The Message of Reconciliation begins with God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit at creation. Each lesson progresses throughout the history of His people from the Creation, birth of Jesus, His crucifixion, the Christ return, the Second Coming, and Judgment. They present God’s message to His creation – “I created you in My likeness, you sinned, I want you back but to do this you must change back into My likeness – The Message of Reconciliation.

Patriarchs
Those to whom God spoke directly, i.e.; Noah, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob

Israelites
Those chosen to be the earthly race into which the Messiah, the Anointed One, The Christ would be born.

Christians
Those born into His family by trust and obedience, based on a knowledge of the Truth, a love for righteousness, a faith that Jesus is God who came to Earth in the flesh.

You are encouraged to read YOUR Bible to prove the truth presented in these lessons or any other lesson as it is your responsibility to seek to do God's will. Let the Bible speak to YOU.

At the end of most lessons is a series of questions to assist you in evaluating your understanding of the lesson.
Lesson 1

The word 'elohiym (el-o-heem'); plural of 'elowahh (Strong's Greek Hebrew Dictionary) translated into English as God is plural. This agrees with the Genesis 1:1-3 where the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit were together united as one when they created the Heavens and the Earth.

Speaking of the creation, Genesis 1:1-3 states, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light." While John 1:1-3 states, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made." The only thing man knows about the beginning is what God has chosen to reveal to him. Theories of "learned men" are unproven and often contrary to what has been revealed.

The last day of creation as recorded in Genesis 1:26-27 is "Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.' So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them." This creation was different from all His other creations as man was made in God's likeness, in His image. Man is not an exact copy of God. Man was created flesh and blood while God is spirit.

God put man in the midst of the rest of creation to rule over and have dominion over it. He told the man, Adam, to work it and take care of it. "And the LORD God commanded the man, 'You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die'." (Genesis 2:16-17)

The Devil took on the form of a serpent to tempt Eve, lying to her. "When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it." (Genesis 3:6)
James defines the temptation process: "but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death." (James 1:14-15)

To Eve the fruit was pleasing to the eye and desirable to make her wise but disobedience has consequences. In this case the consequence was immediate. However, in some situations sin may not be found out until the judgment when one faces God. They were removed from paradise to a land of toil and pain. God said to the serpent "Because you have done this, Cursed are you above all the livestock and all the wild animals! You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life. And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.' To the woman he said, 'I will greatly increase your pains in childbearing; with pain you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.' To Adam he said, 'Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat of it', 'Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return'." (Genesis 3:14-19)

With this sin both Adam and Eve were separated from God and in need of being reunited with Him. This reconciliation would require a perfect sacrifice for their sin of disobedience.
1. The Greek word 'elohiym translated God is
   A. ______ singular for God the Father.
   B. ______ plural for God the Father, God the Holy Spirit
   and God the Son.

2. The Word existed before the creation.
   True _____ False _____

3. The only instruction God gave to Adam was not to eat of the
tree of knowledge of good and evil.
   True _____ False _____

4. Adam, consequently all mankind, was created
   A ______ exactly like God.
   B ______ like all other animals that breathed air.
   C _____ in the likeness of God.

5. Eve did not understand that she should not eat of the fruit of
the tree of knowledge of good and evil.
   True _____ False _____

6. Adam and Eve sinned because
   A ____ they ate the forbidden fruit because they were
   starving.
   B ____ the devil in the form of a serpent forced them
to eat the forbidden fruit.
   C ____ they disobeyed God by yielding to temptation
   and decided to eat the forbidden fruit.

7. Since Eve ate of the forbidden fruit, Adam had no choice as
God had made Eve for him.
   True _____ False _____
Lesson 2  

Adam and Eve

Eve, knowing that God commanded them not to eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, yielded to her desires, ate of the fruit and gave some to Adam and he also ate. The devil in the form of a serpent had enticed them to sin. This action of disobedience resulted in them being expelled from paradise, the Garden of Eden, and suffering other consequences of their sin. The consequences were separation from God, pain and death.

Their greatest pain may have been when one son, Cain, killed another son, Abel. Sin was present before the murder as Cain's heart was not pure and godly. Both Cain and Abel offered sacrifices to God. But, Cain became angry because Abel's offering to God was accepted and his was rejected.

Cain and Abel

In Hebrews 11:4 we read that Abel's offering was by faith. Now faith is based upon knowledge and love. So Abel's action and attitude pleased God whereas Cain's did not. God said of Cain's offering "if you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must master it." (Genesis 4:7)

Therefore it appears the object Cain offered was not acceptable or his attitude was unacceptable or both. He may have not offered the best he had, he may have offered something not authorized or he offered exactly what was required but with an attitude other than love of God. Whatever the situation, God was not pleased and Cain knew why. As punishment, the earth would not yield fruits for him and he would become a restless wanderer.

Noah

God told Noah what he must do to save the righteous people from perishing in the impending flood. No doubt these instructions appeared to be unusual but very explicit. Noah may have even questioned how a boat made only from one kind of wood exactly so long, wide and high with only one window and door could possibly save him and his family. However, he began building immediately warning others of the
consequences of their rebellious and sinful lifestyle. In Hebrews 11:7 we read "By faith Noah, when warned about things not yet seen, in holy fear built an ark to save his family. By his faith he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness that comes by faith."

**Summary**

So far in only six chapters of the first book of the Bible we have seen three situations where people disobeyed God's commandments, substituting their own desires; one disobeyed because it was pleasing to the eye and something to be desired to make them wise, one disobeyed by presenting an offering, an act of worship, that was not pleasing to God and one group disobeyed as the thoughts and intent of their mind was evil continually. God was displeased in every case, judging their actions against his standard, his Word. A righteous God, their creator, established the consequences He considered appropriate for their action.

1. God is.
   A_________ only the Father  
   B_________ the Father and the Holy Spirit  
   C_________ the Father and the Son  
   D_________ the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit

2. The Word, Jesus, existed before the creation.
   True _____  False _____

3. Cain's offering was not acceptable because
   A _____  it was a grain offering rather than an animal offering  
   B_____ Cain was not obedient thus sinned with his offering  
   C______ he kept the best for himself

4. Noah followed God's plan exactly and did not substitute his own opinion for God's.
   True ____  False ____

5. Noah’s faith was based upon
   A__________ his feelings about what God wanted.  
   B__________ someone else's opinion of what God wanted.  
   C___________ knowledge of what God said He wanted.
Lesson 3  
Noah was a righteous man who obeyed God. By faith he built an ark saving mankind from annihilation. After the ark was completed Noah and his family entered the ark and God caused the animals that breathed air to come into the ark. After God closed the door He opened the fountains of the deep and the windows of heaven to flood the earth. After days and months the waters abated. Then Noah, his family and the animals came out of the ark.

Noah immediately built an altar, offered a sacrifice and worshipped God. This offering pleased God “The LORD smelled the pleasing aroma and said in his heart: ‘Never again will I curse the ground because of man, even though every inclination of his heart is evil from childhood. And never again will I destroy all living creatures, as I have done. As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will never cease’. (Genesis 8:21-22) God also gave some instructions or commands (Genesis 9:3-7):

- Everything that lives and moves will be food for you
- Just as I gave you the green plants, I now give you every thing,
- But you must not eat meat that has its lifeblood still in it.
- And for your lifeblood I will surely demand an accounting. I will demand an accounting from every animal. And from each man, too, I will demand an accounting for the life of his fellow man.
- Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God has God made man.
- As for you, be fruitful and increase in number; multiply on the earth and increase upon it.

God then established a covenant with Noah and every living creature.

Sin knocked at the door again as Ham showed disrespect for his father whereupon he was cursed to become a slave to his brothers.

In Romans 1:28-32 “Furthermore, since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, he gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done. They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil;
they disobey their parents; they are senseless, faithless, heartless, ruthless. Although they know God’s righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.” Note the parallel in Noah’s time and our situation:

a. The people were sinful and we are sinners – Romans 3:23 “for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”

b. They were about to die and we may also – John 8:24a “I told you that you would die in your sins.”

c. Noah was told what to do to save the righteous and so have we – John 8:24b “if you do not believe that I am [the one I claim to be], you will indeed die in your sins.”

d. All the people of Noah’s time had a choice to make and we also have a choice – 2 Corinthians 6:2b “I tell you, now is the time of God’s favor, now is the day of salvation.”

1. Noah was considered righteous because he built an ark and saved mankind.
   True _____ False _____

2. Every adult except Jesus has sinned.
   True _____ False _____

3. When is an acceptable time for ones salvation?
   A _______ After one has sown their wild oats.
   B _______ When time pressures are not so great
   C _______ There is no time like the present.

4. What happens when people refuse to retain God in their knowledge?
   A _______ It is never too late to accept God’s call.
   B _______ Time will mellow the heart creating a desire for knowledge of Him.
   C _______ God gives them over to their desires.

5. Following Noah’s worship to God, God promised to never again destroy all living creatures by water.
   True _____ False _____
A Promise

Lesson 4

Years following the temptation of Adam and Eve and their yielding to their desires rather than obeying God, two hundred ninety years following the flood and hundreds of years before God gave Moses the Commandments on Stone, Terah became the father of Abram. After becoming an adult, God made a promise to Abram. "The LORD had said to Abram, 'Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you. I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you'." (Genesis 12:1-3) God changed Abram's name to Abraham when He established His covenant with him.

In Hebrews 11 we read, "By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going. By faith he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God." (vs. 8-10) It should be clear that God's promise to Abraham was to all mankind rather than to one nation.

Abraham and Sarah, his wife, were childless even though God had promised they would have many descendants. They became impatient for God to fulfill his promise of a son. Using human reason, they took matters into their own hands. Their impatient action caused great conflicts later between Ishmael's descendants, his first born by Sarah's handmaid, and those of Isaac, the son of promise. These conflicts still exist today. God waited until it was physically impossible for Abraham and Sarah to have a child so when they did have one there would be no doubt that it was a direct result of God's promise and their faith. "By faith Abraham, even though he was past age - and Sarah herself was barren - was enabled to become a father because he considered him faithful who had made the promise. And so from this one man, and he as good as dead, came descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as countless as the sand on the seashore." (Hebrews 11:11-12)

Even though Abraham became the father of many nations and known as the father of the faithful, he was not without sin. He lied on more than
one occasion. When confronted by God he repented and put his faith and trust in Him. It is through descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob that a savior would come into the world to redeem the faithful.

It should not be so amazing that God blesses the faithful obedient and disinherits the rebellious (disobedient) as this occurs even among all peoples and nations.

1. God's promise to Abraham that his descendant would bless all mankind was given.
   A _____ following the giving of the Ten Commandants.
   B _____ at the time Abraham offered Isaac as a sacrifice to God.
   C _____ while with his father and prior to going to Canaan.

2. Abraham was called the father of the Faithful because he did not sin.
   True _____ False _____

3. Isaac, the son of promise, was Abraham's first born son.
   True _____ False _____

4. Abraham was referred to as the father of the faithful because he trusted God.
   True _____ False _____

5. Knowing it was humanly impossible for Sara to conceive, as she was 90 years old when Isaac was born, leaves no doubt that Isaac, rather than Ishmael, was the son of Promise.
   True _____ False _____
God's Covenant with Abraham

Lesson 5
"When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to him and said, 'I am God Almighty; walk before me and be blameless. I will confirm my covenant between me and you and will greatly increase your numbers'." (Genesis 17:1-2) The covenant was sealed by Abraham's obedience to God's command to circumcise all males. This was before he and Sarah had any children and hundreds of years before the Law was given to Moses. About a year later Isaac was born and Abraham circumcised him on the eighth day according to the covenant. The following statement about this unusual birth is made in Hebrews 11:11-12 "By faith Abraham, even though he was past age-and Sarah herself was barren-was enabled to become a father because he considered him faithful who had made the promise. And so from this one man, and he as good as dead, came descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as countless as the sand on the seashore."

Later, when Isaac was older, God commanded Abraham to offer Isaac as a burnt offering sacrifice. This was a test of Abraham's faith. Abraham believed that God gave him Isaac when it was physically impossible for him and Sarah to have a son. He reasoned that God could also bring Isaac back from the dead in order to fulfill his promise.

What is so significant about this relationship between God and Abraham? First and foremost God requires obedient faithfulness. Through Abraham's faith God's promise to provide a way for man to be reconciled to Him was initiated. It would not be realized until years later when Jesus of Nazareth, through complete obedient faithfulness, would offer himself as an atoning sacrifice for man's sins.

It was through Isaac, the son of promise, not Ishmael, Abraham's first born, that the covenant would be continued. Isaac and Rebekah had twins, Jacob and Esau. Jacob was a schemer and deceiver. Esau sold his birthright, took two wives from among the Hittites, a people who worshipped idols, and was disrespectful and displeased his father Isaac. "Yet, before the twins were born or had done anything good or bad-in order that God's purpose in election might stand: not by works but by him who calls — she was told, 'The older will serve the younger'." (Romans 9:11-12) "Is God unjust? Not at all! For he says to Moses, 'I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on
whom I have compassion.' It does not, therefore, depend on man's desire or effort, but on God's mercy." (Romans 9:14-16)

The same is true in our attempt to be reunited with God. God had mercy upon us and sent His Son as the perfect sacrifice for our sins. There is no way mankind can earn his reconciliation. It is a matter of attitude, faith and obedience to His Word, the Message of Reconciliation.

1. God’s covenant with Abraham, several hundreds of years before the covenant with the children of Israel, was based upon Abraham’s willingness to put his trust in God.
   True _____ False _____

2. God spared Isaac’s physical life because of Abraham's faith and their trust and obedience to God.
   True _____ False _____

3. Esau was disrespectful and displeased Isaac because he had little regard for his birthright and his marrying wives who worshipped idols.
   True _____ False _____

4. Jacob lived a less than exemplary life but respected God and worshipped Him.
   True _____ False _____
Lesson 6
Because of problems between herdsmen of Abraham and Lot, his nephew, Abraham allowed Lot to choose his land and Abraham would take another area. Lot chose the better area near the city of Sodom. "And the LORD said, 'Because the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grave, I will go down now and see whether they have done altogether according to the outcry against it that has come to Me; and if not, I will know.'" (Genesis 18:20-21) Before God sent angels to destroy Sodom He revealed His plans to Abraham who pleaded with God to save Sodom because of righteous people living there. But there were so few. So God's angels in the form of men appeared at evening entering the city of Sodom. When Lot saw these visitors he insisted they enter his house under his protection.

The wickedness of Sodom is clearly seen in the following; "Now before they lay down, the men of the city, the men of Sodom, both old and young, all the people from every quarter, surrounded the house. And they called to Lot and said to him, 'Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us that we may know them carnally.' So Lot went out to them through the doorway, shut the door behind him, and said, "Please, my brethren, do not do so wickedly! 'See now, I have two daughters who have not known a man; please, let me bring them out to you, and you may do to them as you wish; only do nothing to these men, since this is the reason they have come under the shadow of my roof.' And they said, 'Stand back!' Then they said, 'This one came in to stay here, and he keeps acting as a judge; now we will deal worse with you than with them.' So they pressed hard against the man Lot, and came near to break down the door. But the angels reached out their hands and pulled Lot into the house with them, and shut the door." (Genesis 19:4-10)

The angels explained to Lot the purpose of their mission so "When the morning dawned, the angels urged Lot to hurry, saying, 'Arise, take your wife and your two daughters who are here, lest you be consumed in the punishment of the city.'" ... "'Hurry, escape there. For I cannot do anything until you arrive there.' The sun had risen upon the earth when Lot entered Zoar. Then the LORD rained brimstone and fire on Sodom and Gomorrah from the LORD out of the heavens. So He overthrew those cities, all the plain, all the inhabitants of the cities, and what grew on the ground." (Genesis 19:15, 23-25)
God removed Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden because of disobedience, destroyed by water all people because of the wickedness of man and the evil intent of his heart (mind) except Noah, his family and selected animals. Now He destroyed Sodom by fire because of grievous wickedness. It should be evident that disobedience and wickedness is not tolerated by God and those who practice such will also be destroyed unless they turn from their wickedness and obey the will of God.

1. What sin was so great that God decided to destroy Sodom?
   A ____ Abortion
   B ____ Devil worship
   C ____ Homosexuality

2. Lot chose the land east of Jordan because
   A ____ he desired the city life offered by Sodom and Gomorrah.
   B ____ he wanted to get away from Abraham as they constantly argued.
   C ____ the land appeared to be the better land.
   D ____ The Bible does not say.

3. Disobedience to God caused problems
   A ____ in the Garden of Eden.
   B ____ with the people in Noah's time.
   C ____ in the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah.
   D ____ all the above.

4. The destruction of the area around Sodom and Gomorrah only affected the men who attempted to defile the men [angels] visiting Lot.
   True ______  False ______

5. Abraham pleaded with God to save the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah because of righteous people living in these cities.
   True ______  False ______
God called Abraham while he was living in Ur of the Chaldees to go to a far country. He had no place to call home; only a promise that his descendants would one day have a home. Abraham's descendants would ultimately become Egyptian slaves. God through Moses delivered them from slavery to go to the land of their inheritance, the land where Abraham wandered. This is very similar to our short stay here on earth amid wickedness being slaves to sin. God through Christ will deliver us from slavery of sin to a home in Heaven.

Their journey into that far country, Egypt, began with a cowardly act by Jacob's sons to a younger brother, Joseph, when they sold him to a band of Ishmaelites, descendants of Abraham's other son. They sold him as a common slave and then deceived Jacob into believing Joseph had been killed by a wild animal. Remember, Jacob had also deceived his father in order to receive a blessing. Joseph remained faithful to God and God used him in his plan to create a mighty nation from Abraham's descendants. This would occur after years of slavery among a people who worshipped created things rather than Almighty God.

After four hundred years in Egypt Moses was born. His parents defied Pharaoh's edicts to kill the baby and they hid him. They acted righteously by their willingness to disobey Pharaoh's command rather than disobey God's. "By faith Moses' parents hid him for three months after he was born, because they saw he was no ordinary child, and they were not afraid of the king's edict." (Hebrews 11:23) Moses was found by Pharaoh's daughter who had compassion on him. Moses' sister summoned her mother and "Pharaoh's daughter said to her, 'Take this baby and nurse him for me, and I will pay you.' So the woman took the baby and nursed him. When the child grew older, she took him to Pharaoh's daughter and he became her son. She named him Moses, saying, 'I drew him out of the water'.‖ (Exodus 2:9-10)

In Hebrews 11: 24-27 we read "By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a short time. He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt, because he was looking ahead to his reward. By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the king's anger; he persevered because he saw him who is invisible." After being
trained in all the ways of the Egyptians for forty years, God trained Moses another forty years as a herdsman before calling him to lead Abraham's descendants from the bondage of slavery to the land promised long ago to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Because of these former slaves' lack of faith and obedience, it took forty years before they were ready to obey and claim their promised land. Even though this land was given to them by God's grace they had to fight God's enemies to inhabit it.

Today mankind is under the bondage of sin. We are freed from the bondage of sin by the blood of Christ. It takes continued obedience and faithfulness for us to reach Heaven, our promised land, while always fighting the enemies of God.

1. Moses was born a slave but became grandson of Pharaoh, ruler of all Egypt.
   True _____ False _____

2. Moses chose not to continue being Pharaoh's grandson
   A ____ because Pharaoh was partial to other grandchildren
   B ____ because Pharaoh mistreated Moses birth family.
   C ____ by his faith in Jehovah God.

3. Since God gave Canaan to former Egyptian slaves, they were not required to do anything to receive their Land of Promise.
   True _____ False _____

4. People who are slaves to sin today are not required to do anything to inherit Heaven, the spiritual Promised Land.
   True _____ False _____

5. God trained Moses 40 years in Egypt and 40 years as a herdsman before appointing him to lead the Children of Israel out of Egyptian slavery.
   True _____ False _____
Lesson 8
At the appropriate time Moses’ mother took Moses to Pharaoh’s daughter. "Moses was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and was powerful in speech and action. When Moses was forty years old, he decided to visit his fellow Israelites. He saw one of them being mistreated by an Egyptian, so he went to his defense and avenged him by killing the Egyptian. Moses thought that his own people would realize that God was using him to rescue them, but they did not." (Acts 7:22-26)

In fear resulting from his rash action he fled from Pharaoh, going to the land of Midian. He humbled himself as a shepherd for forty years, after which God was ready for him to deliver the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob from the bondage of physical slavery, a symbol of our slavery to sin. God gave Pharaoh and the Egyptians ten opportunities to choose obedience over destruction. Pharaoh appeared to recognize God’s power but with each passing opportunity it was easier for him to refuse. After the death of his first born he told the Israelites to leave. But he changed his mind and pursued them to bring them back to slavery.

It was at the Red Sea that the Israelites had to make a choice to obey God or return to slavery. It was also there that Pharaoh and his army were buried in the waters of the sea. A new nation, freed from slavery, arose on the other side. This is also like our flight from sin. At the cross of Christ we must make a decision and bury our sinful master in the waters of baptism in order to arise as a new creation. Paul stated in Romans 6:3-7 "Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin- because anyone who has died has been freed from sin."

They did not enter into Canaan immediately as their faith was weak. They rejected the report of Joshua and Caleb to trust in God.
Consequently, they wandered in the wilderness, near their promised land, for forty years, never entering the Promised Land. It wasn't until all males over twenty died (except Joshua and Caleb) that they would be allowed to enter the Promised Land. Moses was prohibited, by God from leading them into Canaan. Instead it was Joshua, Moses' faithful aide. Once they put their faith in God and obeyed him, they were allowed to enter their Promised Land. We too must have obedient faith and be reconciled to God to enter our Promised Land, Heaven.

1. In attempting to deliver Israel from oppression, Moses attempted to take matters into his own hands rather than waiting upon God.  
   True _____ False _____

2. God did not give Pharaoh the choice to escape death and destruction.  
   True _____ False _____

3. Faith in God allowed the Children of Israel to pass through the waters of the Red Sea to become free from bondage and arrive upon the other shore a new nation.  
   True _____ False _____

4. Upon first reaching the Land of Promise, the children of Israel put their faith in  
   A _____ the report of Joshua and Caleb with God's guidance.  
   B _____ their own ability.

5. Moses was permitted to  
   A _____ lead the Israelites into the Land of Promise.  
   B _____ enter the promised land but told Joshua to lead.  
   C _____ see but not enter the Land of Promise.
Tables of Stone Covenant

Lesson 9
God performed many miracles of blessing upon the Israelites, the most prominent being the leading of millions of slaves toward a land promised years before to Abraham.

Three months after they departed Egypt and around four hundred years after God's promise to Abraham they camped at Sinai. Here God appeared, delivering to Moses his commandments. "The Lord said to Moses, 'Come up to me on the mountain and stay here, and I will give you the tablets of stone, with the law and commands I have written for their instruction'." (Exodus 24:12) We refer to them as the Ten Commandments and they are listed below. (Exodus 20:3-17)

° "You shall have no other gods before me."
° "You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing love to a thousand [generations] of those who love me and keep my commandments."
° "You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name."
° "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your manservant or maidservant, nor your animals, nor the alien within your gates. For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy."
° "Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you."
° "You shall not murder."
° "You shall not commit adultery."
° "You shall not steal."
° "You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor."
° "You shall not covet your neighbor's house. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor."
Read them again and notice that they are laws, rules, regulations, things to do and things not to do. Did you find any statement of forgiveness or faith? No! Did you notice that only one or two dealt with man's heart, mind or attitude? No! This covenant was designed to bring us to Christ, and as stated in Hebrews, is replaced by a new one, a covenant that forgives wickedness. "For if there had been nothing wrong with that first covenant, no place would have been sought for another. But God found fault with the people and said: 'The time is coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they did not remain faithful to my covenant, and I turned away from them, declares the Lord'." (Hebrews 8:7-9)

"'This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time, declares the Lord. I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest. For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more'." (Hebrews 8:10-12)

"By calling this covenant 'new,' he has made the first one obsolete; and what is obsolete and aging will soon disappear." (Hebrews 8:13)

When Christ came he preached a message of repentance, a message of God's grace and of faith, love and reconciliation. His mission was "to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work." (John 4:34) He opened the way for forgiveness of sin by willingly giving his life as the atoning sacrifice for OUR sins, to all who believe on Him and who "wholeheartedly obeyed the form of teaching to which you were entrusted." (Romans 6:17)

"Before this faith came, we were held prisoners by the law, locked up until faith should be revealed. So the law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith. Now that faith has come, we are no longer under the supervision of the law." (Galatians 3:23-25)

"And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.” (Colossians 2:13-14 NKJV)
God's love and mercy provided the perfect blood sacrifice in His Son. Christ's death established the "new covenant", providing for forgiveness of sins and freedom from sin to all who obey the call to repentance and obedience. (Read Hebrews 9:16-28).

So "Speak and act as those who are going to be judged by the law that gives freedom, because judgment without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful. Mercy triumphs over judgment"! (James 2:12-13)

1. God called Moses upon the mountain to give him the Ten Commandments for the
   A ___ Gentiles and Israelites [Jews].
   B ___ Children of Israel forever.
   C ___ Israelites until replaced by another and better covenant.

2. The Ten Commandments, the Law, was a tutor or custodian to bring mankind unto faith.
   True _____ False _____

3. Some of the Ten Commandments could be kept outwardly even though they were not kept inwardly in the mind and heart.
   True _____ False _____

4. The Law of Moses provided for salvation, the forgiveness of sin.
   True _____ False _____

5. God removed the Law of Moses, “the handwriting of requirements”, by nailing it to the cross by the death of Christ.
   True _____ False _____
Lesson 10

After being delivered from Egyptian slavery and receiving a land flowing with milk and honey, Israel was governed by judges whom God selected. But the Israelites wanted to be like all the nations around them. They rejected God and wanted a king. So God gave them a king - Saul. He ruled by what the people wanted - rule by opinion rather than as an obedient servant of God. Therefore, Samuel, at God's direction, anointed David as king, one who would obey him. Many times David had to flee from Saul because Saul was hunting him down like a common criminal desiring to kill him. Yet, in spite of this David refused to do anything "against God's anointed".

After Saul's death David became king. God said of David: "After removing Saul, he made David their king. He testified concerning him: 'I have found David son of Jesse a man after my own heart; he will do everything I want him to do.' From this man's descendants God has brought to Israel the Savior Jesus, as he promised." (Acts 13:22-23)

On one occasion David's men were among the flocks of a very wealthy man and while there they dealt honorably with him protecting him, not mistreating his herdsmen or taking anything of his. Later David was nearby, his men were hungry and in need of food so David requested assistance, but Nabal, a surly man known for his mean dealings, refused David's request in a harsh and disrespectful manner. David became very angry, intending to kill him, but he repented, allowing God to exercise his judgment.

But not everything was godly in David's life. Instead of going to battle with his army he remained at home. There he saw a lovely woman, lusted for her and sent for her to commit adultery. Learning she was pregnant by him, he ordered the murder of her husband to cover up his sin. Terrible? Yes! Pleasing to God? No! David desired fleshly satisfaction and yielded to the temptation. He suffered much for this sin. But when confronted by Nathan, the messenger from God, he admitted his wickedness, repented and pleaded for forgiveness. Although forgiven, he still suffered the consequences of his sinful actions.

No doubt his attitude of heart, his remorse and desire for forgiveness in order to be reconciled to God is why God would say "I have found David
the son of Jesse, a man after My own heart, who will do all My will." This is everyone's situation today. We have all sinned, need the proper attitude toward our sin and need to be reconciled to God.

God promised David that one of his descendants would sit on his throne forever, referring to Jesus, the Christ, whose kingdom will have no end. It was Christ, without sin, totally obeying God, willingly giving his life as an atoning sacrifice for us, thus fulfilling God's promise to David and Abraham.

1. David refused to harm Saul, King of Israel, as Saul had been appointed king by God and to do harm to him would not be respecting God.
   True _____ False _____

2. A person after God’s own heart means
   A _____ one who teaches God laws and commandments.
   B _____ one who is powerful in leading God’s people.
   C _____ one who desires to do what is right and desires to correct sinful acts he may have done.

3. David is an example for us in that he
   A _____ was a powerful King.
   B _____ did not sin therefore Jesus who had no sin could be the Son of David.
   C _____ was quick to repent and plead for God’s mercy upon becoming aware of his sins.

4. God was always pleased with David’s actions.
   True _____ False _____
Ever since Adam's sin, which resulted in his fall from a perfect relationship with God, man has needed to be reconciled to God. He needed to have his sins washed away and his guilt removed. At just the perfect time and by action of the Holy Spirit God became flesh to dwell among men. The Holy Spirit performed a miracle allowing Mary to become pregnant without sexual relations with man. The angel Gabriel announced to Mary and later an angel announced to Joseph about how God would be using them to bring the Messiah, God's anointed one, to earth to save mankind from their sins. Both were willing to become servants of God regardless of how people would treat them or what they would say about them. They only wanted to obey and be used by God.

"Why were you searching for me?" he asked. 'Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?' But they did not understand what he was saying to them." (Luke 2:49-50)

At thirty years of age "When all the people were being baptized, Jesus was baptized too. And as he was praying, heaven was opened and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: 'You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased'. Now Jesus himself was about thirty years old when he began his ministry." (Luke 3:21-23a)

Following His baptism "Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the desert, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil." (Luke 4:1-2) He had overcome the Devil's temptations so he returned to His home in Nazareth. In their synagogue following His reading of Isaiah 61:1-2, he announced that He was the fulfillment of God's promise to send the Messiah.

A short time later He began selecting those whom He would teach to be his messengers following his resurrection.

At the appropriate time Jesus would actively begin proving to all with whom he came in contact that he was God who had come to earth to live among men and to become a perfect sacrifice for man's sins. He did this by his perfect life, the miracles He performed openly before great crowds and statements by John the Baptist and God himself.
Many people benefited from these miracles. Even those full of envy, jealousy and covetousness had to acknowledge that miracles had been performed. The hypocritical religious leaders rejected him because of their desire for power and prestige. In doing so they even violated their own laws and traditions which they outwardly professed to uphold.

His followers had heard His message, His parables and their explanations and witnessed His miracles. They had witnessed those raised from the dead, the blind made to see, the deaf to hear and the denial of such by their religious leaders. But there were many things they needed to know so Jesus said "I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you." (John 16:12-14)

As He was preparing for His atoning sacrifice, he prayed; (as recorded in John 17) "After Jesus said this, he looked toward heaven and prayed: 'Father, the time has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you. For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him. Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. I have brought you glory on earth by completing the work you gave me to do. And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.' (vv. 1-5) ... "I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word. Now they know that everything you have given me comes from you. For I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me." (vv. 6-8) "... I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world. {I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. (NKJV)} My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified." (vv.14-19)
1. At what time did Jesus come to the Earth?
   A ___ December 25, the day we refer to as Christmas.
   B ___ When Israel was powerful, so many people would praise Him.
   C ___ At just the right or fullness of time.
   D ___ We do not know.

2. Following Gabriel's appearing, Mary was pleased and honored to be used by God but Joseph was reluctant, fearing what people would say.
   True _____  False _____

3. Different New Testament writers recorded Jesus’ lineage showing how God was faithful in keeping His promise to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and David.
   True _____  False _____

4. While Jesus was here on Earth, He proved He was God by
   A ____ Testimony of Religious leaders
   B ____ Testimony of John the Baptist
   C ____ His perfect life, sinless
   D ____ The miracles He publicly performed
   E ____ A & B
   F ____ C & D
   G ____ B, C & D
   H ___ All the above

5. What was the message Jesus preached during his ministry on Earth?
   A ____ A message of redemption
   B ____ A message of forgiveness of sins by God
   C ____ A message of reconciliation to God
   D ____ All the above
Lesson 12
During Jesus' earthly ministry it was important that the people would come to believe that He was the Messiah, the Christ, the Son of God. There were several witnesses who proved this to be the truth.

**John the Baptist**
John preached a baptism (baptizo, a Greek word meaning immersion) for repentance and it was said all Judah came to John to be baptized. "Now some Pharisees who had been sent questioned him, 'Why then do you baptize if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?' 'I baptize with water,' John replied, 'but among you stands one you do not know. He is the one who comes after me, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie.'" (John 1:24-27) ... "The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, 'Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! This is the one I meant when I said, 'A man who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.' I myself did not know him, but the reason I came baptizing with water was that he might be revealed to Israel.' Then John gave this testimony: 'I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him. I would not have known him, except that the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, 'The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is he who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.' I have seen and I testify that this is the Son of God." (John 1:29-34)

"Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. But John tried to deter him, saying, 'I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?' Jesus replied, 'Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness.' Then John consented." (Matthew 3:13-15)

**Holy Spirit**
"As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him." (Matthew 3:16-17a)

**God**
"And a voice from heaven said, 'This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased'." (Matthew 3:17b)

Jesus then fasted forty days prior to publicly beginning His work. It was at the end of the forty days the Devil seized the opportunity to tempt Jesus in his physically weakened condition. Although he failed in this attempt, he continued to look for opportunity. Jesus then began His
ministry. One of the first things He did was to select twelve men to train and to be witnesses of all He said and did, which was mostly public. He performed many miracles proving that God was with Him.

**Miracles, Signs and Wonders**

He received no training in the Law and Prophets but people recognized he spoke with authority; not like the learned men, the rabbis, priests, Pharisees, Scribes and other religious leaders. To these learned men He was very pointed in His remarks calling them hypocrites, and blind guides as their hearts, minds and attitude, were so prideful, arrogant, haughty, jealous and willing to stop at nothing to maintain their place in society. They even attributed His many miracles to the Devil rather than giving glory to God. Matthew records the following about them in chapter 23:vv.

- 3 ... "For they do not practice what they preach."
- 5 ... "Everything they do is done for men to see."
- 6 ... "They love the place of honor at banquets and the most important seats in the synagogues."
- 13 ... "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites!"
- 16 ... "Woe to you, blind guides! You say ..."
- 33 ... "You snakes! You brood of vipers! How will you escape being condemned to hell?"

Luke adds another to the charge in 20:47 ... [You] who devour [eat up, consume, exploit, prey upon] widows' houses [rob widows of their resources].

They tried many things to trap Him into contradictions but failed. They challenged his authority but failed. See Luke 20 and Mark 12.

**Crucifixion**

Events during His Crucifixion witnessed to the fact He was the Christ, the Son of God. (Refer to Matthew 27:50-52)

- Jesus cried out for the last time with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit
- At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom.
- The earth shook and the rocks split.
- The tombs were opened and the bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life. They came out of the tombs and after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many people.
Roman Soldiers
"When the centurion and those with him who were guarding Jesus saw the earthquake and all that had happened, they were terrified, and exclaimed, 'Surely he was the Son of God'!" (Matthew 27:54)

Those Closest to Him - Apostles
"Therefore it is necessary to choose one of the men who have been with us the whole time the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from John's baptism to the time when Jesus was taken up from us. For one of these must become a witness with us of his resurrection." (Acts 1:21-22)

"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched-this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ." (1 John 1:1-3)
1. Immediately when Jesus came up out of the water following his baptism a voice from Heaven said that Jesus was God’s Son and God was well pleased with Him.
   True _____ False _____

2. The Greek word *baptizo* means
   A ___ pour over.
   B ___ sprinkle or rain on.
   C ___ dip, plunge or immerse.

3. Jesus spoke as one having authority because He was one of the learned men having been schooled in the rabbinical schools of the Jews.
   True _____ False _____

4. Jesus referred to the Pharisees and Scribes as
   A ___ blind guide.
   B ___ hypocrites.
   C ___ thieves.
   D ___ only A and B.
   E ___ only B and C.
   F ___ only A and C.
   G ___ A, B and C.

5. Jesus' closest friends testified as eye witnesses of His miracles, death, burial and especially His resurrection.
   True _____ False _____

6. Why was Jesus baptized in water by John the Baptist?
   A ____ To comply with the Law of Moses
   B ____ To be forgiven of His sins
   C ____ To be obedient and to fulfill all righteousness
   D ____ None of the above
Lesson 13
It is stated in John 1:1-4 "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God; all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men."

Therefore, God, the Son, chose to leave the riches and glories of Heaven with God, the Father, and God, the Holy Spirit, so that He could become the atoning sacrifice for man's sins. A perfect sacrifice was needed to reconcile man to God. He was born in Bethlehem, fled to Egypt and grew in favor with God and man. The citizens of Nazareth referred to Him as the son of Joseph, the carpenter.

At the age of twelve He chose to linger in Jerusalem at the temple to listen to the teachers and to ask and answer questions. It is uncertain if any of these teachers, twenty-one years later, were among the leaders who sought His death. When Joseph and Mary questioned Jesus about His decision to stay in Jerusalem, He replied"... 'How is it that you sought me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?' "as recorded in Luke 2:49. Upon returning to Nazareth He "... was obedient to them; and his mother kept all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature, and in favor with God and man." (Luke 2:51-52)

About age 30 He left home to begin to accomplish His purpose for leaving Heaven and coming to Earth as the Word, in the person of Jesus. When John the Baptist was baptizing unto repentance Jesus came to him desiring to be baptized. John was reluctant "But Jesus answered him, 'Let it be so now; for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.' Then he consented. And when Jesus was baptized, he went up immediately from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and alighting on him; and lo, a voice from heaven, saying, 'This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased'" (Matthew 3:15-17) confirming what John had said prior to Jesus' baptism. Jesus was led to a deserted place where he fasted forty days. During this time he was confronted by the Devil, tempting Him in all things like we are tempted as follows:

- Desire for food - lust of the flesh
- Desire for power - pride of life
- Desire for things - lust of the eye
In each temptation he chose to be obedient and did not sin. Time and time again we find Jesus stating his decision to be about His Father's business and to do the will of His Father. We need to base our choices and decisions on the will of the Father. Therefore it is imperative for us to be diligent in our study of His words and the words of the apostles who were guided by the Holy Spirit. These words referred to as the New Testament or simply The Gospel allow us to know what to do to have our sins forgiven through Christ our atoning sacrifice so we can be reconciled to God.

Jesus faced each challenge and temptation by simply doing the will of the one who sent Him to earth. Since we were created in God's image we have the same choice. Simply obey.

1. Who was in the beginning with God, the Father?
   A ___ The Word
   B ___ Holy Spirit
   C ___ Both A and B

2. God, the Son, came to earth to be the sinless sacrifice killed by man, who was created in His image, in order to provide the means of reconciliation.
   True _____  False _____

3. Jesus chose to be baptized by John the Baptist to be obedient and fulfill all righteousness.
   True _____  False _____

4. Jesus did not yield to the Devil's temptations because He was not really human; i.e., not flesh and blood but spirit.
   True _____  False _____

5. We need to study the Bible so our decisions can be based upon faith through knowledge of will of God.
   True _____  False _____
Christ - Doing His Father's Will

Lesson 14

John the Baptist told his followers that Jesus was the Lamb of God. God announced at His baptism that Jesus was his Son and He was well pleased with Him. Christ began telling the Jews about the Kingdom of God, proving His words by very powerful miracles that no one could deny, not even His enemies. On two occasions they were performed before thousands of people when He fed them from only a few pieces of fish and bread. He even stopped a funeral procession to bring back to life an only child of a widow. He healed people who had been blind or crippled all their lives, which everyone in the town knew. Lastly, he went to a cemetery, opened the grave and brought back to life a body that was already decaying. All these statements and miracles proved to the honest and sincere people that Jesus was the Son of God. They believed. But the religious leaders did not believe. They wanted "proof."

Jesus often used parables during His short ministry. The twelve He had selected to be His witnesses asked many questions desiring to understand their meaning. On many occasions, He took them aside and explained the parables. All the while, He continued to tell everyone His Kingdom was not of this world, but they had difficulty understanding. He constantly mentioned familiar prophecies and how they were being fulfilled right before their eyes. More and more believed - but not the religious leaders. They began looking for ways to entrap and discredit Him even discussing ways to kill Him.

Very late in His ministry Jesus began to explain to His disciples, especially the twelve, that He was going to be betrayed and be crucified. From the beginning of time on earth, everything had been planned for this upcoming event. The head of that serpent of old, the Devil, would be crushed by the descendant of Eve by:

- His complete obedience
- His death, the perfect sacrifice to atone for sin
- His burial, from which He would burst forth
- His resurrection, the triumph over death and the grave, opening the way for reconciliation to God.

God demands our obedience whether we understand His entire purpose behind the command or not. For instance, why was Abel's animal sacrifice more pleasing than Cain's offering from the fruit of the ground? Or, how could a large boat taking years to build be so important? Or, how could putting blood over a door prevent the death of a first-born son? Or, how could looking upon a brass snake raised upon a pole cure
the bite of a poisonous snake? We may or may not fully understand God's purpose but we understand we must obey God's commands. We must respond with complete trust in God and obedience to His commands regardless of how illogical it may seem to man's finite mind.

So we see Jesus in complete obedience setting out to Jerusalem to die, offering his life as the perfect sacrifice for our sins. We see the leaders of the Jews filled with envy, hate, jealousy and pride, hiring someone to betray Jesus into their hands so they could kill Him. We see a Roman judge finding Him innocent and undeserving of death but willing to kill Him to please the Jews. Jesus willingly gave his life as the perfect sacrifice to atone for man's sin so man could be reconciled to God through obedient faith in Him.

1. Obedience to God is doing what He desires because we have faith in His faithfulness even when we do not fully understand how or why.
   (True) (False)

2. Knowing He would die when He returned to Jerusalem, Jesus still went there for that very purpose. That was why He came to Earth.
   (True) (False)

3. What proof was given that Jesus was the Christ, Son of God?
   A. Miracles
   B. Acknowledgment by John the Baptist
   C. Statement by God Himself
   D. All the above

4. Jesus went to Jerusalem near the end of His ministry because
   A. His disciples wanted to go there for the Passover.
   B. The Roman government required everyone to go here to be counted and pay their taxes.
   C. He wanted to offer proof to the Pharisees and Scribes that He was the Son of God.
   D. It was time to complete His mission for coming to Earth by freely giving His life as an atoning sacrifice of mankind's sins.

5. Pilate, a Roman official, found Him innocent.
   (True) (False)

35
A New Message

Lesson 15
In Luke 18:18 a certain rich ruler asked Jesus the most important question facing all humankind "Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Although this man believed in Jesus and His teachings and he desired eternal life, he was not willing to obey. He chose not to put his trust in or follow Jesus. He chose the pleasures of this earthly life over eternal life. We are also faced with this same decision. Jesus told us what to do in the words he spoke and in the message recorded by the apostles, who were guided by the Holy Spirit of God. It is the Gospel, the message of reconciliation, as recorded in our Bible.

This Gospel is Christ Jesus beginning with His choice to leave Heaven, to come to Earth and live as a man and offer his body as a sin offering. He taught as one having authority and not as the learned religious scholars of His day - not human rules and traditions but love and service. Consider how different the Laws recorded on the Tables of Stone are from Christ's teaching listed below from Matthew 5.

vs. 3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
vs. 4 "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.
vs. 5 "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.
vs. 6 "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.
vs. 7 "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.
vs. 8 "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.
vs. 9 "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.
vs. 10 "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
vs. 11 "Blessed are you when men revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you"

He followed these with unheard of principles based upon love, truth and righteousness (justice) like:
• Do not be angry and hold a grudge
• Be careful what your eyes linger upon
• Do not desire what belongs to another
• Do not attempt to get even with others but allow God to judge
• Desire what is good and best for your enemies and pray for them
• Provide for those in need without expecting anything in return
• Do not be concerned about earthly wealth (materialism) but rely upon God
These teachings are summarized in Matthew 22:36-39 "'Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?' Jesus replied: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' When we have this attitude, we obey all his commandments because we want to, not just out of duty or fear of punishment. "As for the person who hears my words but does not keep them, I do not judge him. For I did not come to judge the world, but to save it. There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; that very word which I spoke will condemn him at the last day. For I did not speak of my own accord, but the Father who sent me commanded me what to say and how to say it. I know that his command leads to eternal life. So whatever I say is just what the Father has told me to say." (John 12:47-50)

Sin is the problem and God is the solution as He is Love, Truth and Righteousness.

1. The message of reconciliation, that is the Gospel, is
   A ___ the Ten Commandments.
   B ___ the Beatitudes.
   C ___ the sacrifice and resurrection of Jesus.

2. The response of the rich young ruler to Jesus' answer was
   A ___ joyful obedience.
   B ___ a request for a sign that Jesus was the Son of God.
   C ___ rejection as he went away sorrowfully.

3. What will judge actions of mankind on the last day?
   A ___ There will be no judgment as everyone will go to Heaven
   B ___ The Law, i.e., the Ten Commandments
   C ___ Living a good moral life
   D ___ The words spoken by Jesus

4. Jesus did not speak by his own authority but by the authority of God, the Father.
   True _____ False _____

5. God, Christ and the Holy Spirit is (are)
   A ___ Truth.
   B ___ Love.
   C ___ Righteousness.
   D ___ all the above.
Lesson 16
Some of the final statements Jesus made just prior to His return to Heaven to be with the Father are recorded in Matthew 28:18-20 "Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." And in Mark 16:15-16 "He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned."

One can be sorrowful for their sins and still not be a disciple, for example Judas. (Matthew 27:3) One can believe and not be a disciple; i.e., the Devil. It is by obedience but not blind obedience as one must understand that " ... faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ." (Romans 10:17) So before we can obey we must be aware of what we are to obey by reading God's words. We cannot accept another's opinion of what the Bible says but we must prove that what we heard were the words recorded in the Bible, in proper context and not just someone's opinion.

The Gospel message is simple: "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." (John 3:16) That giving included Jesus becoming flesh by taking on the form of a man, living among man, being tempted like man, living a sinless life, being obedient, willing to die even though He could have prevented it, and overcoming death. In doing so He drove out the prince of the world in order that man could be cleansed from his sins, being washed in the blood of the sacrifice. "Now my heart is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour. Father, glorify your name! Then a voice came from heaven, 'I have glorified it, and will glorify it again.' The crowd that was there and heard it said it had thundered; others said an angel had spoken to him. Jesus said, "This voice was for your benefit, not mine. Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out. But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself." (John 12:27-32)

The message summary is:
° In the beginning was the Word, Jesus, Christ, Anointed one, Messiah.
° The Word became flesh and lived among men.
° Christ had no sin.
° Jesus was obedient to His death on the cross.
° God resurrected Him from the grave thereby conquering death, the direct result of sin.
° Christ ascended back from where He descended, Heaven.
° He preached the Truth that those who were forgiven through his blood who continued to walk faithfully in his Word would live eternally with Him.

It is in Him, Christ, that we are reconciled for "Jesus answered, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me'." (John 14:6) And "This is love for God: to obey his commands. And his commands are not burdensome." (1 John 5:3)

1. Anyone who believes Jesus is the Christ is a disciple and will have eternal life.
   True _____ False _____
2. You can have faith in something without ever knowing what it is.
   True _____ False _____
3. There is more than one way to be reconciled to God, the Father.
   True _____ False _____
4. Keeping Jesus' commandments is love of God.
   True _____ False _____
5. The message of reconciliation, the Gospel of Christ, is
   A ___ in the beginning Jesus was God.
   B ___ Jesus left Heaven and became a human born of woman.
   C ___ Jesus willingly gave his life as the sacrifice for man's sins.
   D ___ God raised Jesus from death thus destroying death and grave.
   E ___ Jesus ascended back to heaven to be with God, the Father and God, the Holy Spirit.
   F ___ all the above.
Christ - Establishing His Church

Lesson 17
During His earthly ministry, Jesus asked His disciples "'But what about you?' he asked. 'Who do you say I am?' Simon Peter answered, 'You are the Christ, the Son of the living God'. Then Jesus told Peter that He would establish His church upon the foundation that He was the Son of God, saying 'And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the powers of death shall not prevail against it'." (Matthew 16:15-18)

The term church as used in the Greek language is "ekklesia (ek-klay-see'-ah); meaning a calling out; i.e., (concretely) a popular meeting, especially a religious congregation (Jewish synagogue, or Christian community of members on earth or saints in heaven or both)", (Strong's Greek/Hebrew Dictionary). Christ's church would be those who heard His call to come out from the world of sin and become His disciples by obeying from the heart his message of reconciliation. Christ had not at this time established His church for He said "I will build my church" but, whenever it would be established death and the grave would not limit it or have any power over it.

Following the mockery of a trial with its perverted justice, the Romans crucified the innocent Son of God. The judicial charge against Him, JESUS OF NAZARETH, KING OF THE JEWS, was fastened to the cross. The hypocritical Jewish religious leaders mocked Him and looked upon with great pleasure. Darkness fell over Jerusalem for three hours just before His death. John tells us in John 19:30 that just, before He died, Jesus said, "It is finished". He had completed His mission of redeeming mankind. The way was open for man to be reconciled to God. And at the moment of His death the Jewish temple curtain, the symbol statement that common people did not have access to God's presence, was torn into two parts from "top to bottom". Now the path into God's presence was open to all through the sacrificed body of Jesus, the Christ. (Hebrews 10:19-20)

The earth shook and rocks split. Bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life (after Jesus' resurrection they went into the city appearing to many). The Roman soldiers acknowledged something was very different stating, "Truly this was the Son of God", which Pilate had printed on His cross. This was the very thing the Jews accused Jesus of claiming to be. Surely these things did not go unnoticed by all, especially those religious leaders who had denied that Jesus was the Son of God. So how could they explain these events?
They could not explain them away so they chose not to believe them. But Satan could not keep Jesus in the grave so on the third day God resurrected Him. But Jesus' mission on Earth was not complete as He would provide more proof to those closest to him. He appeared to many of his disciples and gave some final instructions to these witnesses he had trained. "Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age'." (Matthew 28:18-20) Ten days following His return to Heaven, on the day of Pentecost as recorded in Acts 2, Jesus established His Church.

Today the choice we are faced with is the same as it was for those whom Peter addressed in Acts 2:37 "When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, 'Brothers, what shall we do'?" As you read how they responded to Peter’s reply, consider how you will respond.

1. Jesus said He would establish his church on the solid foundation that He was the Son of God.
   True _____ False _____

2. The church Jesus established would be composed of all who would come out of the world of sin by obedience to His commands.
   True _____ False _____

3. Christ established His church following his resurrection and ascension not before his Death.
   True _____ False _____

4. Who are those Christ adds to His church?
   A _____ Those who witnessed his death.
   B _____ Those who receive his word and are baptized
   C _____ Those who devote themselves to prayer

5. What choices do we have today?
   A _____ No choice as there is nothing we can do as all have sinned
   B _____ No choice as everyone will be saved
   C _____ Receive his word, be baptized and follow Him all the days of our life or reject Him.
Choices of Bible Characters

Lesson 18

Every day we make many decisions, most of which are routine such as what we eat or wear and where we go. Occasionally man's choices result in unexpected joy and happiness while others bring great disappointment and heartaches. Often we are called upon to make major choices that affect entire family relationships which could involve religion, jobs with possible relocation or life and death matters. Probably all of us have known individuals who have made some bad decisions and others who have made some good decisions. Regardless of whether good or bad our choices have some type of consequence.

The following are some examples in the Bible of:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decisions</th>
<th>Consequences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>◦ Adam &amp; Eve eat of forbidden fruit</td>
<td>Death, banned from Eden and pain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>◦ Cain offered unacceptable sacrifice</td>
<td>Reprimanded by God</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>◦ Cain killed his brother</td>
<td>Became a marked wanderer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>◦ Noah built the ark</td>
<td>Considered righteous &amp; saved mankind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>◦ Abraham sacrificed his son</td>
<td>Received promises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>◦ Moses chose God</td>
<td>Became the leader of great nation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>◦ Mary desired to be used by God</td>
<td>Birth of Jesus who became our sacrifice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>◦ Judas betrayed Jesus for money</td>
<td>Committed suicide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>◦ Paul repented, obeyed and immersed (baptized)</td>
<td>Became the Apostle to the Gentiles</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Each day we face choices involving our growth in the knowledge of God and in our understanding of how we can obey his commands so we can please Him. Consider the following:

◦ Will we be honest in our business, family and spiritual life?
◦ Will we be faithful to our self, spouse and children?
◦ Will we control our mind, eyes and tongue?
◦ Will we give thanks to God in all things?
◦ Will we humble ourselves and obey God's commands so we can be reconciled to Him?
1. Every decision in life is a major decision.
   True _____  False _____

2. Often our decisions have major consequences on our lives.
   True _____  False _____

3. Bible examples of choices reveal that choices of disobedience bring pain and sadness while choice of obedience brings joy and happiness.
   True _____  False _____

4. Evaluate choices you have made to the five questions in the text.
   _____________________________________________
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Choice - Belief in Jesus as God

Lesson 19
The same Jesus who preached repentance also preached:

" ... whoever lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?" (John 11:26)

"... The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news"! (Mark 1:15)

" ... Then Jesus cried out, 'When a man believes in me, he does not believe in me only, but in the one who sent me. When he looks at me, he sees the one who sent me. I have come into the world as a light, so that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness. As for the person who hears my words but does not keep them, I do not judge him. For I did not come to judge the world, but to save it. There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; that very word which I spoke will condemn him at the last day. For I did not speak of my own accord, but the Father who sent me commanded me what to say and how to say it. I know that his command leads to eternal life. So whatever I say is just what the Father has told me to say.'" (John 12:44-50)

"If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. He who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me." (John 14:23-24)

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

"Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age'." (Matthew 28:18-20)

We were created in the likeness of God, given the ability to make choices, and told to work. We have also seen prophecies and their fulfillment. We have seen how God provided a way, a method, and a plan for man to be reconciled unto Him. Jesus preached repentance, a turning away from sin and all ungodliness. He taught us love, goodness and righteousness. He also preached belief that He was the Messiah, the Christ, who came to Earth as the perfect sacrifice for our sins and that
obedience to His commands proves our faith in Him.

His teachings were with authority, in fact, all authority was given unto Him following His resurrection. His teachings were different from anything seen or taught, requiring a change in attitude toward fellowman and God. His message was of love of God rather than self, a change in lifestyle.

"This is love for God: to obey his commands. And his commands are not burdensome." (1 John 5:3) "And this is love: that we walk in obedience to his commands. As you have heard from the beginning, his command is that you walk in love." (2 John 1:6) "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another." (John 13:34)

"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched-this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us." (1 John 1:1-2)

1. Jesus has all authority.
   True _____ False _____

2. A person can believe Jesus but does not have to do what Jesus requires; i.e., obey.
   True _____ False _____

3. Jesus preached
   A ___ only believe on me.
   B ___ believe and change lifestyle, repent.
   C ___ make disciples and baptize them.
   D ___ all the above.
   E ___ both A & B.
   F ___ both B & C.

4. Jesus requires a change in attitude toward
   A ___ self.
   B ___ neighbor.
   C ___ God.
   D ___ all the above.

5. As a witness of Jesus what did the apostle John say?
   A ___ I saw Him
   B ___ I heard Him
   C ___ I touched Him
   D ___ He is Eternal Life
   E ___ All the above
   F ___ None of the above
Obedience - The Proof of Love

Lesson 20
"This is love for God: to obey his commands. And his commands are not burdensome." (1 John 5:3) Love involves the desire to please the object of that love - our God. "And this is love: that we walk in obedience to his commands. As you have heard from the beginning, his command is that you walk in love." (2 John 1:6)

Jesus preached a message of love, belief in Him as God, change in lifestyle away from the world and its sinful ways, and obedience to His commands so man could be reconciled to God the Father, Christ the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Now obedience because of love is not doing something because you are in agreement with it or even thinking it is the best alternative. Obedience cannot be forced upon you by threat of force or economic sanctions. It is performing something desired, requested or commanded even when it appears unreasonable, illogical or unnecessary. Obedient love is a voluntary action taken just because the one you love wants it done and because you desire to please Him.

Several examples of this type of obedience have been seen in previous lessons.

• Noah spent years building an ark to exact specifications.
• Following the flood and his return to dry land Noah built an altar and offered a sacrifice to God, an act of worship because of love.
• Abraham circumcised all males within his household - something that by human standards and reason was totally unreasonable but he did so since God wanted it done.
• Abraham took his only son of promise to a mountain and built an altar to offer him as a sacrifice to God. By man's standards this is murder and no normal man would do such thing but Abraham did because of his complete trust in God.

The terrified Israelites reached the Red Sea with Pharaoh and his army in pursuit close behind. By what logic could anyone expect the sea to part allowing the Israelites to cross? But Moses, putting his faith, belief and trust in the God he loved, obeyed and the sea opened for them to cross.

Finally, Jesus, having spent three years teaching and establishing that He was the Son of God by his miracles, set His face toward Jerusalem. He
was determined to go there even though He knew the Jews, with the help of Roman officials, were going to kill him. But He willingly went giving His life because that was why He left Heaven. His prayer to God shows his complete obedience with death on the cross at hand "... He went away a second time and prayed, 'My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done'." (Matthew 26:42)

Therefore when it comes to obedience to God's requirements for reconciliation, we must obey because we love him, regardless of how unreasonable we think it is. Like Jesus, our desire must be "thy will be done."

1. Love for someone is doing something they desired because
   A _____ we think is it is the right thing to do.
   B _____ it appears to be the better of all other alternatives.
   C _____ we think it will please the one we love.

2. Love can be obtained by family pressures, economic or political sanctions, threats or even gifts.
   True _____  False _____

3. Jesus’ desire to go to Jerusalem was to observe the Passover even if it resulted in His arrest.
   True _____  False _____

4. Our response to Jesus’ teaching on salvation should be whatever You, Jesus, want.
   True _____  False _____

5. Everyone will be reconciled to God even those who do not obey His commands because Jesus died for all mankind.
   True _____  False _____
People Added to the Church Christ Established

Lesson 21

First Members
Before Jesus returned to Heaven to be with the father, "He told them (His apostles), 'This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high'.” (Luke 24:46-49) ... "Then they returned to Jerusalem from the hill called the Mount of Olives, a Sabbath day's walk from the city." (Acts 1:12)

On Pentecost, 50 days following Jesus' ascension to Heaven, a group of 120 were in the upper room as Jesus had instructed. The Holy Spirit descended on them and immediately they were able to speak in languages (tongues) they did not know or understand. A crowd gathered so Peter told them about the Messiah that they had crucified and preached "repentance and forgiveness of sins."

Pentecost Day
To the Jews' question “Peter replied, 'Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call'. With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, 'Save yourselves from this corrupt generation'. Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day." (Acts 2:38-41)

Samaritans and Simon
"But when they believed Philip as he preached the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. Simon himself believed and was baptized. And he followed Philip everywhere, astonished by the great signs and miracles. ... When Simon saw that the Spirit was given at the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money. ... Peter answered: 'May your money perish with you, because you thought you could buy the gift of God with money! You have no part or share in this ministry, because your heart is not right before God. Repent of this wickedness and pray to the Lord. Perhaps he will forgive you for having such a thought in your heart. For I see that you are full of bitterness and captive to sin'." (Acts 8:12-13; 18; 20-22)
**Eunuch from Ethiopia**
"Then Philip ran up to the chariot and heard the man reading Isaiah the prophet. 'Do you understand what you are reading?' Philip asked. 'How can I,' he said, 'unless someone explains it to me?' So he invited Philip to come up and sit with him. ... Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus. As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, 'Look, here is water. Why shouldn't I be baptized?' And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him." (Acts 8:30-31; 35-38)

**Saul of Tarsus**
"The Lord told him, 'Go to the house of Judas on Straight Street and ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for he is praying. In a vision he has seen a man named Ananias come and place his hands on him to restore his sight'." ... Then Ananias went to the house and entered it. Placing his hands on Saul, he said, 'Brother Saul, the Lord-Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here-has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit.' Immediately, something like scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he could see again. He got up and was baptized, and after taking some food, he regained his strength. Saul spent several days with the disciples in Damascus. At once he began to preach in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God." (Acts 9:11-12; 17-20)

**Cornelius**
"Cornelius was expecting them and had called together his relatives and close friends. ... Then Peter began to speak: "I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism but accepts men from every nation who fear him and do what is right. ... He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one whom God appointed as judge of the living and the dead. All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name. ... Then Peter said, "Can anyone keep these people from being baptized with water? They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have." So he ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked Peter to stay with them for a few days." (Acts 10:24; 34-35; 42-43; 46b-48)

**Lydia**
"One of those listening was a woman named Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth from the city of Thyatira, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul's message. When she and the members of her household were baptized, she invited us to her home. 'If
you consider me a believer in the Lord,’ she said, ‘come and stay at my house.’ And she persuaded us." (Acts 16:14-15)

Jailer at Philippi
"The jailer called for lights, rushed in and fell trembling before Paul and Silas. He then brought them out and asked, 'Sirs, what must I do to be saved?' They replied, 'Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved-you and your household.' Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all the others in his house." (Acts 16:29-32)

Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue
"Then Paul left the synagogue and went next door to the house of Titius Justus, a worshiper of God. Crispus, the synagogue ruler, and his entire household believed in the Lord; and many of the Corinthians who heard him believed and were baptized." (Acts 18:7-8)

Disciples of John
"While Apollos was at Corinth, Paul took the road through the interior and arrived at Ephesus. There he found some disciples and asked them, 'Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?' They answered, 'No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.' So Paul asked, 'Then what baptism did you receive?' 'John's baptism,' they replied. Paul said, 'John's baptism was a baptism of repentance. He told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is, in Jesus.' On hearing this, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus." (Acts 19:1-5)

Paul writing to the Roman Christians, but referring to all who obey the Gospel
"Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin because anyone who has died has been freed from sin." (Romans 6:3-6)

There are no questions but note the common thread in these examples:
  a. Hearing about the crucified Christ
  b. Saving faith in Him as the Savior
  c. Obedience to His instructions
Lesson 22
The question "What must I do?" was first asked of Peter when Christ established his church as recorded in Acts 2 which you are encouraged to read in its entirety.

"When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven (vv. 1-2a)... When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment (vs. 6a) ... Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd (vs. 14a) ... 'Men of Israel, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. This man was handed over to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him.' (vv. 22-24) ... 'Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.' When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, 'Brothers, what shall we do?' Peter replied, 'Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.' (vv. 36-39) ... Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day." (vs. 41) ... They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. (vv. 42-43)

We all have the same choice. Will we accept Christ's message of reconciliation or reject it? Some rejected the message but about 3,000 accepted it and did the following:

- They heard the Gospel message - Christ had been crucified, resurrected and ascended back to the Father.
- They were convicted of the sin.
- They asked "what shall we do?"
- Those who accepted the Gospel message:
  a. Repented
  b. Were immersed in the name of Jesus for forgiveness of sins
  c. Received gift of the Holy Spirit
- About 3000 added to their number, Jesus' disciples.
- They devoted themselves to
  a. Apostles' teaching
  b. Fellowship
  c. Breaking of bread
d. Prayer

It should be noted that everyone who heard made a decision. They either accepted or rejected the message of reconciliation.

There are many ways one can hear the Message of Reconciliation - someone could personally show them the message directly from the Bible, they could learn from reading the Bible or verifying from the Bible the truth of lessons on the World Wide Web, Internet.

There does not appear to be a requirement that a disciple or follower of Christ do the immersing, baptizing, as long as it is based upon a saving faith, by immersion in water in the name of Jesus and for the forgiveness of sins.

1. What is the Message of Reconciliation?
   A ______ Christ's death
   B ______ Christ's return to Heaven
   C ______ Christ's burial
   D ______ Christ's Resurrection
   E ______ All the above
   F ______ None of the above

2. What did everyone who heard do?
   A ______ Accepted the message
   B ______ Rejected the message
   C ______ Made a decision

3. Those accepting the message
   A ______ received the gift of the Holy Spirit.
   B ______ repented.
   C ______ were immersed.
   D ______ all the above.
   E ______ none of the above.

4. Those who accepted devoted themselves to
   A ______ learning more about Jesus and His teachings.
   B ______ returning to their old friends and acquaintances.
   C ______ associating with others who had accepted the message.
   D ______ breaking bread with others who had accepted.
   E ______ prayer.
   F ______ All the above.
   G ______ A, B, D & E.
   H ______ A, C, D & E.
A New Creation

Lesson 23
"Therefore, if any one is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold, the new has come." (2 Corinthians 5:17)

Death - The Old Self of Sin [Flesh or Earthly Man]
- You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires. (Ephesians 4:22)
- Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexuals nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God. (1 Corinthians 6:9-11)
- At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another. (Titus 3:3)
- The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God. (Galatians 5:19-21)

Burial - Of the Sinful Body
Like a seed that is planted into the earth and rises a different plant - so sinful man accepts the Word is buried into death of Christ and rises a new spiritual man to live a different life.
- Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. (Romans 6:3-4)
- Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! (2 Corinthians 5:17)
- Neither circumcision nor un-circumcision means anything; what counts is a new creation. (Galatians 6:15)

Resurrected - A New Creation [Spiritual Man]
- For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith-and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God- not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do
good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. (Ephesians 2:8-10)

- You were taught with regard to your former way of life to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness. (Ephesians 4:22-24)
- (We) have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator. (Colossians 3:10)
- But I say, walk by the Spirit, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you would. (Galatians 5:16-17)
- And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. (Colossians 3:17)
- But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other. (Galatians 5:22-26)

**Daily Living**

- As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. (Ephesians 4:1-3).
- You must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts. Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, with a continual lust for more. (Ephesians 4:17-19)

**Ephesians 4, 5, and 6 — daily living by the new creation:**

- Be made new in the attitude of your minds
- Put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbor
- In your anger do not sin
- Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry
- Steal no longer, but must work
- Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths
- Get rid of all bitterness, rage, brawling and slander, and every form of malice.
- Be kind and compassionate
• Forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you
• Live a life of love
• Among you there must not be:
  a. A hint of sexual immorality
  b. Any kind of impurity
  c. Greed
  d. Obscenity
  e. Foolish talk
  f. Coarse joking
• No immoral, impure or greedy person has any inheritance in the kingdom of God.
• Do not get drunk on wine
• Be filled with the Spirit
• Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs
• Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord
• Always giving thanks to God the Father
• Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ
• Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord
• Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her
• Children, obey your parents in the Lord
• Honor your father and mother
• Fathers do not exasperate your children
• Slaves, obey your earthly masters with respect
• Masters, treat your slaves in the same way. Do not threaten them, since you know that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no favoritism with him
• And from Titus 3:1-2 - Be subject to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready to do whatever is good, to slander no one, to be peaceable and considerate, and to show true humility toward all men
• Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes
1. A person coming into Christ becomes a new creation because:
   A ___ God miraculously changed one’s life.
   B ___ The person resolved within themselves to become a better person by changing their lifestyle.
   C ___ There was a death to sin, a burial into Christ and God resurrected the person as a new creation, spiritual body

2. God's grace, Christ the perfect sacrifice for sin, is free to all but man is free to accept or reject based on his faith or lack of faith.
   True _____ False _____

3. An individual can lose all sensitivity to what is right, pure and just.
   True _____ False _____

4. A new Christian, new creation, can continue to live as before one’s death to sin, burial with Christ and resurrection as a new creation.
   True _____ False _____
Benefits of Being In Christ

Lesson 24

Previous studies have shown we must change our lifestyle from rebellion to righteousness. We must believe the Gospel message of the crucified and resurrected Christ. We must obey that message to be in Him because it is in Him and through Him we have redemption and are reconciled to God.

"He predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding. And he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment-to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ." (Ephesians 1:5-10)

"For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again. So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation." (2 Corinthians 5:14-19)

"What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin because anyone who has died has been freed from sin." (Romans 6:1-7)
See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ. For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority. In him you were also circumcised, in the putting off of the sinful nature, not with a circumcision done by the hands of men but with the circumcision done by Christ, having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead." (Colossians 2:8-12)

Jesus as our advocate beside us when we stand before God.

1. When someone crucifies his old self with Christ, he is united with Him by death of his sin, having the assurance of eternal life and being united with Him in His resurrection.
   True _____  False _____

2. Where is redemption found?
   A ______ Only Faith in Christ
   B ______ Prayer asking for redemption
   C ______ The blood of Christ

3. How does one become a new creation?
   A ______ When one believes Christ is their savior
   B ______ When one gets into Christ by the burial of baptism
   C ______ When resurrected following physical death
   D ______ A & C
   E ______ B & C

4. People who have died to sin, been buried in water baptism and resurrected to a new spiritual life are united with Christ.
   True _____  False _____

5. Where does the fullness of Deity dwell?
   A. ______ Bible
   B. ______ Christ
   C. ______ Apostles
Devoured by Desires

Lesson 25
Paul in Romans states that the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation (1:16), that faith comes from hearing or reading in such a way that the word of God is understood. (10:17) When we obey God’s Word we die to sin." ... We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life." (Romans 6:2-4)

This is the seed analogy. A seed must be planted, germinate, push up through the soil before it can become a glorious plant. As the plant continues to grow it may face many trials; for example storms, flood, drought, fire, disease, bugs, birds, animals and man. Some plants may not be damaged at all while others may become deformed, broken down, eaten or cease to mature and die. As with plants, unpleasant things happen to Christians and they too may become deformed, broken down, devoured or just cease to mature and die as shown in the following scriptures.

Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. (1 Peter 5:8)

Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation if you continue in your faith, established and firm, not moved from the hope held out in the gospel. (Colossians 1:21-23)

See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ. (Colossians 2:8)

Do not let anyone who delights in false humility and the worship of angels disqualify you for the prize. Such a person goes into great detail about what he has seen, and his unspiritual mind puffs him up with idle notions. He has lost connection with the Head. (Colossians 2:18-19a)

All over the world this gospel is bearing fruit and growing, just as it has been doing among you since the day you heard it and understood God's grace in all its truth. You learned it from Epaphras, our dear fellow servant, who is a faithful minister of Christ on our behalf. (Colossians 1:6-7)
Holding on to faith and a good conscience. Some have rejected these and so have shipwrecked their faith. Among them are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have handed over to Satan to be taught not to blaspheme. (1 Timothy 1:19-20)

The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron. They forbid people to marry and order them to abstain from certain foods, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and who know the truth. (1 Timothy 4:1-3)

For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs. (1 Timothy 6:10)

Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to your care. Turn away from godless chatter and the opposing ideas of what is falsely called knowledge, which some have professed and in so doing have wandered from the faith. (1 Timothy 6:20-21)

Avoid godless chatter, because those who indulge in it will become more and more ungodly. Their teaching will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, who have wandered away from the truth. They say that the resurrection has already taken place. (2 Timothy 2:16-18)

"For Demas, because he loved this world, has deserted me." (2 Timothy 4:10)

For there are many rebellious people, mere talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision group. They must be silenced, because they are ruining whole households by teaching things they ought not to teach-and that for the sake of dishonest gain. (Titus 1:10-11)

I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you by the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel. (Galatians 1:6)

If, while we seek to be justified in Christ, it becomes evident that we ourselves are sinners, does that mean that Christ promotes sin? Absolutely not! (Galatians 2:17)

You are observing special days and months and seasons and years! I fear for you, that somehow I have wasted my efforts on you. (Galatians
4:10-11)

Mark my words! I, Paul, tell you that if you let yourselves be circumcised, Christ will be of no value to you at all. Again I declare to every man who lets himself be circumcised that he is obligated to obey the whole law. You who are trying to be justified by law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace. (Galatians 5:2-4)

You were running a good race. Who cut in on you and kept you from obeying the truth? (Galatians 5:7)

What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? (James 2:14)

In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. (James 2:17)

"Therefore, my brothers, be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, you will never fall," (2 Peter 1:10) and by implication if you do not do these things you will fall.

"But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them—bringing swift destruction on themselves." (2 Peter 2:1)

Therefore, dear friends, since you already know this, be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of lawless men and fall from your secure position. (2 Peter 3:17)

These men are blemishes at your love feasts, eating with you without the slightest qualm—shepherds who feed only themselves. They are clouds without rain, blown along by the wind; autumn trees, without fruit and uprooted—twice dead. (Jude 12)

Jude clearly states others were devoured. "Though you already know all this, I want to remind you that the Lord delivered his people out of Egypt, but later destroyed those who did not believe. And the angels who did not keep their positions of authority but abandoned their own home—these he has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment on the great Day." (Jude 5-7)
1. When Paul stated in Colossians that Christ would present Christians holy and blameless "provided that you continue in the faith" he left no doubt that those who did not continue in the faith would not be presented holy and blameless.
   True _____ False _____

1. The disciple Demas, Paul's companion, deserted Paul and returned to his former worldly life.
   True _____ False _____

3. Peter warned Christians to beware lest they be carried away from their secure position.
   True _____ False _____

4. Even angels were carried away leaving their place and are being held in darkness until judgment.
   True _____ False _____

5. The craving for money causes some to wander away from the faith.
   True _____ False _____
Lesson 26
Those who have been buried into Christ through immersion in water upon hearing and believing Jesus is the Son of God, the perfect sacrifice for sin, have been added into His Body, that is, to the Church He established. "You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ." (Galatians 3:26-27)

It is imperative we become more like Him.

We must study to learn and understand the apostles' teaching, their letters and epistles, which the Holy Spirit of God guided them to write. We are now the Church, the sanctified, or those called out of sin to obedience, or simply the Body. It is by the things we wear or put on (not meaning material clothes but way of living) that the world will know we are His disciples.

The leaders of the Jews questioned Jesus "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?' Jesus replied: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments." (Matthew 22:36-40) Jesus also stated in John 13:34 "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another."

A life based upon love, first of God, then of man, will always seek to do good things, to serve rather than aiming for power, prestige, wealth or fame. Paul gives us a good list in Colossians 3:12-17. "Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him." Also in Galatians 5:22-26 "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace,
patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other."

"You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness." (Ephesians 4:22-24)

In Galatians 5:19-21 Paul identifies some things not to do or become "The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God."

Finally John makes it very clear in Revelation 21:8 "But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars - their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death."

Paul tells us what to cast off followed by what to be "Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body. 'In your anger do not sin': Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold. He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need. Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption." (Ephesians 4:25-30)

Having been reconciled to God by obedience to His message and putting on things pleasing to Him we grow more like Him.
1. According to Jesus the two greatest commandments are to love God and to love one’s fellowman.
   True _____  False _____

2. What binds everything together in perfect unity?
   A ___ Faith
   B ___ Hope
   C ___ Love

3. Christians who walk by the Spirit
   A ___ are not self conceited.
   B ___ do not provoke another.
   C ___ do not envy.
   D ___ both B and C.
   E ___ all the above.

4. Christians in Galatia were warned they would not enter the Kingdom of Heaven if they participated in the works of the flesh.
   True _____  False _____

5. To whom was the apostle Paul referring when he said put away falsehood, don't steal anymore, speak not evil and do not grieve the Holy Spirit?
   A ___ Christians
   B ___ Non-Christian
Functions - Within the Spiritual Body

Lesson 27
All who have obeyed from the heart the message of reconciliation have put on Christ and have
1. died to sin
2. been buried or immersed in water (baptism)
3. been raised a new being
4. been added to the Body of Christ and are in Him, in Christ

As disciples of Christ we constitute a spiritual body and just like the human body there are many functions the body must perform if it is to grow. All activity must be functioning in unity for the body to be effective and efficient, therefore all parts of the body do not do the same thing. "For as in one body we have many members, and all the members do not have the same function so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another." (Romans 12:4-5)

Paul, while in prison, provided insight into spiritual gifts when he wrote "I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift." (Ephesians 4:1-6) ... "And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head — Christ — from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love." (Ephesians 4:9-16)

Perhaps the most crucial functions are never seen while others are always seen.
The spiritual body's functions listed below are from Romans 12:6-8:
• Prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith
• Service or ministry, let us use it in our serving or ministering
• He who teaches, in teaching
• He who exhorts, in exhortation
• He who gives or contributes, with liberality
• He who leads, with diligence
• Perform acts of mercy with cheerfulness

In performing these activities we must continue to live a life pleasing to God. Romans 12 tells us how we are to live before God:
• Be genuine in Love.
• Hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good.
• Love one another with brotherly affection.
• Outdo one another in showing honor.
• Never lag in zeal, be aglow with the Spirit, serve the Lord.
• Rejoice in your hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer.
• Contribute to the needs of the saints, practice hospitality.
• Speak well of those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them.
• Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep
• Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty.
• Associate with the lowly.
• Never be conceited.
• Repay no one evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all.
• If possible, so far as it depends upon you, live peaceably with all.
• Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God.
• Do good things to your enemy for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.

And from Ephesians 4:11-13 we see that in order to prepare His people for works of service to build up the body so it could mature and reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God He gave some to be:
° apostles
° prophets
° evangelists
° pastors, shepherds, bishops or overseers
° teachers

Therefore in the Body of Christ we do not all perform the same functions but become servants, doing whatever needs to be done and give honor to everyone not just to those who have a more public function.
1. God is the one who adds to the church He established those who have put on Christ.
   True _____ False _____

2. The body of Christ has many functions to perform therefore each individual Christian must do every function.
   True _____ False _____

3. Functions of apostles, prophets, evangelists, overseers or elders and teachers are to
   A _____ assign tasks or functions to every Christian.
   B _____ prepare Christians for works of service to mature them.

4. In order to reach unity in the church we must grow in knowledge of the Word and do the works of the Body, the Church.
   True _____ False _____

5. Christians are servants of God, therefore we can select what we want to do rather than do what our Master needs to have done.
   True _____ False _____
Remaining Faithful

Lesson 28
Once someone has:
A. Heard the Gospel Message that Jesus (1 Corinthians 15:1-4)
   1. was God who came to earth in the flesh
   2. was crucified on the cross for our sins
   3. was buried rising again on the third day
   4. seen by many who knew him best

B. Responds to that message by:
   1. believing He is the Son of God
   2. repenting of all unrighteousness
   3. changing one's way of life to one of godliness
   4. dying to sin, leaving the dead body of sin in the grave of baptism

C. They are resurrected by the power of God as a new creation. They are then a Child of God.

Rest assured the Devil will use everything at his disposal to get you to return to your former way of life. Peter wrote "If they have escaped the corruption of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and are again entangled in it and overcome, they are worse off at the end than they were at the beginning. It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than to have known it and then to turn their backs on the sacred command that was passed on to them." (2 Peter 2:20-21)

The apostle John also provided some insight when he wrote, "Anyone who claims to be in the light but hates his brother is still in the darkness." (1 John 2:9)

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

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

"But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars-their
place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death." (Revelation 21:8)

"Outside are the dogs, those who practice magic arts, the sexually immoral, the murderers, the idolaters and everyone who loves and practices falsehood." (Revelation 22:15)

When a Christian returns and remains in their former way of life, they are not better off, but worse. "They promise them freedom, while they themselves are slaves of depravity-for a man is a slave to whatever has mastered him. If they have escaped the corruption of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and are again entangled in it and overcome, they are worse off at the end than they were at the beginning. It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than to have known it and then to turn their backs on the sacred command that was passed on to them. Of them the proverbs are true: 'A dog returns to its vomit,' and, 'A sow that is washed goes back to her wallowing in the mud'." (2 Peter 2:19-22)

The Hebrew writer makes it clear that God has no pleasure in those who turn back. "So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded. You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised. For in just a very little while, 'He who is coming will come and will not delay. But my righteous one will live by faith. And if he shrinks back, I will not be pleased with him.' But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who believe and are saved." (Hebrews 10:35-39)

It is not enough to just begin in the way of righteousness. One can turn back from a life in Christ to their former way, a life of sin. Look at the message given to seven Asian churches most of which were established a few years earlier by Paul:

**Ephesus** “...Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken your first love. Remember the height from which you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first. If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lamp stand from its place.” (Revelation 2:4-5)

**Smyrna** “... Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer. I tell you, the devil will put some of you in prison to test you, and you will suffer persecution for ten days. Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life.” (Revelation 2:10)
Pergamum “... I know where you live—where Satan has his throne. Yet you remain true to my name. You did not renounce your faith in me, ... Nevertheless, I have a few things against you: ... Repent therefore! Otherwise, I will soon come to you and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.” (Revelation 2:13, 14, 16)

Thyatira “... Nevertheless, I have this against you: You tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess. By her teaching she misleads my servants into sexual immorality and the eating of food sacrificed to idols.” (Revelation 2:20)

Sardis “... These are the words of him who holds the seven spirits of God and the seven stars. I know your deeds; you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead. Wake up! Strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have not found your deeds complete in the sight of my God.” (Revelation 3:1-2)

Philadelphia “... Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also keep you from the hour of trial that is going to come upon the whole world to test those who live on the earth.” (Revelation 3: 10)

Laodicea “... I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! So, because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit you out of my mouth.” (Revelation 3: 15-16)

Paul's advice is very timely: “So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall”! (1 Corinthians 10:12)
1. Peter tells us a Christian can become worse off than before one knew the way of righteousness.
   True _____  False _____

2. Paul warned the Galatian Christians that if they returned to the works of the flesh they would not inherit the Kingdom of Heaven
   True _____  False _____

3. John explains that a Christian can still be in darkness.
   True _____  False _____

4. To whom is the wrath of God revealed?
   A ___ Ungodly men
   B ___ Wicked men
   C ___ Men who suppress the truth
   D ___ God is a God of love not a God of wrath
   E ___ A, B & C

5. The world and the lust for it will pass away but the will of God lives forever.
   True _____  False _____
Eternity

Lesson 29
It is difficult for our finite minds to comprehend eternity, but before the creation of the Earth God already existed and He will continue to exist after the end of time on Earth. When Christ comes again everyone will face his Creator, the Almighty God, to give an account of his actions while on Earth.

How great it will be to have Jesus, our Advocate, beside us on that day. He will speak up on behalf of His obedient, faithful disciples because: "We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life." (Romans 6:4) Then God will welcome us into His presence. We will be so overjoyed that we will sing His praises and give thanks forever. Christ died so we could live in Heaven where there will be no fear, no sorrow, no pain, no weeping and no darkness, but only love, peace, truth and righteousness, forever and ever without end.

There is another group of people. Those who will not have that advocate on their side. What about them? They lived in rebellion satisfying their human desires refusing to obey or even acknowledge the presence of Almighty God. "You, therefore, have no excuse, you who pass judgment on someone else, for at whatever point you judge the other, you are condemning yourself, because you who pass judgment do the same things. Now we know that God's judgment against those who do such things is based on truth. So when you, a mere man, pass judgment on them and yet do the same things, do you think you will escape God's judgment? Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, tolerance and patience, not realizing that God's kindness leads you toward repentance? But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed. God 'will give to each person according to what he has done'. To those who by persistence in doing good, seek glory, honor and immortality, he will give eternal life. But for those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger. There will be trouble and distress for every human being who does evil: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile; but glory, honor and peace for everyone who does good: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile." (Romans 2:1-10)

"But now he (Jesus) has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself. Just as man is destined to
die once, and after that to face judgment, so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him." (Hebrews 9:26b-28)

These events can be clearly seen in 2 Thessalonians 1:6-10 "God is just: He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels. He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power on the day he comes to be glorified in his holy people and to be marveled at among all those who have believed. This includes you, because you believed our testimony to you." This is also stated in Romans 1:18-32.

At the return of Jesus "The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. They will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." (Matthew 13:41-42) And "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels'." (Matthew 25:41)

Everyone has a choice. We can choose a life of obedience to God or a life of rebellion against God. What will your choice be, for "Today is the day of Salvation?"

The faithful, who chose obedience to God, will spend eternity with Jesus as stated by Paul in 1 Thessalonians 4:15-18 "According to the Lord's own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage each other with these words."
1. At the Judgment Day Christians have an advocate or attorney, Christ, beside them to explain that His blood through immersion into him has washed away the stains of sin.
   True _____ False _____

2. Satan, that rebellious angel, stands ready to welcome all rebellious ones who refused Christ's invitation.
   True _____ False _____

3. Man created in God's image is without excuse as God’s eternal power and deity are clearly perceived in things God made.
   True _____ False _____

4. When Jesus returns at the end of time on earth He will send angels to remove from his Kingdom evildoers and throw them into the furnace of fire.
   True _____ False _____

5. The furnace of fire or Eternal fire was prepared for the Devil and his angels.
   True _____ False _____
SELF EXAMINATION
OF
MY RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

Lesson 30
Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith.

Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you? [2 Corinthians 13:5]

1 Do you believe?
a. Jesus Christ is the Son of God? YES __ NO __
   · God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. [John 3:16]
   · ... Christ, the Son of the living God. [Matthew 16:16b]
   · Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus. Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, "See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?" Then Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." [Acts 8:35-37]
b. You are a sinner? YES __ NO __
   · "... All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." [Romans 3:23]
   · "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." [1 John 1:8-9]
c. Jesus came to die for the sins of mankind? YES __ NO __
   · ... The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many. [Matt. 20:28]
d. Jesus died for you? YES __ NO __
   · But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone. [Hebrews 2:9]

2. Have you?
a. Repented of your sins? YES __ NO __
   · I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish. [Luke 13:3-4]
   · Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent. [Acts 17:30-31]
b. Confessed your faith in Christ? YES __ NO __
   Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever denies Me before
men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven. [Matthew 10:32-33]

c. Been baptized for the remission of sins? YES __ NO __
· Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call." [Acts 2:38-39]

3. Do you?
a. Study the Bible with any consistency? YES __ NO __
· Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. [2 Timothy 2:15]

b. Pray with any consistency? YES __ NO __
· Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. [1 Thessalonians 5:16-18]

c. Believe the Bible is the authoritative Word of God? YES NO __
· All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. [2 Timothy 3:16-17]

d. Believe the Bible will judge us when Jesus comes? YES NO __
· And if anyone hears My words and does not believe, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world. He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him — the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day. For I have not spoken on My own authority; but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak. [John 12:47-49]

e. Visit (look out for) the sick when the opportunity and need are present? YES ___ NO ___
· "When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.'"  
[Matthew 25:31-36]
f. Show any interest in those who are lost?  YES ___ NO__
   · "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vine dresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you." [John 15:1-3]

g. Give as you should?  YES ___ NO __
   · On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper. [1 Corinthians 16:2]

h. Love the church as Jesus does?  YES ___ NO __
   · Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. [Ephesians 5:25-27]

4. If you should die this moment, do you feel you would die?  LOST ___ SAVED ___
   If your response is LOST or if there is doubt about your situation then:
   · Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; Put away the evil of your doings from before My eyes. Cease to do evil. [Isaiah 1:16]
   · Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. [James 4:8]
   · Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out. [Acts 3:19]
   · Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. [Acts 2:38]

Now is the time for decision.
   "And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord." [Acts 22:16] Therefore seek out someone who will baptize, immerse, you just as the Bible states – by being buried. Go into the water, go by the authority of Jesus calling upon His name, be completely covered, washed, by water into the name of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit; being raised from the grave of water cleansed of all sins, pure and Holy having been adopted by God as a new spiritual being, added by Him to the church Christ established and receive the Holy Spirit as a gift or deposit who will intercede to God for you as you continue in Jesus’ and the Apostle’s teachings in your walk daily with Jesus.