



Lay a Solid Foundation

FOUNDATIONS CLASS

Vision Version 2020

STUDENT BOOK



WELCOME TO THE FAMILY WHERE YOU BELONG

CONNECT · GROW · BUILD

Transferable Concepts

Kingdom Living

There was not a word of all that Moses commanded, which Joshua read not before all the congregation of Israel, with the women, and the little ones, and the strangers that were conversant among them. (Joshua 8:35)

Biblical Worldview

What is a worldview? James W. Sire defines worldview as a "Set of **presuppositions** (assumptions which may be true, partially true, or entirely false) which we hold (consciously or subconsciously, consistently or inconsistently) about the basic make-up of the world.

For most of us, there is only one absolutely true worldview – theism – and one completely true religion within that worldview – **Christianity**. However, I pose that even still there is a difference between religion and Christianity. Religion is a derivative of ideas conceived by **man** and his **selfish** inhibitions. It is rules without **relationship** and rituals without **righteousness**. It stems from man's feelings, emotions, paradigms, and a heart that is enmity against God. Christianity is a renewed mind and heart; it is God's opinion. It is an intimate covenant relationship with God. It is absolutely God's will and sacrifice of one's own ideas, opinions, and emotions because they have been renewed by the Spirit of God and **consecrated** unto Him.

Spiritual Gifts & Administration

Tongues

Who gave us tongues? The gift of speaking in a **spiritual** language came from God Himself, which Jesus told us would come (*Acts 1:8*).

Tongues should also be interpreted for all to understand if in a corporate setting (*1 Cor. 14:13*). There are times that your prayer language is simply between you and God in your **private** prayer or worship, to bring intimacy in your relationship and edification to your spirit man, as well as glory to God. When the enemy begins to attack your spirit, heart, or mind, it serves as a reminder that the power of the Holy Spirit dwells in

you. It serves as a reminder of the power given to you as a spirit-filled Christian, to take authority over the spirits and principalities against which we fight in the spirit. Speaking in tongues is simply a **gift** you receive by asking for it. It is not the sole evidence of the filling of the Holy Spirit. Your salvation is not contingent upon your having received a prayer language or not. It is simply one of the many gifts of the spirit that may empower a Christian to live in righteousness, fulfilling his or her purpose and destiny in the Kingdom of God.

Prophecy

- And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many people, and nations, and tongues, and kings. (*Rev. 10:11*)
- For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted. (*1 Cor. 14:31*)
- Follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy. (*1 Cor. 14:1*)
- Having then gifts different according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith... (*Romans 12:6*)
- For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. (*1 Cor. 13:9*)
- ...but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. (*2 Peter 1:19-21*)

Prophetic Administration. Prophecy is a gift given to the church by God. It can also be a very powerful weapon against the enemy. A soldier who is given a weapon but no training on how to use the weapon can become very dangerous. In the same manner, prophecy used improperly and not held to authority and **accountability** can be detrimental to the health and well being of the body of Christ. Therefore, in accordance with Scriptural guidance, administrative guidance has been developed for the use of the prophetic gift in the local church.

- Personal prophecy to be used in the local body must be exercised under the covering **authority** of the established, recognized, and appointed prophet of the house and the pastor.
- Personal prophecy to **youth** will be done only in the presence of the pastor, youth pastor, house prophet, an elder, or parent of that youth.
- Congregational prophecy will be reviewed by the house prophet, pastor, or an elder of the local church **prior** to delivery to the congregation.
- The level of prophetic liberty is developed as relationship, trust, and maturity in the gift is built between the persons desiring to step out in this area and the **leadership** of the local body who have prophetic oversight and responsibility of the congregation.

Healing and Laying on of Hands

Yielding to the Holy Spirit

Anointing with Oil

- They drove out many demons and anointed many sick people with oil and healed them. (*Mark 6:13*)

Reverence

“For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife [**bride**] even as himself; and the wife [**bride**] see that she **reverence** her husband.”(*Ephesians 5:31-33*)

Praise, Worship, Prayer

- Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee. (*Hebrews 2:12*)
- Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving (*Colossians 4:2*)
- Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. (*1 Thess. 5:17-18*)

Dancing, tambourines, and instruments in worship (Expressive Worship)

- Let them praise his name in the dance: let them sing praises unto him with the timbrel and harp (*Ps. 149:3*);
- Praise him with the timbrel and dance: praise him with stringed instruments and organs (*Ps.150:4*).
- And Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances. (*Exodus 15:20*)
- And the children of Benjamin did so, and took them wives, according to their number, of them that danced, whom they caught: and they went and returned unto their inheritance, and repaired the cities, and dwelt in them. (*Judges 21:23*)
- And the servants of Achish said unto him, Is not this David the king of the land? Did they not sing one to another of him in dances, saying, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands? (*1 Samuel 21:11*)
- Is not this David, of whom they sang one to another in dances, saying, Saul slew his thousands, and David his ten thousands? (*1 Samuel 29:5*)

Character of Christ

“And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” (*Matthew 16:18*)

We are to be people of Christian **Character**. Instead of worrying about how to witness with words, we should communicate our Christianity by the way we live.

Alcoholism, sexual disease, immorality, perversion, divorce, violence, and betrayal should not even be a part of our vocabulary. The church should be a model of godly character and **conviction**. The church is not a place built on exciting events, entertainment or the latest popular movement at the time. The foundation of a Life Giving church is the Word and Worship full of life and power, a people committed to prayer and the character of Christ.

Kingdom Politics

“In that day, saith the LORD of hosts, will I take thee, O Zerubbabel, my servant, the son of Shealtiel, saith the LORD, and will make thee as a signet: for I have chosen thee, saith the LORD of hosts.” (*Haggai 2:23*)

“And they made the plate of the holy crown of pure gold, and wrote upon it a writing, like to the engravings of a signet, HOLINESS TO THE LORD.” (*Exodus 39:30*)

We have become a part of the **commonwealth** of Israel and the Kingdom of God and in that fellow-**citizenship** comes responsibility to govern ourselves according to the precepts and principles of God's government. In doing so, we are to govern in three primary areas:

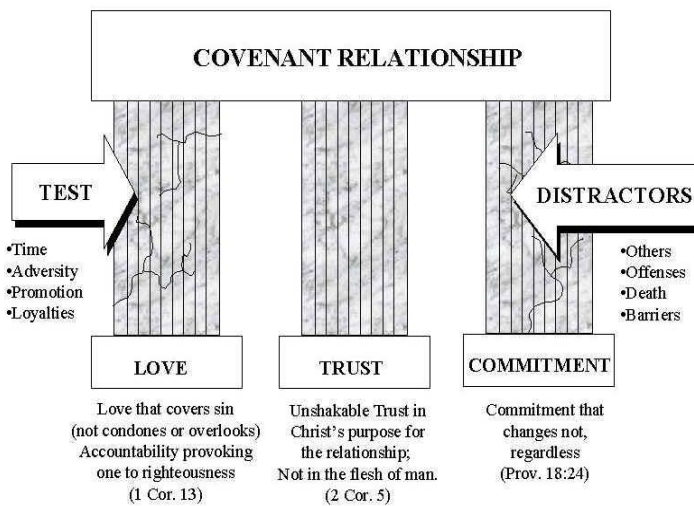
1. **Self**-government -

2. **Family** government -

3. **Church** government -

The church is the voice in every occupation and arena of **culture** opening the doors to the Kingdom providing and offering hope, love, joy and peace. (*Romans 6:12-14*)

Covenant Relationship



Where and when do you need a covenant? A covenant is used to make good on promises either for human or **divine** purpose (*Gal. 3:15-17*). Covenant was used for God's people in Israel (*Isa. 59-21*).

Why covenants? Covenant is used to show righteousness with the Ten Commandments (*Ex. 28-34*). God uses covenant to **bond** relationship with man and to prove His word. Man makes covenant to hold each other accountable and fulfill God's purposes in each other's lives. Covenants are not agreements, arrangements, or contracts. Unlike these, covenants **cannot** be broken. Covenants are for **life**. Covenants are not to be entered into lightly or without full understanding of what a covenant really is and involves. It extends for all generations and is not subject to opinions, **feelings**, hurts, rejections, etc. The best example is that even as we

rejected God and often continue to rebel or offend His love, He still keeps His covenant with us. Covenant relationships are built on Loving as **Christ** Loved, Trust, and Kingdom **Commitment**. Covenant relationships are tested and proven by time, adversity, promotion and **loyalties**.

Courtship

Courtship and dating are not the same. The idea of courtship is radical in our culture today. However, just like most things in the Kingdom of God it is radical and totally opposite of **worldly** thinking. Instead it is a Kingdom perspective on **romance** from the principle of covenant relationship. The whole principle of courtship comes from the way we **define** love and romance. Either we define them according to God's definition and examples, or according to the worlds. It also is built upon the thinking that I am not my **own** but God's, and I seek first and foremost His **will** in my life, and I trust Him with even my intimacy and love life.

We are commanded by God to teach our children His ways, yet we live in a culture that teaches the concept of dating which is basically wanting to **experience** intimacy without making any real commitment. By this definition dating is something we should actually be doing after the commitment of marriage. As another contradiction to Kingdom thinking, dating teaches us how to play the game of **manipulation** and self, as well as how to practice a series of short-term, taste test relationships. However, courtship is built upon Biblical Kingdom concepts and principles of covenant and righteousness where both are seeking first the will of God in each other's life for each other. Scriptural References for Love, Relationships, Purity, and Trust: *Matt. 5:28; 6:33; 10:29; 16:24; Luke 12:2; I Thes. 4:5-6; Eph. 4:22-24; John 13:34-35; 15:13; I John 2:16; Eccl. 3:1-8; I Cor. 7:32; II Tim. 2:21-22; I Tim. 6:6; Phil. 4:11-13; Jer. 29:11-13; Prov. 7:25-27; Col. 3:5; James 1:14-15.*

Marriage Covenant

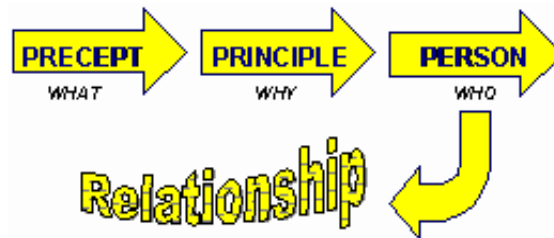
Marriage is a covenant ordained and instituted by **God**. We first find such a covenant made when God presents Eve to Adam. We find a stronger understanding when God illustrates this covenant through the giving of His Son Jesus Christ: "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it..." (*Eph. 5:25*)

Marriage is not to be taken lightly. It is a **lifetime** commitment to be entered into with the understanding that there are no **options** out except that of death. It is total giving of **oneself** to another for the purposes of God in each other's life. It is two made one in the spirit, as God is three in one (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit). Even as God is one, each of the trinity has distinctive characteristics and responsibilities. So it is in the body of Christ and so it is in a marriage. The two become one with Christ as the bond or glue fitting them together for His purposes in the Kingdom of God (*Gen. 2:24; Matt. 19:5; Mark 10:7; Eph. 5:31*). In this union there is not to be a little "i" and a big "I" but Christ as the I AM.

Parenting

Genesis 17:7-9 states, "I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me, you, and your **descendants** after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you... As for you, you must keep my covenant, you and your descendants after you for the generations to come." The covenant God made with Abraham is everlasting even to our generation and beyond. He made a promise to be our God and the God of our **children**. It is up to us to stand on this promise, to claim it for our family – our children and our children's children. Let us not merely consider it a possibility for God to keep His promise. Rather we must expect God to do all He has promised to do, and like Abraham, we must do all He has commanded. Let Abraham be our example for parenting, not Eli, of whom God said that he had

esteemed his sons above God and did not hold them accountable unto righteousness. Children will not become just what you teach them but who you are. There is an awesome responsibility and commandment given to us as parents. That command is to write the precepts and principles of God upon the hearts and minds of our children. We are to set the example in righteousness. Our first responsibility of **evangelism** is to our own children. It is the church's responsibility to reinforce the **impartation** of generational concepts (Biblical/Kingdom precepts and principles). If parents are lacking, the church is to instruct the parents. It is the parent's responsibility foremost to **instruct** their children. It is also the church's responsibility to provide supportive **accountability**. It is expected of each and every parent of the church community to instruct their children in the precepts, principles and disciplines as set forth in Scripture. It is also the church's obligation to provide assistance to parents who need help building Godly character and behavior in their children. It is the church's obligation to provide assistance to parents who need help with the restoration of parental relationships. In the Kingdom, relationships are not built on just rules, but on precepts that instill **principles** and tell us something about the person who established the precept.



Education

Generational Transfer

Leaders are needed -- leaders to disciple and **mentor** generations in developing personal and intimate relationships with God. These generations will go forth and impact the nations (*Ps. 89:1; Isaiah 58:12; Isaiah 61:4; Ps. 2:8*). Jubilee's approach to youth ministry is Biblical Discipleship where they both learn and experience the things of God. "And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. (*Deu. 11:19*)"

Evangelism.

The following are the global and local evangelism mission and vision statements for Jubilee:

Global Statements of Evangelism: The purpose of Jubilee Church Intl is to glorify God by uniting Christians for biblical fellowship and outreach, equipping and encouraging them to minister effectively **in the earth**. Our vision is that God will use JUBILEE and its members as standard bearers to prepare the way for an extraordinary work of His Spirit **in the earth**.

Local Statements of Evangelism: The purpose of **this local Jubilee Church Intl body** is to glorify God by uniting Christians **in Arkansas from all walks of life, races, nationalities, ages, and denominations** for biblical fellowship and outreach, equipping and encouraging them to minister effectively **in the state and their communities**. Our vision is that God will use **this Local JUBILEE body** and its members as standard bearers to prepare the way for an extraordinary work of His Spirit **in our state and communities**

God commanded to us what is known as the "Great Commission" (*Matt. 28:19-20*). He also knew that there would be many in the church who would not do as He commanded. He stated that the "harvest is plenty but the laborers are few". In resolve to this He then gave us another command:

WIN - BUILD - SEND
SAVE THE LOST - DISCIPLE THE NATIONS - FEED THE SHEEP

Kingdom Administration

As with anything we do for God, there must be excellent stewardship of the resources He makes available to us. In adherence to the Kingdom Principle of Stewardship, the following administrative processes for Jubilee have been set forth in this manual. With our compass set on the Kingdom of God and the Great Commission we must find the balance between strong vision and strong administration.



Therefore, we must maintain a balance of both a strong vision with clear direction and purpose, as well as a strong sense of administrative excellence in service to the Master. Both of which must be covered in prayer and operating in the character and favor of God. "Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms." (*1 Peter 4:10*)

Kingdom Principles

A kingdom is a set of precepts (commandments) and principles by which a people govern themselves. As God's people we are called to govern our lives according to the precepts and principles of God. We must do this in every area of our lives, from the way we think and perceive, to the governing of our families (children and marriages), to finances (personal & business), and even political and educational issues. In all things we

are to look at them through the eyes of God and measure them according to His righteous standards. There are many Kingdom principles that apply to every area of our lives such as stewardship, courtship, tithes, sonship, accountability, discipling, covenant, fatherhood and many more. Our goal at Jubilee is to teach you these Kingdom principles as God commanded. “There was not a word of all that Moses commanded, which Joshua read not before all the congregation of Israel, with the women, and the little ones, and the strangers that were conversant among them.” (*Joshua 8:35*)

Counseling

Prophetic – The gift of prophecy is used through the Holy Spirit to reveal to the counselor and heal.

Theophostic – The gifts discernment is used through the Holy Spirit to reveals lies of the enemy and reveal the truth of Christ.

Nouthetic – The truth of the Word of God is used to reveal where the life does not line up with or reflect the truth of Christ.

The Horrific Cost of Our Salvation

Pastor Jim Hamann

By salvation we mean being delivered, rescued, forgiven and healed from sin and selfishness and all its consequences. If we imagine after some exposure to the truth of the cross and the passion of Christ we understand the significant meaning of this awesome event we are truly deceived. There are staggering depths and fresh illumination concerning the passion we have never fathomed nor realized. To be sure we will never plumb the depths of it, we will never scale the heights of it, but now the Holy Spirit wants to reveal the awesomeness of the event as never before until worship springs forth to the Lamb that was slain.

Let's read the following passages: Matthew 26:36-45, Mark 14:32-42, Luke 22:3-46.

What was in the cup? As He prayed, the cup drew nearer. A vile venom was filling the cup ... the sins of all the sons of Abraham. Centuries of rebellion, idolatry, incest, murder, lies and deceit made their way into the cup. The sins of the Hebrew race had now become one with the cup. Then the transgressions of pagan gentiles began to pour forth into the iniquitous brew of idolatry, blasphemy, unimaginable immorality and filth, murder and the brutality of man toward man through battles and wars. These all found their way into the cup from all the gentile heathen people. The cup seemingly trembled as the contents of the deeds of the fallen and accursed citizens of the unseen realm poured into the cup. The full corruption of the damned spirits, the foulness of the fallen angelic hosts, and the rebellion of the princes of perdition all flowed into the vomitus brew.

Gethsemane tells me that it was no weak foe that our Lord met in the garden. Gethsemane reveals to me the cruelty and power of sin and the dread danger that lurks in its seeming harmlessness. Gethsemane assures me that God does not minimize the forces of sin, nor has He lightly treated the tragedy of man's fallen estate. Gethsemane shocks me into asking the question, what is this awful thing called sin? Gethsemane makes me stand aghast at the awful horror of sin.

Sin **stains** the soul. It degrades us personally. It darkens the mind and makes us worse than animals. Sin pollutes, defiles and stains. All sin is **gross**, disgusting, loathsome and revolting in God’s sight. Our culture has lost a sense of sin and its true horribleness. The Scripture calls it ‘filthiness’. Sin is compared to **vomit** and sinners are dogs that lick it up. Sin is called mire and sinners are the swine who love to wallow in it. Sin has turned humanity into a polluted, befouled race. Sin does not necessarily express itself in **overt** acts. Sinful attitudes, sinful dispositions sinful desires and a sinful state of **heart** are as reprehensible as the actions they produce. Sin is deceitful in a way that **hardens** the sinner against his own sinfulness. We seemingly want to **minimize** our sin as if it was no big deal. After all, God is merciful and loving; He understands and can’t be too hard on us. But to reason this way is to be deceived by sin’s cunning. Sin, according to scripture is the transgression of God’s law. In other words everyone who practices sin, practices **lawlessness** and we fall short of God’s standard ... we fail to glorify God in our thoughts and endeavors because they are self-relating for self-glory. Can you get your mind around that?

Patterned Living

Pastor Norm Willis

The Message Bible reads, “Anyone who claims to be intimate with God ought to live the same kind of life Jesus lived.” The work and way of the Cross being the central reality of Christ’s life and what He came to do. The way of the Cross is the central reality of our life and what we are to do.

If all roads lead to God, Christ’s road can’t, because Jesus said His was the only road that did. If all patterns replicate God, then Christ’s pattern can’t, because His pattern claims to be the only one that does. So to substantiate His claim as the only road and the only pattern, He lives a perfect life of obedience, endures an entire life of pain and suffering, and then is crucified. If that weren’t enough, to prove what He had already substantiated, He is raised from the dead and ascends to the Father.

John 13:15 – I gave you an example that you should also do as I did for you. **1 Peter 2:21** – Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps. “Example” is a Greek word meaning “a written copy.” It was the word used to describe the disciples’ written copy of the Teacher’s written teaching, the Teacher’s copy being the pattern, the disciples’ copy being the replication. The Apostle Paul underscores this reality of replication in Philippians 2 when he reminds us of who Jesus was and what He did, then raises the bar of expectation for us to do the same. **Philippians 2:1-11** - Paul begins the exhortation by urging us to be of the same mind, same love, same spirit and same purpose. Of course, the question is, the same what? The answer is, same as the given pattern. Same as the original and sole expression of God’s nature: Jesus Christ.

The authorized pattern is:

1. Empty of self -

2. Bondservant-

3. Humility –

4. Obedience –

5. Death-

Where did the death of Christ really take place? Was it on the cross, or was it in the garden? On the cross he gave up His spirit, but in the garden He gave up the death of His will. Understanding that this pattern is for our replication, The Apostle Paul said in 1 Corinthians 15:31, “I die daily.”

Our life was never intended to be a “design as we go” life that we simply add Jesus to in order for it to be Christian. To be the Christian life, it must be a patterned life where once His life saves us, it then continues to provide the pattern by which it directs us.

“Anyone who claims to be intimate with God ought to live the same kind of life Jesus lived.”

Decided Love
Pastor Norm Willis

We can redetermine our determination, recommit our commitments, and even reaffirm our affirmations-or we can just **increase** our love, for love will advance every desire. Love puts in the proper and necessary **motivation** for obedience. Love takes obedience out of the realm of obligation and puts it in the realm of **desire**. So today we want to look deeper into the nature of God's love and see how we posture ourselves to remain in His love.

Verse 19 says, "We love because He **first** loved." It's understanding and receiving God's love that enables us to direct our will to love others. (Because we received love, we can then decide to love.) " Without revelation, there is very little decision or direction. So let's us look again at the nature of God's love so we will be postured correctly to direct our love. In v.16, John tells us, "God is love." While that is most definitely true, He is also so much more. In fact, to truly comprehend the love of God, you must see it in relationship to all of His other known attributes.

1. *Asiety of God* -

2. *Eternality of God* -

3. *Infinitude of God* -

4. *Immutability of God* -

5. *Justice of God*-

So how do we posture ourselves to receive and remain in that expression of God's love?

1. **Acknowledging** our need (Luke 7:40-47) -

2. **Receive** God's love (1John 4:19) -

3. **Abide** in God's love (1 John 4:16, 2:24) -

COUNTERFEIT CONVERSION - PART 1

The Religion of Fear (Legal)

Over one hundred years ago, revival swept America. Thousands of souls entered the Kingdom of God under the searching sermons of a humble servant of Christ, Charles G. Finney. It has been estimated that over half a million were converted to God as a direct result of his ministry, and that by a conservative estimate over 80% remained true to Christ to the day of their death, without backsliding or falling by the wayside. The years have passed, and century 21 is almost born. Yet no voice has been raised strong enough to stir the church and shake the world. A wave of watery Churchianity, militant proselytism, and unintelligent “evangelicalism” threatens to be the only apparent forms of “conversion” confronting a reality-hungry generation. The church world is fast drifting into an “easy-believism” salvation that Christ would not recognize. Lest He be grieved, who bought the Church with His blood, men who profess salvation must meet anew God’s own conditions of **true** conversion. “Christian” is almost a meaningless word to the masses today. Because so many believe that they are Christians, when in fact, they are not, four of Finney’s searching sermons have been selected; 1.) True and False Conversion 2.) True Saints 3.) Legal Religion 4.) Religion of Public Opinion

They have been simplified, condensed and supplemented somewhat from other sections of his lectures and sermons, and thoroughly documented with Scripture. A certain amount of paraphrase was utilized to adapt them to today’s vocabulary. May the Holy Spirit of Truth challenge your heart as you read! You may appreciate the solemn injunction of the apostle Paul: “Examine yourselves, whether you be in the faith... prove your own selves.” (2 Cor, 13:5) Each section is set forth in love, so you can examine your own **spiritual** standing in the light of God’s Word. Many examine themselves by comparing their beliefs with **others**, or by trying to live up to what is set forth by some man or group. If we profess to truly follow the Lord Jesus, we will heed His words about Scripture: 1.) “To the law and the testimony; if they speak not according to this **word** it is because there is no light in them” (Is.8:20) 2.) “Search the Scriptures; for in them you think you have eternal life; and they are they which **testify** of me” (John 5:39) 3.) “For there is a way that **seems** right to a man, but the end of it is the way of death.” (Prov, 14:12)

These messages may shock you and shake you. They were meant to! But do not be angry or afraid to read on. It is your life and eternal **destiny** that is being settled by acceptance or rejection of the Word of God. Only the dishonest fear the truth. If your faith is real, it will stand this searching examination; if it is false, God knows it and you shall know it, too. Do something about it before you go out into eternity. May you feel the same yearning love and compassion that moved these messages over a hundred years ago, and may you have the courage and faith to do whatever you must before the God who **searches** every heart.

The Religion of Fear

The natural state of all men before true conversion is wholly selfish.

(I Kings 11:9-II; 15:3; 2 Chron. 12:14; Ps.28:3; 66:18; 78:37; 95:10; Jer. 17:9-10; Ezek. 14:2-3; 18:30-32; Mt. 5:27-30; 9:4; 13:15; Mk.3:5; 7:18-23; Lk.21:34; Acts 8:21; 18-24; Rom. 2:4-6; Heb.3 :17-15)

A man who lives in a converted state is not supremely selfish, but loving, or benevolent.

(Mt. 22:36-40; Mk. 12:28-34; Lk. 10:25-28; Rom. 13:8-10; Gal. 5:14; I Tim, 1:5; Jas.2:8-10)

(I Jn. 4:7; I Pet. 1:16; Jude 21; Rom. 13:10; I Jn. 5:3; John 15:9-14; 17:14-26; I John 4: 16-17)

True conversion is an ultimate change from a state of supreme selfishness to benevolence.

(Matt. 6:22-24; 7:17-20; 12:33-35; Jn. 3:19- 21; Rom. 6:16-18; 2 Cor. 5:17; Tit. 1:15; Js.3:10-11)

Has this change taken place in your life? As you read this, you are in one of the two classes above. The supreme end of life you have chosen is determining your own destiny. Do you know which class you belong to? Do you know if you truly love God or are just seeking His **favor** and aiming at **heaven** for your own benefit supremely? I assume that you are perfectly sincere, and possibly even very zealous in your faith. This test will not look however, at what you do. It will not question what you believe. It will simply expose one thing for you; whether or not you are **selfish** or a true child of God... whether or not you meet the **basic** requirement of true Christian faith; *to love God supremely, and your neighbor as yourself*. You can check your own conduct against the following, know for certain your true character, and if necessary, be ready to change it to discover the thrill of true conversion.

Hope and fear - or Love?

There are only two basic principles on which any government, human or divine is based; **fear** and **confidence**. All obedience springs from one of these two principles. In one case, people obey from hope of **reward** (for themselves) or fear of **punishment** (to themselves) and is the essence of the selfish man's life. The other class obey from **love** and **confidence** in the one in authority. Consider two children. One obeys his Dad because he trusts him. He has a faith which works by love. The other yields only an outward obedience from hope or fear, because he does not **trust** him.

You can tell a man or woman in the religion of fear. Some of their characteristics are:

They serve God like taking medicine.

(John 1:12; Rev. 3:20; John 11:25-26; 14:23-27; 15:3-11; Rom. 5:1; 14:17; 18:13; 8:1-17; Mk. 12:28-34; I Jn. 3:2)

The do what they have to, not what they really want to.

(Ezk. 33:31-32; Matt.21:28- 31; Lk.6:45-46)

A counterfeit convert has a basic motivation of fear, not love.

(Matt. 15:1-20; 23:4, 13-33; Gal.4:3-12; 8:4-6)

(Matt.25:31-46; I Cor. 10:23-33; Rom. 14:5-8; Phil. 3:3-14)

They are more afraid of punishment than sin.

The counterfeit keeps on **sinning**, because he does not really **hate** sin; only punishment for it. The true child of God is more afraid of sin than punishment. He does not ask, “If I do this, what will happen to me?”, but feels, like Joseph, “How can I do this wicked thing and sin against **God**?” (Gen.39: 7-9; Ezek. 8:12; Job.31:33-34; Rom. 2:16-29; 2 Tim. 2:19) The counterfeit keeps committing the same sin by **convincing** himself that God will forgive him eventually and he can always repent of it **afterwards**.

(John 3:19-20; 9:39-41; 12:44-48; Matt. 13:40-43)

(Lk. 18:9-44; Jn. 9:31-34)

They have a spirit of GET instead of GIVE.

True Christians enjoy giving and helping others more than being helped by others because they love. Their hearts are set on the highest good, and their deepest, sheerest joy is to be able to do it. (Matt. 20:28; Mk. 12:42-44; Lk. 3:11; 2 Cor. 12:9-13; Heb. 12:2)

(Deut. 15:7-11; Matt. 10:9; 13:44-46; 19:29-30; Luke 12:13-34; 16:19-25; 18:18-30)

Their prayers and cares for others are born out of fears for themselves.

The counterfeit is chiefly afraid of hell himself, and when he is strongly convicted he is afraid that others may go there too. The true saint prays for the sinner because he has a sense of the evil of sin which sinners commit, the counterfeit because he has a fear of the terrors of hell. The phony prays for a sinner's safety. The Christian prays for safety from sin. Christians feel compassion for the sinner, but grieved anger on God's behalf for the sinner's rebellion.

COUNTERFEIT CONVERSION - PART 2

The “Carnal Christian”

Much is said today about the “carnal Christian.” Such a one, we are told, has made Jesus “Savior” but not **Lord**. It appears by this that a man can be saved, but not **surrendered** to Christ; following Him, but still serving **self**. And it is easy to see why this idea has arisen. Preachers and personal workers are at a loss to explain the strange contradiction of a self-pleasing, self-centered person who claims the name “Christian” without bearing any **resemblance** to this Savior they profess to love. Yet ask them, “Do you believe in Christ? Have you accepted Him as your personal Savior?” “Oh, yes,” is the invariable answer. If these are all the basics, they are apparently in order, so another source of counsel must be sought other than conversion.

Just how much like a Christian can a sinner be? The Bible answers, exceedingly so. It tells us that an unsaved man can be strictly moral in his **outward** life (Matt. 23:8); outwardly very prayerful (Mk.12:40); zealous in religion (Matt.23:15); and conscientious in doing what is expected of him. (Matt. 23:23) None of these things are necessarily the sign of a **true** child of God. An unsaved man may be very much like a Christian in desires; to be of some use to others, to make converts and give money for the work of religion (I Cor. 13:3; Matt.23:15; Lk. 18:12). But **desires** are not the measure of true faith. The sinner may hate the same things a Christian hates but for a totally different reason, and that difference brings him a totally different destiny. It is the heart, or the supreme, ultimate **choice** man lives for that determines whether he is a true Christians or not in God’s sight. If the heart is wrong, everything else is wrong, no matter what is done outwardly. Either your heart is set on serving **Christ** supremely or it is set on serving **yourself** supremely. You are **loving** or you are **selfish**. You are living intelligently or unintelligently. You belong to God or you do not. (Matt.6:22-24; 7:17-20; 12:33-35; Jn.3:19-21; Rom.6:16-18; 2 Cor. 5:17; Tit. 1:15; Jas. 3:10-11)

It’s Hard to Tell the Phony (Sometimes)

The sinner may want to glorify God, and still be unsaved! The true saint does this because he loves Him, and wants to see Him glorified; the counterfeit, because he believes this is the way to be saved, and desires it as a means to his great end, his own benefit. The counterfeit may want to repent, because he is **afraid** if he does not he will be lost; the Christian repents because he hates sin itself, because it **dishonors** God. They may both believe in Christ; the true saint because he loves Him; the other, that he might have a hope of **Heaven**.

They may both feel like obeying God; the Christian, that he might be more **like** his Lord; the counterfeit because he wants the **rewards** of obedience. Desires are the same; the heart, in each case, totally different. One is saved; the other is not. They may also agree in actual affections and resolutions towards certain things.

(John 6:26-29; John 2:24)

Both true and false may feel badly about the low state of religion or church; both hate infidelity, injustice, and prejudice. The true saint, because it is **opposed** to God, to holy living, and to his Kings’ Kingdom. The counterfeit, because it **injures** an interest in which he is concerned, (for himself, of course), and if allowed to spread, will injure his **hopes** for happiness, oppose the **religion** he has chosen, and run contrary to his own views and opinions. (Matt.5:20) A man can even “hate” sin and yet not **forsake** it, being no more a Christian

than the devil. How often an addict hates drugs because they have ruined him, but not for sins' sake. He hates their bad effects, but loves the **sin** itself.

Now, if the Bible be our guide, it is clear that a man cannot truly be called a Christian when he is supremely **selfish**. And if the “selfish Christian” cannot be found in the Bible, as far as God is concerned, there is no such thing. Yet it is said that the Bible teaches this, and such a person may be called a “carnal Christian”. Let us first examine the Bible signs of the carnal man, to see whether or not we may call him at least a partial Christian. The word “carnal” comes from the Greek root “*sarx*” (flesh) giving “*sarkikos*” meaning “fleshly.” Each time the word “flesh” or “fleshly” is used in the Bible describing a moral action, it can be replaced by the word “carnal”. The two words are the same in Greek, they only differ in some English translations. Let us first of all list the signs of the carnal man as opposed to the spiritual man in Romans chapter 8:

CARNAL MAN SPIRITUAL MAN

Paul lists another set of signs characterizing the carnal man in Galatians 5:16-26. “**WORKS OF THE FLESH**” actions of the CARNAL MAN ... “of the which I told you before, as I have also told you in times past that they which do such things shall **not** inherit the Kingdom of God.” (v.21) *NOTE especially these starred characteristics for later reference.

Another list of the characteristics of carnal people is given in 2 Peter 2:9-22. We are told that they are ungodly and are reserved for judgment (2:9). Those singled out for the worst judgment are those who have **known** the Gospel and **still** live selfishly and carnally. They “walk after the flesh” in the lust of uncleanness and despise government, (rule or authority; immediately, of a society, but ultimately of God, refusing His Lordship). (2:10) They are self-**willed** and self-loving, (AMP 2:10) showing most of the signs of the people in Galatians 5:16-26: fornication (2:14), uncleanness (2:10), lasciviousness (2:2), emulations (2:18), sedition (2:10), heresies (2:1) drunkenness and revellings (2:13). These men are cursed (2:14), they have forsaken the right way, gone astray (2:15) slaves of sin (2:19). “...to whom the mist of darkness is reserved forever” This does not sound like heaven! It should be reasonably evident now, that a man who claims to be a “carnal Christian” does not have a very promising future, because his life is **identical** with the unsaved man. He is a **slave** to the flesh, a servant of his own desires and as such a **rebel** against the good rule of God, righteousness, and holiness.

SETTING ANALYSIS: I Cor.2:9-16

The Apostle Paul came under the direction and guidance of the Holy Spirit, not his own powers. The purpose of his visit, (and letter), is to **combat** faction, division, and **false** teaching not of the Holy Spirit. This implies:

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. No matter whether they do or not, they had better be prepared to **act** on his words!

Paul also amplifies his purpose (showing **more** of Christ's glories for those that love Him, (I Cor.2:6-11), then says that the Spirit shows men God's **right** and goodness. Accordingly:

- a. _____ (vs. 11-15);

b. _____ (v. 15; cf. I Jn. 1:5-7; 3:4-8);

c. God knows and shows what is right to spiritual men, who have His **mind**. (v.16) however...

This sets the atmosphere for a searching, but loving rebuke. Paul has heard of some very suspicious activities still going on in this Corinth church. Sin could only occur if:

(a.) Some Corinthian Christians still **thought** some sins might be allowable or even **justifiable** through either lack of light or false teaching;

(b.) Some sinners in the church were still successfully **posing** as true Christians. From this, Paul says: “I, brothers, could not speak to you as spiritual (men) but as carnal (natural, fleshly, unsaved men) as babies in Christ (or; as uninstructed people in the Word of God as to what a Christian should be like). He explains further by saying the first time he spoke to them, they had so **little** light they hardly seemed like Christians, so he had to give them “milk” (simple, basic facts of true faith for conversion). But, now some have still not **changed!** A “baby” Christian is not partially selfish and “growing” from **partial** repentance and commitment to **complete** repentance. All true men of God have forsaken all known sin, and are not knowingly living in sin. A Christian “**grows**” by responding to moral light given and disciplining new areas as God **reveals**. If they were babies, they should have learned the last time. There was only **one** other explanation for such sin problems continuing under the light of truth he had given them: “For you are yet (still must be **unsaved**) carnal; for whereas there is among you:

o **ENVYINGS**: (zelos - cf. Rom. 13:13; Jas. 3:14,15; I Cor. 13:4; but especially Gal. 5:21)

o **STRIFE**: (eris - cf. Rom.13:13; 2 Cor. 12:20; but especially Gal. 5:20 as above)

o **DIVISIONS**: (dichostasia - “a two-fold upstanding”, used only twice elsewhere in Scripture; Rom. 16:17 as “faction”, and Gal . 5:20 as sedition) “...are you not carnal, and walk as men?” or “Are you not worldly-minded and **behave** like the unconverted” (Berk.) (I Cor.3:3)

Notice carefully: Paul makes no case for a selfish Christian at all. There is no option here to forsake all sin; it is an **absolute** necessity. No honest Bible scholar could at all justify the salvation of a man who still **lives** in sin. If he does not know what he is doing is wrong, it is not sin. (Rom. 7:7-9; Jas. 4:17; Lk. 23:34; 12:47-48; 11:47-51; Jn. 9:41; 15:22,24) If he sins **ignorantly**, he is a baby; if he sins **knowingly**, he is a phony.

(I Cor.3:15)

COUNTERFEIT CONVERSION – PART 3

The “**People-Pleasers**” (**Social**) “For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God” (John 12:43). This verse describes men who refused to confess that Jesus was the Christ because He was extremely **unpopular** with the scribes and Pharisees, leaders of Jerusalem. These men were, of course, never saved. They chose to respect **men** rather than God, and as a result forfeited life. They were representatives of the third main class of religious people without true faith. We shall call them the “people-pleasers.”

How can you tell a people-pleaser? If a man professes to love God and put Him first, yet makes the praise of men his **idol**, how can you tell? Test your own character by these signs if you hope you do not belong in the class of counterfeit converts...They do what Paul says: “...measure themselves among themselves...” (II Cor.10:12), and for this reason do not find true faith.

(Ps. 36:1-2; Prov.12:15; 16:2; 30:12; Eccl. 11:9; Judges 17:6; Matt. 6:1-7, 16-18)

People pleasers never bother to **raise** the standards of right around them. They are not bothered that the general standard of piety is so low in the church that a visiting early church Christian would have to **backslide** to be in fellowship! People-pleasers like the “present” standard, because they have **conformed** their religious reputation around it. If the real friend of God and man tries to wake up the church and raise the tone of faith, he seems **critical** and meddling to the people-pleaser. (Matt. 25; Jer. 14:10-14; Mk. 6:1-3; Acts 5:28)

(Lev . 11:44; Ps. 24:3,4; Jer. 23:9-22; 26:1-15; Rom. 6; I Thess. 4:3-7; Heb. 12:14; I Jn. 3:3-10; I Jn. 5:18)

They often oppose men, measures, and efforts to wake the church as long as they are unpopular; but if they become popular, fall in with them. The opposite is also true. If the work becomes unpopular they will turn against it. (Matt. 3:7- 10; Mk. 6:14, 17, 20, 22, 26; Lk. 13:23-27; Jn. 6:60-66; 7:10-13; Acts 6:8-13) Let a man of God begin to wake up churches to true faith. While he is little known, the people-pleasers are not reluctant to speak **against** him. But let him go on and gain **influence** and they will profess to be his warmest friends. (Lk. 6:7-9; Jn. 2:23-25).

(Jer. 42:16 cf. 43:1-7; Lk. 14:25; Jn.9:18-25; Acts 24:24-27)

People-pleasers separate God’s requirements into two groups: those which are strongly enforced by public **feeling** and those which are not. They do the first to please men and break the rest as it suits **them**. A people-

pleaser is careful to stay away from sins forbidden by **public** opinion, but does other things not frowned on that are just as bad. He will never miss public worship - oh no! - because he could never hold a reputation for religion if he did... but neglects other things plainly required in the Word of God. When someone **habitually** disobeys any known law of God, the obedience he seems to have to other laws is not from a true love for God, but from selfish motives. (Luke 16:10; I Jn. 3:3-6; Jn.14:21) He does not, in fact, obey any command of God. (Jas. 2:10)

(Luke 16:10-15; Deut. 6:5; Matt. 6:24; Jn. 8:34-36)

How is it with you, friend? Do you habitually **neglect** any command of God because it is not sustained and enforced by public opinion? If you profess to be a true Christian, you probably do not neglect anything strongly urged by public sentiment. But how is it with others? Do you habitually practice some things acceptable among men that you know to be **contrary** to the law of God? If you do, write down your name; "people-pleaser". (Luke 18:9-14) They are apt to sin **away** from home when they would not if they were with those they know.

Many a man who is outwardly very religious and respectable in his own community drops his mask at a distance and begins to act like he has always lived **inside**. If he is fairly sure no-one knows him there, he **will** sin. If he is a religious man in church, away from church company he is ready to "let his horns grow". The true Christian in love with God does not lead a **double** life. **The things that make him happy in church are the same things that make him happy a thousand miles away from it.** (Matt. 15:8; Jer. 23:24; Titus 1:16; Titus 2:7-15; Jas. 2:9; I Jn. 2:3-6, 23)

A people-pleaser also often indulges in **secret** sin. I am now speaking of something by which you may know yourselves. If you allow yourself any sin secretly, (when you know how to get out of it but you can "get along" without any human being knowing it), know that GOD **sees** it, and He has already written down your name, "hypocrite"! You are more afraid of disgrace in the eyes of men than disgrace in the **eyes** of God. If you loved God as you claim to, and were tempted to do such a thing, you, as a true Christian would react like Joseph: "**How can I do this wicked thing and sin against God?**" (Gen. 39:7-9; Ezek. 8:12; Job 31:33-34; Rom. 2:16-29; 2 Tim. 2:19) They may not secretly sin, but secretly neglect duties that if known would bring them shame. Things like Bible study and secret **prayer**, for instance. They will appear very pious at church, but in the privacy of their own rooms, live different lives. How is it with you? Do you habitually and secretly omit some things, knowing how and why you should do them, and yet are careful to perform all your **public** duties? Need it be said that you "love the praise of men more than the praise of God"?

People-pleasers dread the thought of being called "fanatical". They miss a first principle of Scripture: That all the world is wrong! The world's feelings are all against God, and every one who intends to serve God must, from the start, **oppose** its opinions. It is true and always has been, that "they that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecutions". They shall be called "fanatical", "extreme" and the like. They always have been and always will be, as long as the world is wrong. (Matt. 5:11-12; Jn. 15:18-25; Acts 14:22; Acts 21:27-31; 26:24-29) But people-pleasers never go further than people's **opinions**. They say they "must" do this to influence such men.

(I Sam. 16:7; Matt. 23:5-7; Matt. 23:28; I Peter 3:3; II Cor. 5:12)

(Matt. 10:32-33; 26:47-50; Mk. 4:16-17; Luke 9:26; 12:9; John 1:20; 9:22; 12:42; Acts 3:13)

There is a great deal more apparent piety in the church than true piety. There are many things which sinners suppose are good which are abominable in the eyes of God. It is easy for people to take credit for people-pleasing lives and make themselves believe they are models of piety, when in fact they are only examples of **hypocrisy**.

Who will agree to take the Bible for your rule and Jesus Christ for your **pattern**, doing what is right in all cases, whatever man may say or think? If you are not willing to take this stand, you are a stranger to the grace of God. A people-pleaser is by no means His child. If you are not resolved upon doing what is right, public sentiment or not, you love the praise of men more than the praise of God.

“Wherefore come out from among them, and be a separate people...and I will receive you, saith the Lord...and will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters” (2 Cor. 6:17-18). And now, will you do it? Who is on the Lord’s side? Who is willing to say, “We will no longer follow a multitude to do evil, but are determined to do the will of God in all things no matter what the world thinks or says about us” (John 12:24-26)? “Search the Scriptures; for in them you think you have eternal life; and they are they which testify of Me... I RECEIVE NOT HONOUR FROM MEN... how CAN you believe, which receive honor one of another, and seek not the **honor** that comes from God only?” (John 5:39,41,44) Copyright © 1998 Winkie Pratney

GOD’S GREATEST PROBLEM

God’s greatest problem is summed up in one little word: S-I-N. Heaven is at battle stations today because sin has invaded the human race and the moral Universe. It is high time the Church knew her enemy! Her first enemy is not the Devil, it is not death, it is not despair. Her enemy is **SIN**, and unless she learns to understand it, face it and deal with it, God can never grant us a visitation from on high to turn our nations back to Him. John Wesley said - “Give me one hundred men who fear no one but God and hate nothing but sin and I will move the world.” Do WE hate sin? Satan has successfully clouded the minds of thousands of church people on this dangerous issue. No man is a real Christian who does not hate the things God hates and love the things that God loves, as he sees them. And in all His holiness God **hates** sin. Sin cost Him His only-begotten Son. Sin cost the Lord Jesus His life. Sin plunged the world into a living Hell. It will yet plunge multitudes into an endless Hell. It is time we paid serious attention to the subject of sin. Our understanding of its guilt and awfulness will largely determine our **view** of the love and mercy of God, our presentation of the Gospel to sinners and our presentation of truth to the Body of Christ. What IS sin?

WHAT SIN IS NOT

(1) Sin is not **NATURAL**

(I Pet, 2:22)

ARE WE REALLY UNABLE TO OBEY?

(2) Sin is not **unavoidable**

(Ps. 119:56; Ps. 119:36).

(Matt. 22:36-40; Mk. 12:28-34; Lk. 10:25-28) (Deut. 6:5; Lev. 19:18)

(Gal. 3:19; Ps. 19:7; Matt. 5:17; Rom. 7:12; 1 Tim 1:8) No saint in Scripture thought they were “unable” to keep God’s laws. Moses didn’t (Ex. 24:3; Deut. 5:1, 6:24-25; 10:12-13). Neither did Joshua (22:5) Ezra (7:23-26) David (Ps. 19:7; 40:8) his psalmist friend (Ps. 119:165-168) or Daniel (9:9-11) or others! (2 Kings 17:13, 7-18, etc.). The Lord Jesus Himself told men to obey His Father’s laws; this was the test of being a true **disciple**. (Matt. 5:17-20; 19:17; Jn. 14:15,21; 14:23-24; 15:10). The Apostle John stresses this obedience. (1 Jn. 2:3-6; 3:18-22).

IS SIN A “SOMETHING”?

(3) Sin is not physical

These logic flaws are:

1. A man is not a dog.

2. Do we need a sinful nature to sin?

(Is. 53:10-12; Heb. 9:22-23; Matt. 26:28; Acts 20:28; Rom. 3:24-26; 5:9-11; Eph. 2:13; Heb. 10:10-14; 10:19-20; 1 Pet. 1:18-19; 1 Jn. 1:7).

In Romans 7:7-24, the Apostle Paul personifies sin to show its power over an enlightened, but unconverted mind. He calls it the law of sin and death. Any habit of wanting our own way clashes with the judgment of **conscience** and God’s moral law. Any such developing death-style of evil habit (the “law” or “rule of action of sin”) **conflicts** with the changeless reality of the true state of things, the law of God. A sinner may discipline his life to try to break some bad habits, but no-one ever escapes **unaided** the ultimate addiction of serving ourselves. Without the drawing power of the Holy Spirit, no sinner can free himself. Only Christ by the Gospel can truly **deliver** him. (Rom.7:25; 8:1).

Paul illustrates the battle by speaking as if he is presently in it. That it is only an illustration and not a present personal problem is clear; the passage ends in **true** freedom. He speaks of the tug of this “law of sin” as if it is at home in his bodily members. “Flesh” is a phrase used to describe the concentration on emotional **gratification** through our five senses. We feel excited desires sparked into unnatural strength by habits of

selfish gratification in our bodies. Jesus comes to break the cycle of death and bring **deliverance**. Even here Paul does not really make a case for “physical” sin, and certainly is not seeking to prove it as his helpless inheritance. He is not concerned with how a man sins, but the fact of an **internal** battle raging that cannot be won alone. His point is to show us we have no hope of salvation in ourselves; the law of moral thermodynamics is against us. Who can help him get free? Only Jesus Christ, who faced all the temptations in His own body and did not give in at all; only Jesus, whose perfect character was sealed in death and whose resurrection demonstrates His power to face our worst and ugliest and win. If sin is physical, in what form does it exist? Is it solid, liquid or gas? If sin is identifiably material, can it be isolated in a test-tube? Can it be injected into a saint to make him wrong? May we see the phenomena of a vial of sin concentrate? This is, of course, absurd. All efforts to trace actual sin to some **biologic** or materially organic connection with **parents** have failed of genetic, medical or physiological evidence. Attempts to trace actual wrong to some **gene** or **chemical** deficiency is the humanist’s last shot at explaining morality, and still fails to deal with the universality of sin. At the most, all inherited traits from parents simply contribute **influences** for later selfish choices.

What Sin Is

(1) Sin is universal

Nothing is clearer in Scripture or in daily life. World history is a chronicle of wickedness. Every man prior to conversion is a **slave** to his own selfishness. Every unsaved man knows that he is selfish. The Bible shows the unsaved to possess one common wicked heart or character: Gen. 6:5; 1 Kings 11:9-11; 15:3; 2Chron. 12:14; Ps. 28:3; 66:18; 78:37; 95:10; Jer. 17:9-10; Ezek. 14:2-3; 18:30-32; Eccl. 9:3; Matt. 5:27-30; 9:4; 13:15; Mark 3:5; 7:18-23; 8:17; Lk. 21:34; Acts 8:21(18-24); Rom. 2:4-6; Rom. 8:7; Heb. 3:7-15.

This universal persistency in sin is also shown in: Gen. 8:21; Ps. 10:4; 14:13 (53:1,3); 28:3; Ps. 94:11; Eccl. 1:14; Is. 55:7-9; 64:6; Jer. 13:23; 17:9-10; Matt. 7:21-23; 12:34-35; Rom. 1:21; 3:10-12; 3:23; 6:16-17; 6:20; Eph. 2:1,3; 5:8; Tit. 1:15; 3:3; 1 Pet. 2:25.

YOU AND YOUR ORIGINAL SIN

(2) Sin is original

There is nothing clearer in the Bible; man is very **original** in his sin! Sin is not transmitted; it is re-created by any being **misusing** the elements of true morality - emotion, reason, choice, moral light and spiritual perception of God’s law.

For Adam, a tree was the test: provided he choose to draw his life and truth first from his loving **Creator**, he was righteous. Adam’s body and soul were perfect and unblemished. He served God, but without any real test of obedience, as nothing had yet entered Eden to tempt him to disobey. He was more **innocent** than holy, having no real pressures of temptation to test his **faithfulness**. No command of God crossed any of his natural inclinations; he was allowed to have his own way within the Garden God had given him. Finally, the great test came. The serpent suggested something that appealed to Adam and Eve’s love of **conscious** freedom in opposition to the direct command of God. Tree of **life** or tree of **knowledge**; and they chose terribly. Tragedy struck; Eve, then Adam, surrendered to the **desire** to have their **own** way, and broke the clear command of God. In unspeakable sadness, God was forced to clamp down His Divinely-appointed penalties. These penalties were of a two-fold nature:

1. **Physical** -

2. **Moral** -

WHAT HAPPENED TO ADAM?

Romans 5:12-14 shows that “death” was the penalty of disobeying God’s law, but men died from Adam to Moses when there was no law. Thus, the transmitted death that all die is not spiritual, but **physical**. Because Adam sinned, all men die; they inherit not sin, but **death**. In verse 17, Paul catches on points of correspondence between Adam and Christ (cf. I Cor. 15:45-49). Here the work of Christ equals and even surpasses Adam’s own failure; while Adam brought temporal death to his race, the Lord Jesus brought to man the gift of **eternal** life. Nothing is said, as would be expected in verse 20, about Adam’s fall extending to his race. Paul knew the word for “impute” (*logazomai*) meaning to count, reckon, and used it for righteousness (Rom. 4:22) but a different word is used in Romans 5:13 (*ellogeo* - to bring into account). Verse 20 shows instead that the law came in as the occasion of universal sinfulness, implying that men sin now just as Adam did then; by **intelligent** transgression of known law of God. Romans 5:19 is an exact parallelism. A key is the phrase translated “were made.” What does it mean? Does it mean made so without choice or chance? If it should be translated “constituted” as some have said, then all men are or will be saved, (no choice or chance) because of what Christ did! This is obvious **Universalism**. However, this

phrase occurs 21 times in the New Testament and in all other places where Paul uses it, it means “to ordain, appoint, put in place of”. It is used of the ordination of elders, bishops, priests or judges, and properly means “to put, place, lay down” or “put in a position”. To be put in a position is not genetic. Deacons and elders have conditions to meet for their place; they can also lose it. With this qualification, the passage is clear. Adam’s sin put all men in the place of **choosing** sin. He fell first, damaged us all and set us up to follow his lead. But Jesus did not sin. His Jubilee over sin and death put all men in the place of choosing **righteously** if they will respond to Him! As Adam’s sin is the **occasion** (not cause) of a race’s ruin, so Christ’s obedience is the occasion, not cause of its **redemption**.

What then, did Adam pass on to his race? It is easier to sin than do right. People that sin keep sinning more. All, indeed, “have sinned”.

(Ex. 20:5; Num. 14:18; Deut. 5:9)

The Bible testifies to our physical depravity by birth and circumstances. This makes it easier for the will to choose self-gratification, while not the cause of our wrong action. It is obvious that man is in a **weakened** and unbalanced condition: Ps. 103:15-16; Matt. 26:41; Rom. 6:19; Rom. 8:3,23; 2Cor.4:11; 5:2-4; 12:7; Gal. 4:13-14; Phil. 3:21; Jas. 4:14. This gives him a bias towards selfish action, the key among many influences for sin.

WHY DO CHILDREN SIN?

(1 Sam. 15:22; Prov. 6:20-23; Prov. 10:17; Prov. 13:18; Prov. 15:5,31-32; Eph. 6:1; Col. 3:20.)

(Ezek. 18:1-3,20, see also the whole chapter; Jer. 31:30; Deut. 24:16; 2Chr. 25:4; Ps. 94:23.) In speaking of the coming judgment, we are expressly told in the Bible that God shall judge every moral being for his own sins, no mention being made of the imputation of Adam’s guilt . Ps. 9:7-8; 96:13; Ecc. 11:9; 12:14; Is. 3:10;11; Jer. 31:30; 32:17-19; Matt. 12:36-37; 16:27; Lk. 12:47-48; 20:46-47; Jn. 5:27-29; 12:48; Acts 17:30-31; Rom. 2:2-11,12,16; 14:10-12; Gal. 6:7-8; 1 Cor. 4:5; 2 Cor. 5:10; 1 Tim. 5:24-25; Heb. 9:27; 1 Pet. 1:17; Jude 14-15; Rev. 2:23. God has specifically stated He would not judge man for another’s sin. Yet, all sin in Scripture without exception is under the judgment of God. Man cannot, therefore, **inherit** sin from his parents or Adam. Some Scriptures used to try to support this “inherited sin” idea have been pressed right out of context. In examining these, it will be important to adhere to some universally **accepted principles of Biblical interpretation. They are:**

1. Interpret each verse or passage in the light of all other **revealed** Scripture;

2. Examine each verse in the **context** where it is placed, taking into account the design, purpose, authority and author of each passage;
3. Texts used to prove either of two **theories** prove neither;
4. Passages must be interpreted in a way (if they can be) by which they will not **contradict** each other.

It is with these principles in mind that we shall examine the so-called Scriptural objections:

(1) Psalm 51:5 “I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.” Isn’t it saying here we are born sinful? Here David speaks; he speaks from personal experience, and not for the whole world; and who is the subject of this sentence? Not David, but his mother! Pressed literally, this verse says that during his time of gestation and conception, his **mother** was a sinner; David is the object. There is a world of difference between being **shaped** in iniquity and iniquity shaped in **him**, just as there is a great difference between being born in New Zealand and New Zealand being born in me! So does this mean (as Augustine once believed) that any act of sexual procreation because of sexual feelings even in marriage is itself sinful? Surely not. God made sex. It is His idea. What He calls clean ought not to be called unclean. What then, does this passage teach? There are three different interpretations, none of which teach the dogma of transmitted or inherited sin;

(2) Psalm 58:3, Job 14:4, 15:4, and John 3:3

This first verse in Psalms 58:3 has been pressed into service along the same lines. Note that it is the **wicked** who are spoken of and that even they “go astray”. If the text is forced to literal interpretation, it means that infants talk as well as lie from birth! Job 14:4 and 15:4 have been stretched to fit into this dogma. Both these two verses simply imply the **universality** of human sin and bodily frailty, without any reference to the means by which man sins. Both may be used to support the idea that man is physically **depraved**, and by these influences will certainly (not necessarily fixed) sin. John 3:3 can only at the limit state that that which is born of **fleshly** desire will tend to sin (when the will yields to its control) while that which results from the Holy Spirit’s agency (in the sense that the will yields to Him) is holy. Nothing here about inherited sinfulness.

(3) Eph. 2:3 “by nature, the children of wrath” must be compared with Eph. 2:1 which plainly states man is dead through his own **trespasses** and sins. Man’s wicked nature has come as the result of his wicked walk in the way of this **world**. As previously stated, the word “nature” does not mean the way we were born. God shows that a sinner goes against his nature in his sin (Rom. 1:31; 2 Tim. 3:3; James 3:6). His “nature of wrath” is the result of his sinful actions, forming in his life a **character** that makes God angry with him.

THE FINAL CONCLUSION - WHAT SIN REALLY MUST BE

(3) Sin is always moral

FREE AS A SLAVE

Who Has the Right To Rule?

Love-Slavery to Christ

The early Christians called themselves “servants of Christ.” In Greek, there is a special word for this type of servant; doulos, which means slave. To understand what it means to be a love-slave of Christ, we must discover what this servanthood meant to the first disciples.

Disciple Are Love-Slaves of Christ

First, they had a clear understanding that a Christian is a person who has been delivered from the service of sin and become a love-slave of Jesus. If Jesus is not truly our Master, then we are not truly Christians. (Romans 10:9) No man is a true Christian who has not made Jesus LORD of all known areas of his life. Deliberate withholding of obedience to God and refusal to surrender known rights, or sins, are signs of a phony Christianity. We cannot be a mixture of bad and good. You are either a love-slave of Christ, or a bond-slave of sin! (Romans 6:12-22; Philippians 1:1; James 1:1; 2 Peter 1:1; 1 Corinthians 7:21-24) Slavery to sin is marked by fear of punishment and hope of reward, as well as guilt and emptiness. Slavery to Jesus Christ is marked by LOVE; unselfish choices for the highest good of God and His creation. This is the sign of the true Christian. He loves Christ, he loves others, and he does what his Master asks him to do.

Slaves Have No Rights of Their Own

When a man becomes a slave he ceases to have any say in his own life. He has been bought with a price, and belongs absolutely to his master. All that a slave has and is lies under the control of his new owner. He is not free from the control of his lord, until death. He is called to serve and to go on serving regardless of praise or blame, weariness or sickness, thanks or disgrace.

When we are slaves to sin, the only way out is death; that is the sting of sin that burns in its final wages. The Lord Jesus offers a new kind of service and an alternate way of death to escape from the slavery of sin. Christ challenges us to die to our old way of life, allow Him to bury our selfish past, and live as His love-slave. As long as we are under His control we will be paid His wages, and not the wages of sin. But if He is to be Boss, He must be absolute Boss. This involves the total surrender of all our rights to Him. Until this happens, He is not our real Master and Lord. (Matt. 10:24-39; Phil 2:5-8; 3:7-8)

True Freedom Is Love-Slavery to Christ

(Matt. 11:29; 19:29; Luke 17:10; 22:24-27; 9:23-25; I Cor. 7:23b)

Disciples Are Learners

There is another name given to the one who would be a love-slave of Christ, and that is **DISCIPLE**. All disciples are **learners**. It's possible that you didn't understand what becoming a Christian really was when you first gave your life to God. You acted on all the light you had, and God met you graciously in His love. Since then, no doubt, you have wondered why it can seem so difficult to be a servant of Christ and why it often seems impossible to serve others as He commands you to do. Perhaps you have thought, "If it were not for the irritating things other people do, I could be a better disciple." How often do we react in **anger**, because we feel that someone has hurt us and violated our **rights**? There is one basic lesson you must learn to be a true disciple; the lesson of **meekness**. You must know now, that the Lord Jesus wants all of you, and that He is not going to stop dealing with you until He has it! He is easy to please, but hard to satisfy. If you are still troubled by fits of temper or worry, you have not learned what it means to be a love-slave. This can be learned by taking on His yoke of meekness. Being a disciples is more than being a student. It is not enough to say "Teach me what you know". The disciple of Christ says, "Make me like Jesus".

Meekness Isn't Weakness

When Rage Rushes Up

Getting Irritated

What Do You Do With Anger?

Victor over Worry

Worry is the other destructive force stemming from un-yielded rights. Occasions for worry also are opportunities for you to discover the **faithfulness** of the Father. As human beings, we have six basic essentials for living. When we find one of these rights threatened, self-love, (self-preservation), signals danger to the personality. A man who is trying to run his own life will **worry**. He has no heavenly Father's promise of provision, and must take full responsibility for insuring and meeting all these needs **himself**. He assumes a responsibility that is not rightfully his, and this produces worry. These six needs are:

1. **ACCEPTANCE** - _____
2. **ACCOMPLISHMENT** - _____
3. **PROVISION** - _____
4. **POSSESSIONS** - _____
5. **SAFETY** - _____
6. **SECURITY** - _____

The following steps can be used to surrender your rights, and get rid of worry and anger. If you will carefully and prayerfully follow these steps with your cherished right, you will be set free!

- o **DISCOVER YOUR RIGHT.**

- o **WRITE DOWN THAT RIGHT**

- o **BUILD A LITTLE FIRE,**

- o **FINALLY, EXPECT GOD TO TAKE HIS RIGHT!**

KNOWING GOD'S WILL

“How can I know the will of God?” If you haven’t asked this question openly or secretly you are probably not a Christian. Walk through the halls of time and you will see the men of God who changed history. Look at them carefully. They were not special men. You will not often find the naturally gifted among their ranks. But all had one thing in common - they **knew** and **did** the will of God in their generation, and God did a work through them to shape the course of history. Those that God used in the past were just **ordinary** people with an extraordinary Master. They were not all champions of great faith, but little people who saw their own need, and put their small faith in a **great** God. The driving force in their lives was the sure **conviction** that God had called them to His work - and that as long as they were faithful to that call, He would work with them and through them against impossible odds to Jubilee. They **KNEW** His will! Living in His purpose, they could be natural and let Him be supernatural.

Goal and Plan

God’s will for your life is a goal, not a blue-print. His one ultimate goal, or purpose, is for you to be **conformed** to the image of His Son, Jesus. God’s goal never changes. A goal is the point you are trying to get to - it sets your **direction**. While on your way to this ultimate goal, you will encounter many smaller goals and purposes along the way. Guidance is a lifelong process. God will reveal goals, help you reach them, then set new, higher ones. Therefore, knowing God’s will for your life is a continued discovery of the present most effective plan to help you eventually reach, (through a series of substages), His ultimate goal for you. Should you miss God and make a wrong decision at one of these sub-stages, all is not lost. However, many times there are **consequences** to pay. Sometimes you may miss an opportunity that may never again come your way... and many times good years that belong to God are simply wasted. But the moment our self-dependence or mistakes are confessed to God, and His pardon obtained, He will take you where you are at and work with you, pointing out the best course to take **daily**, in order for you to reach His ultimate goal for you - to be conformed to the image of His Son, Jesus.

Conditions

You cannot expect to hear from God until you are fulfilling these essential conditions for knowing His will. Check your life against these before you ask for guidance:

- 1. A Desire to know and do all the will of God.**
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-
-
-

(John 7:17)

- 2. Be a love-slave.**
-
-
-
-

(Matt. 10:24,37-39; Phil.2:58; Psalm 25:9)

- 3. A willingness to be counted a fool.**
-
-
-
-

(Matt.11:25; Acts26:24-25; Mark 3:21; 1 Cor. 3:18-20)

4. A clean conscience from the past.

(Matt. 5:8,23-24; Psalm 24:3-6)

5. Regular time of prayer and reading the Word of God.

(Proverbs 6:23; Isaiah 58:9-11; John 17:3)

Methods

God speaks and has spoken in many different ways. Guidance breaks down into three basic categories - **personal**, **corporeal**, and **supernatural**. Study the following examples in Scripture.

I. PERSONAL (Individual Direct Guidance)

1. The Word of God - The Holy Scriptures, the foundation of all guidance.

A. Regular Bible Reading - The “jigsaw” principle. You fill in a portion of a “puzzle” each time you read a section of the Bible. A key piece fitted in will suddenly reveal a whole picture.

B. Mental Suggestion - In prayer God will sometimes bring to mind a verse, a chapter, or a book of the Bible. Turn to the place and begin to read until God speaks to you.

C. Recalled Memory Verse - Often, during a time of temptation or difficulty, God will bring to your mind a verse of Scripture that will give clear instruction. It is to your benefit to know and memorize parts of the Word of God. (Psalm 119:9-11,15-16, 33-35, 65-68, 97-105; Proverbs 2:1-20, 3:1-6, 4:1- 13; II Tim.3:14-17)

2. The witness of the Holy Spirit -

(Rom. 8:14-16; John 14:16-17; 1 John 2:27, 4:1- 3,13; Col.1:9-11)

3. Waiting on God -

(Psalm 62:1,5, 33:20, 25:5, 27:14, 40:1, 130:5, 37:7; Isaiah 40:31, 49:23; Hosea 12:6; 1 Chron.28:9)

II. CORPOREAL (Other Christians)

Although God greatly desires to speak to each of us personally, He also likes to use other members of the Body of Christ to pass on needed pieces of the “puzzle” to us. This helps teach us **gratitude** for His work in the lives of others, and the needed lesson that none of us are a law or light to ourselves. We can learn a lot from other Christians, although in the end, we are responsible to no one but Him.

1. Godly men and women -

(Proverbs 15:22, 12:15, 13:10, 11:14, 24:6; 1 Thess.2:11-15)

2. God’s servants in the ministry -

(Exodus 4:10-12; 1 Samuel 3:10-21, Isaiah 6:8-9; Rom.10:14-15; I Cor. 2:1-2; 1 Pet. 4:11)

3. The gifts of the Holy Spirit -

(Rom. 12:6-8; I Cor. 12:1- 12, 27-31, 14:12,26-33,39-40; Eph. 4:8-11; II Tim.1:6)

III. SUPERNATURAL

The instances of “supernatural” guidance, or special **Divine** Intervention in our lives are more rarely recorded. These cases are rare, but not because there are only a few who ever reach the “exalted height” of such direct contact. In fact, God may sometimes choose to act in this way because those on the receiving end are so spiritually **insensitive** and dull that they might otherwise never hear or understand!

Although it is not wise to generalize principles from such occasional interventions, it is certainly clear through Scripture and history that men and women have received **authentic** direction from such Divine channels of contact

1. The audible voice of God.

Examples: Samuel (I Samuel 3:1-10); Elijah (I Kings19:9-13); Saul (Acts 9:1-7); the Lord Jesus and the multitude (John 12:27-30).

2. Visions and dreams.

Examples: Peter (Acts10:9-16); Isaiah (Isaiah 6:1-8); Daniel (Daniel 8:1-27, 7:1- 28,10:1-9); John (Rev. 1-20); Elihu (Job 33:14-18); Joseph (Matt. 1:19-21).

3. Visitation.

Examples: Abraham (Genesis 18:1-33); Moses (Exodus33:19-23); Joshua (Joshua 5:13- 15); Jacob (Genesis 32:24-30); Manoah (Judges 13:2-23); Zacherias(Luke 1:8- 20); Mary (Luke 1:26-38).

A word of warning before we leave this area. Young Christians can easily become fascinated with the “special cases,” and exalt these above the more simple and ordinary daily **ways** God uses to speak to us. To deliberately seek or glorify any form of guidance is an outright invitation to spiritual **deception**. We are not to seek or specify how God **should** speak, but only seek Him in any way that He wishes to make Himself known. And as previously mentioned, for God to have to use such methods is no guarantee at all of our **superior** spirituality; it may instead be an indication of spiritual **immaturity**.

Steps

The following method of receiving guidance combines most guidance principles into three basic steps:

1. Give up your own desires.

2. Resist the devil.

(Proverbs 18:10; Eph.1:17-23; James 4:5- 10; I John 3:78; I Pet.5:6-9)

3. Listen to the voice of God.

Your Move

Ahead of you is a generation that desperately needs a voice of authority. Men are tired of the constant failure of **human** wisdom; what they need most of all is to hear from Heaven. Can you be His **vessel** to proclaim, “Thus saith the Lord!” to a lost and dying world? Do you dare be guided by God? Will you accept the challenge to hear His voice and do His will?

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Baptisms and Apostasy

In Hebrews Chapter 6 we find the eightfold command for Christians NOT to apostatize. To “apostatize” means “to abandon one's religious **faith**, a political party, one's **principles**, or a cause.”

There are Seven Stages of Apostasy:

1. **Refusal** to hear God (Heb.3:7)
2. **Hardness** of heart through refusal to hear and obey God (Heb. 3:8,13,15)
3. **Unbelief** a consequence of hardening the heart against God (Heb. 3:12)
4. **Departure** from the living God (Heb. 3:12)
5. Open **rebellion** against God to provoke and tempt Him (Heb. 3:8-9,16)
6. **Habitual** sinning, careless living, and flagrant violation of God's laws (Heb. 3:10,17)
7. **Apostasy** – all faith in God and His redemptive work thrown **overboard** – beyond all hope of repentance because no more faith (Heb. 3:11,18-19).

Hebrews 6:2 states, “...of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.”

- **Repentance** (Mt. 13:35; 2 Cor. 4:9; Rev. 12:10; Lk. 11:50; Jn. 17:24; Eph. 1:4; Heb. 4:3; 9:26; 11:10; 1 Pet. 1:20; Rev. 13:8; 17:8; Jn. 3:15-18)
- **Salvation (Baptism in Christ)** (Eph. 4:5; Rom. 6:3-7; I Cor. 12:13; Gal. 3:27; Col. 2:12)
- **Baptism of Water** (Mt. 28:19; Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38-41; 8:12-16,36-38; 9:18;10:47-48;16:15,33;18:8,19:5;22:16; I Cor. 1:13-17; I Pet. 3:21)
- **Baptism of the Holy Spirit** (Acts 10:44-48; Acts 1:4-8; 2:1-11; 11:16; 8:12-21; 19:1-7; Mt. 3:11, 14; 20:22-23; Mk. 1:8; 10:38-39; Lk. 3:16; Jn. 1:33; 7:37-39)
- **Laying on of Hands** (Acts 8:18; I Tim. 4:14; Heb. 6:2; Jn. 14:12)
- **Resurrection of the Dead** (Mt. 22:31; Lk. 20:35; Jn. 11:25; Acts 4:2;17:32;23:6;24:15-21;Rom. 1:4; I Cor. 15:12-21,42; Phil. 3:11;Heb. 11:35;1 Pet. 1:3;Rev.20:5)
- **Eternal Judgment** (Mt. 23:14; Mk. 12:40; Lk. 20:47;23:40; 24:20; Rom. 3:12; 1 Tim. 3:6; James 3:1; Jude 4)

Hebrews 6:6 declares, “(Crucify the Son of God again; Put Christ to open shame) If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.” Sustained moral failure and living a **double** life (one foot in the Kingdom and one foot in the world) is a treasonous action. It is **collaboration** with the enemies of Christ. It will cripple ministry for life, bring unfathomable pain to **others**, disgrace to yourself and the cause of Christ. Consider this before you serve in a position where you are a public **ambassador** for Christ and others are trusting in your moral Christian **integrity**. **Hebrews 6:4** “For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost,” The writer here gives specific criteria to define the one whom he refers to is **impossible** to be brought back to life in Christ. It is important to note that this criteria points to one who was a seasoned man or woman of God, who had tasted or **known** and operated in the things of the Spirit such as the gifts and or offices of the five-fold ministry. Further more, it is important to clearly define what the author means by “impossible”. In Luke 18:27; Luke 1:37; Mark 10:27; and Matthew 19:26 the Scripture tells us that what is impossible for man is **NOT** impossible for God for **NOTHING** is impossible for God. Therefore, it may be impossible for you or me to lead this fallen brother

or sister back to Christ after they have had the knowledge of the deep things of God but it is not impossible for **God**.

Verses 7-20 go on to challenge us to grow in Christ as disciple. What fruit of Christ's life is evident in you and how you live? (Mt. 13; Lk. 13:9; Jn. 15:2-8; 2 Cor. 11:15; 2 Pet. 3:10) We are to be **imitators** of the faithful witnesses before us. Slothfulness in righteous living deprives you of the promises and blessings of God's Kingdom. It puts at **risk** your Kingdom inheritance. It ultimately will **destroy** your hope and faith in Christ. God made covenant with Himself. He made covenant with His own eternal power **transcendent** of man to fulfill the promise. You must make covenant with yourself that you will hold fast to the covenant **you** have made with God to walk in His righteousness. You must first make a commitment to **commitment**.

Are you ready to be a true disciple of Christ? Do you desire the full and complete conversion as a follower of Jesus? Will you surrender completely to His Lordship and process of making you like Him?