as truth!
- e) Without such, there is no hope of redemption.
- f) God wins man back from his fall by Truth!

2ND COMPARISON**1. Satan uses Doubt to bring about man’s fall.**

- a) He not only questions God’s Word, but causes man to doubt the truthfulness of His Word (Gen. 3:4-5).
- b) He wants us to doubt God’s promises as well as His threats.
- c) If he can get us to doubt that God will punish the disobedient, then God’s warnings are worthless to get man to straighten up.

2. God’s answer for man is Confidence!

- a) God’s warnings and promises must be accepted as given to be effective!
- b) We must believe that He cannot lie!
- c) God told man he would die if he ate of the fruit—and he died spiritually and eventually even died physically.
- d) Without confidence in God’s Word, we have nothing to hold to or depend upon.

- e) Throughout the Old Testament, God strove to build man's confidence in His Word and dealings with man.
- f) Heb. 6:13-20

3RD COMPARISON

1. Satan appeals to the lust of the flesh, the eyes, and the pride of life to lure man into disobedience.

- a) Mother Eve saw that the fruit was good for food, pleasing to the eyes, and that it would make her wise....she ate of it (Gen. 3:6).
- b) These desires are placed there by God in all men and they are good, right, and desirable for man's existence.
- c) But when appealed to in order to get man to disobey God—they can be misused.
- d) Satan used these desires successfully to get Eve to disobey God.

2. God's answer to man is to turn and satisfy your spiritual longing.

- a) *"Man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God."* (Matthew 4:4).
- b) Man has deep spiritual longings that need to be satisfied and can only be done by faith and obedience to God.
- c) Man has the choice of which will be first in his life (Matt. 6:33).

4TH COMPARISON

1. Satan denies God's goodness!

- a) He not only denies God's Word, but His goodness to all.
- b) Satan accuses God of hiding the real truth from His creatures (Gen. 3:5).
- c) He wants us to completely overlook all the good things He has done for us.
- d) Then, he picks the one thing God forbids and accused God of being mean not allowing us to eat of the fruit.
- e) He infers that these things are good, desirable, and just!
- f) He wants us to think: *"How can I serve a God who denies me something good?"*

2. God's answer is—He reminds us of His goodness!

- a) God is faithful, true and good to mankind.
- b) Yes, he is severe, but justly so upon those who deserve it.
- c) If we have difficulty deciding if God is good or not, we are in trouble.
- d) John 8:42-47
- e) Mark 16:16—Is this the truth or a lie? Is this being good or being evil to man?
- f) We must make the choice.

5TH COMPARISON

1. Satan tries to get us to disbelieve God and thus disobey Him.

- a) All he does is to lead men away from God, not to Him.
- b) His ultimate aim for mankind is disobedience to God.
- c) Hebrews 3:12-13

- d) He works overtime to get us to question or doubt God's Message to us.
- e) If he succeeds, our disbelief will lead to a break in our relationship with God.

2. God's answer to man is to believe and obey!

- a) The whole emphasis of the Bible is to believe and obey God (Eccl. 12:13).
- b) John 3:16; 8:24; 20:30-31.
- c) God has provided sufficient evidence to base our faith on.
- d) If we believe, we will obey!
- e) Heb. 5:8-9
- f) Man's hope is based on believing and obeying God.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

The battle goes on between God and Satan to see who will believe and obey the one or the other. It is a battle for the souls of men. We must not be ignorant of the Devil's devices. What kind of choices are we making?

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

True or False

- 1. Man only has a choice of whether to believe God, not Satan.**
- 2. Since man's nature is only to do evil, he cannot make the choice to believe and obey God.**
- 3. The serpent actually told mother Eve a lie.**
- 4. Deception takes away man's choice.**
- 5. Confidence in God can only come after long years of experience in life.**
- 6. Man's desires causes man to disobey God.**
- 7. Suffering and death makes Satan's job easier to get man to believe that God is not good.**
- 8. Anything contrary to God's truth is a lie.**
- 9. Obedience is a part of saving faith.**
- 10. There is no sin if there is no choice.**

Lesson Five

“Justification by Works versus Justification by Grace”

The question of man’s justification before God is not only a very important one, but it has also become a much debated one! Several things enter into the picture that complicates the issue, such as: (1) Feelings (usually misguided); (2) Inherited ideas and beliefs; (3) Prejudice (wanting to believe something regardless of what the Bible says); (4) A lot of erroneous teaching by those who claim to preach truth; and (5) A lack of solid knowledge of God’s Word. In spite of all of this confusion, we cannot afford to pass the question off lightly. Our eternal destiny is at stake. One’s pride and prejudice can destroy him forever! Our justification depends upon us facing facts and realities from the Word of God. He is the only One that can make us acceptable, so we had better listen to what He has to say about the question of our justification. Contrasting ideas can often help to clarify Bible teaching. We believe it will be of help on this subject. The New Testament presents two ways by which man can be justified: (1) By works of merit on his own part; or (2) By the merit of another. Let’s look at these two concepts.

JUSTIFICATION BY OUR OWN WORKS OF MERIT

A. This requires a person to live a perfect life!

- 1) There is a tendency on the part of men not to admit mistakes.
 - a) Such takes away from my perfection.
 - b) My image of myself drops if I am wrong about something.
 - c) Luke 18:10-14:
 - In the Temple—a place of holiness, perfection, and God’s presence.
 - But with sacrifices all around that showed the sinfulness of men.
 - The Pharisee said: *“I thank God I am not like other men.”*
 - He began to extol his righteousness...he was so good!
 - He looked down his nose at sinners!
 - Which one went home justified before God & Why?
- 2) We also have a tendency to blame others for our mistakes.
 - a) A self-righteous attitude.
 - b) Eve blamed the serpent for her disobedience.
 - c) Adam blamed the woman that God gave for his disobedience.
 - d) No acknowledgement of sin—such takes away from my perfection.
 - e) King Saul’s problem was admitting his mistakes.
 - When he failed to kill all the Amalekites as God directed and was faced with his disobedience....He did not say, *“I have sinned!”*
 - His excuse—*“The people wanted.....”*
- 3) One good possible reason for this attitude is—I need to be right!
 - a) Rom. 2:13—***“Not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers”***

- b) James 2:10—***“Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.”***
- c) To be right with God, one must live a life above sin!
- d) Sin is a transgression of God’s Law (1 John 3:4).
- e) Those who are under the concept of justification by works (Law) are said to be under the curse of death because they are obligated to keep the whole law perfectly (Gal. 3:10).
- f) Just one sin brings the curse upon the sinner!
- 4) The perfect man does not need God’s mercy!
- a) If a man keeps the Law without breaking it—he is not lost—he needs no forgiveness!
- b) He is JUST before God—for he has not sinned! (Rom. 11:6).
- c) Justification before God is then man produced, and earned! (Rom. 4:4).
- d) It is something God needs to recognize.
- e) Such a man can then boast (glory) in his own achievement (Rom. 4:2).
- *“Look what I have done!”*
 - *“I am not like other men!”*
 - It is an attitude of pride, haughtiness, and self-righteousness!
- 5) There is that constant assertion on man’s part: *“I am good enough, God ought to accept me!”*
- a) But such a person has not yet understood a very fundamental thing—He is a sinner! He is not perfect!
- b) Isa. 64:6—***“We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags”***
- c) Our goodness is worthless, unless it is perfect goodness!
- d) When we break God’s Law:
- We become sinners (1 Jn. 3:4).
 - Our relationship with God is broken (Isa. 59:1-2; Eph. 2:1, 5).
 - We come under the curse of the Law—Death (Rom. 6:23).
 - We deserve to be punished!
- e) Men might appear good in comparison to other sinful men.
- But when compared to the Law of God...we are sinners!
 - We are not good enough to be just before God!

B. Thus, sinners find themselves in a very precarious situation!

- 1) He does not need JUSTICE, but MERCY!
- 2) Or, he must pay the supreme price of his sin—death!
- 3) ***“O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?”*** (Rom. 7:24-25).

JUSTIFICATION BY THE GRACE OF GOD

A. Requires that we see ourselves as sinners—law-breakers!

- 1) This shouldn’t be hard for most of us!
- 2) Rom. 3:9, 12, 20, 22, 23; Gal. 3:22
- 3) It requires that we freely admit our need of God’s mercy (Rom. 11:32; Tit. 3:5).
- 4) It is to realize that our only hope is in God’s grace towards us.

B. Requires that we recognize that our justification is God produced and not merited on our part.

- 1) Adam & Eve serve as an example:
 - a) They were driven out of the Garden after they sinned.
 - b) An angel was placed to guard the entrance.
 - c) God would not allow them to just walk back in as though nothing had happened.
 - d) The only way back in, if at all, is by God's grace.
- 2) Rom. 3:24-25
- 3) As sinners, we cannot approach God on our own merits, but we need the merits of Jesus.

C. Requires that any boasting that is done is done in the Lord, not in ourselves!

- 1) Rom. 3:27; Eph. 2:8-9; 1 Cor. 1:31, 29.
- 2) We are under a different system for justification.
 - a) The Law-Keeping (Works) System, Legal System, is OUT!
 - b) We cannot keep it, we are condemned by it, and we must pay the penalty!
- 3) Our only hope is the Grace and Mercy that God is willing to extend through Christ.
 - a) Who has died in our stead.
 - b) Paid our penalty for us.
 - c) Made our redemption back to God possible.

JUSTIFICATION BY GRACE IS "CONDITIONAL!"

A. If justification is unconditional:

- 1) All men would be made just before God.
- 2) Justification would be totally on God's part—man has nothing to do!
- 3) Man, then, is not a responsible being before God—He does not have to obey God!
- 4) Man can and will be saved in unbelief and disobedience!
- 5) **No intelligent, Bible-believing person could believe such!**
 - a) Because the Bible clearly says that all men will NOT be saved!
 - b) That man is a responsible being.
 - c) That God does expect obedience from man in order for him to be made just.
 - d) That man will not be saved in disbelief and disobedience!

B. Justification by Grace is Conditional!

- 1) Therefore—few men will be willing to meet the conditions to be saved (Matt. 7:13-14)
- 2) Man must do something in order to be made right with God (Acts 2:40; Phil. 2:12).
- 3) Man is a responsible being and can respond to God's Will (Rev. 22:17; Matt. 11:29-30).
- 4) When man's faith is put into action to do what God requires, he is forgiven by the blood of Jesus (Acts 2:38).

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Man is to be preached to so that he can know, not only that he is a sinner, but that there is hope for him in Christ. But...he must be willing to recognize his need of Christ and respond to God's offer of forgiveness through Christ. The believing and penitent person is then to be baptized into Christ upon a confession of their faith in Jesus. Have you accepted God's grace?

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

True or False

- 1. Man has a choice of three ways to be just before God.**
- 2. Justification by Law keeping is not only possible, but many have been just this way.**
- 3. There has to be Law before man can become a sinner.**
- 4. The perfect person still needs God's mercy.**
- 5. Man is either a perfect Law keeper or a sinner.**
- 6. The penalty of sin is only physical death.**
- 7. Men in the Day of Judgment will want mercy, but will receive only justice.**
- 8. Any boasting (glorying) that is done by justified man needs to be in God.**
- 9. Justification on man's part is conditional.**
- 10. Man must do something before he can be just before God.**

Lesson Six

“Faith versus Faith Only”

What is faith? What is “true” faith? This question has been debated ever since the Reformation Movement dating back to the 16th century. It is an easy question to answer if you turn to all that the Bible has to say on the subject. However, if you have a prejudiced view of how man is saved (not a Biblical view), it will always result in a “faith only” concept. Again, we suggest that a contrast will help to define accurately what “true” faith really is.

“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.” (Ephesians 2:8-9). This passage has three strong points to make: (1) Salvation is not by works that we do (meritorious works) lest we should boast; (2) Salvation is by Grace (a gift from God); and (3) Man’s part in his salvation is through faith! Because of so much false teaching and misunderstanding another contrast is necessary to look at—**Salvation on man’s part is by an obedient faith, not faith only!** Possibly the best place to begin our study is James 2:14-26.

JAMES 2:14-26

A. Be sure you see what is being contrasted!

- 1) Some passages contrast Grace versus Works!
 - a) When this is done, it emphasizes that man cannot be saved by works.
 - b) He can only be saved by Grace.
- 2) But this passage is contrasted something different.
 - a) It is contrasting faith that works versus faith alone.
 - b) This contrast is stated, argued, and illustrated clearly.

B. The Question asked, answered, and illustrated!

- 1) Can a man’s faith without works save him?
- 2) If you do not help a needy brother, but wish him well, what does such profit?
 - a) Obviously, it doesn’t.
 - b) So faith without works is dead!
- 3) Can a person’s faith be shown without works?
 - a) The answer seems to be obvious again.
 - b) A person can only show his faith by his works.
- 4) Even the demons believe and tremble—they have faith only!
 - a) Are they saved?
 - b) Faith without works is dead!
- 5) Even Abraham illustrates this truth.
 - a) He was justified by his faith.
 - b) But it was not a dead faith, but a working faith.
 - c) His works perfected his faith.

- 6) Rahab the harlot illustrates this truth.
 - a) She was a sinful woman in need of God's grace.
 - b) He received it by faith.
 - c) But by a working faith, not faith only.
- 7) Faith only is like a dead body without the spirit.

OBEDIENCE IS EMPHASIZED

Being saved by the grace of God does not take away from our responsibility to live our lives according to the Law of God! Obedience is stressed throughout the Old and New Testament books.

- 1) By Jesus: *“Not everyone that says, ‘Lord,’ ‘Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he that does the will of my Father in heaven.”* (Matt. 7:21-23)
- 2) Example of Jesus: *“Though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him.”* (Heb. 5:8-9)
- 3) By an inspired Apostle: *“God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.”* (Rom. 6:17-18)
- 4) And...many, many other passages!!

MEANING OF JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH

A. Negatively—it means we are not justified by our own works of merit!

- 1) We are sinners...enslaved or in bondage to sin.
- 2) We have no way to remove the guilt of our sin by ourselves alone.

B. Positively—it means that man has something he must do in order to be saved by God!

- 1) Contrast in understanding:
 - a) J. Frank Norris (Baptist)—*“We are justified by faith plus nothing, minus nothing—by faith only.”*
 - b) Acts 2:40—*“And with many other words did he testify and exhort saying, **SAVE yourselves from this untoward generation.**”*
- 2) Faith, itself, is a work on man's part.
 - a) Heb. 11:6; John 6:28-29
 - b) It is not meritorious work, but necessary work in order to be saved by God.
- 3) Also obedience of faith is works, but not meritorious works!
 - a) Rom. 1:5; 16:26
 - b) Baptism is a work, but does not merit salvation.
 - It, in and of itself, has no value to justify.
 - It is a command of God that openly expresses our faith in God.
 - Jesus said: *“He that believes and is baptized shall be saved.”* (Mark 16:16).
 - We either believe that promise or not.
 - If we believe it, we will show it by being baptized to be saved.

C. God has always tested man's faith in him!

- 1) God commanded Adam & Eve not to eat of certain fruit! Why?
- 2) God commanded Abraham to kill his only son! Why?
- 3) God commands us to be baptized to be saved! Why?
- 4) Is it to TEST or PROVE our faith & trust in His Word & Promises?

THE CONVERSION OF SAUL OF TARSUS**A. Paul states he was justified by faith (Rom. 5:1).**

- 1) He was obviously saved by the Grace of God (1 Tim. 1:14).
- 2) He called himself "*chief of sinners.*" (1 Tim. 1:15).

B. But how was he justified by faith?

- 1) He had persecuted Christians—giving consent to their death.
- 2) On the way to Damascus to persecute Christians, the Lord appeared to him.
- 3) Saul asked: "*What will you have me to do, Lord?*"—evidently believing that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God.
- 4) He was penitent—he showed it by fasting and praying 3 days.
- 5) However, he did not yet have peace with God (Rom. 5:1).
- 6) This only comes through an obedient faith.
- 7) Saul was commanded to be baptized so his sins could be washed away (Acts 22:16).
- 8) Upon being baptized, he was forgiven, and had peace!

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Justification cannot be by works of merit on man's part. It must be by grace through faith. But it cannot be by faith only without obedience to God. What kind of faith do you have? Is it dead or living?

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION**True or False**

- ___ 1. Since salvation is a gift from God, we can do nothing to earn salvation.
- ___ 2. Man has to avail himself of God's grace by faith alone.
- ___ 3. Salvation by faith is plainly taught in Scripture.
- ___ 4. James 2 is contrasted belief and unbelief.
- ___ 5. Faith can be shown without works.
- ___ 6. Demons have faith in God and are saved.
- ___ 7. Obedience to God is not necessary for man to be acceptable to God.
- ___ 8. Rahab was used by James to show what true faith is.
- ___ 9. Saul of Tarsus didn't have to be baptized to be saved.
- ___ 10. Only sinners need to be saved.

Lesson Seven

“The Cost versus the Reward”

We live in an age of relative ease. It is a time when people want to hear that discipleship to Jesus is easy. That the path we will walk will be “paved with roses, green pastures, pleasant valleys, and beautiful streams.” Thus, discipleship to Jesus is often made on false statements and promises. It is not right! It is foolish and short-sighted not to tell the whole truth about following Jesus. He certainly did not want to make disciples under false pretense! Because, when a man sees “ragged mountains, dangerous paths, bramble and thorns,” he might rightfully wonder if he is on the right path. Men must be fully informed of the cost involved to follow Jesus; or else, there will be great disappointment at the Judgment Day when they hear: **“Depart from me, I never knew you...”** (Matthew 7:23).

Christ did not make followers on false pretenses. Multitudes followed Him more for the loaves and fishes than for the things He was teaching. When he taught them the whole truth, many began to turn away and followed Him no more. Jesus told two parables to let people know that they need to sit down and count the cost of following Him before they make their commitment. He continually discouraged outward adherence and stressed real consecration.

THE REWARDS OFFERED**A. Both Jesus and Satan hold out rewards for mankind.**

1) The Lord’s Rewards:

- a) Privilege of being His disciple and a Child of God (1 Jn. 3:1).
- b) Forgiveness of sins, freedom from guilt and its punishment (Acts 2:38).
- c) Help to overcome the problems and trials of life (Phil. 4:13).
- d) God’s providential help and care over our lives (Rom. 8:28)
- e) The privilege of prayer (1 John 3:22).
- f) Hope in the face of death (1 Cor. 15:55-57).
- g) The promise of eternal bliss after this life (1 John 5:12-13).

2) Satan’s Rewards:

- a) We don’t have to do what God says, but as we wish.
- b) We can enjoy the pleasures and passions of sin.
- c) We can take the easy, convenient way of life.
- d) We can pursue riches and keep it for ourselves.
- e) We can curse, swear, and say any mean thing we want to.
- f) We don’t have to be kind and considerate of others, but we can do as we please.
- g) We can be concerned for the here and now, not “pie in the sky after awhile.”

But where there are rewards offered, there is usually a cost that must be paid as well. It is true spiritually as well—there definitely is a price that must be paid.

THE COSTS THAT MUST BE PAID

A. Look at the Lord's price tag!

- 1) ***Must deny self*** (Matthew 16:24).
 - a) We must give up our own will and do the Will of the Lord.
 - b) Matt. 16:25-26)
 - c) It is to present our bodies as a living sacrifice to God (Rom. 12:1).
- 2) ***God must be placed before Father, Mother, relatives, friends, and our own lives also*** (Luke 14:26).
 - a) The closest ties on earth may have to be broken in order to follow Christ.
 - b) Our love for them can lead to disobedience to God.
- 3) ***We must take up our cross as Christ took up His willingly*** (Luke 14:27).
 - a) Sorrows, heartaches, trials, burdens must be born if we follow Christ.
 - b) We will have the choice to refuse, but we can no longer be a following of Christ.
- 4) ***We must be willing to come under the yoke of Christ*** (Matt. 11:28-30).
 - a) Jesus said: ***“Why call me Lord, Lord, and do not the things that I say.”***
 - b) He must become our Master, our Shepherd, our Leader, our Guide.
- 5) ***We must love God more than material things*** (Matt. 22:37; 1 John 2:15).
- 6) ***We must love our neighbor, as well as our enemy*** (Matt. 5:44-45)
- 7) ***We must be willing to suffer persecution*** (John 15:18-20).
 - a) It will come (2 Tim. 3:12).
 - b) James 1:2-3

ARE WE WILLING TO PAY THE PRICE FOR WHAT THE LORD OFFERS US?

B. Look at the Devil's price tag!

- 1) ***We must lose the benefits of God's manifold blessings*** (Eph. 1:3).
- 2) ***We will be denied God's providence*** (Rom. 8:28).
- 3) ***We must forfeit the peace of God*** (Rom. 5:1).
- 4) ***We are denied the privilege of prayer*** (1 Pet. 3:12; Phil. 4:6-7).
- 5) ***We will have no hope in death*** (Eph. 2:12).
- 6) ***We can only look forward to eternal punishment away from God*** (2 Thess. 1:7-10).

ARE WE WILLING TO PAY THE PRICE FOR WHAT SATAN OFFERS US?

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

A reward must be chosen and a cost must be paid. We cannot choose both, nor can we reject both. ***“Choose you this day whom you will serve....” “You cannot serve God and Mammon...”*** The Lord challenged us to sit down and count the cost of serving Him; and, if we are willing to pay the cost, make firm our commitment to follow Him. It is a serious matter and much is involved. It is not a matter of whether we can pay the price or not....but which price we are willing to pay!

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

True or False

- 1. Cheap discipleship to Jesus is a lie!**
- 2. Both Jesus and Satan offer men rewards for following them.**
- 3. Denial of self means we give up our will to follow Christ's Will.**
- 4. We must love God more than anyone or anything else in the world.**
- 5. A yoke is a means of keeping oxen working together.**
- 6. Every Christian will suffer persecution of some kind or another.**
- 7. Faithful to death is the price the Christian pays to go to heaven.**
- 8. Jesus does not want disciples under false pretense.**
- 9. We will pay the price demanded to either Jesus or the Devil...we have no other choice.**
- 10. Paying partial price to both will not get the job done.**

Lesson Eight

“Conversion versus Non-Conversion”

“Be faithful unto death and I will give you the crown of life...” (Revelation 2:10). The question of faithfulness usually goes back to a discussion on conversion. But at the same time, the question of conversion usually goes back to the question: *“Will a person be faithful if he is really converted?”* That, in turn, calls for another question: *“How can a person know who has really been converted?”* And the reasoning usually winds up going in a circle. For example, there is a religion group that advocates that once a person is saved, he will always be saved. However, if you were to ask them: *“If a person professes to be converted, but does not continue in the way that a Christian should walk, does that not show that a person is not always saved eternally?”* The usual answer would be that he never was converted in the first place! But how do they know that he was not converted? Their answer would be: *“Well, if he had remained faithful, he was really converted; but, if he did not continue, he never was converted.”* Such reasoning is in reality reasoning in a circle and has not really proven anything.

Jesus, in the Parable of the Soils, shows clearly that a person can be converted, but fall away (Matthew 13:20-21). Notice that Jesus said that he hears the word and immediately receives it with joy: yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while...and then stumbles. The same expression is used with the 4th soil (Matthew 13:23)—he also hears and receives it. But he is productive or fruitful in his service to God. It seems that the real issue here on how to know if a person is converted or not is to see if he has done what God commands to bring about his conversion. Since only God knows the heart of a person and can know for sure if he obeys from the heart that pattern of teaching (Romans 6:17-18), only God can ultimately know if a conversion takes place. The only way that we can tell is by the outward actions of a person.

In this lesson we are going to be contrasted two things: Conversion versus Non-Conversion! We need to see what the Word of God says about such, and then to compare our “conversion” with that of the “Bible conversion!” We need to see what Conversion is and what it is not.

DEFINITION & USE OF THE WORD “CONVERSION”

The Old Testament word for conversion is “Shub” and the New Testament word for conversion is “Epistropho.” Both words indicate a “turning about,” “to turn upon,” or “to bring back.” In the New Testament, the word is used in the following passages:

- 1) Acts 15:3—Refers to the conversion of the Gentiles.
- 2) Acts 3:19—People were told to repent and be converted.
- 3) Acts 28:27; Matthew 18:3—Emphasizes the need to be converted.
- 4) James 5:19—A person can err from the Truth, but be converted (turned back to the Truth).
- 5) James 5:20—Sinful people can be turned from the error of his way.

Whether one is a non-believer or a believer who has turn back into the world, they both can be turn to God through the preaching and teaching of the word of God (Psalm 19:7). In either case the person must understand with his heart before he can be converted (Isaiah 6:10; Romans 6:17-18; Matthew 13:14-15).

THE CONVERSION PROCESS!

Man is in disobedience to God because he has not believed and obeyed God. Man needs to be turned from his disobedience to obedience! That process is brought about by the following things:

- 1. A person must hear the Gospel** in order to be “healed” of his sinfulness (Matthew 13:15). If he closes his eyes, ears, and his heart, there is no way that he can be turned (converted) (Matthew 13:14-15).
- 2. A person must understand the Message** in order to be converted (Matthew 13:14-15). It must make sense to him. The power of truth is to set men free from error and thus bring about a change in their outlook and lives (John 8:31-32). Paul said that the person being converted must obey from the heart! (Romans 6:17). But what must he obey?
- 3. A person must openly confess his faith in the Message of Christ** (Romans 10:9-10). It is only in believing the Message that a person will made the change that is needed. Conviction that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, is what will cause a person to change his heart about loving sin and turn to loving God.
- 4. A person must Repent** in order to bring about conversion (Acts 3:19). There must be a change of heart or mind that will lead to a change of one’s way of living. Jesus warned the people in His day: **“Repent or perish!”** (Luke 13:3).
- 5. Finally, a person must be baptized** in order to complete the conversion process (Mark 16:15-16; Romans 6:1-4; 16-18). He outwardly demonstrates that Jesus is now Lord and Master of his life by submitting to a simple act of being buried in water to be identified with Jesus’ death and raised up as Jesus was raised up. He begins his “newness of life.”

While we cannot see into a person’s heart, we can make a judgment by observing the fruit in his life (Matthew 7:16-20). We can see indications of a change of one’s heart by his outward change for the better. He becomes a servant of righteousness and is no longer desiring to be a servant of sin (Romans 6:18). He puts off the old man with all of its ungodliness and unrighteousness, and puts on the new man created in Christ Jesus unto righteous living.

THE UNCONVERTED

The unconverted can be identified by several passages that make it clear that either no conversion has taken place or they have turned back into the world again. Notice the following Scripture:

1. They are unwilling to hear the truth or to accept it (Matthew 13:14-15). They are not like the Bereans that Paul described as not only were they willing to hear his message, but they searched the Scriptures daily to see if what he taught was in the Scriptures (Acts 17:11-12).

2. They openly reject the Message (Acts 13:46). Paul said that these people judge themselves unworthy of everlasting life.

3. They refuse to obey the Will of God (Luke 7:30). In this case, they refused to be baptized as God had commanded through John's preaching. But, in principle, for us to refuse to submit to those requirements that bring about our conversion is an obvious outward indication of non-conversion. Satan has an insidious way of deceiving people into believing that they have been converted when in reality they have not submitted to the very things God commands in order for them to be converted. In other words, they have not truly been turned to God—they still are following their own ideas or the ideas of men!

4. They go through the motions of obeying God but their heart is not in it (Romans 6:17-18). The outward actions can be done easily in many instances, but the heart not being involved in the process. Jesus talked about people who drew nigh to Him with their mouth and honor Him with their lips, but their heart was far from Him. They showed their lack of conversion by teaching and following their own doctrines (Matthew 15:7-9).

5. People who at one time were converted, but fell away (2 Peter 2:20-22; Hebrews 6:4-6). They turn back to the former ways of the world.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Converted people have a true hope—unconverted people have a false hope. The converted exemplify the actions and behavior of a person turned to God—the unconverted see no need of changing his ways. The converted person is growing in the grace and knowledge of the Lord—the unconverted see no value in the things needed for spiritual growth.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

True or False

- 1. There is no way to really tell if a person is converted or not.**
- 2. If a person is "truly converted" he will never be lost.**
- 3. Jesus said that one can hear and received the message from God and later give it up.**
- 4. There is no difference in a person who is Biblically converted and one who is converted to the wisdom of men.**
- 5. To be converted is turn one's self back to God and righteous living.**
- 6. Conversion is brought about by the Word of God.**
- 7. Repentance and baptism is a part of the conversion process.**
- 8. The heart of the person has to be involved in the conversion process.**
- 9. People can judge themselves to be unworthy of eternal life.**
- 10. A person can be deceived into believing he is converted when he really is not!**

Lesson Nine

“Truth versus Error”

There is a gigantic struggle going on in the world between TRUTH and ERROR! Our happiness, salvation, and eternal destiny depends upon our acceptance of truth only and the total rejection of error! It is truth that sets us free, not error! (John 8:32). Jesus said that God’s Word is truth! (John 17:17). And we are warned over and over of the dangers of false teachers that would try to deceive us into believing error rather than truth (Matthew 7:15; 2 Thessalonians 2:11-12). God’s people are admonished to preach the truth, hold to the truth, defend the truth, love the truth, etc. But we are also admonished to reject error, resist it, and not to condone it. It becomes obvious in attempting to do this that one cannot preach truth without automatically condemning error. And also, if we compromise the truth, we then are condoning error. We have to be on one side or the other. We have to make a choice and take a stand. We would like to use the passage in John 3:16 to help illustrate this concept.

GOD

This verse advocates that God exist, as well as other verses (Genesis 1:1; Hebrews 11:6). To advocate or preach or teach that God exists is truth! But when you teach such, you automatically say that ATHEISM is wrong (error). Atheism says there is no God. God either is, or He is not—the choice must be made. Jesus said that only truth can set us free.

GOD SO LOVED

God is concerned about His creatures. He loves his creatures and showed it clearly when Jesus died for us (Romans 5:8; 1 Timothy 2:4) so we could be saved by coming to a knowledge of truth. But when you teach this you automatically condemn the teaching of FATALISM as being wrong (error). Fatalism advocates that God has set everything in motion and left it to itself. That God is not really concerned about us. They advocate that *“What will happen will happen and nothing can be done about it. We are caught in a web and can’t change it—in reality, we do not control our destiny!”*

But God’s Word says that He does care and that we are not creatures of circumstance. We can make choices and can choose to be saved or lost. God doesn’t want anyone to be lost, but we make the choice (2 Peter 3:9). Jesus said that only the truth can make us free.

GOD SO LOVED THAT HE GAVE

This concept emphasizes that man needs God’s help, God’s grace. We cannot live successfully in this world without it. We cannot save ourselves and thus are in need of God’s saving grace (Titus 3:5; Revelation 1:5). But to teach this we automatically condemn the teaching of LEGALISM as being wrong (error). Legalism would have us believe that we don’t need God’s grace and that we can live a good life and God won’t condemn us. So, man’s goodness can get him into heaven without the grace of God.

But the Word of God says that man cannot save himself. He needs the Grace of God or he will never make it. And it also advocates that God is willing to extend that grace to man. You can't believe both—a choice must be made. But neither can you teach one without condemning the other. Remember—only truth can set men free.

HE GAVE HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN SON

This emphasizes the Deity of Jesus (Matthew 16:16; Hebrews 1:8; Matthew 1:23). But to teach this, we automatically condemn the teaching of MODERNISM as being wrong (error). Modernism would have us believe that Jesus is not Deity. They want us to believe that He had a beginning like any other man and that He was not conceived by the Holy Spirit—and thus, Deity. But the Word of God makes it clear that Jesus is Deity (John 1:1)! We are either on one side or the other—Truth or Error! But remember that only truth can set us free.

THAT WHOSOEVER

This concept indicates that men do have a choice in their salvation (Acts 10:34; Revelation 22:17). We not only have the privilege and obligation of making a choice, but we will be punished if we do not make the right choice (Mark 16:15-16). But to teach such is to condemn CALVINISM as being wrong (error). Calvinism advocates that only a select few have been chosen to be saved by God and the rest have been condemned. They advocate that man has no real choice in his salvation; and, if you are not among the elect, you are doomed without choice.

But God's Word states clearly that we do have a choice (Joshua 24:15; Matthew 11:28-30). We make the choice whether to be saved or lost. If we choose truth, we can be set free; but, if we choose error, we will be enslaved!

BELIEVES

This verse teaches conditional salvation! It says clearly that man must do something to be saved! (John 8:24; 6:29; Mark 16:15-16; Luke 13:3, etc.). Man must believe, but his belief must be an obedient belief or a working faith according to James 2:17-26). But to teach conditional salvation is to condemn UNIVERSALISM as being wrong (error). Universalism teaches that all men will eventually be saved in the end. They state that there really are no conditions of salvation. Besides, they say, a loving God could not condemn anyone to Hell!

There is no room for middle ground. Jesus said that we were either for Him or against Him. We either believe in Him and His message of hope or we don't. We either believe that only certain ones that God designates are going to be saved and the rest will be lost, or that man has a choice in whether he will be saved or lost by meeting the conditions God has laid down for us. Error never saves a soul, only truth can save!

BELIEVES ON HIM

This verse makes it very clear that salvation is through Christ Jesus! (John 14:6; Acts 4:12; 2 John 9). Salvation depends upon our putting our trust in Christ and His teachings. But to

teach this is to condemn all other religious teachings but His! This is often referred to as ECUMENISM. To teach salvation only through Christ is to condemn ECUMENISM as being wrong (error). Ecumenism advocates that there are many religious avenues to approach God. They would allow belief in different saviors besides Jesus. The challenge is “Truth or Error!” We need to take a stand for truth and deny error. You can’t stand for truth without being against error and condemning it. Only truth can set us free.

HAVE EVERLASTING LIFE

This thought states the ultimate hope of the believer. The Christian is exhorted to seek first God’s kingdom, to set our affections on things above, and to be content with our present situation (Matthew 6:33; Colossians 3:2; 1 Timothy 6:7-8). The Christian’s emphasis is not on this life, but the life that is to come with God. But, we teach this, we automatically condemn the MATERIALISTS as being wrong (error). A Materialists is one who puts his emphasis upon this world, this life. He wants to save his life for here and now. He wants to secure his physical future, but is not concerned about his spiritual future. He wants us to place our emphasis upon what we can get out of this life. A choice must be made!

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Truth needs to be taught and error needs to be condemned for what it is—a deception! We need to see clearly the choices that we have to make and make them wisely. What choices have you made?

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

True or False

1. There is no way that a man can be sure of truth.
2. Negative preaching turns people off.
3. Atheism advocates that there is no way of knowing if there is a God.
4. Fatalism advocates that God has left the universe running and that He is not involved in man’s situation.
5. Legalism advocates that man can save himself by his own goodness.
6. Modernism advocates that Jesus is Deity, but limited Deity.
7. Calvinism teaches that God is the One who decides who will be saved or lost.
8. Ecumenism advocates that we should all join together and overlook our differences.
9. Materialism places its emphasis on this world.
10. We should never just preach against error.

Lesson Ten

“Hot versus Lukewarm”

There was a time in China’s history that hundreds of people were martyred for professing to believe in Christ. They were beheaded simply because they believe in Jesus as the Son of God and would not deny Him. What would we have done if we had been there during that time? Would we raise our voice and say: *“Hold on! Wait a minute! I think I can make a statement that will be satisfactory to both sides.”* Or, would we have humbly submitted to our fate? What about the church at Laodicea (Revelation 3:14-22)? The churches around them were being persecuted, but not them! Why? Were they able to make a statement that satisfied both sides? A brief study of this church can give us another good study in contrast: Hot versus lukewarm!

CONDITION OF THE CHURCH AT LAODICEA

Revelation 3:15-16—*I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot: I would that you were cold or hot. So then because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of my mouth.”*

Laodicea seems to have been a city of compromisers. They were not disturbed by heresies nor broken up by persecution. It seems to have been afflicted with indifference. Jesus said that the church was lukewarm—that is tepid, straddlers, sitters on the fence, etc. Moral issues may not have been black or white, but dull gray! The church at Smyrna was hot (had zeal) and the church at Sardis was cold and dead, but Laodicea was neither.

Revelation 3:17—*“Because you say, I am rich and increased with goods and have need of nothing; and know not that you are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.”*

Laodicea seems to have lost their sense of values—They thought they were rich, but they were poor; They thought they had need of nothing, but they needed everything! Most of all, they needed a sense of dependence upon God. They placed too much emphasis upon their own confidence in themselves—what they possessed. Many Christians lose a sense of stewardship when they become well-to-do! They are lulled to sleep by a sense of false security. They needed the kind of preaching that would disturb them, awaken them! As one person has observed that the purpose of preaching is to *“comfort the afflicted and to afflict the comfortable.”* The church seems to have lost its purpose for existence. They had lost their joy of winning the lost. They were wretched and miserable as a group. They were poor, blind, and naked. They had also lost their attractiveness as a drawing power. Indifference had paralyzed their efforts and robbed them of their attractiveness.

Revelation 3:20—*“Behold, I stand at the door and knock...”*

They seem to have shut Jesus out, for He was on the outside knocking for them to open to Him. Christ cannot abide in a half-hearted life or a half-hearted church. They needed to change for the better and Jesus admonished them to do so quickly or else He would remove their candle stick! He does not want a lukewarm church, but one that is zealous (hot) and active in carrying out their mission (Matthew 28:18-20).

ARE WE INDIFFERENT TO JESUS?

Have we put him on the outside? Have we become lukewarm people? Have we become as indifferent people? (See Poem)

When Jesus came to Golgotha they hanged Him on a tree,
They drove great nails through His hands and feet and made a Calvary;
They crowned Him with a crown of thrones, red were His wounds and deep,
For those were crude and cruel days, and human flesh was cheap.

When Jesus came to Camp hill they simply passed Him by,
They never hurt a hair of Him, they only let him die;
For men had grown more tender, they would not give him pain,
They only just passed down the street, and left Him in the rain.

Still Jesus cried, "***Forgive them, for they know not what they do,***"
And still it rained the winter rain and drenched Him through and through;
The crowds went home and left the streets without a soul to see,
And Jesus crouched against a wall and cried for Calvary!

ADMONISHES TO CHRISTIANS

1. Seek first God's kingdom and righteousness (Matthew 6:33).
2. Present your bodies a living sacrifice (Romans 12:1-2).
3. Be doers of the Word—not just lip-service (Matthew 7:21; James 1:22).
4. Meet regularly with God's people for true worship (John 4:24; Hebrews 10:25; Matthew 15:8)
5. Give unselfishly and regularly (1 Corinthians 16:1-2; 2 Corinthians 9:6-7).
6. Pray for laborers to work in God's vineyard (Matthew 9:37-38; 28:18-20; John 15:2).
7. Strive to be a servant to others (Matthew 20:25-28; 16:24-25).
8. Learn to love one another (Matthew 22:37-40; John 13:34-35; 14:15).
9. Use our talents, abilities, money, etc., to build the kingdom (Matthew 25:33-40).
10. Be a diligent Christian (2 Peter 1:5-10).

COUNSEL CHRIST GAVE TO LAODICEA

1. They were to see for the true riches found in Christ.
2. They were to seek to be clothed with God's righteousness for true beauty.
3. They were to seek for better sight by the enlightening Word of God.
4. They were to strive to be over-comers.
5. They were to hear what the Spirit was saying to the church.
6. They were to be zealous and repent.
7. They were to open the door to let Christ back in among them.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS:

Have we pushed Jesus out of our lives???

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

True or False

- 1. Christ would have preferred that Laodicea be cold rather than lukewarm.**
- 2. Putting one's candle out is the same as being spewed out by Jesus.**
- 3. Laodicea was a rich church.**
- 4. Laodicea was a poor church.**
- 5. False security is brought on by losing all our money.**
- 6. Indifference can rob one of his attractiveness as a Christian.**
- 7. Christ was pictured as being on the outside of this church, not in it.**
- 8. Admonitions to Christians were not given to be ignored.**
- 9. Assembling for worship is more than just a "body" showing up.**
- 10. Giving is a vital way of showing our dedication to God.**

Lesson Eleven

“Death of Righteous versus Death of Unrighteous”

“Death” is not the most desirable topic to discuss with people but it is something that we need to face up to realistically! It is appointed for man to die! (Hebrews 9:27). The question that we are discussing is not whether man will die, but in what condition he will die and what will be his future expectations. If you knew that you had only a few days to live, how would you face it—what would be your feelings? Would it be fear, terror, grave uncertainty, or hopelessness? Or, would it be joy, anticipation, and great hope? Jesus came to make sure that we understood what to expect after death. In Luke 16:19-31, He vividly described the death of the righteous and the death of the unrighteous.

Before we look at the story of the rich man and Lazarus, let’s spend a few minutes looking at the question of “*why death for all mankind?*” Men have discovered some answers on their own as to what can cause death such as: disease, suffocation, loss of too much blood, etc. But we have to turn to God to find the answer as to why all men have to die. The first three chapters of Genesis provide us with an answer. God made man a creature of choice. He warned him of the grave dangers of making a wrong choice. Man didn’t listen, he made a bad choice, and brought both physical and spiritual death upon mankind (Romans 5:12). Since death will overtake us all some day, we ought to be concerned about it (Psalm 39:4). We certainly ought to be prepared for it in mind, heart, and life. We need to learn how to die well. We will all die one of two deaths: (1) The death of a righteous person; or (2) The death of an unrighteous person.

THE DEATH OF THE UNRIGHTEOUS PERSON

A. Such will die in various conditions.

1. Some will die having been more concerned with this world than in doing God’s Will. Their primary goal was to serve self, to strive to amass things for self, or to live for this life and what it has to offer. Jesus said of such a man in Luke 12:20-21 that he was a fool. He die rich in this world, but was not rich towards God. King Solomon pointed out that both the wise and the fool die alike. When they die, they leave behind all that they have amassed from their labors. They may leave it to a fool who will waste it all. Then, what value is all that accumulation? (Ecclesiastes 2:16-19). This type of person is indifferent to God and thinks in terms of “***Let us eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die.***”

2. Some will die having refused to believe in God’s existence. Many have even been defiant in their denial of God. But when death comes, that defiance often changes drastically. It have been recorded of **Sir Thomas Scott** as saying: “*Until this moment I thought there was neither a God nor a hell. Now I know and feel that there are both, and I am doomed to perdition by the just judgment of the Almighty.*” **M. F. Rich** is quoted as having said: “*I have given my immortality for gold; and its weight sinks me into an endless, hopeless, and helpless hell!*” What words of

hope can an unbeliever give to a friend that is dying? What words of consolation that can make death easier to bear? Or, what words of assurance can he offer?

3. Possibly the most tragic is the unrighteous person who thinks he is right with God when he is not. He has been deceived by another or has deceived himself. Jesus told about such in:

- a) Matthew 7:21-23—They thought they were right. They were busy, zealous, and religious, but Jesus said He never knew them.
- b) Matthew 25:1-12—The five foolish virgins thought they were ready, but had not prepared properly.
- c) Luke 18:11-14—The self-righteous Pharisee was righteous in his own eyes, but totally unprepared to meet God in judgment.

B. The condition of the unrighteous person after death is vividly described in Luke 16:19-31.

1. Verses 23-24. Such will go into a place of suffering where they are fully conscious.
2. Verse 25. Such are in possession of their entire memory.
3. Verse 26. Such cannot be comforted, and there is no hope of release from the punishment.
4. Verses 27-31. Such did not shoulder their responsibility of seeking the way of righteousness.
5. There is good reason to shudder at such a fate upon death!

THE DEATH OF THE RIGHTEOUS PERSON

A. Such people are righteous because they have been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. They have been born again of the water and the Spirit (John 3:3-5). They have given themselves as living sacrifices in service to Christ and righteousness (Romans 12:1; 6:17-18). They have lived a faithful and godly life all the way to the end (Revelation 2:10). Jesus promises to such people: *“If a man keeps my sayings, he shall never see death.”* (John 8:51).

B. The contrast between the two persons is great. The righteous person deserves the same condemnation of the unrighteous person because of his sins. However, he will escape this punishment because he has humbled himself before God and put his trust in Jesus’ death to deliver him from such. Death is no longer a “king of terror” for him because he has the promise of eternal life (John 5:24). Or, as Jesus said of Lazarus, he will go to a place of comfort (Luke 16:22, 25). He has an assurance of a resurrection unto life through Christ (John 5:28-29).

C. Stephen is an example to illustrate. He was surrounded by his enemies being stoned to death. He was allowed to see the glory of God with Jesus standing as they watched his death. He could then not only face a cruel death, but even prayed for his tormentors (Acts 7:55-60).

D. The Apostle Paul’s assurance was expressed over and over in his writings. His thoughts

of death were far from being gloomy and dismal. The sting of death had been taken away (1 Corinthians 15:55). He looked upon death as a gain (Philippians 1:21), and even desired to go on to be with Christ—which was far better (Philippians 1:23).

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Upon death, the righteous person can realize that the battle is over and we have won the race—victory is assured! We will die, but not alone for the good Shepherd is with us in the valley and shadow of death (Psalm 23:4). We can look forward to an abundant entrance into that everlasting kingdom (2 Peter 1:11).

It is not hard to see which death is the more desirable to die! Which choice of death are you making at the present time?

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

True or False

- ___ 1. All men die physically because of Adam's sin.
- ___ 2. There have been no exceptions to this rule.
- ___ 3. Solomon said that both the wise and the fool die alike.
- ___ 4. Judgment follows immediately upon death.
- ___ 5. A deceived person will die unprepared for judgment.
- ___ 6. The unrighteous go to a place of suffering after death.
- ___ 7. The spirit or soul of man is conscious and has his full memory after death.
- ___ 8. Jesus promised that those who keep his words will never see death.
- ___ 9. The Apostle Paul felt that it was better to die in order to be with the Lord.
- ___ 10. At death, the battle is over for the righteous person.

Lesson Twelve

“Dead to Sin, but Alive to God”

We have been looking at contrast in Scripture and all have been the opposites of each other. But in this lesson we want to see another contrast, but one in which they both go together. This lesson is not dealing with a choice between two ways of living or the outcome of such, but a contrast where both must be done to be right with God. One of the grave failings of mankind is to emphasize on side of an issue and neglect the other side. People often feel justified by doing one thing that is right but neglecting the other thing or things that ought to be done as well. This lesson is not dealing with an either/or but a “both must be done” emphasis!

Jesus gave an illustration of this very thing in Matthew 23:23—**“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithes of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone.”** Their giving was right and commendable, but their ungodly lives made them unacceptable to God. Jesus said that they were like white washed tombs that appear beautiful outwardly, but inside they were full of dead men’s bones and all uncleanness (Matthew 23:27). They had missed the truth that true religion before God is both and not an either/or matter. The following Scriptures add emphasis to this concept of both:

1) Matthew 22:37-40. Jesus said we were not only to love God, but we were to love our neighbor as well. The Apostle John stated it this way....**“If someone says, ‘I love God,’ and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen?”** (1 John 4:20). It is not enough to just love God; we must love our neighbor also. Or, it is not enough to just love our neighbor; we must love God as well. It is not one or the other, but both.

2) James 1:22. It is not enough to sit and listen to the Word of God preached week after week, but we must be doers of the Word as well. It is not an either/or, it is both that must be done.

3) 1 John 3:18. It is not enough to say to others “I love you” but we must show it by our actions, our deeds. James says show me your faith without works and I will show you my faith by my works. The same can be said of love! Both are important to do....it is not an either/or matter.

4) James 1:27. James says that pure and undefiled religion is not only to see after the needs of orphans and widows in their troubles, but we must also keep ourselves unspotted from the world.

It is important that we recognize and respect all that God expects of us—not just the part we are willing to do. Let’s not deceive ourselves into thinking that we can pick and choose what we want to do and neglect the rest. But to our lesson today! We have two phrases that are being contrasted, but both of them must be done to be acceptable to God. They are not an either/or matter that we can choose which we would like to do.

DEAD TO SIN!

The Apostle Paul used this expression in Romans 6:1-2. He asked the question: ***“Should a Christian continue in the way of sin, so he can receive more grace?”*** And then he answers his own question with a strong ***“certainly not!”*** His reason is stated for such a strong answer: ***“How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?”*** The person who becomes a Christian must make the decision to die to sin! He is to crucify (put to death) the old man of sin (Romans 6:6) and no longer be a slave of sin. That decision is called “repentance” in Scripture. Repentance is motivated out of a recognition of what sin can do to us with its terrible consequences (Romans 6:23; Galatians 3:10; 6:7-8). Repentance is also brought about by a “godly sorrow” over our rebellion against a loving and patient God (2 Corinthians 7:10). Without repentance (a decision to die to sin), we really are not ready to become a child of God—nor can we! We should be able to see that a life of sin may have its fun and rewards for a while (Hebrews 11:25-26), but it also has its terrible consequences here and hereafter.

There are also several other expressions that Jesus used to help us see the need to make the proper decision of dying to sin, such as:

- 1) Matthew 16:24-25. A person must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow Jesus. We have to die to self, if we are to follow Christ. Unless we are willing to lose our lives, we can't find it.
- 2) Luke 14:26. We must “die to” anyone that stands in the way of our following Christ.
- 3) Romans 8:6. We must either die to the carnal or fleshly or we will die eternally away from God. We cannot be spiritually minded and still mind the things of the flesh. Sin must be destroyed before we can live a godly life.

ALIVE TO GOD

Jesus told the story of a man who had been cleansed of an evil spirit. The spirit wondered about for a time and then goes back to his original home where he found the house empty, swept, and put in order. He then goes and finds seven other spirits more wicked than himself and they all enter into the man and dwelt there. The latter state was worse than the first (Matthew 12:43-45). Notice the emphasis....it is not enough to die to sin, but you also have to be active as a servant of righteousness. This story was told because there were Jewish leaders who considered themselves right with God but were neglectful of becoming true servants of righteousness. True Christianity is not only a dying to the way of sin but it is also becoming a servant of God. We not only die, but we live! We are alive to God! We are a “living” sacrifice daily to God. It is not a question of either/or, but both! It is not just enjoying the benefits of the cleansing blood of Jesus, but a life to be lived, a race to be run, a battle to be fought to the end faithfully. We are no longer to be servants of sin, but we also become servants of righteousness (Romans 6:16-18). We no longer walk in darkness, but now we walk in the light (1 John 1:5-7). We no longer walk after the flesh, but we also walk after the Spirit (Galatians 5:16; Romans 8:1, 4-6). We cannot just be cleansed of sin and then coast into heaven on a nice comfortable bed, but we have to get our hands dirty by becoming soldiers under the command of King Jesus! (2 Timothy 1:7-8; 2:3).

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

One of the great evils fostered upon an unsuspecting world is a perverted Christianity! It is to preach or teach only a part, not the whole counsel of God! It is to change or leave out some critical teachings that deceive people into believing they are right with God when they are not. It is important that we demand that the whole counsel of God be taught rather than a perverted gospel that cannot save (Galatians 1:6-9).

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

True or False

1. The true religion from God must not be changed to the detriment of mankind.
2. The Jewish people was not required to tithe.
3. Justice, mercy, and faith are weightier matters than giving—which makes giving unimportant.
4. Loving God and Loving our Neighbor sums up the Law of God.
5. Dying to sin is the same as denying ourselves.
6. Repentance is required before one can be born anew.
7. There must be godly sorrow for sin or else our repentance is not genuine.
8. It is not enough to die to sin, we must also live for God.
9. A man can not only walk after the flesh and after the Spirit at the same time.
10. A living sacrifice to God can only come after one dies to the way of sin.

