



MAP ♦ 575 US Highway 250 ♦ Greenwich, OH 44837 ♦ (419) 962-1515 ♦ September 2021

## The General Epistle of James

Teacher's Outline and Study Bible™

<p><b>1. The tongue—the tool of the teacher— causes the teacher to face a stricter judgment</b></p> <p><b>2. The tongue stumbles &amp; sins often</b></p> <p><b>3. The tongue is a small part of the body but it makes great boasts</b></p> <p>a. Two illustrations: Horses &amp; ships</p> <p>b. The point: Control the tongue &amp; the whole body is controlled</p> <p>c. The sin: The tongue boasts great things</p> <p><b>4. The tongue is a</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>CHAPTER 3</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>III. TEMPTATIONS &amp; TRIALS: COMMON TO ALL, BUT ESPECIALLY TO TEACHERS, 3:1-18</b></p> <p><b>A. Temptation 1: Misusing the Tongue, 3:1-12</b></p> <p>My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation.</p> <p>2 For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body.</p> <p>3 Behold, we put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body.</p> <p>4 Behold also the ships, which though they be so great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth.</p> <p>5 Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great</p>	<p>things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!</p> <p>6 And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.</p> <p>7 For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind:</p> <p>8 But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.</p> <p>9 Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God.</p> <p>10 Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be.</p> <p>11 Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter?</p> <p>12 Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs? so can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh.</p>	<p><b>fire, a world of evil</b></p> <p>a. It corrupts the whole body</p> <p>b. It inflames the whole life</p> <p>c. It has a source: Hell</p> <p><b>5. The tongue is a restless evil</b></p> <p>a. It is the only member uncontrolled</p> <p>b. It cannot be tamed by man</p> <p>c. It is unruly, restless</p> <p>1) It is full of deadly poison</p> <p>2) It blesses God &amp; curses man</p> <p>d. It should be controlled (by Christ)</p> <p>1) Because its behavior is inconsistent</p> <p>2) Because its behavior is contrary to our nature</p>
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# Section III COMMON TO ALL, BUT ESPECIALLY TO TEACHERS James 3:1-18

## STUDY 1: TEMPTATION 1: MISUSING THE TONGUE

**TEXT:** James 3:1-12

**AIM:** To determine in your heart to speak good things, not evil.

### MEMORY VERSE:

*“Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!” (James 3:5)*

### INTRODUCTION:

Temptations and trials are common to all, but some are especially common to teachers. One of the greatest temptations is the abuse of the tongue. Think about the tongue for a moment. How many times have we gotten into serious trouble:

- because of an ill-spoken word?
- because of speaking without thinking?
- because of expressing our opinion in a hurtful way?
- because of some vile words we uttered?
- because we allowed a cursing to come out instead of a blessing?

James gives us some very strong advice in this lesson—advice that every believer must pay close attention to and apply. The tongue is to be used for blessing and not cursing. We must not allow our tongues to be used for evil and hellish purposes. We must put under subjection the most unruly member of our body—the untamed tongue.

### OUTLINE:

1. The tongue—the tool of the teacher—causes the teacher to face a stricter judgment (v.1).
2. The tongue stumbles and sins often (v.2).
3. The tongue is a little member, boasting great things (vv.3-5).
4. The tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity (vv.5-6).
5. The tongue is a restless evil (vv.7-12).

## 1. THE TONGUE—THE TOOL OF THE TEACHER—CAUSES THE TEACHER TO FACE A STRICTER JUDGMENT (v.1).

Not many believers should become teachers because teachers shall face a stricter judgment from God. A teacher tells others how to live and corrects them when they come short. In fact, a teacher is responsible for the lives and spiritual growth of those under him. God holds him responsible. Therefore, if the teacher

fails to live what he teaches, he will bear a greater judgment and condemnation. The teacher must live what he preaches and teaches. Note three facts.

1. This verse stresses a pointed truth: a person should commit his life to teach only if he cannot keep from teaching. Teaching is a high calling; therefore, it carries with it heavy responsibilities. Individuals failing to fulfill those responsibilities will receive the greater condemnation by God.

2. However, a person is not to fear this responsibility and neglect the gift of teaching. If he is called and gifted to teach, then he must teach. The great responsibility and potential condemnation enhances teaching’s great dignity.

3. A teacher’s main tool for work is speech or the tongue. Therefore, it is the tongue and its use that will have a great bearing upon a teacher’s condemnation. The tongue is where the first great temptation attacks teachers, the temptation to misuse the tongue—whether to promote false or misleading information, to gain unmerited authority, to spread rumors or gossip, or simply to speak unkindly or in an arrogant manner.

### QUESTIONS:

1. Has God placed the calling to teach upon your life? If so, have you heeded the call, and are you taking the role seriously?
2. In reality, we are all teachers of someone in some area of life. What responsibilities, with regard to our tongue, do we have in common with those who are called to teach?
3. How can an unruly tongue be a hindrance in your work for God?

## 2. THE TONGUE STUMBLES AND SINS OFTEN (v.2).

The tongue stumbles and sins often, stumbles in word after word. Note: “we all offend” (stumble, fall, sin). This includes teachers as well as other believers. No believer—no matter how great a teacher or who he or she is—is free from stumbling and falling. In fact, note what the verse says: “In many things” we all stumble. We do not just occasionally fall and sin; we are always coming up short before God. And this includes all teachers and preachers as well as all other believers. What is the proof of this? Our tongues. Our tongues show that we do not always love; we are not always...

- patient
- long-suffering
- kind
- modest
- calm
- pure in thought, word, & deed
- rejoicing in the truth
- bearing all things

- humble
- believing God in all things
- generous
- hoping in God in all things
- polite
- enduring all things for God

In no uncertain terms, the tongue shows us that we are always stumbling and coming short. This is not to excuse us, nor to say that we are not to control the tongue. On the contrary, we are held accountable by God for every word we speak. Therefore, we must learn to control our tongues so that we can become perfect, mature, fully developed. If a person will learn to control his tongue, he can learn to control any passion or appetite of the body.

***“In the multitude of words, there wanteth not sin: but he that refraineth his lips is wise”***  
(Pr.10:19).

**ILLUSTRATION:**

*A fire raged on a natural gas platform that had been built out in the ocean. Firefighters worked night and day to put out the blaze, but their efforts were unsuccessful. It was discovered that the fire was so hot, it actually burned beneath the surface of the water where the pipe had been damaged and the gas was fueling the fire directly. In order to extinguish the fire, divers had to go below all the flames and cut off the gas supply first. Only then could they put out the fire above.*

How similar that blaze is to our tongue. We must go below the tongue down into the heart to cut off the ungodly emotions and evil desires that fuel the tongue. We must daily win the spiritual battle within us, the source of disagreeable talk (Js. 4:1). Otherwise, the tongue will never be controlled.

**QUESTIONS:**

1. In what situations is it easy to offend others with your words? What do you need to do to have self-control at these times?
2. A good way to avoid speaking evil is to quote Scripture silently. What Scripture should you memorize for those times when you are tempted to misuse your tongue?

**3. THE TONGUE IS A SMALL PART OF THE BODY BUT IT MAKES GREAT BOASTS (vv.3-5).**

The tongue is a little member that boasts great things. Two illustrations are given.

⇒ Consider the bit or bridle that is put in the mouth of a horse to guide and turn the horse’s body. The bit and

bridle are very small.

⇒ Consider the rudder or helm that guides a ship. It even controls the ship through the winds of a fierce storm. Yet in proportion to the overall size of the ship, the rudder or helm is extremely small.

So it is with the tongue. It is only a little member of the body, but its destructive power is great. It can boast great things, making statements stressing our own...

- abilities
- talents
- accomplishments
- triumphs
- possessions
- position
- spirituality
- sufficiency

A person can boast about anything, and he can boast in a quiet, unassuming way or boast with many words. All boasting is destructive: either the speaker’s image is lowered in the eyes of others, or the listener is made to feel inferior or less of a person than the boaster. Boasting is nothing more than vain or empty talk, but its destructive force must never be underestimated.

***“Whoso boasteth himself of a false gift is like clouds and wind without rain”*** (Pr.25:14).

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Why is boasting always destructive?
2. Compare the examples James gives of the horse and the ship to a boasting tongue.
3. What can you do to control your tongue so that you lift up others instead of boasting about yourself?

**4. THE TONGUE IS A FIRE, A WORLD OF EVIL (vv.5-6).**

The tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The word “matter” (v5) refers to wood or a forest.<sup>22</sup> Therefore, the meaning of the verse is that a great forest is set on fire by only a little spark. So it is with the tongue. The tongue is a fire that can set a whole forest of lives and relationships ablaze, consuming and destroying all that lies in its path. Just think about the terrible and immense amount of damage done by the fire of words, rumors, tale-bearing, and sharp or cutting remarks. Think about the...

- marriages destroyed
- children shattered
- friendships damaged
- reputations ruined
- wars fought
- fights aroused
- injuries caused
- bodies maimed
- promotions denied

<sup>22</sup> Marvin Vincent. Word Studies in the New Testament, Vol.1. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1969), p.747f.

The list could go on and on, but the point is well made. The tongue can be a little fire that sets ablaze and consumes a whole forest of people and relationships.

The fire of the tongue defiles the whole body and sets on fire the whole course of a man's nature or life. The phrase "the course of nature" is a descriptive phrase. It means the wheel of nature, the wheel of life, the unending span of life stretching from birth to death.<sup>23</sup> Therefore, the tongue can do just what this verse says: pollute and dirty a man's whole body and life. How is this possible? Think for a moment how all the evil of the world finds expression in our words...

- words that lead to immorality
- words that lead to wickedness
- words that are malicious
- words that are envious
- words that express lust
- words that curse and blaspheme
- words that express covetousness
- words that lead to idolatry
- words that lead to murder
- words that express anger
- words that are divisive

Name the sin, and words are involved either in the mind or through the tongue.

Now note the source of a fiery tongue: hell. Satan himself is the igniter of a fiery tongue; therefore, any person who sets his tongue ablaze is following the tongue of Satan, of the fire of hell itself. This person demonstrates a hellish, Satanic heart and not the heart of Christ. The fire of hell, Gehenna, is never to be seen in the life of a believer. A believer's tongue is never to speak forth the fiery flames of hell's destructive words—words that are ugly, offensive, irreverent, unclean, angry, divisive, unkind, suggestive, or sheer gossip.

***"Whoso privily [secretly] slandereth his neighbour, him will I cut off: him that hath a high look and a proud heart will not I suffer"*** (Ps.101:5).

#### ILLUSTRATION:

*The story is told of a man who spent much time at a small country store catching up on and participating in town gossip. His minister simply could not convince the man of the damage he was doing. One windy day, the minister visited the man and said, "Come with me to your barn. I want to show you something." The minister had purchased a feather pillow. He said to the man,*

*"Open this pillow and let the feathers fly out." When the man had done so, the preacher said, "Now go pick them all up."—SOURCE UNKNOWN*

The point was made. The man could no more take back all his vain talk than he could retrieve all those scattered feathers

#### QUESTIONS:

1. How much evil talk does it take to cause trouble and problems? Tell about a time when speaking good things avoided trouble.
2. What attitudes tempt you to speak evil? How does uplifting others help you guard against these attitudes?

#### 5. THE TONGUE IS A RESTLESS EVIL (vv.7-12).

1. The tongue is the only creature that cannot be tamed (v.7). Men have tamed some of every kind of creature there is: beasts, birds, serpents, and creatures of the sea.

2. The tongue cannot be tamed by any man, not completely and fully. Note that verse 8 says that no man can tame the tongue. But God can. Matthew Henry says:

*"No man can tame the tongue without supernatural grace and assistance." The apostle does not intend to represent it as a thing impossible, but as a thing extremely difficult, which therefore will require great watchfulness, and pains, and prayer.*<sup>24</sup>

Only Christ can control a man's tongue—control it so that it can please God.

3. The tongue is "unruly," that is, restless, uneasy, unstable, always roaming about; and it is full of deadly poison (vv.8-10). Also note how inconsistent the tongue is. It can bless God in one breath and curse men in the next. Imagine! The very same tongue that blesses is the same tongue that curses. How many sit in church on Sunday or at meals blessing God and then turn around on Monday and curse or use foul or off-colored language? It is the same tongue that does both. How restless it is! Truthfully, it is difficult to hold the tongue still; and when it speaks, it is just as liable to speak a curse word as it is to speak a blessing.

4. The tongue must be controlled by believers.

⇒ It is not fitting or right for a believer's tongue to be untamed. A believer is just like a fountain, a fountain for God.

<sup>23</sup> A.T. Robertson. Word Pictures in the New Testament, Vol.6, p.43

<sup>24</sup> Matthew Henry. Matthew Henry's Commentary, Vol.6. (Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell Co., n.d.), p.985.

Does a fountain that is supposed to bring forth sweet water also bring forth bitter water?

⇒ It is contrary to the nature of believers to have an untamed tongue. A believer is just like a fig tree. Does the fig tree bear olives? Or a vine, figs? No fountain yields both salt and fresh water. No good tongue yields both words of blessing and words of cursing. Only an evil tongue could do this.

*“A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in picture of silver” (Pr.25:11).*

*“Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue, keepeth his soul from troubles” (Pr.21:23).*

#### QUESTIONS:

1. What happens when we try to tame our tongues on our own? What specific things do you need to do to give God control of your words?
2. In what practical ways can your words be sweet and bear fruit for the kingdom?

#### SUMMARY:

All of us have experienced evil at some point in life because of the tongue, both our own tongues and those of others. And we have all heard the children’s lyric, “Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words can never hurt me.” That may sound good as a comeback to hurtful words, but words can hurt; words do hurt. Let God help you control your tongue. Pray what King David prayed, “Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer” (Ps.19:14). Do not take lightly what the tongue can do, and remember:

1. The tongue—the tool of the teacher—causes the teacher to face a stricter judgment
2. The tongue stumbles and sins often.
3. The tongue is a little member, boasting great things.
4. The tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity.
5. The tongue is a restless evil.

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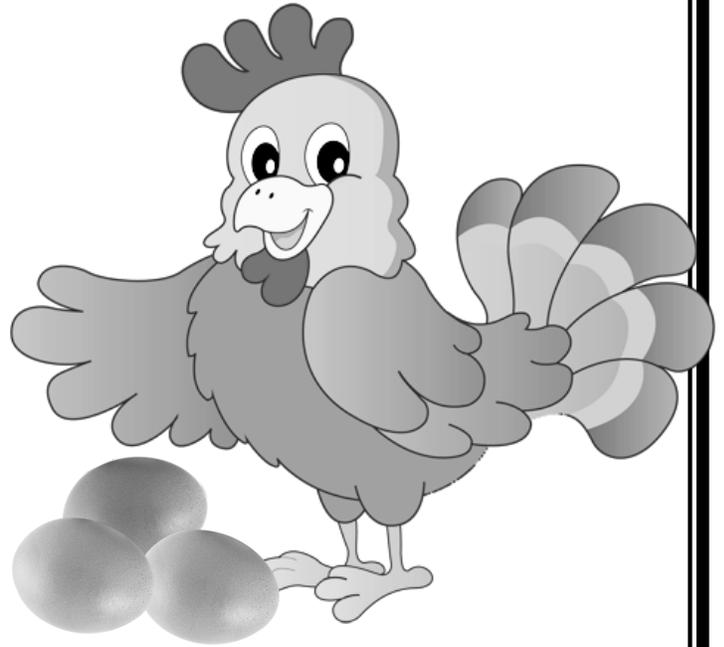
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## Think About It!

### CHICKEN OR EGG DILEMMA SOLVED!!

Which came first, the chicken or the egg? This question has plagued philosophers for centuries. The Bible states that God Created birds with the ability to reproduce after their kind. Therefore the chicken was created first with the ability to make eggs! Yet, evolution has no solution for this dilemma.



*“And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven. And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that it was good. And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth. And the evening and the morning were the fifth day” (Genesis 1:20-22).*

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I want to share some truth from Scripture about the Holy Spirit. He is a very necessary part of the Christian life. First, it is God that draws a sinner towards Himself as John 6:44 says:

*“No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.”*

Perhaps you wonder why we can't come to Him unless He draws us? Jeremiah 17:9 says:

*“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?”*

That is why. We have no desire for God in our sinful wicked state because we love the works of darkness. John 3:20 says:

*“For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.”*

The Holy Spirit will convict us of our sins and our wrongdoings because Jesus has gone back to the Father. Romans 5:10 says:

*“For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.”*

What do we do when we become convicted of our sins? Luke 13:3 says:

*“...except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.”*

When we repent and ask for forgiveness, the Holy Spirit comes to dwell in us as newborn babies in Christ, for that is what we are when we get saved. 1 Peter 2:2 says:

*“As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:”*

The Spirit convicts us of our sin. The devil condemns us. When we feel condemned, we feel trapped, like there is no way out. This can turn into self-loathing,

self-hating, and identifying as worthless wretches. Even though that is who we really are, that is not how God sees us. He looks at us with love because Jesus died on the cross for our sins so that we can go free.

**When the Spirit convicts us, it is in a way that doesn't cause us to hate ourselves, but rather we feel bad for what we did, turn to God and repent. He gives us a direction to go: back to the Father. He is gentle. He doesn't beat us up. He doesn't push us, but draws us. We feel genuinely sorry for what we did, and we try to make things right. He encourages us to go forward and gives us peace after we repent - all because of the love that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit have for us.**

The Holy Spirit is our earnest, which means “to stamp (with a signet or private mark) for security or preservation (lit. or fig.); by impl. to keep secret, to attest:— (set a, set to) seal up, stop.” Also, it says in 1 John 2:25:

*“And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life.”*

And in 1 John 5:11:

*“This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.”*

This is what we are promised when we repent and follow God and His Word. Following are a few more verses about being sealed by the Spirit:

*“Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts” (2 Corinthians 1:21-22).*

*“Now he that hath wrought us for the*

*selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit” (2 Corinthians 5:5).*

*“And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption” (Ephesians 4:30).*

*“Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time” (1 Peter 1:5).*

When a person is born again, there is a transformation that happens in their heart and life. Some people believe that it is prideful to know that a person is saved, but Scripture is clear that we can know that we are saved. Ephesians 2:8-10 says:

*“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”*

2 Timothy 1:9 says:

*“Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.”*

Some people also have a very fragile view of salvation as well. They believe that wearing certain clothing or going certain places will send a person to hell. But what does the Bible say? Are they just making standards or are they teaching what the Bible actually says? The Spirit seals us. We become Christ's. We are still human. We still make mistakes. We still hurt others unintentionally. We still embarrass ourselves. We still struggle to do what we know we should. But the Spirit lives in us and wants to help us.

When you buy a house or any other big

thing, you usually need to pay a down payment and then work on paying off the rest as you are able. So it is with God when we get saved. He sends the Spirit to take up residence in our heart and to be the down payment for us that He intends to go through with His plan for us to the end. The Spirit dwells in us and convicts us of sin. He seals us to the Father. And then the journey begins.

After we repent of our sins and are born again and the Holy Spirit has become our "down payment" from God, He then becomes our Guide. John 16:13 says:

*"Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come."*

Romans 7:6 says:

*"But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter."*

Romans 8:16-18 says:

*"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."*

Romans 8:26-27 says:

*"Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God."*

1 Corinthians 2:12-14 says:

*"Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."*

1 Corinthians 12:13 says:

*"For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit."*

2 Corinthians 3:17-18 says:

*"Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."*

In 1 John 4:13-15 it says:

*"Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world. Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God."*

When we get saved, the Spirit becomes our Guide and Leader. We turn from going our own way and start following God. We also read God's Word to understand His will, and He speaks to us through His Word. When we ask for help and advice, it may come in the form of Scripture, or a person, or any other way that God chooses to speak to us. Each person is different, and God knows just how to reach us in a unique way that we

will know what He wants us to do or not do. There are times that there is a real struggle between what we want to do and what we know that God wants us to do. Who will we yield our body to? Romans 6:19 says:

*"...for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness."*

In Old Testament days, the Jews would come to the temple in Jerusalem to worship God. But then when Jesus came, He was talking with the woman at the well. When she questioned Him about it, this is what He replied:

*"...Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:21-24)*

When we get saved, the Spirit makes His home in our body and we become His temple. We can worship God wherever we are. It's almost like the turtle carrying his house on his back. No matter where he goes he always has his shelter. When we become His temple there are things that are an abomination to God that He doesn't want us to take part in anymore. You can find out what those things are in: Gal. 5:19-21; Col. 3:5-10; Acts 15:25-29.

2 Corinthians 6:16 says:

*"And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in*

Continued on Next Page

*them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.”*

An idol is anything that we make more important than God and what He wants us to do - whether it be our attitude, our appearance, our work, or pleasure. It can literally be anything. He doesn't want us to have idols and give Him second place. As Lord and God of the universe, He deserves first place in our lives, but we are such selfish creatures that we get sidetracked by so many other things, and before we know it, He's no longer important. Let us remember what these verses say:

*“For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's”* (I Corinthians 6:20).

*“And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ”* (1 Thessalonians 5:23).

When something changes in a person's life, there is always the fruit of that change - whether it be good or bad. When a person accepts the gift of salvation and is adopted into God's family, there is a change in their life, and fruit comes from it. When a person allows the Holy Spirit to guide them, there will be fruit: things that grow. It may be small at first, but as a person grows in their relationship with God, these things will grow; often not visible to the individual themselves, but to those around them. What does the Bible say some of these fruits that grow will be?

- ⇒ **Love:** love, i.e. affection or benevolence; spec. (plur.) a love-feast:—(feast of) charity, dear, love.
- ⇒ **Joy:** cheerfulness, i.e. calm delight:—gladness, greatly, (be exceeding) joy (-ful, -fully, -fulness, -ous).

- ⇒ **Peace:** prob. from a prim. verb (to join); peace (lit. or fig.); by impl. prosperity:—one, peace, quietness, rest, set at one again.
- ⇒ **Longsuffering:** longanimity, i.e. (obj.) forbearance or (subj.) fortitude:—longsuffering, patience.
- ⇒ **Gentleness:** usefulness, i.e. mor. excellence (in character or demeanor):—gentleness, good (-ness), kindness.
- ⇒ **Goodness:** goodness, i.e. virtue or beneficence:—goodness.
- ⇒ **Faith:** persuasion, i.e. credence; mor. conviction (of religious truth, or the truthfulness of God or a religious teacher), espec. reliance upon Christ for salvation; abstr. constancy in such profession; by extens. the system of religious (Gospel) truth itself:—assurance, belief, believe, faith, fidelity.
- ⇒ **Meekness:** mildness, i.e. (by impl.) humility:—meekness.
- ⇒ **Temperance:** self-control (espec. continence):—temperance.

**If we say we are Christians and our lives are not bringing forth fruit like mentioned above, there is something wrong.**

Here are a few more verses about what should be happening in our lives:

*“And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ”* (2 Peter 1:5-8).

*“For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and*

*truth”* (Ephesians 5:9).

*“And let ours also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful”* (Titus 3:14).

John 15:16, one of my favorite verses, says:

*“Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.”*

We will also do our part with our own unique gifts and talents that we have been given to obey this command:

*“...Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature”* (Mark 16:15).

Matthew 7:17 says:

*“Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.”*

Ephesians 2:10 says:

*“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”*

When something is growing, there is eventually fruit, but when something isn't growing or sits still like a pool of water, it becomes stagnant and good for nothing. Perhaps you wonder how you can keep from becoming like a good-for-nothing pool of stagnant water.

**The answer is simple:**

1. **Abide in Christ by prayer. Keep your focus on Him doing everything as though He was asking you to do it.**
2. **Study the Bible.**

As we abide in Him, He makes us grow and bring forth fruit. It is not something we can do on our own, but it happens as we live each day with our focus on Him.

**END**

I have a confession to make. I cringe when I hear the word “forgiveness”.

I know. I hear you. You probably think that I am crazy, or that I am just one of those people who are triggered by truth. Maybe I am. I will let you decide, but I respectfully ask that you keep reading before making accusations of this sort.

A few times when I’ve been vulnerable enough to admit that the word forgiveness makes me cringe, I caught a glimpse of narrowing eyes. I understand why: to people who have never had forgiveness thrown in their face, it makes no sense.

But for those of us who have been told that forgiveness is a quick-fix-cure-all for deep emotional pain, it is a trigger. For people who have been told that they are bitter because they do not trust the person who hurt them, forgiveness is a trigger. A huge one.

I know that I am not alone. Forgiveness can be one of the hardest things for a survivor to hear, particularly if forgiveness has previously been used to buy their silence or “fix” relationships.

You need to understand that I have not closed my heart to forgiveness. I haven’t and I won’t. In fact, I decided to study it more closely. I wanted to see for myself what forgiveness is and what it is not. I should know by now, that when one seeks the Lord’s view on something, He brings clarity and peace.

I started with the verse in Ephesians 4:32, which states that we are to forgive one another, even as God through Jesus Christ, forgave us. And so, my first question was, “How did Jesus forgive?”

I went to the crucifixion story. Yes, Jesus forgave. He did so by putting the immeasurable injustice done to Him in the lap of His Father. He said, “*Father, forgive them; for they know not what they*

*do*” (Luke 23:34).

So, did Jesus’ plea to God for the forgiveness of the people who nailed Him change the consequences that they faced for doing so? No. Not unless they chose to repent.

Did Jesus’ forgiveness of the thief on the cross who saw Jesus as an innocent Man change the consequences that the thief was facing for his crimes? No. Not at all. The thief still died for his sin.

Did Jesus’ forgiveness take away His pain? No.

Did Jesus’ forgiveness “fix” the relationships between Jesus and His offenders? Did His forgiveness (by itself) bring restoration? No.

Was Jesus shy about showing His scars? Did Jesus’ forgiveness prevent Him from speaking about His death? No.

Jesus’ forgiveness, was an outpouring of His Father’s love. He begged His Father to have mercy on His killers. He longed for them to see the truth. To believe. To repent. To embrace His Father, instead of turning away from Him.

This, my friends, is forgiveness.

Unlike the things that many abuse survivors have been told, forgiveness does not entail silence; it tells what God has done for you, even when that includes the messy stuff. Forgiveness is not a quick fix for the pain, though it likely will be part of the process of healing. It is not a one-time occurrence; it is an attitude – a desire to see your offender turn away from sin and turn to God. Forgiveness is not covering up sin; it is exposing it for the good of the offender. By itself, forgiveness is not reconciliation, restoration, or trust.

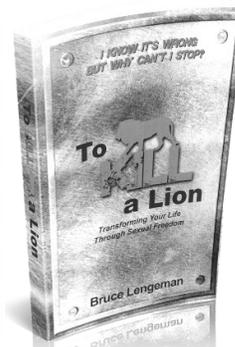
I wonder if Jesus understands why the word “forgiveness” makes me cringe. I wonder how He feels when it is twisted

into something that it was never meant to be. I wonder if He begs God to forgive the people who use so called “forgiveness” as a weapon to harm the wounded.

Just as Jesus pled for mercy for the souls of His killers and continually intercedes for us, we too can pray for the people who have hurt us. We can desire repentance while we grieve and long for truth, even in our pain, just like the Man of Sorrows who carried our own sin and pain so many years ago.

If there’s Anyone who understands pain, it is Him. May we choose to forgive like He does.

**END**



Do you struggle with lust or other sins and addictions? *To Kill a Lion*, written by Bruce Lengeman, is designed to help men find

the roots of their sexual addiction. The theme is, “Men cry out, ‘I know it is wrong, but why can’t I stop?’”

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In my lifetime, I do not believe that I have ever run into a person who did not look at themselves and see a sinful human being. From a child up, we just knew. Our minds, hearts, and mouths prove that we continually fall short of God's righteousness.

We struggle to forgive. We get caught up in addictions. We fail to love God with all of our hearts, souls, and minds. We lust. We stay angry after the sun has gone down. We lie. We deceive others. We live in hypocrisy. We are filled with jealousy. We gossip about others. We are loaded down with idols that distract us from God. We find security in our money, rather than in God. We ignore the Spirit of God and walk in the flesh. We love to be in control and struggle with pride.

The list goes on indefinitely. The point is that we are all sinful people, and we are all in desperate need of a Savior.

In Psalm 14:2, David wrote:

*"The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God."*

This is what He observed:

*"They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one" (Psalm 14:3).*

God was not able to find a single human being that measured up to His righteousness. Not even one. How sad that must have been for God.

Paul writes in Romans 3:10-12 and 23:

*"As it is written, there is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no,*

*not one. For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God."*

Again, the Bible reminds us that not one single soul on the face of the earth, including you and I, are good – that is, in the flesh. We are one hundred percent unfit for the kingdom of God. The Scriptures continue:

Jeremiah 17:9 says:

*"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?"*

Romans 7:18 says:

*"For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing..."*

Rather than comparing ourselves with God and seeing how sinful and wicked we appear before God, we tend to look around and find people who are worse sinners than we are. We look at the one who went out and committed adultery with another man's wife. We look at the one who is serving a lifetime in prison for murdering another human being. We look at the homosexuals. Then, we begin to play the comparison game and think, "Well, at least I am not as bad as those people are."

There are many other things we do and think when we play the comparison game. In our heart, we have believed the lie that if we are better than others, it is somewhat pleasing to God; therefore, He accepts us as good and righteous. We have also believed the devil's lie that if we belong to a certain kind of church denomination, if we attend church regularly, if we get baptized, if we participate in communion and foot washing, if we live plain and simple lifestyles, if we sin less than we did ten years ago, if we "do, do, do," then God will overlook our sinful state and accept us in spite of all of our short comings.

Those are lies, my friend. Lies that come straight from the pit of hell. Do not believe them!

Be aware that many people in the world today are being taught that they can, on their own, do a good work that pleases God; therefore, they view themselves as *righteous enough* to spend eternity with God. Let me tell you, that is also a lie! Even if there was such a thing as man being capable of offering God a good work, consider the words of Isaiah 64:6:

*"But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags..."*

Did you get that? The Bible says it so clearly! Our righteousness – our good works – appear as filthy (bloody, messy, smelly, rotten) rags in the sight of God?

That could only mean one thing: we must stop comparing ourselves with other sinners and start comparing ourselves with God. We must come to grips that we, on our own, cannot measure up to God's required standard of holiness. When we do that, we will truly see how desperate we are for a Savior.

Consider this: the entire human race stands before a pure, holy, righteous, sinless, and sacred God. Many people are being taught, and they have believed the lie, that God, in His kindness and love, will look past their short comings and sin and receive the good works they did in life as payment for their sin. Church people are often taught to believe that if their heart is sincere and their good works outweigh their bad works, God will receive them. My friend, this is simply not true. It is a lie that will send millions of people to hell. No one is good enough. Not even the humblest preacher of God's Word is good enough.

Imagine for a minute that you died and stood before God. When asked, "Why should I let you into heaven?" you

replied, “Well, Lord, I know I am a terrible sinner, but please consider my faithful church attendance. I gave to the poor. I read my Bible. I prayed. I was baptized. I was a member of the church. I believed in Jesus. I lived a humble and separated life. I seldom stole, lied, or cheated. I worked hard. I cared for the widows. Lord, I did my very best to always please You and follow all Your commandments.”

And then the prophet comes along and says, “...and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags... (Isaiah 64:6).

Just in case it has not yet sunk in yet, let me say one final time: you and I will never get to God by our own good works. Having said that, let me also say that it is not all gloom and doom. There is something very wonderful and precious that I want to share with you. Oh, it is so, so precious, and so opposite of what we have learned thus far.

The very same God who said, “*They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one,” also made a way for you and me to be made one hundred percent PURE, one hundred percent HOLY, one hundred percent RIGHTEOUS, and one hundred percent BLAMELESS in His sight – not our flesh, but our spirit (much could be said about our 3-part make up – spirit, soul, and body. – see I Thessalonians 5:23).*

This is huge, so please, please, please pay attention. When God came up with a way for you and me to be made one hundred percent righteous in His sight, He DID NOT leave it up to us to get it right. He, Himself, did all of the work. Look!

The prophet Isaiah wrote Isaiah 53:4-6:

“Surely HE hath borne our griefs...HE was wounded for our transgressions (crimes), HE was bruised for our iniquities (sins)... with HIS stripes we are healed...”

*and the LORD hath laid on HIM the iniquity of us all.”*

Jesus did all of the work on our behalf! Nothing, absolutely nothing, we could do on our own is good enough. Even if God gave us an extra lifetime – fifty extra lifetimes – to get it right, we could never, on our own, reach God’s requirement of total perfection.

Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 5:21:

*“For God hath made Him [Jesus] to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.”*

It is impossible for man to grasp how God could make Jesus Christ become sin for us. Yet, this is exactly what the Scripture declares: *[God] hath made [Jesus] to be sin for us*. Jesus literally became my sin. Then He suffered the wrath of God with all my sins on His back. He became what I was, so I could become what He is.

Do you believe that? Not just with your head, but do you believe that in your heart?

Jesus was the ideal, perfect God-man in human flesh. Therefore, He could become the ideal, perfect sin-bearer. He could die the ideal death, the death that would satisfy the justice of God's eternal court and holy nature.

The Bible says:

*“So, Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many..”* (Hebrews 9:28).

*“Christ hath redeemed [rescued] us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us...”* (Galatians 3:13).

*“For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God...”* (1 Peter 3:18).

God's purpose is that we might be made the righteousness of God in Christ. What

does this mean? Very simply, when a person believes in Jesus Christ alone for salvation, God takes that man's faith and counts it as righteousness. That man is not righteous, but God considers and credits that man's faith as righteousness. Why is God willing to do this?

The POSB Commentary says:

“God loves His Son Jesus Christ so much that He honors any man who honors His Son by believing in Him. He honors the man by taking the man's faith and counting (crediting) it as righteousness and by giving him the glorious privilege of living with Christ forever in the presence of God. This is what is called justification. The word justify (diakioun) is a legal word taken from the courts. It pictures man on trial before God. Man is seen as having committed the most heinous of crimes; he has rebelled against God and broken his relationship with God. How can he restore that relationship? Within human courts if a man is acquitted, he is declared innocent, but this is not true within the Divine Court. When a man appears before God, he is anything but innocent; he is utterly guilty and condemned accordingly.

But when a man sincerely trusts Christ, then God takes that man's faith and counts it as righteousness. God counts the man—judges him, treats him—as if he were innocent. The man is not made innocent; he is guilty. He knows it and God knows it, but God treats him as innocent.”<sup>1</sup>

The Apostle Paul wrote a letter to the Church at Rome. In a minute, we are going to see what he wrote, but first, let me point out that it is obvious Paul was writing to the church crowd of his day. It is also obvious that his audience was

<sup>[1]</sup> Preacher's Outline and Sermon Bible - Commentary - 1 & 2 Corinthians. (Leadership Ministries Worldwide, 1991).

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### **Book of Romans (Romans 5:12-21)**

Michael Pearl has been studying and teaching the book of Romans for over 40 years. This verse-by-verse teaching is presented for the layman from the unique perspective of a student that believes the Bible rather than from a scholar that critiques it. Michael addresses all of the hard theological issues that have been the foundation of Christian faith down through the centuries.

### **The Revelation—Why Your View of Heaven Will Change Your Life on Earth**

(part 3 of 5)  
Message from Chip Ingram.

### **On Money**

(part 2 of 2)

In this two-part series, Pastor John Marino develops several biblical principles on the right handling of our finances.

### **Christian Theology - Sin**

(part 8 of 11)

Correct doctrine is the foundation of our faith as Christians. In this eleven-part series on Christian theology, Pastor John Marino explores what the Bible teaches.

## October

### **Book of Romans (Romans 6:1-5)**

Taught by Michael Pearl.

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(part 3 of 5)

Chip Ingram cuts through the imagery and metaphors in the book of Revelation, puts life into perspective, and brings clarity and purpose to everyday struggles like never before. If you long to make wise choices, live your life with a steadfast purpose, and experience joy and peace, this is a great place to start!

### **Desire is Stronger Than Reason**

What is needed in order for people to change? Can we just explain to them the “unreasonableness of sin? Is the human shortcoming merely a shortcoming of the mind? Or does it involve something more? Listen in as Pastor John Marino discusses the relationship between the mind and the will, desire and reason.

### **Christian Theology - The Gospel**

(part 9 of 11)

Message by Pastor John Marino

## November

### **Book of Romans (Romans 6:6-23)**

Taught by Michael Pearl.

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(part 5 of 5)

Chip Ingram teaches his 5th and final message on the book of Revelation.

### **The Four Seasons of Marriage Love and Respect**

(part 1 of 3)

Join Emerson and Jonathan for Part I of this three-part series. Why is marital paradise lost? Why do couples feel they have left Eden and live in a jungle of sorts? Since Scripture indicates couples will have trouble in this life, why are husbands and wives unprepared? The answer is simple: they do not anticipate and accept the four seasons. Those who go through them without defeat, do so because they anticipate and accept the process.

### **Christian Theology - The Church**

(part 10 of 11)

Correct doctrine is the foundation of our faith as Christians. In this eleven-part series on Christian theology, Pastor John Marino explores what the Bible teaches.

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*“For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ” (2 Corinthians 10:3-5).*

## “PULLING DOWN OF STRONGHOLDS”

When you see these words, what comes to your mind? It is talking about the weapons of our warfare being mighty through God. It also says that these weapons are not carnal, meaning they are not literal like spears, guns, or bombs.

We don't fight in the flesh. Our weapons are not literal - and yet we are in warfare. Confusing? What is the war about? It is called the battle of the mind. The mind is where many battles are fought. In the mind is where the strongholds need to be pulled down.

Let me explain, because what I am talking about is completely New Covenant teaching. It is what Jesus taught. One time Jesus said:

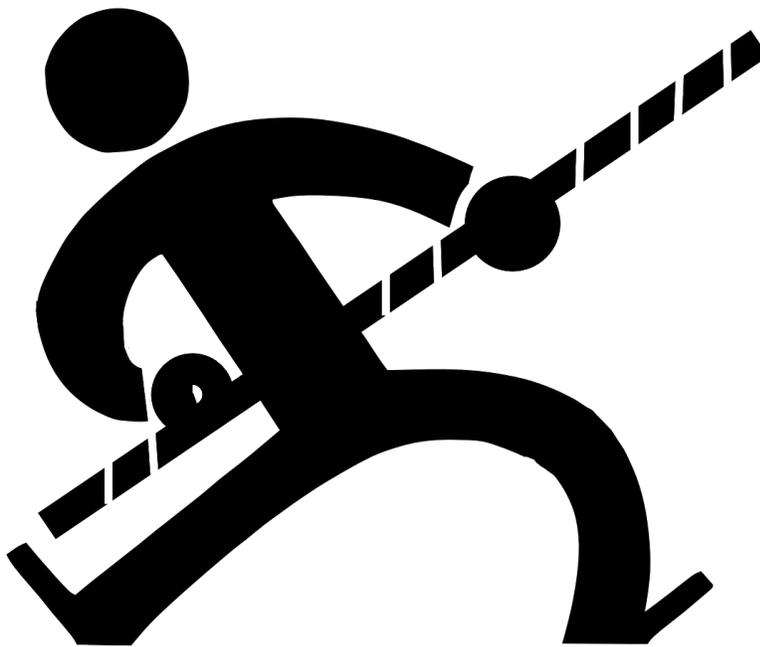
*“Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart” (Matthew 5:27-28).*

The real sin is committed in the mind. If the thought of adultery is not brought into captivity, it will lead to lust and that

is where the battle is lost.

Something happens, and as a result, two people have an intense disagreement. This turns into conflict. Maybe they are not speaking anymore. The intense dislike continues, the battle in the mind has been lost, and they are both guilty of murder.

*“Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him” (1 John 3:15).*



What about other sins? Covetousness is another battle of the mind. Only after the battle is lost in the mind do we see the fruits of covetousness.

Jesus taught a much higher standard than the Old Covenant did. And the Old, being impossible to keep, how can we keep a much higher standard? It seems impossible.

But wait! God knew all about this. He knows our every weakness. He sent Himself (the Holy Spirit) to walk with us and to guide us into all truth. If we give the Holy Spirit the preeminence (first place) in our lives, He will guide us and

direct us, and then we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us.

If the battles is won in the mind, the battle is won. If the battle is lost in the mind, the battle is lost.

The man who views porn, has lost the battle before then. He did not bring his thoughts into captivity earlier and allowed his thoughts become actions.

Before Judas betrayed Jesus, Scripture says that the devil put it into his heart to betray Jesus. Judas allowed the devil access to his heart.

*“And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him” (John 13:2).*

This is a high standard indeed. And is only possible by allowing God access to into our heart. In the Old Covenant, it was all about keeping the law in their own power. In the New Covenant it is all about walking in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Sadly, many church's today are still practicing the Old Covenant. When they see bad fruits, they focus on behavior modification. They try to change or stop the bad fruit without going to the root. We can never change ourselves to become acceptable to God. We must become what the Scripture says.

*“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new” (2 Corinthians 5:17).*

Notice how the verse begins, “IF ANY MAN BE IN CHRIST.”

**END**

**Being in Christ is the only way.**

zealous [passionate] about God. However, they had believed the lie that so many church people believe today; they believed that their own righteousness made them acceptable to God. They were wrong, and they were lost - just as lost as the murderer, the whoremonger, and the atheist.

This is how the Apostle Paul put it:

*“Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God”* (Romans 10:1-3).

Paul made it so clear: it is not possible to trust partly in your own righteousness and partly in God's righteousness to make you perfect.

- ⇒ God's righteousness cannot be earned by OUR righteousness!
- ⇒ God's righteousness is a gift!
- ⇒ God's righteousness must be accepted by faith alone, and by His grace alone!

Romans 11:6 says:

*“And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise, grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise, work is no more work.”*

Salvation does not happen by God's grace AND our works. Salvation is either all by God's grace, OR it is by all by our works. You are either trusting the *grace of God* to save you from sin and keep you saved, or you are trusting in *your works* to save you from sin and keep you saved.

## Do you believe that?

In Romans 10:9-13, the Apostle Paul tells us how our own self-righteousness (filthy, smelly, bloody, rotten rags) can be completely covered with the God's righteousness. By God's righteousness, I mean perfect like God is perfect, holy like God is holy, and sinless like God is sinless.

Will you read it? Will you believe it?

*“That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the scripture saith, whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever (that is you) shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved”* (Romans 10:9-13).

God did not say: might be saved. He said: shall be saved.

In conclusion of this study, I want you to know one thing very clearly. God promises salvation to every man, woman, and child; that is, if he or she will do one thing: "Call upon the name of the Lord."

Note what God says:

***“Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”*** The word "whosoever" means:

- ⇒ Anyone and everyone, no matter who they are.
- ⇒ Any person, any culture, any race, any color.
- ⇒ Any person from any environment, condition, background, country, government, or family.

⇒ Any person, whether bad or good, poor or wealthy, nice or mean, unpopular or popular, deformed or attractive, diseased or healthy, needful or without need.

"Whosoever" means that any person can be saved. No matter how terrible a person and his circumstances may be, he can be saved. He may be in the depths of the inner city or in the depths of the jungle, and he may be enslaved by the most terrible spirit of sin and evil imaginable—God will still save whoever asks by faith.

To "call upon the name of the Lord" means at least two things:

1. It means that a person calls upon the name of Lord Jesus Christ. He believes Jesus Christ can and will save him.
2. It means that the person looks upon and believes that Jesus Christ is the Savior of the world, that He is the Son of God who came to earth to save men. Very simply, it means that a person believes the message of John 3:16 and John 5:24.

*“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life”* (John 3:16).

*“Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life”* (John 5:24).

**DO  
YOU  
BELIEVE  
THAT?**



*the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord” (1 Thessalonians 4:13-17).*

If believers go to be with Christ immediately after death, what is the purpose of this resurrection? It seems that while the souls/spirits of believers go to be with Christ immediately after death, the physical body remains in the grave “sleeping.” At the resurrection of believers, the physical body is resurrected, glorified, and then reunited with the soul/spirit. This reunited and glorified body-soul-spirit will be the possession of believers for eternity in the new heavens and new earth. (Revelation 21-22).

Second, for those who do not receive Jesus Christ as Savior, death means everlasting punishment. However, similar to the destiny of believers, unbelievers also seem to be sent immediately to a temporary holding place, to await their final resurrection, judgment, and eternal destiny. Luke 16:22-23 describes a rich man being tormented immediately after death:

*“And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham’s bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom”*

Revelation 20:11-15 describes all the unbelieving dead being resurrected, judged at the great white throne, and then being cast into the lake of fire:

*“And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small*

*and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.”*

Unbelievers, then, are not sent to hell (the lake of fire) immediately after death, but rather are in a temporary realm of judgment and condemnation. However, even though unbelievers are not instantly sent to the lake of fire, their immediate fate after death is not a pleasant one.

*“And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame” (Luke 16:24).*

Therefore, after death, a person resides in a “temporary” heaven or hell. After this temporary realm, at the final resurrection, a person’s eternal destiny will not change. The precise “location” of that eternal destiny is what changes. Believers will ultimately be granted entrance into the new heavens and new earth.

*“And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea” (Revelation 21:1).*

Unbelievers will ultimately be sent to the lake of fire (Revelation 20:11-15).

These are the final, eternal destinations of all people—based entirely on whether or not they had trusted Jesus Christ alone for salvation.

*“And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal” (Matthew 25:46).*

*“He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him” (John 3:36).*

**END**



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**What Happens After Death?**

—By [www.gotquestions.org](http://www.gotquestions.org)

Within the Christian faith, there is a significant amount of confusion regarding what happens after death. Some hold that after death, everyone “sleeps” until the final judgment, after which everyone will be sent to heaven or hell. Others believe that at the moment of death, people are instantly judged and sent to their eternal destinations. Still others claim that when people die, their souls/spirits are sent to a “temporary” heaven or hell, to await the final resurrection, the final judgment, and then the finality of their eternal destination. So, what exactly does the Bible say happens after death?

First, for the believer in Jesus Christ, the Bible tells us that after death believers’ souls/spirits are taken to heaven, because their sins are forgiven by having received Christ as Savior.

*“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16).*

*“He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son*

*of God” (John 3:18).*

*“He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him” (John 3:36).*

For believers, death is to be “away from the body and at home with the Lord”

*“Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: (For we walk by faith, not by sight:) We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.” (2 Corinthians 5:6-8).*

*“For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better” (Philippians 1:23).*

However, other passages describe believers being resurrected and given glorified bodies.

*“Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all*

*be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory” (1 Corinthians 15:50-54).*

*But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with*

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