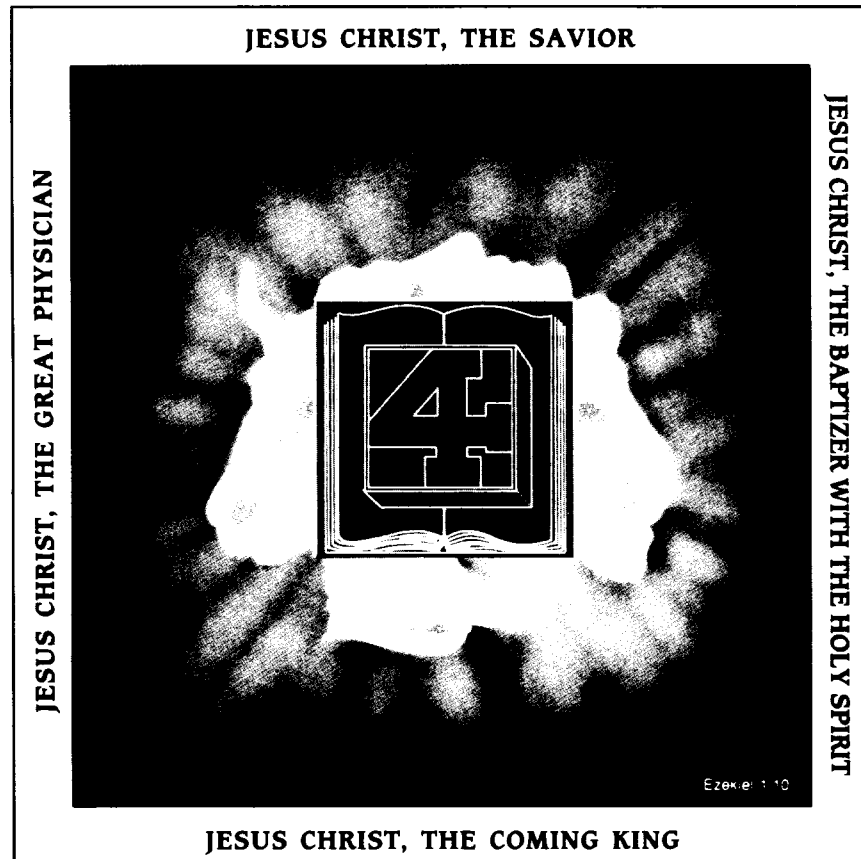


Declaration of Faith

UNIT TWO

INTERNATIONAL CHURCH OF THE FOURSQUARE GOSPEL

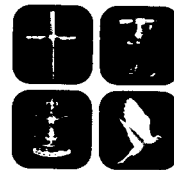


Declaration of Faith

UNIT TWO

Condensed
from the
original,
two-year
teaching
series

Nathaniel M. Van Cleave
Guy P. Duffield
and Luther U. Mier
condensed and compiled by Pamela S. Duarte



International Church of the Foursquare Gospel
Foursquare Publications/Los Angeles, California 90026

DECLARATION OF FAITH

One of four units of study condensed from the original, two-year teaching series copyrighted 1949, 1950 by International Church of the Foursquare Gospel

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THE VISION: A MESSAGE KNOWN AROUND THE WORLD

by Aimee Semple McPherson

One particular night, in the midst of the Oakland revival, God led me to speak on the prophet Ezekiel's vision, as recorded in the Book of Ezekiel, the first chapter, the fourth to tenth verses. Verse ten was dwelt upon at great length, as the Spirit spoke through me in revealing power. It reads:

"As for the likeness of their faces, they four had the face of a man, and the face of a lion on the right side; and they four had the face of an ox on the left side; they four also had the face of an eagle."

Approximately 8,000 people filled the huge tent and hundreds more crowded around the edges where the side walls were rolled up. People leaned forward in expectancy as God poured the message forth from my innermost being.

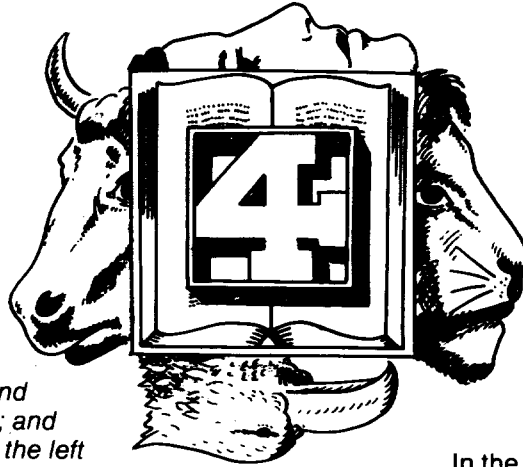
My own soul was awed as the Spirit painted in word-pictures the glorious account of that which Ezekiel saw.

IN THE CLOUDS of heaven the prophet had beheld "a whirlwind, a great cloud, and a fire unfolding itself, and a brightness." Out of this phenomenon "came the likeness of four living creatures," moving back and forth across the skies with "the appearances of a flash of lightning."

Above the firmament that was over their heads, Ezekiel saw "the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone: and upon this throne was the likeness of the appearance of a man above upon it." From his loins upward, and from his loins downward, he was clothed in the brightness of fire and round about the throne there was a rainbow!

This, explains Ezekiel, "was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord." So wonderful, so magnificent was the revelation, that the prophet could only repeat, "it was the appearance of the likeness of" some thing!

As I spoke, God revealed to the assembled multitude that the four faces typified the four-fold ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ.



In the face of the *MAN* we beheld that of the "man of sorrows and acquainted with grief" — the Saviour of the world!

In the face of the *LION* we beheld that of the mighty Baptizer with the Holy Ghost and fire; Jesus is the "lion of the tribe of Judah." As a lion denotes strength and power, it is a fitting symbol for Christ as the Giver of the Holy Spirit.

In the face of the *OX* we beheld the Great Burden Bearer, who "Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses." Jesus is the Great Physician and the Healer of our bodies.

In the face of the *EAGLE* we saw reflected a vision of the coming King of kings, whose pinions would soon cleave the shining heavens as He returns to catch His waiting bride away!

A PERFECT GOSPEL! A complete gospel for body, for soul, for spirit, and for eternity! A gospel that faces squarely in every direction!

As the wonder — the power — the majesty of it cascaded o'er the battlements of glory, filling, flooding, enveloping my very being, the whole tent seemed enveloped as well — aquiver with the praise of God!

I stood there still and listened, gripping the pulpit, shaking with the wonder and the joy of it, then —

"WHY" — why, it's the F-O-U-R-S-Q-U-A-R-E Gospel!" burst from the white heat of my heart.

Instantly the Spirit bore witness! Waves, billows, oceans of praise rocked the audience.

Borne aloft upon the wings of a Holy Ghost revival, the term "The Foursquare Gospel," which the Lord gave to me that night as vividly distinguishing the message which He had given me to preach, has become known around the world.

INTRODUCTION

The condensed Declaration of Faith is designed to meet the educational needs of the growing, progressive church and individual. Its distinct purpose is to provide a strong, Biblical foundation as well as a solid framework of Foursquare beliefs and doctrines in a course-study format. This format facilitates the learning/growth process by means of personal application to ensure effective, spiritual advancement.

The course is comprised of four units containing thirteen (13) lessons each. The lessons revolve around a central theme which is clearly stated under the lesson *AIM*, and which focuses on the basic directive for that particular study.

Needless to say, Scripture is a very important part of the course. *KEY VERSES* have been purposefully provided as a foundational basis from which each lesson's text obtains its footing. Throughout the course many other Bible references are listed with the intent of adding a fuller, Scriptural documentation, and of providing materials for a secure, learning structure. Thus, research and careful examination of these references will prove to be rewarding.

Inserts entitled, *NOTE TO INSTRUCTOR* are woven into the tapestry of the lesson plan. They are a means of stimulating class discussion in a group study; provoking constructive, individual thought; and channeling the attention of the student(s) into the mainstream of the section immediately following it. Accompanying each note is a question(s) or instruction which is answered or discussed in the ensuing text.

The *OPENING* and *CLOSING ACTIVITIES* are helpful application assists designed to highlight, solidify and emphasize the Bible truth being presented. They can be done in small groups or individually. The *OPENING ACTIVITY* should be completed in the classroom if the course is being used in a group study, and the *CLOSING ACTIVITY* can be done either in the classroom or at home the week following.

Each lesson is finally capped with a series of questions referred to as a *WORKSHEET*. This sheet can be used as a review for group evaluation, or as a "self-check" if the course is being studied independently.

All will find the condensed Declaration of Faith to be highly palatable in its reading and flexible in its use. Following are a few suggested means for most effectively utilizing this material.

Group-Study Options Include:

1. Class discussion — The instructor conducts the actual classtime in a discussion atmosphere, using the lesson as an outline. In this case, the instructor may wish to devise more questions than those listed in the *NOTE TO INSTRUCTOR* section. Students should read the lesson during the week prior to class.
2. Lecture — The classtime may be primarily lecture, allowing prescribed time for questions and some discussion as needed throughout the teaching. In this case, the student may read through the lesson the week following class as a review.

If the instructor is the only one using a book, the students should be encouraged to take notes. It is helpful to have an outline of the lesson charted on a blackboard or an overhead projector. The worksheets placed at the end of each lesson may be photocopied for the class. The same applies to puzzles or lists of questions included in the *OPENING* and *CLOSING ACTIVITIES*. It is also suggested that the title, *AIM*, and *KEY VERSE* of the study be posted for all to see.

In a group situation, it is recommended that the instructor involve the class in the *OPENING* and *CLOSING ACTIVITIES*, guide the students in thoroughly examining the Scripture references, and become skillfully acquainted with all of the material.

Not only is this book a valuable tool for group study, but it is also an indispensable "must" for the individual endeavoring to explore God's Word, and better understand specific Foursquare doctrine.

Individual-Study Format Involves:

1. Setting a goal for the completion of the course — preferably one lesson per week.
2. Reading the lesson *AIM*, looking up the *KEY VERSE* in the Bible, and meditating on the Scripture and its meaning.
3. Completing the *OPENING ACTIVITY* and observing the special directions for individual study.
4. Studying the lesson, and making notes on important aspects of the subject matter.
5. Considering the question(s) or instruction listed

under *NOTE TO INSTRUCTOR* in view of finding the answer(s) in the material immediately following it.

6. Working through the *CLOSING ACTIVITY*, and finishing the *WORKSHEET*, either at the same time or a few days later.

Although the means of approach pursued in this course may differ in varying circumstances, the final outcome

will be the same — a common advancement in the strength and knowledge of the Word of God.

A world of adventure waits to be discovered by the one who sets out to journey through the annals of Biblical wealth. This Declaration of Faith will prove to be a faithful guide coursing a pathway enriched with the fruits of Life, bedecked with revelation of the King, Jesus, and canopied with a fresh vision of His Majesty.

THE NATURE AND DEITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

AIM: To explore the nature of the Holy Spirit by establishing the fact that He is a definite, distinct personality and that He is deity itself — He is God.

KEY VERSES:

“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. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you” (John 16:13-15).

“Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all” (I Corinthians 12:4-6).

OPENING ACTIVITY: Neighbor nudge and share your thoughts to the following question: “Does it make a difference to our daily Christian life if the Holy Spirit is a person rather than an influence? In what ways?” Share your responses together as a class.

If you are working alone, write your thoughts down on the back of the worksheet at the end of this lesson.

INTRODUCTION

The Bible does not have as much to say relative to the Holy Spirit as it does concerning the Father and the Son; yet His ministry is noted throughout the entire Book. At the very beginning of the Bible (Genesis 1:2) we read, *“And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.”* Likewise at the very end of the Scriptures (Revelation 22:17) we find the words: *“And the Spirit and the bride say, Come.”* Not only is the Holy Spirit seen at the beginning and ending of the Bible, but He is seen in its every part. Furthermore, He can be observed at the very center of every spiritual experience.

By all means, let it not be said of us as it was of the first disciples in Luke 9:55, *“Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.”* It has often been pointed out that we are now in the dispensation of the Holy Spirit. The Old Testament era particularly emphasized the person and ministry of the Father. The gospel era lays accent on the person and ministry of the Son. While the days following Christ’s ascension have particularly brought emphasis upon the person and ministry of the Holy Spirit. The Church age is the age of the Holy Spirit. Thus, if we would fulfill the commission laid upon us, as Christians today, we should by all means acquaint ourselves with the third person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit.

★NOTE to instructor:

Question to be answered by class discussion and/or other appropriate method:

★What are three reasons why we should approach the study of the Holy Spirit with due caution?

As we approach the topic of the third person of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit, we should do so with a sense of inability to fully grasp the holy subject that is before us. In considering the person and work of the Holy Spirit, we are touching that which is very close to the heart of God. It is well that we use due caution in studying this subject, seeking ever the guidance of the Holy Spirit Himself. Several specific reasons for this need of caution might be mentioned:

1. The Holy Spirit never becomes visible. He does not possess a body, as we think of a distinct, visible form. Because of this He can only be spiritually discerned. Natural wisdom can never comprehend Him.
2. So much that we know in relation to the Holy Spirit has to do with our personal experiences, and experiences are never safe guides from which to formulate doctrines.
3. Because of the fact stated above, it is so important that we keep very close to the Word of God in all our thinking concerning the work of the Spirit. Men’s reactions to the power of the Spirit may differ, but the revealed truth of the Word never changes.

THE NATURE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The purpose of our study of the Holy Spirit is to bring help to Christians who long to know more of Him, for it is by the Holy Spirit that every person is brought into the knowledge of Jesus Christ as his personal Savior. And by Him also do Christians grow in grace, knowledge and power. Although experience is definitely brought to pass by the ministry of the Holy Spirit, it is only the Word of God that is our sure guide in the knowledge of Him. We shall, therefore, study the Word of God in regard to the person of the Holy Spirit in a reverent, thoughtful and spiritual manner.

We shall be reverent for as we walk upon the holy ground of the Word of God we shall subject ourselves to its teaching. We shall place our confidence in the light that it throws across our pathway and walk in that light.

We shall thoughtfully consider the entire teaching of the Word of God in relation to the person and work of the Holy Spirit and thereby derive faith from experience in the things of God. For do not the Scriptures declare that faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God? (Romans 10:17).

We shall spiritually consider the instruction of the Word of God and prayerfully seek the divine mind to interpret the depth of meaning, for we are reminded in the Scriptures that spiritual things are spiritually discerned (1 Corinthians 2:14).

We must constantly bear in mind, however, the words of our Lord: *"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. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you"* (John 16:13-15). It is a rare thing for the Holy Spirit to draw attention to Himself; His ministry is to draw our attention to the Lord Jesus Christ, for Jesus is the object of our faith, the center and circumference of our hope. If, therefore, we are to expect his person and ministry, it must be done with the purpose in mind that we desire to know the Lord Jesus Christ in all His fulness. It is when this is our purpose that the Holy Spirit will bless us in our searching, for then, and then only, are our purposes in total agreement.

THE PERSONALITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Bible does not explain, but it does most certainly reveal the Trinity of the Godhead. It teaches that there is but one God, yet He has chosen to manifest Himself in three distinct personalities. That Jesus is a manifest personality is denied by none. It is a little harder to grasp the thought of the Father as a personality distinct from the Son, yet one with Him. But it is still more difficult for many to visualize the Holy Spirit as a definite personality. The reason for this is that we have been accustomed to thinking of personality in terms of corporeity—that which has a body. Yet a moment's thought will lead us to realize that our own body is certainly not our personality. The real man, who we are, simply lives in and manifests himself through our body. When this house of clay is laid away, the real soul and spirit of man continues to live on. Therefore, it should not be too difficult for us to accept the Holy Spirit as a personality, even though He has not been made manifest in a visible body of His own.

Why Is This Important?

The question comes, quite naturally, to our hearts at this time, "But why is it important whether the Holy Spirit is a personality or not? What difference does it make?" Actually it makes a great deal of difference and this subject is very important. In fact, we will never know the

fulness of the ministry of the Holy Spirit, and thus never fully know God, unless we grasp the truth of His personality. This truth has had to be emphasized in all ages. Practically all the modern cults and "isms" deny the personality of the Holy Spirit.

So many speak of the Spirit merely as an influence or a power, a manifestation of the divine nature, an agent rather than a person. So often He is spoken of as "It." So many pray for the power of the Spirit, asking God to send "It" into the midst. This should never be. The Spirit is not merely an influence or a figure of speech. The Holy Spirit is a definite, distinct personality.

The importance of the subject of the personality of the Holy Spirit might be considered from the following standpoints:

★NOTE to instructor:

Questions to be answered by class discussion and/or other appropriate method:

- ★Why is the personality of the Holy Spirit important from the standpoint of worship?
 - ★From the standpoint of our daily, Christian experience?
 - ★From the standpoint of spiritual service?
-

From the Standpoint of Worship

If the Holy Spirit is a person, and a divine person, then we should love and worship Him. Worship has no character unless it is directed toward a worthy being. You can only worship personality. Many, we fear, have robbed the Holy Spirit of the worship due Him because of their failure to recognize His definite divine personality. It is well to note, however, that the Spirit should not be worshipped apart from His relation to the other members of the Godhead. We are not told to pray to the Holy Spirit—nor yet to Jesus for that matter. Prayer should be directed to the Father, in the Name of Jesus, in the power of the Holy Spirit. *"For through him (Christ) we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father"* (Ephesians 2:18).

From the Standpoint of Our Daily, Personal Christian Experience

The realization that the Holy Spirit is a person, who is with us always, will have a tremendous effect upon our daily Christian lives—an effect that a mere power or influence could never exert. It is one thing to believe in His presence and quite another to be actually conscious of it at all times. Let us believe and realize that the Holy Spirit is a friend who is ever at our side to help in every time of need! Were the Holy Spirit not a person this blessing could not be ours, for there is no comfort, consolation, assurance or rest except through personality. There can be no spiritual communion apart from personality.

From the Standpoint of Spiritual Service

If one's conception of the Holy Spirit is that He is merely an influence or power, then his thought will constantly be, "How can I get hold of and use it?" But if, in the biblical way, we see Him as a person of divine glory then our thought will be, "How can I so yield that He can get hold of and use me?" Then, too, if we think of the Spirit as an influence or power that we get hold of, our prayer will be that we may have more of it, where we should be seeking that He might have more of us. The former conception leads to self-exaltation, self-confidence and pride in what we have, as though we were better than others. The realization of Him as a divine person, who comes to take possession of us and use us in accomplishing His will, brings a deep sense of humility and self-renunciation. Because He is a person we must seek to yield to Him and obey Him and thus not grieve Him in any way.

THE DEITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

We saw the importance of recognizing that the Holy Spirit is a person. Now we shall realize that all that importance is multiplied immeasurably as we see that this person is none other than God Himself. Slip back in your mind and go over all the truths concerning the acts which the Holy Spirit performs and the manner in which He may be treated personally, and you will be greatly awed as you meditate on the deity of this One of whom we have been studying. Any fact which will enhance our conception of God's Holy Spirit will be a great aid to us personally and to the service of the Church of Jesus Christ.

★NOTE to instructor:

Question to be answered by class discussion and/or other appropriate method:

★What is meant by the deity of the Holy Spirit?

God has been pleased to reveal somewhat of the infinite depths of His being to us. He is revealed as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. A denial of any one of these divine persons is a denial of God. Therefore, it is important that we tread softly here and keep close to the Bible revelation of the Godhead. If it is a shocking and dangerous thing for a person to deny the deity of Christ, it is none the less so for him to deny the deity of the Holy Spirit.

The teaching that the Holy Spirit is a person is important but the teaching that the Holy Spirit is one of the three divine persons is more important. This great importance we shall endeavor to emphasize as we further develop the facts that He is called God, that He possesses the incommunicable attributes of God, and that the works of God are attributed to Him.

The Holy Spirit Is Called "God"

"For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now therefore ye are no more strangers

and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit" (Ephesians 2:18-22).

By this we clearly understand that when we are brought unto the Father by the Holy Spirit and regenerated by faith in the atoning work of the Lord Jesus Christ, we become a habitation of God. This word "habitation" means a dwelling place; therefore, "an habitation of God" would mean nothing less than the dwelling place of God. If this is true, then we are indwelt by the Holy Spirit and so are said to have God living in us. Regeneration does not only mean that something divine has happened to us, but it also means that someone divine has actually taken up His abode within us.

It is as we understand God has not sent an "influence" to help us in our need, but has come Himself to dwell in us and give us of His life, that we can begin to understand our place in God's program for eternity (2 Corinthians 6:16).

Old Testament Statements About God Are Applied to the Holy Spirit in the New Testament

In Psalm 95:7-9 is a passage in which the words of God are quoted: "*For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your heart, as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness: when your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my work.*" This same passage is quoted in Hebrews 3:7-11, a part of which says, "*Wherefore as the Holy Ghost saith, Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness...*" Here the words attributed to God in the Psalm are stated as being uttered by the Holy Ghost. The two must be one and the same — a further evidence of the deity of the Holy Spirit (Compare also Isaiah 6:8-10 and Acts 28:25-27).

The Non-Communicable Attributes of God Are Ascribed to the Holy Spirit

★NOTE to instructor:

Questions to be answered by class discussion and/or other appropriate method:

★What is meant by the non-communicable attributes of God?

★What are they?

★Are these deity attributes possessed by the Holy Spirit? Give scriptural references.

Certain attributes of God's character may be imparted, in a measure, to man, such as His love, righteousness and holiness. These are sometimes called the communicable attributes of God. There are, however, certain characteristics of God's nature which can never

be transmitted to another. They are possessed only by deity, and thus they clearly stamp any personality who possesses them as being divine. The following characteristics, which the Bible attributes to the Holy Spirit, definitely establish His deity.

1. The Holy Spirit is eternal (Hebrews 9:14).
2. The Holy Spirit is omnipresent — always present (Psalm 139:7-12).
3. The Holy Spirit is omnipresent — everywhere present (Jeremiah 23:23,24).
4. The Holy Spirit is omnipotent — all powerful (Luke 1:35; Romans 15:19; Matthew 12:28; Micah 3:8; Acts 1:8).
5. The Holy Spirit is omniscient — all knowledge (1 Corinthians 2:10,11; Isaiah 40:13,18; John 14:16,17).

Divine Works Are Attributed to the Holy Spirit in the Bible — These Also Emphasize His Omnipotence

1. Creation (Job 33:4; Psalm 104:30; Genesis 1:2).
2. Regeneration (John 3:5-8).
3. Resurrection (Romans 8:11).

CLOSING ACTIVITY: If you were asked "What proof do you have that the Holy Spirit is deity?" how would you respond? Have your class work in groups of 4 or 5 to write their answers. Ask some to share their thoughts with the entire class.

If you are working alone, write your answer on the back of the Individual Worksheet at the end of this lesson.

★NOTE to instructor:

Question to be answered by class discussion and/or other appropriate method:

★What three great divine works are attributed to the Holy Spirit?

The Holy Spirit is Mentioned With, and as Equal to, the Father and the Son

1. In the bestowal of the spiritual gifts. "*Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all*" (1 Corinthians 12:4-6).
2. In Christ's formula for water baptism. "*Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*" (Matthew 28:19).
3. In the apostle Paul's benediction. "*The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen*" (2 Corinthians 13:14).

THE NATURE AND DEITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

INDIVIDUAL STUDY: If you are studying alone, answer the following questions. You may detach this page and submit it for grading.

GROUP STUDY: It is permissible to remove this page and photo sufficient copies for classroom use, if desired.

1. What are three reasons why we should approach the study of the Holy Spirit with due caution? _____

2. Why is the personality of the Holy Spirit important from the standpoint of worship? From the standpoint of our daily, Christian experience? From the standpoint of spiritual service? _____

3. What is meant by the deity of the Holy Spirit? _____

4. What is meant by the non-communicable attributes of God? What are they? Are these deity attributes possessed by the Holy Spirit? Give scriptural references. _____

5. What three great divine works are attributed to the Holy Spirit? _____

THE PROOFS OF THE PERSONALITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

AIM: To emphasize that the proofs of the personality of the Holy Spirit are important, for while most of us believe them, few of us actually realize their truth and allow them to influence our daily Christian life. To encourage our own hearts with a greater realization of this marvelous fact that the Holy Spirit, whom Jesus gave to the Church, is a personal counselor, not merely an impersonal influence which plays upon our lives. A clear conception, and a personal application of this great fact of the personality of the Holy Spirit can literally transform our Christian lives and greatly enhance our service for God.

KEY VERSE:

"...It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment" (John 16:7,8).

OPENING ACTIVITY: Choose one of the following verses and write down how that particular verse indicates that the Holy Spirit is equal in nature with the Father and the Son. Be ready to share your answer.

If you are working alone, write your answer on the back of the worksheet at the end of this lesson.

Matthew 28:19,

Acts 15:28,

2 Corinthians 13:14,

1 John 5:7

INTRODUCTION

★NOTE to instructor:

Questions to be answered by class discussion and/or other appropriate method:

★What four elements are contained in the realm of personality?

★Are these four characteristics ascribed to the Holy Spirit? Support your answer with Scripture.

G. Campbell Morgan, in his book entitled "The Spirit of God," expresses the following thoughts on the personality of the Holy Spirit:

"Four things are contained within the realm of personality—will, intelligence, power and capacity for love. A person is a being who can be approached, trusted or doubted, loved or hated, adored or insulted. These essential parts of personality are limited in human beings; the will has its limitations, the intelligence has its limitations, power has its limitations, love has its limitations.

"It is not unthinkable that there may be illimitable will, intelligence, power and love, and that yet the personality shall remain. Neither is it unthinkable that there may be a being who can be approached, trusted or doubted, loved or hated, adored or insulted, having all these elements of personality in infinite measure. Granted that in the divine there are to be found the elements that exist in other rational beings, it is surely not unthinkable that they may be infinite in the divine, while yet they are finite in man.

"The Christian position is that it is perfectly easy to understand that man, within a circumscribed area, is a picture of the divine; but that yet, by so much as he is circumscribed and limited, he is not himself divine. In this sense man was made in the image of God; but that of which he is the image is like him, yet unlike him. It is unlike him in the fact that all that is found in man of essential majesty and grandeur in limited degree, is to be found in God Himself unlimited and illimitable. The Holy Spirit, then, is a person, possessed of will, intelligence, power, and capacity for love."

★NOTE to instructor:

Question to be answered by class discussion and/or other appropriate method:

★Why do we need to be able to prove the personality of the Holy Spirit?

Therefore, in our dealings with God and in His dealings with us it is the association of personality with personality; the perfect with the imperfect. The object in the mind of God for such dealings is that He might bring imperfect man into such a place of perfection that there can be communion between the two. If we do not start out on the premise that God as a personality is dealing with man as a personality, we can never attain unto the goal in the plan of God. To understand that God the Father is a personality is difficult for the limited mind of man to comprehend, but that He is a personality is emphatically taught by the Scriptures. That Jesus Christ is a personality is not difficult to understand, for He is the fulness of God revealed. To understand that the Holy

Spirit is a personality is much more difficult because of His manifestation being what it is. He is the invisible, everywhere present God and such invisible omnipresence is beyond every capacity that is human, except the capacity of faith. This faith, however, is obtainable and can be had by any man who will ask it of God. Faith comes by the hearing of the Word of God which will lead us to the recognition of the Holy Spirit and lead us to a knowledge of His person and work.

We will call attention to six different lines of proof, from the Bible, which definitely establish the Holy Spirit as a personality.

THE HOLY SPIRIT IS SPOKEN OF IN THE BIBLE AS A PERSON

The highest authority known to man on this subject was the Lord Jesus Christ. That Christ spoke of the Holy Spirit as a definite personality is easily seen by His words in John 16:13: "*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.*" In just forty-one words of teaching the Lord Jesus used the personal pronoun in reference to the Holy Spirit seven times.

In the following verses Jesus used the masculine personal pronoun, "he," "him," "whom," "himself," at least twenty times: John 14:16,17,26; 16:7,8,13-15. This is quite remarkable because the Greek word for "spirit" is "pneuma" and is in the neuter gender. Ordinarily it should have a neuter pronoun, yet the masculine is used by Jesus. Thus the rigid rules of Greek grammar are broken to emphasize to us the Holy Spirit's personality. Let us always refer to the Spirit as "Him." It will help us greatly in appreciating His ministry in a much larger measure.

THE HOLY SPIRIT IS IDENTIFIED WITH THE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE GODHEAD IN SUCH A WAY AS TO INDICATE EQUALITY IN NATURE WITH THE FATHER AND THE SON

In the Formula Jesus Gave for Water Baptism

"*Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*" (Matthew 28:19). If the Father is a distinct personality, and we know the Son is, then the Spirit must also be because His name is used here with the names of the Father and the Son. This rite of baptism is performed in the name of the Holy Spirit. An ordinance such as this could only have meaning when performed in the name of a distinct personality.

In the Apostolic Benediction

"*The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all*" (2 Corinthians 13:14). Here the name of the Holy Spirit is not only used to distinguish Him from the Father and the Son in person, but also in the service He is to perform. The Holy Spirit's ministry is especially in connection with communion, and there can be no communion except with personalities.

In The Mention Of The Three Witnesses In Heaven

"*For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one*" (1 John 5:7). Here again the Holy Spirit is mentioned separately from the Father and the Word, who is the Son (John 1:1-4,14).

In His Identification With Believers

"*For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things* (Acts 15:28). Here the personality of the Holy Ghost, as distinct from the believers, is most plainly implied.

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS ARE ASCRIBED TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

We have already mentioned that the distinctive marks of personality are knowledge, feeling, will and power. These four characteristics are definitely ascribed to the Holy Spirit in the Word of God. Any being who has all these must be a personality.

The Holy Spirit Has a Mind, Thus He Possesses Knowledge

"*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*" (Romans 8:27).

"*God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God*" (1 Corinthians 2:10,11). These verses teach that the Holy Spirit has knowledge which the greatest of human eyes, ears or understandings have never been able to comprehend. A mere influence could never search out and know the deep things of God, the greatest personality in the universe. It is the Holy Spirit who understands the full purpose of God for He is God; perfect in intelligence and, therefore, perfect in understanding. Man who is imperfect and limited in intelligence is, therefore, imperfect and limited in understanding the full purpose of God. For this reason the Holy Spirit has been given to redeemed man to lead him into understanding.

The Holy Spirit Loves, Thus He Has Feeling—Emotions

"*Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me*" (Romans 15:30).

This teaches us "that the Holy Spirit is not a mere blind influence or power, no matter how beneficent, that comes into our hearts and lives, but that He Himself is a divine person, loving us with the tenderest love" — Torrey. We should also thank the Holy Spirit, as we do the Father and the Son, for His love toward us, for we owe our salvation as much to the love of the Spirit as we do to the love of the Father and the love of the Son. Not only does the Holy Spirit love us but He also creates that

same love in the heart of the Christian (Galatians 5:22,23; Colossians 1:8). This love which the Holy Spirit has come to impart to believers is a love that is perfect. The Holy Spirit loves in this manner, and therefore, the perfected child of God will love in like manner, for his love will be that which is spread abroad in his heart by the indwelling presence of the Spirit. What the Spirit of God is, the child of God will be, for the Holy Spirit lives within him.

The Holy Spirit Has a Will

“Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit...but the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal...but all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will” (I Corinthians 12:4-11).

Here is wisdom, caution and discretion as the Holy Spirit, knowing the plan of God and the capacity of men, cooperates with the Father and the Son in dividing among believers the spiritual gifts. It is difficult to conceive of a more important exercise of the will than this reference to the will of the Holy Spirit. Certainly this is conclusive evidence that there is a definite, divine person. God sends His Holy Spirit to dwell in man so that he will have intelligence, understanding and will in their perfect expression, in order that man's ultimate end might indeed be that for which he was created—to hold a place of perfect fellowship with God. We must, therefore, make the will of God our will for in that manner alone can we reach the perfection for which we were created.

The Holy Spirit Possesses Power

“The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places” (Ephesians 1:18-20).

With perfect intelligence, perfect understanding and perfect will, God gives by His Holy Spirit perfect power to accomplish that which His intelligence, understanding and will have purposed. Thanks be to God that he is *“able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us”* (Ephesians 3:20). Here again must we recognize the importance of the person of the Holy Spirit abiding within us. For when He abides every quality of His personality abides. Therefore, man is no longer controlled by his inability unto perfection, for the Holy Spirit has come to dwell within him that by His power many might rise to dwell in newness of life. This is the abundant life of which Jesus speaks.

PERSONAL ACTS ARE ASCRIBED TO THE HOLY SPIRIT IN GOD'S WORD

Properly to understand the person, the actions, and the office of the Holy Spirit, we must know and constantly be reminded of His purpose in dealing with men. Jesus Christ told His disciples, *“It is expedient for you that I*

go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment” (John 16:7,8).

According to these words of Jesus, the presence of the Holy Spirit was vitally necessary, for He had a work to do which Jesus could not do. Salvation from the heavenly standpoint in the work of Jesus Christ the Saviour was finished. All over the world were men who stood in need of being informed of the salvation of the Lord; the Holy Spirit was to come to do this work.

The following eight personal acts, which the Bible ascribes to the Holy Spirit, are conclusive proof of His personality. It goes, even without saying, that only a personality of the highest order could ever be credited with such ability and power. Let us, however, continually look beyond the proof offered and ask ourselves if we are enjoying the particular ministry of the Spirit which we are using as proof. If the Spirit is able to do these things which we have listed, then each of us should be availing himself of His ability along these lines.

The Holy Spirit Speaks

(See John 16:13; Acts 8:29; 10:19,20; 13:2; 1 Timothy 4:1; and Revelation 2:7.) John 16:13 indicates that the Holy Spirit receives the messages from the Father and then speaks them into the heart of the followers of the Lord. He also speaks to the unregenerate by causing him to realize that he is eternally lost.

The Holy Spirit Teaches

(See Nehemiah 9:20; John 14:26; and Luke 12:11,12.) The Holy Spirit dwells in the child of God to teach him of his new life. Every time we study the Bible, it is possible for us to have the Holy Spirit, the author of the Book, to interpret it to us and to teach us its real and innermost meaning. The Holy Spirit also teaches the unregenerate for when by the voice of God the sinner is stopped and made aware of his lost condition, he is taught by the Spirit of God the remedy for his sin.

The Holy Spirit Testifies of Christ

(See John 15:26 and 16:14.) By reading the verses immediately preceding these references, it will be clearly seen that the Holy Spirit was to enable the disciples, and those who would follow in their steps, to know more of Christ than even Jesus Himself could reveal. An impersonal influence could not possibly reveal more than the person of the Lord Jesus.

The Holy Spirit Appoints and Directs

★NOTE to instructor:

Points to be covered by class discussion and/or other appropriate method:

★Show that Jesus was directed by the Holy Spirit.

★Give several examples of the Holy Spirit directing God's servants.

The Holy Spirit appoints and directs the Lord Jesus Himself. The Scripture seems to definitely teach that, when Jesus left heaven to come to fulfill His divine mission here on earth, He voluntarily stripped Himself of His own will (Hebrews 10:7; John 8:26-29) and submitted Himself to the leading and direction of the Holy Spirit (Mark 1:12; Luke 4:1).

The Holy Spirit appoints and directs men and circumstances for the benefit of the unregenerate.

The Holy Spirit appoints and directs the child of God.

The apostles, evangelists and God's servants in all ages, were, and have been, directed by the Holy Spirit. (See 1 Chronicles 28:12; Mark 13:11; Acts 8:29; 10:12, 20; 13:2-4; 16:6,7; and 20:28.) Only a conscious, mighty omniscient personality could do this.

Those who wrote the Scriptures were appointed and directed by the Holy Spirit. (See 1 Peter 1:11 and 2 Peter 1:21.) Here is, no doubt, the greatest example of personal direction in all human history.

The Holy Spirit Makes Intercession for the Believers

(See Romans 8:26.) This ministry of intercession in our behalf implies the deepest understanding of our innermost hearts, for the Holy Spirit prays in our behalf when we have reached the extremity of our knowledge in this regard. The Holy Spirit also intercedes for God in the heart of the unregenerate.

The Holy Spirit Comforts

(See Acts 9:31). Circumstances can cheer, influences can encourage, but only personalities can comfort.

The Holy Spirit Strives

(See Genesis 6:3.) The Holy Spirit strives with the unregenerate to bring him to repentance.

The Holy Spirit strives with the child of God. When the Christian becomes rebellious at the correction of the Spirit, He will strive with all patience to cause him to see the profit of it and to learn the valuable lesson.

The Holy Spirit Convicts

(See John 16:8.)

THE HOLY SPIRIT CAN BE TREATED PERSONALLY

The Bible definitely assumes the personality of the Holy Spirit, for it speaks of Him being treated in a manner only possible toward personalities. Let us be very careful how we treat Him.

★NOTE to instructor:

**Question to be answered by class discussion
and/or other appropriate method:**

★What are some ways in which the Holy Spirit may be treated personally?

The Holy Spirit May Be Vexed or Grieved

(See Ephesians 4:30.)

The Holy Spirit May Be Insulted

(See Hebrews 10:29.)

The Holy Spirit May Be Lied To

(See Acts 5:3.)

The Holy Spirit May Be Blasphemed and Sinned Against

(See Matthew 12:31,32.)

A NAME AND OFFICE ARE GIVEN TO THE HOLY SPIRIT BY JESUS THAT COULD ONLY BELONG TO A PERSON

★NOTE to instructor:

**Questions to be answered by class discussion
and/or other appropriate method:**

★What is the Holy Spirit called by Jesus in John 14:16,26; 15:26; 16:7?

★What does it mean?

In John 14:16,26; 15:26; and 16:7 the Holy Spirit is called by Jesus, "The Comforter." This word, "parakletos" in the Greek, literally means "one called alongside to help." Jesus spoke of Him as "another Comforter" (John 14:16) — one who was going to take His place and be to the disciples all that Jesus Himself had been. An impersonal power could never take the place of the person of the Lord Jesus. Certainly it could not be more important that a mere influence be with the disciples than the Lord Himself. Only a person can take the place of a person.

CLOSING ACTIVITY: Divide into groups and list the eight personal acts ascribed to the Holy Spirit, which are conclusive proof of His personality. Each person may choose one or more of these acts and share how it has affected their life via the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

If you are working alone write this on the back of the Individual Worksheet at the end of this lesson.

THE PROOFS OF THE PERSONALITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

INDIVIDUAL STUDY: If you are studying alone, answer the following questions. You may detach this page and submit it for grading.

GROUP STUDY: It is permissible to remove this page and photo sufficient copies for classroom use, if desired.

1. *What four elements are contained in the realm of personality? Are these four characteristics ascribed to the Holy Spirit? Support your answer with Scripture.* _____

2. *Why do we need to be able to prove the personality of the Holy Spirit?* _____

3. *Show that Jesus was directed by the Holy Spirit. Give several examples of the Holy Spirit directing God's servants.* _____

4. *What are some ways in which the Holy Spirit may be treated personally?* _____

5. *What is the Holy Spirit called by Jesus in John 14:16,26; 15:26; 16:7? What does it mean?* _____

THE NAMES OF THE HOLY SPIRIT AND HOW HE IS RECOGNIZED

AIM: To discover much in regard to the ministry of the Holy Spirit as we carefully study the names applied to Him in the inspired record and learn how to recognize Him. As we seek out the full significance of the names given to Him we can begin to understand His person and His work.

KEY VERSES:

"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (1 John 4:1).

"Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come" (1 John 4:2,3).

OPENING ACTIVITY: After reading the following Scriptures, write down the symbols mentioned to describe and illustrate the operations of the Holy Spirit. These will be further discussed in this lesson.

Matthew 3:11 _____

Acts 2:2 _____

Matthew 3:16 _____

Ephesians 1:13 _____

John 7:38,39 _____

NAMES FOR THE HOLY SPIRIT WHEN MINISTERING AS THE EXECUTIVE OF THE GODHEAD

★NOTE to instructor:

Question to be answered by class discussion and/or other appropriate method:

★What office does the Holy Spirit hold with respect to the Godhead?

The Holy Spirit is recognized to be the executive of the Godhead. Whatever God does, He does by the Spirit. Thus the Holy Spirit is, as it were, the administrator of God's program, both with relation to the physical universe and in connection with man. He is God's agent in the world today. We shall notice all the names used in both the Old and New Testament with relation to the work of the Holy Spirit as the executive of the Father and the Son. These names are capitalized in the Bible.

In the Old Testament

The Spirit of God (Genesis 1:2; Exodus 31:3; etc.)

The Spirit of the Lord (Judges 3:10; 6:34; I Samuel 16:13; etc.)

These two names or titles are used throughout the Old Testament in reference to the Holy Spirit. They show His

work during that dispensation, and make clear the place held by the third person of the Godhead. There are ninety distinct references to the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament in relation to His activity in creation, of both the universe and man, and in the progressive revelation of God and the advancement of man in that revelation. Not too much effort is put forth by the Old Testament Scriptures to distinguish between the persons of the Godhead, for such was not necessary. Suffice it to say, the Spirit of God actively participated in all that God has ever been or done in both heaven and earth for He is one and inseparable with the Father and the Son. We cannot be scriptural and think of the Holy Spirit as beginning His ministry on the day of Pentecost, for He has actively participated in the eternal program of God from the beginning, and shall continue to do so for the unending eternities which will envelop the future.

In the New Testament

As the Executive of the Father

- The Spirit of God (Matthew 3:16; Romans 8:9; 15:19; 1 Corinthians 2:11,14; 3:16; 6:11; 7:40; 12:3; 2 Corinthians 3:3; Ephesians 4:30; and I John 4:2).
- The Spirit of the Lord (2 Corinthians 3:17,18).
- The Spirit of your Father (Matthew 10:20).

As the Executive of the Son

- The Spirit of Christ (Romans 8:9; Philippians 1:19; I Peter 1:11).
- The Spirit of His Son (Galatians 4:6).

NAMES FOR THE HOLY SPIRIT WHEN MINISTERING IN HIS OWN PARTICULAR PERSONAL MINISTRY TO MEN

The Holy Spirit does not only minister in the capacity of representing the Father and the Son. He also has a personal, distinct ministry of His own. We realize that the Holy Spirit has had a personal ministry through the ages, yet it can be said that His personal ministry in this age has its separate and positive distinctions. The Holy Spirit dwells upon the earth today to oppose the spirit of Satan and his myriads of evil spirits by taking up His abode in mankind. He applies the atoning merits of the blood sacrifice of the Son of God and by so doing regenerates the soul that is lost and bound in sin. He then makes the human spirit His temple and brings man to a state of sanctification and holiness that makes him acceptable to God. This is all done by the personal ministry of the Holy Spirit. In performing this work, certain names are given to Him which explain the work that He does.

The Holy Spirit or Holy Ghost

(Luke 11:13; Acts 13:2). There is no difference between these two. This name distinguishes Him from the human spirit which every individual possesses (Ezekiel 13:3; Romans 8:16). It also is in contrast to all the wicked and unclean spirits that are in the world (Matthew 10:1; 12:45; 1 Timothy 4:1). The third person of the Godhead is to be distinguished by His holiness. The Welsh for "Holy Spirit" is "Aspir Glan" which means "The Clean Spirit." We shall expect Him to make men clean and holy.

The Spirit of Truth

(John 14:17; 15:26; 16:13; I John 5:6). In this office He is diametrically opposed to "the spirit of error" (1 John 4:6). Satan is a lying spirit, and there are numerous lying spirits gone out into the world (1 Kings 22:22; Ezekiel 13:6,7; 2 Thessalonians 2:9). Because of this startling fact, we greatly need the ministry of the Spirit of Truth. Truth is only truth when it is held in proper relationship to every other truth. It is possible to over-emphasize truth until it becomes error. The Holy Spirit knows all truth in its relationship to God, and as it is in its absolute form in the mind of God. Thus He can guide us in every detail, with the ultimate end in view. That man needs the Spirit of Truth to guide him in this life is a fact of which the children of God are well aware. "*There is a way which seemeth right unto a man; but the end thereof are the ways of death*" (Proverbs 14:12).

The Spirit of Grace

(Hebrews 10:29; Zechariah 12:10). The Holy Spirit is called the Spirit of Grace because it is He who administers the means of grace. The means of grace is the blood sacrifice of the Son of God. He who treads it under foot by refusing to accept it as the sacrifice for his sin, rejects the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Again we see that the ministry of the Holy Spirit is inseparably connected with the atoning work of redemption in the heart of a man if that man will not place his faith in Jesus as his Saviour.

The Spirit of Promise

(Ephesians 1:13).

★NOTE to instructor:

Question to be answered by class discussion and/or other appropriate method:

★*Where and by whom was the Holy Spirit promised?*

The Holy Spirit was promised in the Old Testament (Joel 2:28).

The Holy Spirit was promised in the New Testament (Matthew 3:11).

The Holy Spirit was promised by the Father (Acts 1:4,5).

The Holy Spirit was promised by the Son (John 7:39; 14:16,26).

Nine hundred years before the day of Pentecost God had given the promise to Joel that the day would come when He would give of His Spirit unto all men. This had been planned in the mind of God from the beginning of time, for He knew that not until the Holy Spirit entered into the very being of man could man be brought to the place where he could fulfill the righteousness of God. Without this righteousness, which would come as a result of the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit, man could never attain unto the place for which he had been created.

The Spirit of Adoption

(Romans 8:15; I John 3:1,2). This ministration of the Spirit brings us into the relationship of full-grown sons of God, where we can receive the fullness of our inheritance. It means being placed as a son. We become children of God through the new birth; we become sons of God through adoption.

The Eternal Spirit

(Hebrew 9:14). This wonderful name emphasizes the changeless character of the Holy Spirit as well as enhancing our realization that He is perfectly acquainted with the eternal counsels of God and is thus able to fully minister to every need of the children of the Lord. With Him enthroned in his heart, the Christian becomes the abiding place of the eternal God.

The Comforter

(John 14:16,26; 16:7). This is, perhaps, the most precious of all the names given to the Holy Spirit. It is so because it is the special name used by Jesus when introducing the Holy Spirit to His disciples just before He was to go from them. It is precious because of the intimacy of the ministry suggested. It refers to the ministration of the Spirit in behalf of the individual believer during those years of his earthly pilgrimage when he most needs One to encourage and strengthen him. He is come to bring

comfort to the hearts of men by revealing to them the love of God, and by so doing, leading them into a place of fellowship and communion with Him. In this relationship He is certainly the greatest friend that man could have.

NAMES FOR THE HOLY SPIRIT WHICH SHOW HIS CHARACTER AND MINISTRY AND ARE SUGGESTIVE OF THE OPERATIONS OF THE SPIRIT

These are not capitalized in the Scripture as the preceding names mentioned in this lesson.

The Spirit of Holiness

(Romans 1:4). The Spirit of not only the Holy Spirit—holy in Himself—but he is also the Spirit of holiness, bringing forth that blessed characteristic in the life of the believer. Holiness is not merely a matter of conduct, or words. It pertains to one's spirit. Something perfectly right, done in the wrong spirit, is not holiness. We need not only to be holy, but we also need the spirit of holiness—the Holy Spirit Himself in our hearts. Resist not the Spirit, but yield to His ministry of love and you shall walk in holiness.

The Spirit of Judgment and Burning

(Isaiah 4:4; Matthew 3:11,12). This is a phrase of the Spirit's ministry which is not always recognized and certainly not always appreciated. Yet it is one of the greatest blessings to the Christian life. Often there are impurities in the life which can only be burned out by the coming of the Holy Spirit. Those who have sought the baptism with the Holy Spirit have become aware of this judging, purging ministry of the Spirit. Let us remember that when we sing, "Lord send the fire," we are asking for this consuming operation of the Holy Ghost, who is the spirit of judgment and burning.

The Spirit of Supplication

(Zechariah 12:10). This passage refers to the anointing of the Spirit by which the Christian is enabled to pray in the power of the Spirit. This ministry of the Spirit, through believers, has reference to a particular kind of praying—supplication. To supplicate means to plead for, or in behalf of, another. How much we need those who know how to approach the throne of God in behalf of others and plead their cause at the mercy seat! We shall need the Holy Spirit's presence and power for this trying task.

The Spirit of Glory

(I Peter 4:14; II Corinthians 3:7,8). The glory of God is the radiance of the beauty of His character and His person. There is no human word which can quite describe the wonder of the glory of the Lord. Moses spent forty days and nights in the presence of the Lord and his face so shone with the divine glory that he had to put a veil over it in order that the people of Israel might look upon him. The Holy Spirit is that "Spirit of glory." What a privilege to have Him in our hearts! The Holy Spirit is the active agency of God in transferring His glory to man. He who is all glorious is God, and by His Spirit He gives Himself to man. His beauty, His purity, His life and His power are

all within the reach of sinful man if he will but reach out in faith and welcome the Holy Spirit Himself into his life.

The Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation

(Ephesians 1:17). The things of God can never be known through mental investigation or scientific research. They can only be perceived as the Holy Spirit draws back the curtain, as it were and reveals, or unveils, them before our eyes. This He delights to do and, thus, to give us wisdom far above the natural. This wisdom is imparted for service unto Him. (Note Exodus 28:3, Deuteronomy 34:9 and Isaiah 11:2 for examples of this ministry.)

The Holy Spirit

(Psalm 51:11; Isaiah 63:10; I Thessalonians 4:8). In these references, the name "holy spirit" is not capitalized, as referring to the Spirit's divine title. The emphasis is placed upon the holiness of the Spirit. It is well that we always realize this in all our speaking, thinking and service with relation to the Holy Ghost. Give right of way to the Holy Spirit and yield to Him, for when He comes in He brings His holiness with Him. It is in this manner that we partake of His nature. You cannot have the Holy Spirit working unhindered in your life without having the spirit of holiness.

The Good Spirit

(Nehemiah 9:20; Psalm 143:10). The Holy Spirit is called the good Spirit in contradistinction to the many bad spirits that are prevalent in the world. Jesus said that no one but God was good. There is no doubt that he had in mind the fact that the only one who had the eternal benefit of mankind at heart was God Himself. That God has sent His Spirit to lead men into all His goodness is the positive voice of Scripture.

The Free Spirit

(Psalm 51:12). The literal rendering of the expression "uphold me with thy free spirit" seems to be, "uphold me with a willing spirit." David was confessing his sin and seeking liberty and a willing spirit to enable him to walk obediently in the future. The Holy Spirit will make us willing to walk in God's way, and free from bondage that we may do so.

The Spirit of Faith

(II Corinthians 4:13). How greatly is the faith of God's children increased when the Holy Spirit abides in their hearts and they are under His anointing! A greater yieldedness to the Holy Spirit will most certainly increase our faith. Not only is salvation the gift of God, but the faith to believe it is given us by the Holy Spirit. How essential, therefore, it is that we be aware of our faith, for with the Holy Spirit dwelling within us, He also gives us the faith to believe for all the things that pertain to life and godliness.

The Spirit of Understanding, Counsel, Might, Knowledge and Fear of the Lord

(Isaiah 11:2). This prophecy concerning the coming

Messiah speaks of the Spirit that would dwell within Him. His perfect life of fellowship with God and power with man will ever be the outstanding example of one truly filled with the Holy Spirit. Let us be reminded once again that this same Spirit that dwelt in Jesus and raised Him from the dead is the Spirit that dwells in the heart and life of the child of God. Two thousand years have not changed the qualities of His character for He is the unchanging God. If the Lord Jesus needed to have His life completely dominated by the Holy Spirit, how much more do we? He has not left us comfortless nor powerless but has sent His Holy Spirit to live in us. As we submit ourselves to Him, He will be in us the Spirit of holiness, and will bring to pass all the divine qualities ascribed to Him.

SYMBOLS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

So many times, God teaches, by symbols, truths which could never be conveyed by mere words. The following symbols are used in the Scripture to describe and illustrate the operations of the Holy Spirit:

Fire

(Matthew 3:11; Luke 3:16; Isaiah 4:4). This illustrates the purging, purifying influence of the Spirit, as well as the boldness and fiery zeal produced by the anointing of the Holy Ghost. It is a fitting symbol because fire warms, illuminates, spreads and purifies.

Wind

(Ezekiel 37:9,10,14; John 3:8; Acts 2:2). This symbol is used, in the first two references given, to illustrate the regenerative work of the Spirit. It is indicative "of the mysterious, independent, penetrating, life-giving and purifying" operation of the Holy Ghost as the unregenerate soul is born again and made a child of God. It was also manifest on the day of Pentecost.

Water

(John 7:38,39; Exodus 17:6; Ezekiel 36:25-27; 47:1; John 4:14). Water refreshes, purifies, quenches thirst and makes fruitful. It is necessary to all life and growth. The Holy Spirit does in connection with spiritual life what water does with regard to natural life. Without Him no life is possible in the spiritual realm. Notice the expression "living water" in John 7. This is in contrast with the still, stagnant water found in a cistern or reservoir. The life that comes from Him is always fresh. In turn, the believer can become a source of living water to those about him through a constant infilling of the Holy Spirit.

A Seal

(Ephesians 1:13). The symbol of a seal conveys the thought of ownership. Men place their stamp or seal upon that which is theirs. The Holy Spirit, dwelling in the heart of a believer, is God's seal of ownership.

Oil

This is perhaps the most common symbol of the Spirit. When priests and kings and prophets were called of God and anointed for their service, it was customary to

pour oil upon their heads—a symbol of the anointing of the Spirit which is now the sign of God's calling. Oil was commonly used in Bible days for food, light, lubrication, healing and soothing the skin. The Holy Spirit strengthens, illuminates, liberates, heals and soothes the heart of His children today. Thus oil and the Spirit, alike, speak of influence, fruitfulness, beauty and life.

The Dove

(Matthew 3:16). In this Scripture reference we see that the Spirit came upon Jesus in bodily form as a dove. This bird always speaks of peace, gentleness, tenderness, loveliness, innocence and purity. The Spirit came upon the disciples on the day of Pentecost in tongues of fire. Jesus had nothing in Him that needed the purging of the fire; the disciples did. The Holy Spirit is not boisterous, but comes beautifully and gently as we most fully yield to Him. If there is that within us which needs the fire, He will burn it away, but if we are completely abandoned unto Him He will move through us in the tender characteristics of a dove.

RECOGNIZING THE HOLY SPIRIT

If the Holy Spirit is to be our guide into all truth concerning the things of God, and we are to utterly commit ourselves to His leading, then it is essential that we be sure of the identity of Him whom we are following. We must clearly understand that the Holy Spirit is not the only spirit in the world. If this were so, the matter of identification would be simple, but there are many spirits abroad and each is clamouring for the ear and allegiance of men. It is one of our deepest responsibilities to be able to discern between the various spirits that would influence our lives. The apostle John warns us, "*Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world*" (1 John 4:1).

★NOTE to instructor:

Questions to be answered by class discussion and/or other appropriate method:

- ★What three kinds of spirits are manifest in the world?
 - ★What are the four great principles by which we may recognize the Holy Spirit's workings?
-

There are three different categories of spirits in the world today, and in order to recognize the Holy Spirit we must be able to discern between these three kinds. There is, of course, first the Holy Spirit; then there is the human spirit; finally, there are evil spirits. Everything that appears to be spiritual is not of the Lord. Indeed we must "try the spirits." However, one need never be deceived if he will carefully and prayerfully take heed to certain very definite identification marks by which the Holy Spirit may always be known. There are possibly many minor points of distinction, but the following four general principles will enable us to clearly distinguish between the work of the human or evil spirits and that of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit will always be in keeping with these four Scriptural rules.

The Holy Spirit Will Always Be Christlike

★NOTE to instructor:

Question to be answered by class discussion and/or other appropriate method:

★What is to be the relationship between the Spirit's ministry and that of Christ?

Jesus promised (John 14:16-18) that He would send another Comforter to the disciples when He went away. He also said, "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you." It would seem that His coming to be with the disciples was to be in the person of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit was to be to them all that Christ had been. In every way, then, He is like Christ. You can always recognize the Holy Spirit by His Christlikeness—He will make those who yield to Him like Jesus.

Jesus said, concerning the Spirit, "He shall glorify me" (John 16:14). This is an unmistakable indication of the ministry of the Holy Spirit. This is something which the devil would never do. He is certainly not interested in glorifying Jesus, for Christ is Satan's conqueror. Again, the flesh, the human spirit in man, is not interested in glorifying Jesus, for the spirit of man is most interested in seeking to glorify self. The Holy Spirit will bring no glory to the enemy nor yet to human individuals. He is preeminently interested in fulfilling His ministry of glorifying Jesus.

Any spirit which does not give full honor to Jesus, as the Son of God, is not the Holy Spirit. John makes the statement, "Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come" (1 John 4:2,3).

The Holy Spirit Will Always Be Opposed to That Which is Worldly

"Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God" (1 Corinthians 2:12). The Holy Spirit and the spirit of the world are in the greatest contrast to each other. The Holy Spirit will never sanction that which is worldly. In fact, here is the best of tests for that which is of the world. If you can do it and keep the blessing of God upon your soul, your activity is probably pleasing to the Lord, but if you lose the sweet presence of the Spirit then you may rest assured that your actions are out of harmony with God's Spirit and God's will. Here is a sure test in any questionable matter. Let us keep the anointing upon our hearts.

CLOSING ACTIVITY: How would you explain to another believer the four ways we may "try the spirits whether they are of God" (1 John 4:1)? Ask class members to practice on their neighbor or friend. Why is it important that we carry out the apostle John's warning in 1 John 4:1, especially in today's society?

If you are working alone write this on the back of the Individual Worksheet at the end of this lesson.

The Holy Spirit Will Always Be in Perfect Harmony With the Written Word

The Holy Spirit is the divine author of the Bible. It was He who inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. It is inconceivable that He should ever lead one to do that which is contrary to, or even out of harmony with, the Word of God. Any spirit that seeks to lead contrary to the Bible is a false spirit. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isaiah 8:20). Test every revelation, every tongue, every prophecy by its agreement to the Holy Scripture. The Holy Spirit will always be in complete agreement with the Bible, and He will bring forth nothing new or contrary to the Word of Truth. The Holy Spirit will make you a Bible Christian. The flesh will exalt itself; the enemy will try to dazzle and confuse; but the Spirit of God will lead us in perfect keeping with, and fulfillment of, the Word of God.

The Holy Spirit Fosters Unity Among All True Believers

"For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. 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. For the body is not one member, but many... Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular" (1 Corinthians 12:12-14,27).

This same figure of speech brought out by the term "baptism" is found in Romans 6:4. This specifically has to do with the work of the Holy Spirit in regeneration. Are we godly enough to recognize that all men who have put their faith in Jesus Christ as their redeemer have been born of the Spirit of God and belong to the body of Christ? Do we recognize that the door of the Church is Jesus Christ and that all men who have entered that door have done so by the direct leading and power of the Holy Spirit? Are we sufficiently alive in the Holy Spirit to love all the brethren regardless of their earthly denominational walls? This is the will of God for "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death" (1 John 3:14).

As the Holy Spirit draws us closer to the Lord Jesus Christ, we will become aware of the fact that we, as the members of the body of Christ, are drawing nearer to one another. Let us therefore recognize the person and the ministry of the Holy Spirit and by the many manifestations of His power and gifts, lift up our hearts and make Jesus Christ the Lord of our lives.

THE NAMES OF THE HOLY SPIRIT AND HOW HE IS RECOGNIZED

INDIVIDUAL STUDY: If you are studying alone, answer the following questions. You may detach this page and submit it for grading.

GROUP STUDY: It is permissible to remove this page and photo sufficient copies for classroom use, if desired.

1. What office does the Holy Spirit hold with respect to the Godhead? _____

2. Where and by whom was the Holy Spirit promised? _____

3. What three kinds of spirits are manifest in the world? What are the four great principles by which we may recognize the Holy Spirit's workings? _____

4. What is to be the relationship between the Spirit's ministry and that of Christ? _____

THE WORKS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Part 1

AIM: A practical study on the outworking of the characteristics of the Holy Spirit as they are manifested to us through the works of the Holy Spirit. To enhance our appreciation of the Spirit as He has revealed, and does reveal, Himself in the world and in our lives. To take a look at the ministry of the Holy Spirit as the one through whom God's will is brought to its final purpose—that all things may return in glory to God.

KEY VERSES:

“And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: Of sin, because they believe not on me; Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged...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. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you” (John 16:8-10; 13-14).

OPENING ACTIVITY: Read the key verses—John 16:8-10; 13-14—and write down the works of the Holy Spirit you see presented in this scriptural passage.

INTRODUCTION

In our studies thus far concerning the Holy Spirit, we have endeavored to learn something of the nature and personality of the third person of the Trinity, as well as the characteristics of His being. We now turn to the outworking of these characteristics as they are manifested to us through the works of the Holy Spirit. Our source of information and our authority will be, as always, the Holy Scriptures.

One of the first thoughts that must impress itself upon us as we pursue this study is the diversified ministry that is attributed to the Spirit. Let us put out of our minds the impression that the Holy Spirit did not come until the day of Pentecost referred to in Acts 2, for we shall find that He has been active in every dispensation and has been present wherever God has been revealed. In so many of His activities God works through the Son in the power of the Holy Spirit. All the divine workings originate with the Father, are carried out by the Son and are brought to fruition by the Holy Spirit.

In the next two lessons we shall study the works of the Holy Spirit as they relate to: (1) the physical universe; (2) the unsaved; (3) the Lord Jesus; and (4) the Christian believer.

THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT WITH RELATION TO THE PHYSICAL UNIVERSE

★NOTE to instructor:

Questions to be answered by class discussion and/or other appropriate method:

★What three passages of Scripture specifically attribute the act of creation to the three members of the Godhead? Are they contradictory?

The Holy Spirit is represented in the Bible, as being definitely associated with the Father and the Son in the work of creation. There are passages of Scripture which specifically attribute the act of creation to the three members of the Godhead. Hebrews 1:1,2 definitely attributes creation to the Father. Colossians 1:16 teaches us plainly that all things in Heaven and earth were created by the Son of God, Jesus (see also John 1:3). Psalm 104:30 teaches us that creation was accomplished by the Holy Spirit.

These various passages are not to be thought of as contradictory, but rather a setting forth of the principle that prevails throughout the Bible, that all three persons of the Trinity work together for the accomplishing of the divine will. The opening statement of the Bible — *“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth”* — suggests that the entire Trinity was active, for the word “God” is the Hebrew “Elohim” which is a uni-plural word indicating more than one personality.

In the act of creation that which did not previously exist is brought into being. The word “create” means “to make out of nothing.” In verse one of Genesis 1 the word “create” is used with reference to the heavens and the

earth—the physical, material kingdom. In verse 21 the word “create” is used with reference to the animal kingdom. In verse 27 it is used with regard to the bringing forth of man, the human kingdom. It is interesting to notice that the Bible specifically states that the Holy Spirit had to do with the creation of each of these diverse kingdoms.

In Nature

Read Psalm 33:6. As little as we understand about the original creation spoken of in the first verse of Genesis, we do know that it had to have purpose and direction. This purpose and direction were given it by the Spirit of the Lord.

In Genesis 1:2,3 we find the Spirit of God moving upon and into the universe that was formless, empty and dark; the minute the Spirit of God began to come upon this useless mass of creation, it became impregnated with life, and light began to come from it. It was the Spirit of God that began to give it purpose and direction.

In taking a look at Psalm 104:29,30 we see that the well ordered earth is completely dependent upon the life giving presence of the Spirit of God. Without the Holy Spirit there would be no balance in nature and the created universe could not contribute to the eternal purpose of its creator.

In the Animal Kingdom

Read Psalm 104:29,30 again. In the previous verses of this Psalm, the animals are directly mentioned; so we infer from this that even the life of the animal kingdom is directly attributed to the presence of the Spirit of God. The animal kingdom is, therefore, placed upon the earth and given life by the Spirit that they too might serve the divine purpose.

In the Human Kingdom

Man, who is declared to be the highest of all earth's creatures, also has his being and purpose of being impregnated by the Spirit of God (Job 33:4). God is not, nor cannot be, separated from His creation for: *“He is before all things, and by him all things consist”* (Colossians 1:17).

THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT WITH RELATION TO THE UNSAVED

That the Spirit of God gives earthly life to all of creation, including the unregenerated man, is incontrovertible. But in contradistinction to all other life, man was created to live eternally. By man's fall into sin he brought death upon himself (this has to do with his eternal nature). It is still the Spirit of God that gives him breath to live out the years of his earthly life.

But the earthly life of man is not the purpose for which he was created. When Jesus said, *“I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live”* (John 11:25), He had reference to the eternal purpose for which man was created.

Man is different from the life of nature and animals in that he is not fulfilling his purpose merely by eating, sleeping and successfully enacting an earthly role; he does and can sin and thereby robs God of his purpose in living. He is created with the capacity to live forever in the presence of God, and the Holy Spirit is sent to make him realize his eternal purpose, that he might live forever.

In the God-Consciousness of All Men

The work of the Holy Spirit is evident in the God-consciousness of all men. All men have an inner conviction of the existence of God, which is called the universal intuitive knowledge of God. It is not something that is learned, but is a knowledge that is pressed into the consciousness of every living creature by the direct ministry of the Holy Spirit. He who says he is an atheist is deceiving himself, for by the Spirit of God all men are made conscious of God's existence.

In Revealing the Saviour

Look up John 16:8-10; 13-14. We must remember that the Spirit is sent by the Father for the purpose of bringing man to the realization and the successful attainment of his created purpose.

Being that redemption and eternal life with God are only obtainable through faith in the atoning work of the Lord Jesus Christ, it is understandable that the principal work of the Holy Spirit is to bring man to the place where he will believe on Christ and enter into the life obtainable only through such belief. Because of this, Jesus emphasized and designated that the basic Holy Spirit ministry would be that which would bring man to this place of faith.

No one can produce conviction in the heart of another. Only the Holy Spirit can overcome the blindness and deceitfulness of the sinful, human heart and make a man realize the greatness of his own iniquity. It is true that the Spirit will use the children of the Lord in this ministry, but apart from Him no amount of preaching or persuasion will bring about genuine conviction.

★NOTE to instructor:

Question to be answered by class discussion and/or other appropriate method:

★What does the Holy Spirit convict man of? Explain.

The Holy Spirit does not convict a man of the sin of stealing, or drunkenness or adultery. Conscience will convict a man that such things are wrong, but the Holy Spirit convicts of a sin of which conscience would never convict him—the sin of unbelief. *“...of sin because they believe not on me...”* (John 16:9). It is the sin of not believing on Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour.

Two things are necessary before a man can be saved. First, he must see himself that he is a sinner. Then he must see Jesus who is his only hope of righteousness. These are the very two things which the Spirit

accomplishes. Lastly, the Holy Spirit will convict of the reality of judgment, attested by the fact that the prince of this world, Satan, is judged. Here again is something which must be produced only by the Holy Spirit, for of himself man will not submit to the thought of judgment. Only as the Holy Spirit brings within our heart a deep sense of our own sinfulness and then makes us to see the greatness of Christ's righteousness, will we be able to realize the awfulness of rejecting His love.

The prayer of every Christian and every congregation should be that the Holy Spirit will manifest Himself through them in bringing deep conviction upon the hearts of unbelievers about them, for without this they will never be brought to Christ. Thank God, this is one of the great purposes for which He came, and the Holy Spirit delights to fulfill His ministry wherever He finds yielded lives.

THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN RELATION TO JESUS CHRIST

★NOTE to instructor:

Question to be answered by class discussion and/or other appropriate method:

★Is the most important work of the Holy Spirit in connection with us as believers or with the Lord Jesus Christ?

The most important work of the Holy Spirit is in connection with the Lord Jesus Christ. We like to think of the Spirit's ministry toward us as believers, and this is vitally important. But even this has little significance except as it relates to Jesus Christ. Probably the most important thing ever said about the Holy Spirit is, in the words of Jesus, "*He shall glorify me*" (John 16:14). Jesus is a manifestation of the glory of the Father, so in exalting Jesus, the Spirit is also lifting up the Father.

The ministry of the Holy Spirit in relation to Jesus may be considered from at least three points of view. Those that we shall mention are: (1) in relation to His person; (2) in relation to His earthly ministry; (3) in relation to His ministry to the Church during this dispensation.

In Relation to the Person of Jesus Christ

The Holy Spirit, together with the Father, sent Jesus into the world (Isaiah 48:16). One of the names given to Jesus was "Christ" which means "the anointed one." Jesus was anointed and sent forth from heaven above by the Holy Spirit that he might perform the ministry which was committed unto Him.

Jesus was conceived, or begotten, by the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:35). The mystery of the incarnation of the Son of God and His birth through the virgin Mary are attributed to the power of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit led Jesus into the wilderness of temptation (Matthew 4:1; Mark 1:12,13). This is a remarkable fact and one which should give a great deal

of encouragement to us today. Jesus was directed by the Holy Spirit to the place of testing. We must remember we are not out of God's will just because the devil tempts us. The same Holy Spirit who led Jesus into the temptation, sustained Him through it, and we can expect the same.

In Relation to the Earthly Ministry of Jesus

Jesus was indeed very God, but He was also very man and it seems that He subjected Himself to the will of the Father in such a way that everything He did was through the direction and the power of the Holy Spirit. In this He showed God's true purpose for man—being submissive to and being dominated by the Holy Spirit. This is also man's great opportunity. If the blessed ministry of Jesus is the result of yieldedness to the Holy Spirit, why should not the same Spirit bring forth mighty works through others who are fully yielded to Him? (John 14:12).

The Holy Spirit anointed Jesus with power for His ministry (Luke 3:21,22). It is significant that at the very outset of His public ministry He should have this definite outpouring of the Holy Spirit. It cannot but remind us of the first disciples who, after being commanded to go into all the world, were definitely charged not to depart from Jerusalem until they were "*endued with power from on high*" (Luke 24:49). The great works which Jesus performed were attributed to the power of the Holy Spirit upon Him (Acts 10:38).

The Holy Spirit anointed Jesus for His preaching ministry (Luke 4:18,19). Here Jesus very definitely attributes His preaching ministry to the anointing of the Holy Spirit. We so often think of the gracious words which proceeded out of His lips as being the result of His own inherent greatness, but the Scripture clearly teaches that He was anointed by the Holy Ghost for this specific task.

The Holy Spirit empowered Jesus to cast out devils (Matthew 12:28). In this portion of Scripture the Pharisees were accusing Jesus of casting out demons by the power of Beelzebub, the prince of devils. Jesus showed them the folly of such a statement, for if the devil cast out devils he would be working against himself. But Christ asserted that it was by the Spirit of the Lord that the demons fled. It was not Christ's own personal authority that caused them to go, but the power of the Holy Spirit. Let us realize again that the same Holy Spirit through whom He accomplished such mighty works is just the same today. The secret of Christ's ministry was His complete abandonment and yieldedness to the Spirit. Devils will still depart today in the power of the same Holy Spirit.

★NOTE to instructor:

Question to be answered by class discussion and/or other appropriate method:

★How was the Holy Spirit connected with the death and resurrection of Jesus?

The Holy Spirit was vitally connected with the death and resurrection of Jesus. Concerning His sacrifice on Calvary we read, in Hebrews 9:14, that the offering of Himself without spot to God was *“through the eternal Spirit.”* Undoubtedly the Holy Spirit graciously empowered and sustained Him during the sufferings of that awful sacrifice. Then we are told that the Holy Spirit was the agent in the resurrection of the body of the Lord. Romans 8:11 speaks of *“the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead.”*

In Relation to Christ's Ministry to the Church in This Dispensation

Christ gave commandments to His apostles through the Holy Ghost (Acts 1:1,2). The Holy Spirit is so vitally connected with the ministry of the servants of the Lord that it seems quite fitting that it should have been He who inspired the Lord Jesus to give commandments to the disciples as they were being sent forth. The same Saviour who commanded those first disciples through the Holy Spirit is guiding and directing our endeavors through the same blessed Spirit. We are not dependent on the bodily presence of the Lord in order to be led by Him. Such leading is accomplished through the Holy Ghost.

★NOTE to instructor:

Question to be answered by class discussion and/or other appropriate method:

★*After having purchased redemption by His death and resurrection, what is the most important thing Jesus has done for Christians?*

Christ is the bestower of the Holy Spirit. In Peter's Pentecost Day sermon, explaining the outpouring of the Holy Spirit which astounded everyone in Jerusalem, he said, concerning Jesus, *“Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear”* (Acts 2:33). This was in fulfillment of the promise of the Lord to His disciples, *“But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father...”* (John 15:26). One of the most important things, if not the most important, which Jesus has done for Christians, after having purchased redemption by His death and resurrection, is to baptize them with the Holy Ghost. John the Baptist was led of the Spirit to speak of the coming of Jesus, and the one great thing which he said would characterize His coming was *“he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire”* (Matthew 3:11). So vitally was the Spirit present in all the ministry of the Saviour it is no wonder that He was anxious that those who were to carry on His work should likewise be empowered by the same mighty Spirit. How wonderful to know that this is our privilege even today! In fact, how else can His work be accomplished?

CLOSING ACTIVITY: The principle work of the Holy Spirit is to bring man to the place where he will believe in Christ and enter into the life obtainable only through faith in the atoning work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Two things are necessary before a man can be saved.

For class discussion ask these questions: (1) What are these two things, which the Spirit accomplishes?
(2) What do you believe is and is not our part, as believers and witnesses, in this process?

If you are working alone, write your answers on the back of the Individual Worksheet at the end of this lesson.

THE WORKS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Part 1

INDIVIDUAL STUDY: If you are studying alone, answer the following questions. You may detach this page and submit it for grading.

GROUP STUDY: It is permissible to remove this page and photo sufficient copies for classroom use, if desired.

1. *What three passages of Scripture specifically attribute the act of creation to the three members of the Godhead? Are they contradictory?* _____

2. *What does the Holy Spirit convict man of? Explain.* _____

3. *Is the most important work of the Holy Spirit in connection with us as believers or with the Lord Jesus Christ?*

4. *How was the Holy Spirit connected with the death and resurrection of Jesus?* _____

5. *After having purchased redemption by His death and resurrection, what is the most important thing Jesus had done for Christians?* _____

THE WORKS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT Part II

AIM: When the Holy Spirit moves upon and through our own hearts, we come to closer grips with the mighty dynamic power of God and are greatly blessed thereby. In this lesson we deal exclusively with the work of the Holy Spirit in relation to salvation. We will emphasize the work of salvation that is experienced in the heart of the believer, but we must bear in mind that the ministry of the Holy Spirit all through human history, and before, has had this as His ultimate goal.

KEY VERSES:

“Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother’s womb, and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.” (John 3:3-6).

“It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life” (John 6:63).

OPENING ACTIVITY: Listed below are six of the most important features of the ministry of the Holy Spirit in behalf of the newly-born Christian. Either make individual copies for each class member, or write this on the chalkboard for the group to work on together. Please read the following verses* and match them with the correct statement below:

- | | |
|--|------------------|
| 1. The believer is sanctified by the Holy Spirit. | Reference: _____ |
| 2. The believer is enabled to mortify the flesh through the Holy Spirit. | Reference: _____ |
| 3. The Holy Spirit bears fruit in the believer’s life. | Reference: _____ |
| 4. The Holy Spirit transforms the believer into the image of Christ. | Reference: _____ |
| 5. The Holy Spirit strengthens the believer for greater revelations of Christ. | Reference: _____ |
| 6. The Holy Spirit leads the sons of God. | Reference: _____ |

* Match these verses with the statements above: 2 Corinthians 3:18; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; Ephesians 3:16-19; Romans 8:5-13; John 16:13; and Galatians 5:22,23.

**THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT WITH
RELATION TO THE CHRISTIAN BELIEVER**

★NOTE to instructor:

Question to be answered by class discussion and/or other appropriate method:

★What is the work of the Holy Spirit in salvation? Use Scripture references.

The Work of the Holy Spirit in Salvation

We have already seen the very important work of the Holy Spirit in the heart of the unbeliever with regard to

conviction of sin, righteousness and judgment. Our purpose now is to follow on from there and see the actual miracle of salvation being wrought in the heart by the Holy Ghost.

The believer is born again by the Holy Spirit (John 3:3-6; 6:63). Being born again is the reception of the life of Christ in the human spirit. Salvation is not merely changing our beliefs or our ways; it is a miraculous reception of spiritual life in the soul of man who before this is *“dead in trespasses and sins.”* This operation is accomplished by the Holy Spirit indwelling the heart in answer to faith in the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ.

When a man is born again, the life which has been lost through sin is generated again and we say he is regenerated—he is born again (Titus 3:5). A born again

Christian is literally one in whom the Holy Spirit dwells (Romans 8:9). His body becomes a temple for the sanctifying presence of the Holy Ghost (I Corinthians 6:19).

The Holy Spirit bears witness to the believer's sonship (I John 5:10; Romans 8:16; I John 3:24; Galatians 4:6)

Let's take a look at Romans 8:16: "*The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.*" The witness that is born to us is that we are in the family of God. We are sons of God. A new relationship has been established and there need be no mistake about it. A new kinship has been brought into being. The Holy Spirit witnesses within the confines of our being when the new relationship with God becomes a reality in our lives. There is a deep, real witness that is difficult to explain, but none the less positive to experience. When we are born of the Spirit, we know we are the sons of God. Notice that it is not our relationship to God, but—far better—His relationship to us, to which the Spirit bears witness. The blessed truth which is witnessed to our heart is that God, the mighty Lord of glory, is our Father. There is a vast difference between looking in our own hearts for the presence or absence of some emotion and being convinced by the Holy Spirit that God is our heavenly Father. Let us recognize the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit and thereby permit Him to do all that He has been sent to accomplish in us.

The Holy Spirit baptizes the believer into the body of Christ (I Corinthians 12:12,13). Much confusion has arisen over this verse because some have taught that it was referring to the baptism with the Holy Spirit such as the disciples received on the day of Pentecost. Thus it has been claimed that all receive the baptism with the Holy Spirit when they are saved. There is a vital difference between the Holy Spirit baptizing believers into the body of Christ, an operation of the Holy Spirit, and being baptized with the Holy Ghost, which is an operation of Jesus (Mark 1:8). One has to do with our position in Christ, while the other has to do with power for service.

This verse (I Corinthians 12:13) teaches that every believer is made a member of the body of Christ—the Church—through an operation of the Holy Spirit which is called a baptism. Baptism signifies death, burial and resurrection. The sinner is said to be baptized into the body of Christ because by faith he takes the place of dying with Christ on Calvary and rising in newness of life in union with Christ Jesus. Water baptism is an outward symbol of that which is actually accomplished by the Holy Ghost.

The Holy Spirit seals the believer (Ephesians 1:13,14; 4:30). The sealing of the believer brings out the thought of ownership. When we are saved, God places His seal of ownership upon us. The seal of God's ownership of His saints is the presence of the Holy Spirit indwelling their hearts. This is an earnest or pledge that we are His until the day when He shall return to take us unto Himself (2 Timothy 2:19).

It was the Holy Spirit who made it possible for us to go this far in God's great redemptive plan and it is the same Spirit who shall complete the work. The day shall come when time shall be no more and on that day it will be the same Spirit who shall present us faultless before the throne of God and we shall take our place at the side of Jesus Christ. We are a new creation in Christ Jesus, created to do the will of God because we so choose to do it. Let us therefore continue to so choose that the Holy Spirit will have the liberty to finish the work and so present us to God on that great day.

The Work of the Holy Spirit Subsequent to Salvation

After the human heart has been regenerated by the Spirit of God and the life of Christ has been imparted—one has been born again—the Holy Spirit does not leave. Were it so, the new Christian would soon slip back into his former ways; but the Holy Spirit has a gracious continuing ministry which He seeks to perform for every believer and which is indeed the secret of his progress and strength in his new spiritual life. In the following two sections we shall endeavor to touch upon some of the most important features of the ministry of the Holy Spirit in behalf of the newly-born Christian.

The believer is sanctified by the Holy Spirit (2 Thesalonians 2:13; 1 Peter 1:2). These two passages emphasize what we might call the process of salvation. It is through the choosing of the Father, the setting apart or sanctifying of the Holy Spirit, the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus, and a belief in the truth of the Word of God. The believer is wholly unconscious of this important ministry of the Spirit, but it is of vital importance to his salvation. The presence of the Holy Spirit in the heart of the believer is that which continues to set him apart from the world for the service and glory of God.

That which is set apart for God must also be clean, and here we come to the second aspect of the word "sanctification." The Holy Spirit cleanses the heart of the believer. This is a progressive ministry and one which every Christian constantly needs. The world, the flesh and the devil are always present and a Christian is as much in need of help from God as an unsaved man. Just as a sinner cannot save himself, so a Christian cannot sanctify himself apart from the Holy Spirit. God has provided daily victory for us through the power of the Spirit. We can expect to enjoy this gracious ministry of the Spirit as we believe and yield to Him.

★NOTE to instructor:

Question to be answered by class discussion and/or other appropriate method:

★*What is our only hope of living a sanctified life unto the Lord? (See Romans 8:5-13).*

The believer is enabled to mortify the flesh through the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:5-13). The word "carnal" means "fleshly" and Paul tells us it is impossible to do the will of

God with the carnal mind, for *“it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God”* (vs. 7 & 8). Thank God for His Holy Spirit by whom we are enabled to mortify—make dead—the flesh and live victoriously in the Spirit. This is our only hope of living a sanctified life unto the Lord.

It is the Spirit within, living His life, thinking His thoughts and doing His deeds that builds within us the kind of temple in which God is pleased to dwell (Romans 8:1,3,4). We mortify the deeds of the flesh by choosing to walk under the guidance and by the power of the indwelling Spirit. We must mortify the flesh by placing no value upon it; in choosing to yield to the Spirit within He brings into operation His power and we thereby walk in Him.

The Holy Spirit bears fruit in the believer's life (Galatians 5:22,23; Romans 14:17; 15:13). The fruit of the Spirit spoken of in Galatians 5:22,23 is a description of the characteristics of the Holy Spirit Himself. These are not developments of natural characteristics; they are the result of the Holy Spirit living His life within the believer. If the believer would but yield himself to the inner presence of the Holy Spirit and would cooperate with Him, he would begin to see this fruit being manifested. It is in this manner that the Holy Spirit brings the believer into a place of sanctification. This fruit grows as the result of the inner presence of the Holy Spirit in the Christian life, and is dependent upon a constant abiding in Christ Jesus (John 15:4,5).

The Holy Spirit transforms the believer into the image of Christ (2 Corinthians 3:18). While we are reflecting the glory of the Lord so that others can see it, something is taking place within our own lives. We are being changed by the operation of the Holy Spirit, into the same image of Christ which we are endeavoring to reflect. Instead of the self-centered interests which had formerly been the directing influences of life, there now comes the powerful personality of God, the Holy Ghost, who step by step, begins to bring into prominence the character and nature of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Holy Spirit strengthens the believer for greater revelations of Christ (Ephesians 3:16-19). As the Holy Spirit glorifies Christ to the mind of the believer and shows him His eternal glory, the believer is made to know that the glory of Christ belongs to him and that as he further yields himself to the gracious ministry of the Spirit, he shall experience and know that glory within himself. This ministry of revelation, which the Holy Spirit exercises upon the renewed, spiritual mind of the believer, is for the purpose of bringing him to the place where he shall be filled with all the fullness of God.

The Holy Spirit leads the sons of God (Romans 8:14; Galatians 5:18; and John 16:13). This is one of the greatest privileges of the children of the Lord—to be led by the omniscient, unerring guidance of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit knows the way and will lead us in it if we will yield to His guidance. Also He has sufficient power to take the believer successfully along the pathway of eternal life and will give that power to every believing soul (Ephesians 3:20).

The Holy Spirit's Work in Connection With Ministry and Service

If our thinking has embraced the teaching which has led us to this point, we have come to the realization that the Holy Spirit has been active in every phase of our living and shall continue to be so throughout the coming unending eternity. We also understand that each act of the Holy Spirit has had a definite purpose. Part of that is that He has been specially sent and authorized by both the Father and the Son to give to the believer certain things that will equip him to be an instrument of righteousness.

★NOTE to instructor:

Question to be answered by class discussion and/or other appropriate method:

★*What things does the Holy Spirit give to the believer to equip him to be an instrument of righteousness?*

The Holy Spirit baptizes and infills, giving power for service. The commission given by Jesus in Mark 16:15 had reference to the earthly ministry of the believer, but He was careful to bring out in the 17th and 18th verses that the signs which should follow their ministry would come as the result of a power that was not resident by human nature, in the believer. This was why He told them to go into Jerusalem and wait until the Spirit came upon them to endue them with power that they might perform these miracles and signs (Luke 24:49). Spiritual ministry and service is always pictured in the Scriptures, as being accomplished by the power of the Holy Spirit rather than through the human abilities of the servants of the Lord (Zechariah 4:6). The baptism with the Holy Ghost is definitely distinct from, and subsequent to, His regenerating work in the hearts of the unsaved. This baptism is especially that men might have the necessary power to carry on the spirit ministry which has been committed unto them.

The Holy Spirit reveals and gives understanding of the Word of God (1 Corinthians 2:11-14). Certainly there is none so able to teach us as the Holy Spirit, for the author of a book is better able to explain what he really meant by what he said than all the critics who might think they understood the writer's purpose (2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21). It is a remarkable thing to realize that every believer can have the author of the Bible as his own personal teacher and guide into all the truths of the Book. Even the humblest believer can have the greatest of all teachers as his personal instructor—the third person of the Godhead, the blessed Holy Spirit. Apart from the teaching ministry of the Spirit, men would have to rely on their own intellectual understanding of the Bible, and how impossible it would be for them to know and understand God's message! The Holy Spirit performed a specific ministry of inspiration for the writing of the Word of God, but He also has a specific ministry in revealing its spiritual truth to the hearts of those who read and hear it. The Word of God is life-giving only when it is anointed and applied by the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit helps the believer to pray (Romans 8:26,27; Ephesians 6:18; and Jude 20). Along with a study of the Word of God, prayer is the chief source of the Christian's strength for his daily life and his constant battle with the enemies of his soul. The Holy Spirit is vitally connected with both of these sources of Christian life and power. Praying in the strength and wisdom of the flesh is very difficult and trying. It is hard to realize the presence of the God to whom you are speaking. It is hard to exercise faith for things you cannot see. It is difficult to be burdened for that which you do not feel. It is almost impossible to have wisdom to know how to pray about things that are beyond your human comprehension. But all this is changed when the Holy Spirit anoints our hearts and minds. The presence of God becomes real and the Spirit opens our spiritual understanding. Faith is simple as God comes so near. The attitude of heart which will be given to the believer by the Holy Spirit is that which was indicated by Jesus in Matthew 6:33.

The Holy Spirit gives power for preaching (I Corinthians 2:4; I Thessalonians 1:5). Effectual preaching of the gospel must be under the anointing of the Holy Spirit. Nothing is more impossible than to try to bring men to realize the value, and their need, of spiritual things unless the message is delivered under the power of the Holy Spirit. Jesus testified that he was especially anointed for His preaching ministry (Luke 4:18,19), and if it was necessary for Him it most certainly is for all lesser servants of the cross. The power to win souls to Christ lies not in the ability of the Christian to think and speak with great ease and logic, but in the simple, direct truth of the saving power of Jesus Christ. It is this that the Spirit of God anoints, for if He is in the simply spoken Word, His power is also there to give it the kind of effectiveness that will bring conviction to the heart of the one listening. The Spirit of God will anoint even the simplest words if given according to His will and purpose.

CLOSING ACTIVITY: With a wide understanding now of the work of the Holy Spirit with relation to Christian believers, ask your class to write a poem, song or letter praising God for the presence and work of the Holy Spirit in and through their lives!

If you are working alone, write your response on the back of the Individual Worksheet at the end of this lesson.

★NOTE to instructor:

Question to be answered by class discussion and/or other appropriate method:

★What is the Holy Spirit's work in connection with the resurrection?

The Holy Spirit's Work in Connection With the Resurrection

Read Romans 8:11. Christ's body was absolutely necessary to our redemption for it was through its sacrifice that He obtained forgiveness for our sins. God raised the body of Jesus from the dead and He now lives in a glorified, resurrected, human body. In like manner the Lord is interested in the final victory of salvation being manifested in our bodies as well. This final victory will be accomplished by the Holy Spirit who indwells us. We do not understand the mystery, but we are here told that the Holy Spirit will "quicken," or "make alive," our mortal bodies, at which time they will be made like unto Christ's glorious body (Philippians 3:20,21). But this quickening ministry of the Holy Spirit with relation to our bodies is not limited to future resurrection. It is not merely a glorified body with which He has to do, but our mortal body—this very body of flesh in which we now live. Divine healing is nothing more or less than the Holy Spirit quickening this mortal body. It is a foretaste of that great immortal, resurrection life which is to be ours in the days to come.

THE WORKS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT Part II

INDIVIDUAL STUDY: If you are studying alone, answer the following questions. You may detach this page and submit it for grading.

GROUP STUDY: It is permissible to remove this page and photo sufficient copies for classroom use, if desired.

1. *What is the work of the Holy Spirit in salvation? Use Scripture references.* _____

2. *What is our only hope of living a sanctified life unto the Lord? (See Romans 8:5-13).* _____

3. *What things does the Holy Spirit give to the believer to equip him to be an instrument of righteousness?* _____

4. *What is the Holy Spirit's work in connection with the resurrection?* _____

OFFENCES AGAINST THE HOLY SPIRIT

AIM: To understand just what constitutes an offence or sin against the Spirit, for His ministry is most vital to both the unsaved and the Christian, as without the Holy Spirit men could never be saved, nor could a Christian live a victorious life in Christ. The offences against the Holy Spirit are emphasized in this lesson that we might be warned to avoid them at all cost.

KEY VERSES:

See Acts 7:51; Hebrews 10:28,29; Matthew 12:31,32; Ephesians 4:30; Acts 5:3,4; and I Thessalonians 5:19.

OPENING ACTIVITY: Work alone or in groups and come up with a paragraph that tells why you believe that without the Holy Spirit men could never be saved, nor could a Christian live a victorious life in Christ.

INTRODUCTION

We must never lose sight of the fact that the Holy Spirit is a person, not a power or influence. Because of this it is possible for men to offend and sin against Him.

Although the Holy Spirit was never manifested in human form, He is just as much a person as is Jesus Christ. It is not the power of the Holy Spirit that is in the earth today but the presence of the person whose name is Holy Spirit. It is not that the believer is baptized with power but is indwelt by the person of the Holy Spirit. The power of God manifested emanates from the personal presence of God, the Holy Ghost. We are not led into truth by an influence, but by the person of the Holy Spirit (John 16:13,14).

A proper understanding of man's relationship with God is therefore dependent upon our understanding of the Holy Spirit as a person before we can fully understand that which He is here to do. Let us therefore treat Him as a person and know that He can be pleased or offended. We shall endeavor to further discuss the several manners in which the person of man can offend the person of the Holy Spirit.

The six offences we will mention have been generally divided into two groups, although it may be that there is some overlapping. In the majority of cases, though, the distinction between those committed by the unsaved and Christians will hold.

OFFENCES AGAINST THE HOLY SPIRIT COMMITTED BY UNBELIEVERS

Resisting the Holy Spirit

★NOTE to instructor:

Questions to be answered by class discussion and/or other appropriate method:

★How is resisting the Holy Spirit manifested? What calamity befalls a soul who resists the Spirit?

"Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost..." (Acts 7:51). We have already seen that one of the chief ministries of the Holy Spirit is to deal with men concerning the sinfulness of sin, the possibility of righteousness through Christ in spite of that sin, and the reality of judgment should the offer of righteousness be rejected. This the Spirit ever seeks to do in the hearts of the unregenerate in order that he may be led to God. The Spirit is very patient and persistent in His endeavors, but it is possible for man to stubbornly resist His pleadings.

The Holy Spirit was striving with men in the days preceding the flood but everyone, outside of the family of Noah, resisted His attempts to turn him from his sin to God. So great and persistent was man's determination to continue in sin that the Lord said, *"My spirit shall not always strive with man,"* and this gracious ministry of the Spirit was withdrawn and the great judgment of the flood was announced.

The men on the council at Jerusalem were not able to reason against the truth that Stephen preached in the power of the Spirit. *"They were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake"* (Acts 6:10). The truth of what Stephen preached was apparent but they would not yield their hearts. This is typical of those who resist the Spirit. They recognize that God is speaking but stubbornly refuse to humble their hearts before the truth.

It is important to notice how resisting the Spirit is manifested. Stephen said, *"Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye"* (Acts 7:51). What was it that their fathers had done in resisting the Holy Spirit? The answer is given in verse 52: *"Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they*

have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One..." Stephen calls refusing to hearken to the prophets of the Lord and persecuting His servants, resisting the Holy Ghost. They were even at that moment resisting the message he was bringing to them.

The terrible calamity that befalls a soul who resists the Spirit is that he is lost eternally. No one can be saved apart from the convicting and regenerating work of the Spirit. Thus when he resists the Spirit there is absolutely no possibility of his ever being able to come to God for salvation. There just is no other way. The Lord is very merciful and He will forgive resistance for perhaps a long time, but there comes a moment when the soul resists for the last time and has forever rejected the love of God. (See Proverbs 1:23-33.)

Insulting, or Doing Despite unto the Holy Spirit

"He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" (Hebrews 10:28,29). Doing *"despite unto the Spirit of grace"* is literally *"insulting the Spirit of grace."*

It is the work of the Holy Spirit to present the atoning work of Jesus Christ to the unsaved, pointing out the cleansing power of the blood of the Saviour. When the sinner refuses to accept Christ he is spurning, or treading under foot, the Saviour Himself and profaning the precious blood that was shed in his behalf. This is actually insulting the love of God that is so fully manifested in His matchless grace. Such an action indicates that the sinner either does not believe he needs salvation or doubts that Christ can save him. To resist the Spirit's appeal, therefore, is to insult the Godhead and cut off all hope of salvation. Those who despised Moses' law were instantly punished by death. To spurn God's grace is an infinitely greater crime and must carry a heavier and eternal punishment.

Blaspheming the Holy Spirit — the Unpardonable Sin

★NOTE to instructor:

Question to be answered by class discussion and/or other appropriate method:

★*What does it mean to blaspheme the Holy Spirit?*

Much has been said of that which is popularly called "the unpardonable sin." In many instances and in the heart of many people, there is a great deal of misunderstanding in regard to it. The devil even uses it to confuse and defeat many from coming to an acceptance of Jesus Christ as their Saviour. There is no doubt that he who resists and does despite unto the Spirit of grace is committing an unpardonable sin if he continues in his rebellion against the means of grace. But let us be

persuaded that, *"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness"* (1 John 1:9). Let us clearly understand that continued rejection of Jesus Christ will ultimately cause the eternal loss of the one who so rejects; and also that each rejection of the ministry of the Holy Spirit as He brings conviction to an individual's heart, will harden that heart just a little more until rejection will become easier with each successive resistance. But this does not constitute the unpardonable sin.

"Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come" (Matthew 12:31,32). Here is the only specific sin mentioned in the Bible for which there is no forgiveness. No prayer will avail; no intercession will be sufficient.

What is this dire transgression? Who can commit it? It is called blaspheming the Holy Spirit. Most Bible teachers believe that it can be committed only by the unsaved. Undoubtedly the Pharisees, in Matthew 12, were guilty of this sin. Jesus had just healed a man who was *"...possessed with a devil, blind, and dumb...insomuch that the blind and dumb both spake and saw"* (vs. 22). *"But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils"* (vs. 24); but Jesus said, *"...I cast out devils by the Spirit of God..."* (vs. 28). Beelzebub was recognized as the prince of devils or Satan himself. Some believe that the name indicates that he was looked upon as the lord of refuse and uncleanness. The Pharisees were attributing the work of the holy Son of God to a god of filth and uncleanness. This gives us the key to what the sin against the Holy Ghost actually is. It is willfully ascribing to the devil a work that is manifestly wrought by the Holy Spirit. Note Mark 3:29,30: *"He that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation: because they said, He hath an unclean spirit."* Jesus pronounced this grave judgment upon the Pharisees *"because they said, He hath an unclean spirit."*

He that deliberately attributes the work of the Holy Ghost to the devil or his evil demons is in danger of eternal damnation. There are those who ridicule what they call "the slaughterhouse religion." By that, they mean those who believe in the necessity of the blood of Jesus Christ for the remission of sin, are ignorant, superstitious and pagan. They attribute the teaching of "the blood of Christ" to an ignorant spirit and thereby hold in disrepute the Holy Ghost whose principle ministry is to present this truth to the hearts of men.

★NOTE to instructor:

Question to be answered by class discussion and/or other appropriate method:

★*Why is blasphemy against the Holy Spirit a greater sin than blasphemy against Jesus?*

Why is blasphemy against the Holy Ghost a greater sin than blasphemy against Jesus? Both the Holy Spirit and Jesus are equally members of the Godhead. It will be noticed that Jesus specifically contrasts sin against the Holy Ghost and against the "Son of Man." He says sin against the Son of Man will be forgiven. He is speaking of Himself in His human manifestation while the Spirit is a divine manifestation. The Son of Man is God in humility, while the Spirit is God in His full majesty. The Son of Man spoke from earth while the Spirit speaks from heaven. A person might innocently fail to recognize Jesus, the Son of Man, in the garments of His flesh, but where the Spirit is recognized and deliberately blasphemed there is no forgiveness. A man could be forgiven for insulting a king if he were disguised in the clothes of a commoner, but it would be a different matter if the same insult were made toward the king when clothed in his royal robes. God has very carefully warned men concerning their attitude toward the works of the Holy Spirit. It behooves each one to take special care not to speak lightly of any of the manifestations of the Spirit's presence and power.

OFFENCES AGAINST THE HOLY SPIRIT COMMITTED BY BELIEVERS

Grieving the Holy Spirit

"And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption" (Ephesians 4:30). The thought of grieving the Holy Spirit emphasizes His personality in a definite way. That which is impersonal cannot be grieved. It has been noted that the higher the type of life or the development of personality the greater the capacity for suffering. It is no doubt true that the Holy Spirit is grieved by things that might never trouble us whatever. The Christian needs to be very careful not to grieve the Spirit for he is dependent upon His blessing in his life.

The idea of grieving implies the thought of love. One never grieves over another unless he loves him. We may be sorry to hear of the failure of a certain individual, but we only grieve over him if we definitely love him. The Holy Spirit influences and guides us by love. He does not force us. He seeks our obedience. We grieve Him when we disobey His promptings. He is holy and we grieve Him when we allow that which is unholy to remain and be a part of our lives. Note Ephesians 4:31 for some things which grieve the Spirit. There is no doubt that there is a vital relationship between power in a Christian's life and the holiness of his character. The power which we have comes from the Holy Spirit. It is not unlikely that He withholds that power when He is grieved.

Lying to the Holy Spirit

"But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land? While it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou has not lied unto men, but unto God" (Acts 5:3,4). This is a most serious offence. Its enormity can be realized as we consider the drastic penalty which was meted out to both Ananias and Sapphira: *"And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost: and great fear came on all them that heard these things"* (Acts 5:5); *"Then Peter said unto her, (Sapphira), How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door, and shall carry thee out. Then fell she down straightway at his feet, and yielded up the ghost..."* (vs. 9,10).

Lying to the Holy Spirit is one of the most frequent offences against the Spirit which Christians commit. Whenever we consecrate anything to the Lord, and do not follow through with that consecration, we are lying to the Holy Ghost. It may be money, time or service. It is better not to promise than to promise and fail to fulfill. It is well to be careful when we make a consecration to the Lord that we realize just what we are doing.

Some might say that this is not so serious, for people are not being stricken dead because they do not keep their promises to God today. That is true, but it is also true that God never changes His attitude toward sin. He manifested His attitude toward this sin in the beginning of the Church Age and He wants us to know that He still feels exactly the same about it now, and we will be judged accordingly.

Quenching the Holy Spirit

★NOTE to instructor:

Question to be answered by class discussion and/or other appropriate method:

★*In what ways does a believer quench the Holy Spirit?*

"Quench not the Spirit" (1 Thessalonians 5:19). The thought of quenching suggests a fire. We quench the Spirit when we do anything which will put out or cause the fire of the Spirit's presence to wane. Unbelief, criticism, fleshly manifestations are just a few of the things that will quench the Spirit. It usually has to do with the Spirit's moving in a public meeting. Generally speaking, resisting the Spirit has to do with His regenerative work; grieving the Spirit has to do with His indwelling presence; quenching the Spirit is in relation to His endowment of power.

The Word of God is very clear throughout in its teachings as to the method of ministry of the Holy Spirit. Whenever a Christian goes, or even allows himself to feel, contrary to the revealed purpose of God, he quenches the Spirit if he persists in going his own way. The method of the Spirit's working is not by the great ability in the hands of the believer, nor is the work of the Spirit enhanced by the powerful position that a believer may hold. He works only through the yielded heart; any other kind of heart will quench the Spirit.

CLOSING ACTIVITY: Ask class members to make a simple outline of the six offences against the Holy Spirit, discussed in lesson six, under the two different categories. Briefly describe each one, giving scriptural evidence. They are to then share these together.

If you are working alone write your response on the back of the Individual Worksheet at the end of this lesson.

OFFENCES AGAINST THE HOLY SPIRIT

INDIVIDUAL STUDY: If you are studying alone, answer the following questions. You may detach this page and submit it for grading.

GROUP STUDY: It is permissible to remove this page and photo sufficient copies for classroom use, if desired.

1. How is resisting the Holy Spirit manifested? What calamity befalls a soul who resists the Spirit? _____

2. What does it mean to blaspheme the Holy Spirit? _____

3. Why is blasphemy against the Holy Spirit a greater sin than blasphemy against Jesus? _____

4. In what ways does a believer quench the Holy Spirit? _____

THE FALL OF MAN

Part 1

AIM: To understand the fall of man by first finding out his original position and purpose in the plan of God. We cannot understand the fall until we understand from whence he fell. We will also take a look at the origin of sin and its entrance into humanity.

KEY VERSES:

“And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth” (Genesis 1:26).

OPENING ACTIVITY: Read Genesis 3:1-6 and James 1:14,15. Reviewing Genesis 3:4-6 list the steps in the fall of Adam and Eve, which led them from sinlessness to sin.

INTRODUCTION

“We believe that man was created in the image of God before whom he walked in holiness and purity, but that by voluntary disobedience and transgression, he fell from the Eden of purity and innocence to the depths of sin and iniquity, and that in consequence of this, all mankind are sinners sold unto Satan, sinners not by constraint but by choice, shapen in iniquity and utterly void by nature of the holiness required by the law of God, positively inclined to evil, guilty and without excuse, justly deserving the condemnation of a just and holy God.” (Taken from *Declaration of Faith* by Aimee Semple McPherson.)

Before we can understand the fall of man we must first find out his original position and purpose in the plan of God. The thought of the littleness of man in relation to the immensity of the universe is counterbalanced as we realize the outstanding place which man is given in the Word of God. He is pictured to us as the crown of God's creation and the object of His special care. We have no record of God being concerned about any other created beings as He is about man. The human race is the object of God's love, so much so that He was willing to give His only begotten Son that man might be redeemed. All that we know about God Himself is in His relationship to man. Man's position is further enhanced as we begin to analyze the marvelous nature and capabilities which God has placed within the human being (Psalm 139:14). Next to God Himself, man is the greatest of all living beings.

THE ORIGIN OF MAN

(Genesis 1:26)

★NOTE to instructor:

Questions to be answered by class discussion and/or other appropriate method:

★*What is the distinction between man and the animals? What does this do to the theory of evolution?*

Exponents of the false theory of evolution would have us think that man today is the direct result of continuous development from the lowest form of life. It is hardly necessary to say that this contention is completely contrary to the teaching of the Holy Scriptures. We are taught by the Word of God that man sprang forth from the special creative hand of God, perfect in manhood. Even as God created all other things on the earth perfect and complete at the first drawing of the breath of life in their lungs, in like manner did He create man. Since the evolutionist has absolutely no proof to substantiate his theory, we can rest our thought on the origin of man in the Biblical declaration: “*And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul*” (Genesis 2:7). The Hebrew word for “dust” is “aphar” which means the finest and cleanest particles of the soil. This represents a scientific fact, for the twenty-six or more elements in man's body are all found in the soil.

In understanding the origin of man, we also discover that man is certainly more than just a highly intelligent animal. The appetites and desires of man's body are essentially the same as those of the animal: the desire for preservation and propagation. Within the animal-self of man there is perfect harmony. BUT there is also within man an entirely different self. One whose attributes are not sensual—related to the body, but which are moral and spiritual and chiefly related to ideals outside of the body. The soul-self in man is not just a more highly developed animal-self, but an entirely different kind of self, possessing attributes never found in the animal.

Within the animal-self of man there is perfect harmony and within the soul-self of man there is perfect harmony, but between the two there is often the fiercest conflict. The animal-self is interested in the body while the soul-self is interested in moral and spiritual ideals that are not directly related to the body. It is this that makes the great distinction between man and the animals. In the brute there is no moral conception whatever, while in man there is always the conscious appeal to a higher moral and spiritual ideal. This is not some instinct of the animal that is more highly developed, but is an entirely different attribute. Evolution completely fails to account for this principle in man. The Bible recognizes it as the result of the life of God breathed in man by the Creator Himself. It is, no doubt, the image of God in man.

THE NATURE OF MAN (Genesis 1:26,27)

★NOTE to instructor:

Question to be answered by class discussion and/or other appropriate method:

★What does the Bible mean when it says that man was created in the "image and likeness" of God?

What does the Bible mean when it says that man was created in the "image and likeness" of God? To understand the likeness between God and man we must understand what are the constituent elements of man's nature. That man is composed of spirit, soul and body is clearly taught in the Scripture (1 Thessalonians 5:23).

Is the Physical Part of Man Created In the Image of God?

Yes—even in its sinful condition—for even after the flood men were warned not to kill each other because by so doing they were destroying that which was made in the image of God (Genesis 9:6). The chief likeness, however, is in the soul and spirit. We must take into consideration that God in His physical manifestation came in the form of man and to this very hour it is the man Christ Jesus who sits at the right hand of the majesty on high as our High Priest. Just how much the fall into sin altered the appearance of Adam it is impossible to say, but in looking to the end of our salvation when this mortal shall put on immortality we know Him "who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself" (Philippians 3:21).

We must therefore respect and honor the body which God has given us for even in its fallen state it houses the Spirit of God within if we have been regenerated by faith in Jesus Christ.

Is the Soul of Man Created in the Image of God?

Only the physical part of man is material; his soul and spirit are not able to be touched by human hands for they are not material. They are none the less real, however, for without them man could not be (Genesis 2:7). Man's soul is the center for his self-consciousness. This is the part of man which constitutes his personality and makes him different from another. This is that part of man which gives life to the body and meaning to its actions. This is the part which God holds responsible for the actions of the body, for it is that which determines both the thoughts and the actions of the man.

Man has been created in the image of God and is ruled by reason and free-will. It is this power of reason and free-will in man that is created in the image of God. It is the intellectual capacity in man that enables him to understand the meaning of things by the process of logical thinking which sets him apart from the animals and gives him kinship with God. It is his moral ability which makes him know the difference between right and wrong and his free-will which enables him to choose either of the two which lifts man to the high place of possible fellowship with God. Certainly the soul of man was created in the image of God.

Distinct characteristics of the soul of man—the following are the outstanding characteristics which are found within the soul of man as the result of his being created in the image of God:

- | | |
|---------------|-------------|
| ●Intelligence | ●Conscience |
| ●Judgment | ●Faith |
| ●Thinking | ●Hope |
| ●Language | ●Religion |
| ●Love | |

Is the Spirit of Man Created in the Image of God?

Myer Pearlman in his book "Knowing the Doctrines of the Bible," makes the following statement in regard to the human spirit: "Indwelling all flesh is a God-given spirit in an individual form (Numbers 16:22; 27:16). This was fashioned by the Creator in the inward part of man's nature and is capable of renewal and development (Psalm 51:10). This spirit is the center and source of human life; the soul possesses and uses this life and expresses it through the body. In the beginning God breathed the spirit of life into an inanimate body and man became a living soul. This soul is embodied spirit, or a human spirit operating through a body, the combination of both constituting man, a soul. The soul survives death because it is energized by the spirit, yet both soul and spirit are inseparable because spirit is woven into the very texture of soul. They are fused and welded into one substance."

It is by man's spirit that he is God conscious; this is the contact point between man and God (John 4:24). It is by the worship of man's spirit that he comes into personal relationship with God. Man is therefore placed in a singular place of blessing among all earth's creatures in that he has the capability of knowing the things of God.

No other earthly creature has this ability (I Corinthians 2:11,12). It is certainly true that man's spirit is created in the image of God for it has the ability to join together with the Spirit of God to make man's whole being a center of worship, praise and blessing (Romans 8:16,17).

THE PROBLEM OF SIN

★NOTE to instructor:

Questions to be answered by class discussion and/or other appropriate method:

★Is God the author of sin? From where did sin come? How did sin first enter the human race?

One of the most perplexing questions which comes to the human mind is in relation to the presence and origin of sin. That all men are sinners cannot be denied, nor is it necessary for man to learn to sin. The principle of sin is in his very nature from the earliest days of his life. From whence came sin? Let us clearly understand that the Bible did not create the problem of sin. Sin was in the world long before the Bible was written. God is not the author of sin. Just because He is the creator of all things, it does not follow that He is the author of sin. The Scripture entirely excludes such a thing (Job 34:10). God could not be the author of sin for He is holy (Isaiah 6:3). There is no unrighteousness in Him (Deuteronomy 32:4; Psalm 92:15). He cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth He any man (James 1:13). He hates sin (Deuteronomy 25:16; Psalm 5:4; 11:5; Zechariah 8:17).

In order for sin to be sin, in the sense that there is guilt attached to it, it must be the free act of a responsible being—one who understands the difference between right and wrong. This is what we call a free moral agent. "The origin of sin is due to the first wrong choice of a free moral agent"—Leander S. Keyser. This must have taken place in the angelic world when Lucifer and some of the angels rebelled against the authority of God and raised their will above His (Isaiah 14:12-14).

The Origin of Sin in the Human Race

The third chapter of Genesis describes how sin first entered the human race. This is one of the most important chapters in the entire Bible. A complete grasp of its teachings is essential to our understanding of that which follows in the Scriptures. The story of the fall of man as given here is in absolute contradiction to the theory of evolution which purports to teach that man began at the very bottom of the moral ladder and now is climbing slowly upwards. On the contrary, this chapter declares that man began at the very top, in the image of God, and proceeded to tumble to the bottom. The origin of sin in the human race was due to the first wrong choice of Adam and Eve who were the first free moral agents placed on the earth. In order to be free moral agents it was necessary that they have the power of choice. We would not have had it otherwise. There could have been no blessing or glory to God from a race of mechanical men who have no conscience or will of

their own. It is easy for men to blame God for making it possible for man to sin, but these same arrogant critics would have been the first to complain if man had not been given the power of free choice. God was not interested in a race of mere automata.

The human race was created in such a way that it could receive and reciprocate the love of God. In order for love to be real it must be bestowed freely. Love is not love if it is given under compulsion. How was God to know whether this first man and woman loved Him? By giving them an opportunity to prove their love by a simple act of obedience. Adam and Eve did not need the fruit of that particular tree that God had asked them to refrain from. It was not necessary for either their happiness or their well-being. Man does not need sin. It has not added one moment of genuine pleasure to his life in any way.

There was no poison or evil in the fruit of that one tree. It was only wrong because God said they were not to eat thereof. In the moral economy which God was establishing here on earth sin was a possibility but not a necessity. Adam and Eve should never have converted that possibility into an actuality. Surrounded with everything for their every need, and duly warned by God of what the consequence of disobedience would be, we can only conclude that they were to blame for what they did. It is very important to bear this fact in mind: God did not permit Satan to coerce or overpower Adam and Eve. The serpent tempted them but he did not force them to eat of the forbidden fruit. The manner in which Satan came was a real trial, but it was not of such a nature as to overwhelm the original pair. This is true of all temptation. A successful temptation requires the cooperation of the individual tempted. He must yield, just as Adam and Eve yielded. They could blame Satan for tempting them, but they must blame themselves for yielding to the temptation. It was their responsibility that they sinned, and thus they bore the penalty.

The Entrance of Sin Into Humanity (Genesis 3:1-6)

In this lesson, we are primarily concerned with how sin entered the human race and brought man to the place where the judgment of death was his rightful due. It is a generally recognized truth that man is not what he was intended to be and that the reason for his being out of place is because of sin. The Bible, however, gives the only pure account of sin, for it alone reveals the holy nature of the God who was sinned against. The mystery of the ages is that God who is holy and all-wise could have ever permitted sin to exist, but since God has not chosen to reveal this mystery to our inquiring minds, He leaves us with but the one alternative of knowing how to be lifted from sin back into the place of fellowship with Him.

There are five definite steps in the fall of Adam and Eve which led them from sinlessness to sin. It is by continuing in these five things that man remains in sin and loses his fellowship with God.

1. They listened to the lies of Satan (Genesis 3:4). God had told them not to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil for if they did they would die. Satan contradicted God and implied that God wanted to keep them from the one thing which would lift them onto a higher plane of living. The first step in their downward flight was listening and considering such a possibility. Had Eve immediately turned from the insinuation of Satan's lie she would not have taken the downward step into sin. Her great mistake was in continuing the conversation.

2. Eve looked thoughtfully at the forbidden fruit (Genesis 3:6). We do not know how long they had lived in the Garden of Eden, but up to this time she had always looked at the tree with no thought in her mind that it was forbidden and had not troubled herself with any further consideration. But now, after listening to the lies she had just heard, she looked with new interest. Had she turned her eyes from it and trusted in the wisdom of her Maker she would not have made the next step toward sin.

3. If Eve had but turned away from listening to the lies of Satan and had refused to look at the forbidden fruit with the influence of the lies prompting her, she would not have begun to doubt God. Had she but reviewed her life in the Garden and thought of the supreme happiness that was hers and had considered that in every respect the things which God had given them had been for their own good, the doubt of God would have found no place in her thinking. But Satan's lies blinded her and she began to doubt God's love. She began to question the character of God. The more she doubted the more reasonable her doubts became. So she looked again, doubted some more and took the next step into sin.

4. She desired what God had prohibited. *"And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise"* (Genesis 3:6; see also I John 2:15,16). Notice that the appeal to sin was first to the physical, second to the soul, and third to the spirit.

5. They disobeyed God (Genesis 3:6; James 1:14,15). The fall of Adam and Eve into sin was brought about by their disobedience to the specific command of God. The command was given for their benefit, as are all the commandments given for the benefit of God's children. God does not prohibit things to His creatures that would be of benefit to them; He only commands to abstain from those things which will harm. Adam and Eve realized this after they had disobeyed, but then it was too late.

It would be well to note the similarity of the temptation and fall of Adam and Eve and the temptation successfully withstood by Jesus in the wilderness:

●Jesus was tempted to sin from the physical standpoint (Matthew 4:1,3,4). Although Jesus had fasted for forty days and was experiencing physical hunger, He did not even consider Satan's temptation to turn the stones into bread. His hunger to do the will of His Father was much greater than any physical hunger, so the suggestion of the devil was immediately cast aside.

●The soul of Jesus was tempted to sin (Matthew 4:5-7). The desire of man to rule the earth and to make even the laws of nature to be subject to him was certainly contained in this temptation, but again Jesus turned aside and refused to be tempted of the devil.

●Not because He was tempted of the devil, but the Spirit of Jesus suffered the temptation of the devil (Matthew 4:8-10). Once again Jesus turned immediately from the temptation of the devil. He knew the day would come when He would be the rightful ruler of all the nations of the earth, but before that day should come He must suffer the death and shame of the cross. Jesus would not be deceived for He knew that God's way was the only way. The devil might promise much but he does not have the power to keep his promises.

God's Word and Sin

★NOTE to instructor:

Questions to be answered by class discussion and/or other appropriate method:

★What was Eve's attitude toward the Word of God?
★What three things did she do that are still being done today?

A point that is often overlooked, in connection with the progress which led toward the fall of man, is Eve's attitude toward the Word of God. In giving instructions to Adam and Eve, the Lord had said, *"But of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die"* (Genesis 2:17). Eve should have immediately quoted the word of the Lord, informing Satan, as well as reassuring herself, of exactly what God had said. Instead of this she began to tamper with the Word of the Lord. Note three things she did:

1. She added to God's Word. She said, *"Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it"*—herself supplying the words "neither shall ye touch it" (Genesis 3:3). God had not said that, and by adding those words she made it appear as though God were unreasonable in His demands. It is always a dangerous thing to add to the plain word which God has spoken. (See Proverbs 30:6 and Revelation 22:18).

2. She altered God's word. Instead of saying, as God had, *"Thou shalt surely die,"* she supplied the words *"lest ye die"* (Genesis 2:17 and 3:3). The sharp point of the Spirit's sword was dulled, suggesting that there was only a possibility that they might die. Here again is a dangerous practice. When God speaks He says what He means and means exactly what He says.

3. She omitted part of God's word. Eve completely omitted God's solemn threat, *"Thou shalt surely die"* (Genesis 2:17). See what Revelation 22:19 says about omitting from God's word.

The enemies of the Lord are still busy doing these same three things today. His Word is either added to, altered or flatly denied. Modern skeptics have become quite adept at tampering with the Word of God. Whenever this is done, and the truth of the Bible is questioned, the way is wide open to a lowering of the moral standards by which men govern their lives, and sin becomes the natural consequence. The Bible, God's Word, is the only true source of light concerning God's will. Tamper with it and you are an easy prey to the devil. The tremendous tide of sin that is sweeping the land today can be directly attributed to the wave of unbelief in the Bible that is engulfing so many. Jesus overcame the temptations of Satan by the use of the Word of God. It is the only sure means of defense. Let us not change, omit, or add to the plain Word which God has given us!

The first temptation of man upon this earth is a perfect picture of the subtle course which the enemy follows when he seeks to lead a soul into sin. The devil did not appear before Eve and say, "I am Satan. I have come to turn your heart away from God. I am going to tempt you to sin so that you will die." If such had been his method, Eve would have fled from his presence. The enemy dealt so cunningly, so gradually, until Eve hardly realized where she was being led. If there is one lesson we should learn from this experience in the Garden of Eden, it is the utter necessity of staying away from the place of temptation. The tempter should never be parleyed with. If we will keep off temptation ground, we will not be subject to temptation.

Keeping Away From Temptation

★NOTE to instructor:

Question to be answered by class discussion and/or other appropriate method:

★*What lesson can we learn from Adam and Eve's experience in the Garden of Eden?*

CLOSING ACTIVITY: "A man would not jump into the Niagara River above the falls, and then expect that by some miracle God would keep him from being swept over the falls. A man would not put a match to a keg of powder and then expect that God would keep him from being blown to atoms. And yet there are rational men and women, who have—outwardly at least—turned away from evil and given their allegiance to God, who walk in the way of temptation and seem to expect that they will be delivered." — Clarence Macartney.

With this thought in mind, ask class members, "Are you walking in the way of temptation in your life? What areas are your greatest downfalls in regard to sinning? Is there anything that you are doing that helps to make the temptations in those areas more difficult to turn away from?"

Why not stop right now and ask the Lord to reveal to you how you can personally "keep off temptation ground." Then ask Him to give you the strength to follow through with your commitment to Him. Lead the class in this prayer.

If you are working alone, write your response on the back of the Individual Worksheet at the end of this lesson.

THE FALL OF MAN Part I

INDIVIDUAL STUDY: If you are studying alone, answer the following questions. You may detach this page and submit it for grading.

GROUP STUDY: It is permissible to remove this page and photo sufficient copies for classroom use, if desired.

1. *What is the distinction between man and the animals? What does this do to the theory of evolution?* _____

2. *What does the Bible mean when it says that man was created in the "image and likeness" of God?* _____

3. *Is God the author of sin? From where did sin come? How did sin first enter the human race?* _____

4. *What was Eve's attitude toward the Word of God? What three things did she do that are still being done today?*

5. *What lesson can we learn from Adam and Eve's experience in the Garden of Eden?* _____

THE FALL OF MAN

Part II

AIM: To see that Adam and Eve's sin was the outcome of an act of their own will and to take a look at the many results of the fall of man. We will also answer the question, "What is sin?"

KEY VERSE:

"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned... For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous" (Romans 5:12, 19).

OPENING ACTIVITY: "Man calls sin an accident; God calls it an abomination. Man calls sin a blunder; God calls it blindness. Man calls sin a chance; God calls it a choice. Man calls sin a defect; God calls it a disease. Man calls sin an error; God calls it enmity. Man calls sin fascination; God calls it fatality. Man calls sin infirmity; God calls it iniquity. Man calls sin luxury; God calls it lawlessness. Man calls sin a trifle; God calls it tragedy. Man calls sin a mistake; God calls it madness. Man calls sin a weakness; God calls it willfulness. There is only one remedy for sin—the precious blood of Christ, which was shed for the remission of sins on Calvary's Cross."
—Christian Digest

Ask the class to write down their definition of sin. They should give Scripture to back up their thoughts. Share some of the definitions.

If you are working alone, write your definition on the back of the Individual Worksheet at the end of this lesson.

THE RESULT OF THE FALL OF MAN

To understand fully the fall of man and the result of that fall, we must never lose sight of the fact that Adam and Eve were free moral agents. Had they chosen to resist the temptation of Satan they could have done so and continued, without sin, in fellowship with God. It is therefore clearly understood, by the Word of God, that their sin was the result of an act of their own will. There was no sin in the nature of our first parents; the temptation to sin came from without and as they yielded to it by the voluntary act of their own will, sin entered. They deliberately put their will above the will of God and overstepped the boundaries which God had set. In so doing they believed Satan rather than God and chose to go contrary to God's revealed will. It is this disbelief of God which took man into sin, and is that which, to this day, causes him to continue in sin.

Throughout the Word of God we are shown the calamitous results of the turning away from God and the following after Satan. The former relationship was sacrificed, and although man became wise in his knowledge of good and evil he lost his first estate by losing his sinless nature. Genesis 3:14-19 contains the direct judgment of God upon mankind. In verse 14 the serpent is cursed for the part he played. He, who was the most beautiful of God's creatures, was changed by the curse into the lowest and most hated. In verse 15 we find the first promise of the redeemer who was to come. Although man had sinned and the judgment of God must follow, God was not through with man. In verse 16

the woman receives her judgment. Sorrow and pain would henceforth be hers in motherhood and she would take the subordinate position in the marriage relationship. In verse 17 the earth is cursed for the sake of man and sorrow shall follow him in his labors with it all the days of his life. Verses 18 and 19 develop the burden of the earth's curse upon man's labor for he shall no longer have the light responsibility of Eden but shall toil ceaselessly to bring forth food to eat. Verse 19 also announces that physical death would come as a result of sin.

★NOTE to instructor:

Questions to be answered by class discussion and/or other appropriate method:

★*What effect did Adam and Eve's sin have on the rest of mankind that was to follow?*

By the above verses in Genesis 3 we understand the judgment that came upon Adam and Eve for their transgression, but the question which presses for an answer is what effect did their sin have on the rest of mankind that was to follow. We shall endeavor to find the exact condition and position of all mankind by seeing what the rest of the Scriptures have to teach.

The Sinful Condition of Men Is Directly Attributed to the Sin of Adam

(Romans 5:12, 19) The only possible truth which can be drawn from these Scriptures and many others is that what Adam was, we are. Every man comes under the penalty of the sin of Adam, for death has passed upon all men.

All Men Are Sinners

All men, regardless of their nationality or the degree of their sin, are sinners in the sight of God (Romans 3:9,10).

All Men Are Guilty of Sin

(Romans 3:19) If the law is broken, the curse abides on those breaking it. If all have broken the law, then all stand guilty before God and must answer for breaking it.

All Men Are Captives of Sin

(Romans 7:23) He who stands on his own merit lives in the jail of sin. The bars at the window permit him to look out and see the holiness of God, but he cannot get to it for the bars are too strong. There is only One who can tear the bars away and set us free.

All Men Are Condemned Because of Their Sin

(John 3:18) The sure hand of God's condemnation rested on Adam for his sin and with equal surety does that same hand rest upon all men who refuse the redemptive grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is not that they have to wait for that condemnation, it is already upon them.

Mankind Is Lost Because of Sin

(2 Corinthians 4:3; Luke 19:10). Man is eternally lost, without hope, unless he accepts the only way back to God through the sacrifice of his redeemer.

All Men Are Spiritually Dead Because of Their Sin

(Ephesians 2:1; Colossians 2:13) Those who are dead because of sin cannot become alive to God unless God reaches forth His hand to give them life. This He does only through Jesus Christ. Those who reject Christ remain dead unto God.

All Men Abide Under the Wrath of God

(John 3:36) God is not only displeased with sin but He is actually filled with wrath against sin and those who choose to abide in it.

All Sinful Men Are The Children Of The Devil

(John 8:44) Sin had killed the relationship that man had had with God. What he is now is the result of his association with the devil. Therefore Jesus said that they were of their father the devil.

The Entire Nature of Man Was Changed Because of Sin

(Ephesians 4:18, 4:27; Titus 1:15; Jeremiah 17:9; 2 Corinthians 7:1). This then is the condition of all men as a result of the fall of Adam and Eve. The picture is certainly one of desolation and helplessness. But there is hope, for God has sent His Son to redeem us from our sins. What we could not do Christ has done for us. He has borne our penalty upon the cross and freely offers us His salvation (2 Corinthians 5:21).

ADDITIONAL RESULTS OF THE FALL

We have been considering the results of the sin of Adam and Eve as they are seen in God's judgment upon sin and sinners. But there is another set of results which must not be overlooked and which we would like to emphasize here. That is the direct result of sin in the very nature of man himself. Human nature herself enacts some very real penalties upon the sinner that are entirely apart from the fact of man's responsibility to God and God's punishment for sin.

The Result of Sin as Seen in Man's Attitude Toward Him

Adam and Eve became immediately conscious of their own sin. Adam and Eve became conscious of two things with relation to their sin. They were conscious of the *pollution* of sin, and they were conscious of the *guilt* of their sin. The consciousness of their pollution led them to attempt to cover themselves. The consciousness of their guilt led them to try to hide from God. Sin's results are always twofold; it pollutes and at the same time makes one guilty. As black and as sad as the pollution and guilt of sin are, this very consciousness, in the soul of sinful man, is the one gleam of hope in an otherwise dark picture. Had man been dead to the shame of his guilt he would have been beyond help. He would not have differed from the evil spirits, who apparently feel no compunction of conscience as they persist in doing the will of Satan, and thus salvation would have been impossible.

Adam and Eve vainly sought to cover their sin. This inherent tendency in sinful mankind to cover up his wrong doing can be observed in the smallest child who seeks to hide the fact that he has done what he knows he should not have done. It follows through all of life, and one of the hardest things for a person to do is to uncover and confess his sin. This is why so many are not Christians today—they are not willing to uncover and admit their sin, and this must be done before salvation can be experienced. Adam and Eve sewed fig leaves and made aprons as their covering. People are still

making as flimsy coverings in an endeavor to hide their iniquities. Even today, humanly contrived coverings do not meet the need when we come to stand before God. "What can wash away my sin? Nothing but the blood of Jesus!" Thank God, the Lord came down and made of the skin of a slain animal a covering for the first sinners, even as, through the shedding of the blood of Jesus, there is a robe of righteousness provided for whosoever will.

The Result of Sin as Seen in Man's Attitude Toward God

Adam and Eve fled from the presence of God. Yes, sin separates man from God. It is strange how the unsaved will go to any ends to keep from coming face to face with the person of God. There is something about sin in the human heart that forms an antipathy toward God, and the sinner will flee from his presence.

Adam and Eve falsely thought they could hide from God. What a false sense of security was theirs as they hid behind the trees of the garden! As though they could hide from the all-seeing eye of the Almighty within the confined limits of Eden! As though there were any place in all God's great universe where one might hide from Him who sees and knows all the secrets of men's hearts! No, you cannot hide from God. There is only one place where we may safely hide, and that is not from God, but in God (Isaiah 32:2). He alone is our hiding place.

The Result of Sin as Seen in Man's Attitude Toward His Fellow Man

When God confronted the first sinners and asked that searching question, "*Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?*" (Genesis 3:11), there was an immediate attempt on the part of Adam to shift the blame to another. Instead of openly admitting his guilt, Adam tried to involve Eve — "*The woman said, The serpent beguiled me*" (Genesis 3:13).

Sinners are never anxious to assume the blame for their own sin, but they will never know real salvation and deliverance until they do. The prayer that brings forgiveness and cleansing is, "God be merciful to ME a sinner." Sin operates in the human heart to make men suspicious of one another — even of those, oftentimes, who love us the most. Sin destroys confidence and trust in mankind.

WHAT IS SIN?

★NOTE to instructor:

Question to be answered by class discussion and/or other appropriate method:

★*What is sin?*

Sin in human nature is one of the saddest, yet most apparent realities. There are those who dream and talk of the inherent goodness of man. These regard acts and words which do not measure up to the ethical standards of society as merely mistakes and weaknesses for which man is not responsible. However, we cannot but see the impossibility of correcting these mistakes in man. Furthermore it is apparent that one misdeed suppressed only causes another to break forth. Realize, too, that we are not dealing merely with sins, that is separate sinful acts, but with something much greater and deeper—with sin as an evil that is inherent in human nature.

Sin is viewed in various ways in the Bible and different expressions are used with reference to it. In order to get the full picture we must briefly look at each of these:

Sin Is a Transgression of the Law

(1 John 3:4)

Sin has a definite relation to law. God has written His laws in His Word and they are there for us to read and obey. We are responsible to know and keep them. But He has also written His will in the heart of every rational soul, and everyone who sins does so against the voice of his own conscience, the monitor of the human soul. There is much more to sin, however, than merely doing something against the laws of conscience or of God. Sin is a condition or state of the whole being of man. Lawlessness, as referred to in 1 John 3:4, is a condition of rebellion, of willful rebellion, against the will of God. A sinner is primarily a rebel who rejects God's will and sets up his own will in its place. Sin began when the angel said, "*I will*" (Isaiah 14:13,14), and every sin has been a lifting up of man's will against the revealed will of God.

Sin Is Missing the Mark

In theology, the subdivision that treats of sin is called Hamartology. The word is taken from the Greek word for sin which is "hamartia" and literally means "a missing, a failure." Hence we have the expression used, and the idea conveyed throughout the Bible, that sin is "missing the mark." It is as when the archer shoots an arrow and misses the target. Clearly man, through sin, has missed the mark of a godly, truly worthwhile life. It is as when a man misses his way and goes in the wrong direction. Man, through sin, is going in the ways of death when God designed that he should walk in the pathway of life. It is also to be found wanting when weighed in God's balances. It is coming short of the necessary standard of divine righteousness, "*All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God*" (Romans 3:23).

Sin Is Not Confined to Outward Acts

The Bible does not merely condemn voluntary sins which manifest themselves in outward acts, it also condemns all evil dispositions or habits. Sin is not merely an act—it is also a condition of the soul. There is such a thing as being sinful as well as committing sins. Man is represented in the Bible as having a sinful nature.

Paul said, "sin . . . dwelleth in me" (Romans 7:17). Sin has its seat in the heart (Proverbs 4:23; Matthew 15:19,20; Luke 6:45). In addition to the sins of commission, which are most easily recognized, there are at least the following four classifications of sin:

1. Sins of omission — failure to do what is known to be the right thing is considered as sin (James 4:17).
2. Sins of unbelief—unbelief is sin (Romans 14:23). Jesus chided His disciples for their unbelief more than for any other condition in their lives.(See Mark 16:14; Matthew 17:17; 14:31; 6:30; 8:26; 16:8; and Luke 24:25.) The greatest of all sins is unbelief in the saving grace of Jesus Christ.
3. There are sins of ignorance—ignorance of the requirements of the law was no excuse in the Old Testament. It will be noticed that if a man sinned through ignorance he was required to bring an offering to atone for that sin (Leviticus 4,5)
4. There are sins of the disposition. Anger is as bad as murder in the sight of the Lord, for it is the seed of murder and Jesus condemns the seed just as much as the full-grown fruit (Matthew 5:21,22; I John 3:15). Jesus condemns the thought of sin as much as the act (Matthew 5:28). There are some people who are so refined in their sinning that they do not realize that God condemns evil dispositions as much as evil acts.

THE HUMAN WILL IS THE HIGHEST POWER GIVEN TO MAN

★NOTE to instructor:

Question to be answered by class discussion and/or other appropriate method:

★*What is the highest power given to man?*

Sin is unbelief in God, which automatically results in a man centering himself in something or someone less than God. This is basically the thing that brought our first parents into the sphere of sin. They chose to disbelieve God and as a result centered themselves in Satan. This is why the Bible speaks of unregenerate men as children of the devil. It is quite evident from the teaching of the Scriptures that man is not self-sufficient. He was created with tremendous power when God gave to him the eternal power of choice, but he lives and is controlled by a power outside of himself. By this power of choice he is able to choose how he will live and by so choosing he will be given the power to live accordingly. Therefore sin was born in man when he chose to disbelieve God and all that he is today is the direct result of his wrong choice.

"And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient" (Romans 1:28). The literal meaning of the first part of

this verse is "and even as they refused to have God," or "and even as they did not approve God." And one of these three translations clearly teaches that man's sin is the result of his refusal to have God as the ruler of his life.

The will is the determining and responsible agent within man. If we will do the will of God, God will give us of His Spirit that we might do so successfully. If we will to choose any other way, we sin and the condemnation of eternal judgment is brought upon us by the power of our own choice.

THE RESULT OF SIN

Recognizing that our first parents turned from God and chose to set their wills against Him, our next question is, of course, what did such a choice do for them and how does it affect mankind in general?

The Nature of Man Is Changed

Our first parents walked in the Garden of Eden in a state of innocence and by nature did the will and pleasure of God. But when Adam sinned his nature was changed, and as a result all of mankind since then has had the nature that was born in sin (Romans 5:12; Ephesians 2:2,3).

★NOTE to instructor:

Question to be answered by class discussion and/or other appropriate method:

★*What are the evidences of the depravity of human nature?*

Evidences of Man's Depravity

What are the evidences of this depravity of human nature?

- As seen in relationship to God. Instead of love for God, man is supremely influenced by a preference of self—"lovers of their own selves . . ." (2 Timothy 3:2). He constantly chooses some lower affection or desire rather than to accept God's way and God's law. ". . . lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God" (2 Timothy 3:4). This attitude of love for self and lack of love to God becomes fully manifest when God's will comes in conflict with man's own will. Then it springs into active enmity (Romans 8:7).

- As seen in the very nature of man himself. The result of sin touches every faculty of man's being. His entire nature has suffered as the result of the fall. Notice the various parts of man's being that are said to be touched with the corruption of sin:

- 1. Sin is said to have affected the understanding of man (Ephesians 4:18).

- 2. The mind and conscience is said to be defiled because of sin (Titus 1:1)

3. Even the spirit, as well as the flesh of man, has been soiled and needs cleansing (II Corinthians 7:1).

Results of Man's Depravity

One of the simplest and yet most profound statements ever made came from the inspired pen of the apostle Paul. It is found in Galatians 6:7, "*Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.*" Sin is willful rebellion against God and such an attitude cannot but bring forth evil results. It is not surprising that we can look all about us and see the awful results of sin. It just is not possible for men to continue sinning and receive anything but a harvest of sorrows of the worst kind (Hosea 8:7; 10:13).

A great man once said: "Our greatest defense against sin is to be shocked at it," and when this attitude ceases, sin has accomplished its direst results. Paul, in that terrible list of gross iniquities in Romans 1:24-32, climaxed the whole dread situation when he said, "*Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.*" When sin loses its sense of sinfulness and men take pleasure in the grossest of sinful practice there is little hope for them. Man is now as he was originally. The divine image has been disfigured, the spirit of life has been withdrawn from him and his movements are nothing but the twitchings of death. His intentions are suicidal rather than life giving. He is no longer a free agent, but is controlled by sin and is a virtual slave to it.

Man's Total Inability

"Total inability" is another expression used to describe the result of sin in the very nature of man. The Scriptures teach that, of himself, man is utterly unable to perform those acts which will make him worthy of salvation. He is not only a sinner but, in himself, he is a helpless sinner. This does not mean that man is not able to perform many acts that are good, when judged by natural standards or by the code of civil righteousness. However, when it comes to meeting the perfect standards of God's law, man is completely unable to do so. His ability has been so weakened because of the sinful nature with which he was born, and the actual sins he has himself committed, that he cannot come up to God's perfect requirements. The sinner cannot by a single act of his will bring his life and character into complete conformity to the will of God, as expressed by the demands of His holy law. (See John 1:13; 3:5; 6:44; 8:34; 15:4,5; Romans 7:18,24; 8:7,8.)

The fact that God in His love has provided a way by which man can be saved, in spite of his personal inability, should cause everyone to rejoice and accept the gift of salvation which God is offering to all.

THE DEEDS OF MAN ARE SINFUL

Adam and Eve were free from the nature of sin and were therefore free to choose between sin and righteousness. Their offspring are not so blessed. Paul

teaches that the natural man cannot keep the law of God (Romans 8:3-8), for it is not within his nature to do so. As long as man is depraved, perverted and evil in his disposition, his actions and deeds will be an offense to God. He will continue to transgress the righteous law of God and will always miss the mark, for he will continue to be governed by desire for that which is forbidden. It is no wonder that the apostle Paul said, "*O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death*" (Romans 7:24). It is God's will that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us. This is an utter impossibility as long as man remains "evil" in his tendencies. There is only one way by which such fulfilling of the righteous laws of God can be realized (Romans 8:2-4).

THE FINAL END OF SIN

★NOTE to instructor:

Question to be answered by class discussion and/or other appropriate method:

★*Distinguish between "life" as described in the Word of God and "existence." What does the Bible mean when it speaks of the wicked being destroyed?*

"*The wages of sin is death*" (Romans 6:23). Let us first distinguish between "life" as described in the Word of God and "existence." There is no place in the Bible where we can understand that the death of the sinner means that he will be annihilated. According to the original Greek, the word "perish" means "to be ruined." It does not mean to become extinct. When the Bible speaks of the wicked being destroyed it simply means that they are forever ruined from enjoying God and shall be separated from Him eternally. (See John 8:24; John 5:28,29.)

The death spoken of in the Bible, which comes as a result of sin and rejection of God's way of salvation is not cessation of existence. The life of which the Bible speaks is right existence and death is wrong existence; in both the personality is conscious, sensitive and thoughtful. (See Matthew 25:41,46.)

God help us to realize the purpose for which we were created and to take the necessary steps to achieve that purpose. Knowing that sin has ruined us from attaining this divine purpose, let us accept the way by which God can renew within us His Spirit and lift us from sin unto salvation through His Son, Jesus Christ.

CLOSING ACTIVITY:

A WONDERFUL RESULT OF SIN

Strange as it may seem, there has been a very wonderful result of sin made manifest to the sons of men, and that is the love, mercy and grace of God. Were it not for the fact that man so grievously sinned, it is doubtful that we would ever have known how greatly God loves us. This is not to say that sin was a part of God's program. God never does evil that good may come. But God marvelously took advantage of sin and used it as a dark backdrop against which the glory of His grace shines so much the brighter. There is a song which the angels will never be able to sing, and that is the anthem of redemption. When we look to the pit from whence we "*are digged*" and then see what God has made us, through the loving sacrifice of His only begotten Son, our hearts are melted in adoration and praise. Thank God that, "*Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound*" (Romans 5:20).

Following this study ask, "What new significance do the words of Romans 5:20, as quoted above, have to me personally?" Share this new discovery with someone this week!

If you are studying alone, write your response on the back of the Individual Worksheet at the end of this lesson.

THE FALL OF MAN Part II

INDIVIDUAL STUDY: If you are studying alone, answer the following questions. You may detach this page and submit it for grading.

GROUP STUDY: It is permissible to remove this page and photo sufficient copies for classroom use, if desired.

1. *What effect did Adam and Eve's sin have on the rest of mankind that was to follow?* _____

2. *What is sin?* _____

3. *What is the highest power given to man?* _____

4. *What are the evidences of the depravity of human nature?* _____

5. *Distinguish between "life" as described in the Word of God and "existence." What does the Bible mean when it speaks of the wicked being destroyed?* _____

THE PLAN OF REDEMPTION

AIM: To understand the following from the Foursquare Declaration of Faith, by Aimee Semple McPherson: "We believe that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us, the Just for the unjust; freely, and by divine appointment of the Father taking the sinner's place, bearing his sins, receiving his condemnation, dying his death, fully paying his penalty and signing with His life's blood, the pardon of everyone who should believe upon Him; that upon simple faith and acceptance of the atonement purchased on Mount Calvary, the vilest sinner may be cleansed of his iniquities and made whiter than the driven snow."

KEY VERSES:

"Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" (Titus 2:14).

Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon" (Isaiah 55:7).

OPENING ACTIVITY: Read the following story . . .

WHEN THE BEE STUNG MOTHER

"A young man was asked when he first trusted in Christ and was saved. His answer was, 'When the bee stung mother.' When he was a little boy he was playing at the door, and he ran in to his mother, followed by a bee. She hid him behind her. The bee fastened on her bare arm and stung her severely. She turned around, took her little boy, and showed him her arm. There was the place where she was stung, and there was the bee slowly crawling up her arm. 'You need not fear the bee now, Willie,' she said, 'for it has no sting. It cannot hurt you. Its sting is here.' She showed her little boy a black speck sticking in the wound. And then she took him on her knee, and told him how the sinner, pursued by God's broken law, by death whose sting is sin, could find no shelter save behind the cross of Christ; while in that spotless One who hung there was plunged the fatal sting; to Him was meted out the wrath, the stripes, the bruises, the wounds, which were the sinner's due, so that now all the sinner has to do is to look, and all its dark waters dried up in Him, and nothing now remains but to bow in thankfulness and praise to the One who is mighty to save. 'Christ also suffered for sins once, the righteous for the unrighteous, that He might bring us to God.' " — The Ram's Horn

NOW, reflect on your own experience when you first trusted Christ and were saved. What significance does it have to you today? If you are in a group, turn and share with someone your thoughts on this. If you are alone, stop and write down your reflections.

INTRODUCTION

By our previous study of the fall of man, we are compelled to the conclusion that man, in his sinful condition, has but one inevitable end, namely, death. The righteous judgment of God upon sin is death. Being that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, death must fall upon every man. If this were the end of the matter, there would be no ray of light in the darkness of eternal doom, but God's revelation does not stop there; He tells us that there is a way out from under this terrible condemnation. The way out is revealed by the Word of God and the heart of the revelation is found in the word "redemption."

LITERAL MEANING OF THE WORD "TO REDEEM"

★NOTE to instructor

Question to be answered by class discussion and/or other appropriate method:

★What is the literal meaning of the word "to redeem"?

Redeem — "To Tear Apart"

Redeemed is used in this way in the Old Testament. The picture referred to is as though two objects were inextricably bound together. The thought given is that

the desired object is torn loose from the undesired. By this we can see sinful man bound to sin and if he is to be redeemed he must be torn loose from it. The idea is not that he might be given the strength to bear it, but that he might be torn loose and be completely separated from it.

Redeem — “To Rescue”

If one were to find himself in the midst of a raging whirlpool with no possible way of getting out and someone would throw him a rope and pull him to safety, he would, in this use of the word, be redeemed; he would be rescued.

Redeem — “To Purchase”

Man has become the property of Satan or a slave to sin. There is no possible way by which he can purchase his own freedom. But another comes who esteems him highly enough that he is willing to pay the purchase price. The price is paid, the deal is closed and ownership changes hands.

Redeem — “To Ransom”

If one were to be kidnapped and held for ransom, he would be freed from his kidnapped condition as soon as the ransom was paid. If he were ransomed, he would be redeemed. In the New Testament the idea of redemption is more in alignment with the thought of “ransom.” (See Galatians 3:13 — men held captive to the curse of the law; Romans 7:23 — captives of sin.) The redeemer pays the purchase price of their deliverance by offering Himself. “*In whom we have redemption through his blood*” (Ephesians 1:7).

FOUR PHASES OF REDEMPTION

★NOTE to instructor:

Question to be answered by class discussion and/or other appropriate method:

★*List the four phases of redemption, using Scripture references.*

The need of man is not only to be liberated from the bondage of sin, but he also needs to be brought back into a place of fellowship with God. From the teaching of the Scriptures we find that both of these needs are met by Jesus, the Son of God. Redemption is a full and far-reaching accomplishment of the wonderful grace of God. It is a complete work — a work of God that answers perfectly to the devastation which Satan, sin and man’s willfulness has wrought in the human race. There are four ways in which the Bible speaks of our redemption. We might refer to them as four phases of redemption:

Christ Has Redeemed Us From the Requirements of the Law as a Means of Salvation

(Galatians 4:4,5).

When the law was designed, its purpose was for the good of mankind — to give sinful man an outline by which he might return unto God and live in a manner pleasing to Him. However, sin wrought so in the soul of man that he was utterly unable to keep the law God had given. The law became a great yoke of condemnation about the sinner’s neck. Redemption takes man out from under that yoke of bondage and, by grace, makes him a child of God in spite of the broken law. Salvation that was impossible under the law, now becomes possible through the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

Christ Has Redeemed Us From the Curse of a Broken Law

(Galatians 3:13)

Not only has Christ redeemed us from a law that was impossible for us to keep, but He has also redeemed us from the curse of the law which we had broken.

Christ Has Redeemed Us From Sin

(Titus 2:13,14)

We are clearly shown in Titus 2:13,14 that redemption does not deal lightly with sin. Redemption includes being delivered from sin and iniquity and being purified and filled with a zeal to do that which is pleasing unto God. It is a complete work wrought in the human heart.

Christ Has Redeemed Us to God

(Revelation 5:9).

“*And hast redeemed us to God*” — this is the positive side of redemption. Christ has not merely redeemed us to set us free. He has redeemed us to set us free unto God. So many times we magnify those things from which we have been redeemed. Whereas the greatest part of the story concerns those things to which we have been redeemed.

REDEMPTION IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

★NOTE to instructor:

Question to be answered by class discussion and/or other appropriate method:

★*How was redemption achieved in the Old Testament? Give examples.*

When Adam and Eve ate of the forbidden fruit the sure judgment of God fell upon them. Fellowship with God, as they had known it in their innocence, was no longer possible; they had forfeited that right by choosing to disobey God. The first indication of divine mercy and redemption is shown as God slew animals that He might cover the sinful pair with their skins. It is not directly stated that this was a sacrifice for their sins, but the spiritual implication is that God was making a provision for their redemption.

The story of Cain and Abel in the fourth chapter of Genesis is the first direct record of sacrifices offered to the Lord. The fact that they offered them presupposed the fact that God must have told them that such sacrifices were necessary if they were to have any kind of fellowship with Him. The fact also is plainly taught that both Abel's sacrifice and attitude were acceptable to God and that the sacrifice and attitude of Cain were not acceptable. This is plainly brought out in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews where it states: "*By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts*" (Hebrews 11:4). As Abel sacrificed the firstlings of his flock to the Lord he received the witness that he was righteous. He apparently had done as God had directed, for as a result both he and his offering were accepted by God. God did not accept Cain's offering of the fruit of the ground, and as a result Cain became wrathful against God. But God, in His mercy, reasoned with Cain by saying, "*If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door*" (Genesis 4:7). The same means of access was available to Cain even as it was to Abel, but instead of accepting it and doing as God had directed, he turned in wrath against his brother and committed the first murder. It was, therefore, established in the very infancy of the human race, that "*without shedding of blood is no remission*" (Hebrews 9:22). Notice that the thing basically wrong with Cain was his attitude of mind. He was, as are many religious people today, willing to recognize God but not willing to obey Him. After his unsuccessful attempt at making an offering to God, it was still not too late, for God gave him the opportunity to bring an acceptable one but he refused and thereby was lost.

On Mount Sinai God gave to Moses the law. Upon the basis of that law was instituted the Levitical priesthood and the basis of the priestly ministry was the sacrificial duties which they performed. We can neither take the time nor space to go into any details as to the many and varied sacrifices which they were commanded to make before the Lord. The principal idea underlying all of them was that the blood of the animals which was shed was a covering for the sins of the people. Their relationship and acceptability with God was wholly dependent upon placing their guilt upon the slain animal. This animal was their substitute and the blood shed upon the altar was the propitiation for their sin. This was God's Old Testament method of redemption and if followed and obeyed would take care of the sin problem of the people.

But as we follow the history of the people of God into the times of the prophets, we find God being displeased by these offerings which He had commanded. The people had mistakenly come to the conclusion that if they offered the sacrifices according to the law, God would be satisfied. But here again they made the same mistake that brought such sorrow to Cain. God is not satisfied with outer offerings unless it is given in the proper spirit. We must remember that it was "*By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was 'righteous'*" (Hebrews 11:4). It was faith in God that made Abel offer his sacrifice. He was declared righteous

because he offered the sacrifice with a heart that was hungry for fellowship with God. The blood of the sacrifice is effective only if it is offered in faith. It is impossible to offer it in faith unless the heart of the individual is hungry to do the will of God. The whole idea back of sacrifice was worship, and worship of God must spring from the spirit. It was, therefore, impossible for God to be satisfied with any kind of sacrifice or offering unless the spirit of man was using it to obtain access to God, that he might worship Him.

Let us remember that redemption, both in the Old and New Testaments, is concerned with bringing man back to the place where he can actively fellowship with and worship God. He is not to be relieved of the guilt and bondage of his sin and stop there. He is to be redeemed for the specific purpose that he might be reconciled to God. Therefore, sacrifice is but a means to an end. It is not difficult to understand God's displeasure with the polluted bread, and with the blind, lame and sick animals which the people of Malachi's time were using in the sacrifices and offerings. They were a people whose hearts were far from God.

We must, therefore, conclude that the covenant which God had made with man was not dependent alone upon the sacrifices but on obedience. It was possible then, even as it is today, to fulfill all the outward requirements but to fall short of God's purpose by withholding the heart from the true worship of God.

PLAN OF REDEMPTION IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

The Gospels Reveal God's Complete Redemption

"*The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world*" (John 1:29). This term, "Lamb of God", was not unfamiliar to the Jews of that day, for in celebrating the passover of Egypt, it was a lamb that was slain, and the lamb's blood that was sprinkled over their doorpost caused the death angel to pass over them.

The life of Jesus was indeed the most unusual life that was ever lived upon the earth. He was the Son of God, without sin, holy and blameless; but He did not come to the earth just to live a holy and spotless life. The teaching of Jesus was wonderful beyond words. The miracles of Jesus were beyond compare. But He also came to do more . . . He came to die as a lamb upon the altar to provide the perfect sacrifice for the sin of men. When Jesus uttered the words, "*It is finished,*" He was not bemoaning the fact that His life was over, but was exulting in the fact that redemption's plan was finished and that the way back to God, for sinful man, was now completely open.

The Epistles Explain the Relationship Between Christ's Sacrifice and Man's Redemption

It is the basis of God's forgiveness (Romans 3:26). Redemption is the basis of God's great salvation. God is holy and cannot merely overlook sin just because He is also a God of love. His love would make Him desire to

justify the sinner, but His holiness requires that He also be just. The price of redemption Jesus paid on the cross makes it possible for God to be just, and at the same time to justify the sinner.

Man is delivered from sin's curse (Mark 10:45; Romans 3:24,25).

We now come back to one of the principal meanings of the word "to redeem." Man was held captive by sin and God sent His Son into the world to pay the ransom and thereby set man free from captivity. Man is delivered from sin's curse because the Lamb of God was slain to bear its penalty.

It is the basis of the believer's reconciliation to God (Romans 5:8-11).

Christ, on the cross, is the means of reconciliation between God and man. Man, in his sin, was an alien to God and without any basis of fellowship. But now, the separation, caused by sin, has been done away with, and a firm basis of friendship and fellowship exists. The death of Jesus removes the necessity of God having to punish the sinner, and makes it possible for Him to manifest His matchless love.

Forgiveness or remission of sin is made possible (Matthew 26:28; Ephesians 1:7; Psalm 32:1).

Reconciliation would not be possible unless God could forgive sin. A holy God and a sinful man can have no fellowship; so by the blood of Christ God does forgive sin. This is one of the clearest teachings of Scripture; that forgiveness of sins is dependent upon the shed blood of Jesus Christ.

The debt which man owes to God because of his sin is cancelled (Romans 8:1-3).

This cancellation of guilt is absolutely essential for without it there could be no reconciliation. That all the world is guilty before God is clearly taught in Romans 3:19: "*Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.*" This word guilty means "owing satisfaction to God" or "liable to punishment." But now, because of Christ, this guilt is cancelled. (See Romans 8:1-3 again.) The sinner, therefore, who rightfully comes under the wrathful judgment of God, finds his punishment removed by the blood offering of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Justification is made to be the divine purpose of the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 5:21).

We can, therefore, understand that by the death offering of Jesus Christ, man not only finds his punishment removed but from the positive standpoint, he finds himself standing before God in the righteousness of Jesus Christ. As he stands there in this righteousness, it is as though he had never sinned.

Sinful man can be brought into a Father-son relationship with God (Romans 8:16,17).

The eternity of the individual shall be dependent upon his sonship relation with God. If God, through the blood sacrifice of Jesus Christ, can bring sinful man to the place where He can honor him as a son, his eternal destiny is assured. When Jesus taught that He was "the

door," He stressed the singularity of entrance into this relationship with God. It was the sacrifice of Jesus Christ that made this new covenant possible and only those who, by faith, enter into His atonement, can stand before God robed in His righteousness.

It is the basis of the believer's assurance.

The presence of sin in the human heart is very real, and the realization of the justice of eternal condemnation is present in every truly convicted soul. A sinner who has been touched by the Spirit of God is keenly aware of the righteousness of his doom. The plan of redemption that has been provided for him, through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, brings the assurance that his heart so much needs. A definite act has been consummated. A definite transaction has taken place, and the sinner can look with confidence toward the ransom price that has been paid for his sins. Assurance of salvation is brought to the soul as we look away from ourselves to what has been done for us by the Lord Jesus Christ. If the enemy of our souls ever comes to challenge our position in Christ, and our right to eternal life, we can always point back to the price that was paid.

It is the basis of the Christian's consecration to God (1 John 4:19).

★NOTE to instructor:

Question to be answered by class discussion and/or other appropriate method:

★Describe or illustrate how redemption is the basis of the Christian's consecration to God.

As we realize the price that God was willing to pay for our sinful souls, there can be but one result in the earnest Christian life - a deep and full consecration to the One who has brought us back from slavery in order to set us free.

This process is perfectly illustrated in the story that is told of an Englishman who came over to this country some years ago. As was his custom, he arose early in the morning and started out for a walk. Soon he was attracted by a large crowd down at the end of a street, and he went to see what was taking place. He discovered that he was witnessing a slave market. The auctioneer was selling a great big Negro slave. He was busy showing off the man's muscles, his teeth and entire physical frame when the bidding started. Soon the Englishman was joining in the bidding. Finally, the bidding settled down to just two men, the Englishman and one other man. The crowd made way so that they were both standing near the raised platform upon which the seller and the slave were standing. Seeing who was bidding on him, the big slave looked down at the Englishman and said, "Suh, dere am no use of you biddin' on me. Dere's de man I wants to work fo," pointing to the other fellow who was still bidding. However, the Englishman kept on raising the price. Again the big slave warned him that he did not want to work for him, but for the other man. Eventually the Englishman's bid was the highest and he was given the

papers of ownership. The black man was in a rage by now. He said, "Ah won't work fo' you. Ah told you. Ah'll burn yo' barns down and cause you all kins of trouble." When he finally slowed down a little the Englishman said to him, "Sam, I didn't buy you to work for me." "What? You didn't buy me to work fo' you? What did you buy me fo'?" "Sam," said the stranger, "I bought you to set you free," and he handed the big fellow the papers that had been given him. When the truth of what the man meant

finally dawned upon the slave, the big tears began to course down his black cheeks and he fell on his knees, clasping the Englishman around the legs, and he looked up and said, "Massa, I'll work fo' you as long as I live."

That is the result of redemption. Consecration is not a legal duty. If it is, it will be meaningless. But if it flows from the heart of one who realizes what Christ has done for him, it will be genuine and lasting!

CLOSING ACTIVITY: Have the class review the nine explanations of the relationship between Christ's sacrifice and man's redemption and to rewrite each of these in their own words, including how it pertains to their own personal relationship with God the Father through Jesus Christ.

If you are studying alone, write your response on the back of the Individual Worksheet at the end of this lesson.

THE PLAN OF REDEMPTION

INDIVIDUAL STUDY: If you are studying alone, answer the following questions. You may detach this page and submit it for grading.

GROUP STUDY: It is permissible to remove this page and photo sufficient copies for classroom use, if desired.

1. What is the literal meaning of the word "to redeem"? _____

2. List the four phases of redemption using Scripture references. _____

3. How was redemption achieved in the Old Testament? Give examples. _____

4. Describe or illustrate how redemption is the basis of the Christian's consecration to God. _____

SALVATION, REPENTANCE, AND ACCEPTANCE

AIM: To expand on our beliefs in regard to salvation, repentance, and acceptance as stated in the following two passages taken from the Foursquare Declaration of Faith by Aimee Semple McPherson.

"We believe that the salvation of sinners is wholly through grace; that we have no righteousness or goodness of our own wherewith to seek divine favor, and must come, therefore, throwing ourselves upon the unfailing mercy and love of Him who bought us and washed us in His own blood, pleading the merits and the righteousness of Christ the Saviour, standing upon His Word and accepting the free gift of His love and pardon.

"We believe that upon sincere repentance, godly sorrow for sin, and a whole-hearted acceptance of the Lord Jesus Christ, they who call upon Him may be justified by faith, through His precious blood, and that in place of condemnation they may have the most blessed peace, assurance and favor with God; that with open arms of mercy and pardon the Saviour waits to receive each penitent who will in unfeigned contrition and supplication for mercy, open the door of his heart and accept Him as Lord and King."

KEY VERSES:

"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord"
(Romans 6:23).

"By grace are ye saved" (Ephesians 2:8).

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness"(1 John 1:9).

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God"
(Romans 5:1,2).

"... him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John 6:37).

OPENING ACTIVITY: We are told in Ephesians 2:8 that we are saved by "grace." What do you believe is the meaning of the word "GRACE"? Compare your definition with that of someone sitting by you or with a dictionary.

SALVATION THROUGH GRACE

The study of the grace of God, like everything that pertains to Him is overwhelming. It is so completely beyond that with which we are familiar in our usual way of living that it is difficult for our minds to grasp. Because it is divine it virtually defies illustration. The best of human experiences can but feebly represent the extent to which God is gracious and has manifested His grace toward sinful mankind. Yet we must know something of this marvelous grace, for it is the very basis of our salvation. It is the foundation pillar of the gospel. We must grasp it, at least by a genuine faith, if not by a clear-cut understanding.

The word "grace" is variously used throughout the Bible. Sometimes it refers to the beauty and graciousness of God's nature. Sometimes it speaks of that ability which men have to do what is right. In this connection we hear of people praying for grace to do some difficult

task. We are particularly interested in that grace which has been defined as "the unmerited love and favor of God in Christ." It is God's free, sovereign, undeserved favor or love to man in his sinful condition which has manifested itself in the forgiveness of, and deliverance from the penalty of sin. All of this is because of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ who is the very embodiment of the grace of God. *"The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us...full of grace and truth"* (John 1:14).

★NOTE to instructor:

Question to be answered by class discussion and/or other appropriate method:

★Define "grace" as outlined in Ephesians 2:7-10

Grace Defined (Ephesians 2:7-10)

The Object of Grace - Salvation

"For by grace are ye saved" (2:8). Here the grace, or graciousness, of God is said to have as its object the salvation of the sinner. The word "grace" (Greek — "charis") originally meant "beauty" or "beautiful conduct." Later it was used to mean any favor granted to another, especially when the recipient had not merited such favor. The Bible writers borrowed this word and under God's guidance clothed it with new significance; so that in the New Testament it usually means the forgiveness of sins granted entirely out of the goodness of God, entirely apart from any merit on the part of the person forgiven. Thus, the believer's standing in Christ is the result of the bestowal of unmerited favor.

The Source of Grace - God

"And that not of yourselves." The believer enjoys salvation, not because he conceived the idea of redemption and sought out God; but, on the contrary, because God in His graciousness sought out man. Someone has said that Christianity differs from all other religions in that they represent man as seeking to find God, while the gospel represents God as seeking and saving man (Luke 19:10). Had not God been gracious in bringing about circumstances in our lives by which we came in contact with the Word of Truth, we never would have heard of salvation, or have inherited eternal life.

The Price of Grace - Christ's Death

"But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ" (Ephesians 2:13)

The Status of Grace — a Gift

"It is the gift of God" (Ephesians 2:8). In order that we may see more clearly the significance of grace, our salvation is declared to be a GIFT. A gift is not earned; it is simply accepted. Nor, does one seek afterward to repay the gift in like value; for then it is no longer a gift but a debt. Because of the very nature of grace it is of necessity a gift. Grace cannot incur a debt. God does not feel that we owe Him anything because of His grace. This is blessed, because with what would we recompense or pay Him for His grace?

The Opposite of Grace - Works

"Not of works" (Ephesians 2:9). "Works" here refer to the works of the law. God never intended that the law should be a means of salvation. The law represents an ideal which has always been out of the reach of sinful human nature. The law as a schoolmaster demonstrated the weakness of sinful flesh and at the same time set forth an atonement for the weakness in the priestly offerings, which were figures of the perfect atonement that was to be accomplished on the cross. Works are not the price of salvation, but the result of salvation.

The Impossibility of Grace - Boasting

"Lest any man should boast" (Ephesians 2:9). God has so ordered His plan of salvation so that He alone receives the glory. Boasting is absolutely excluded. Inasmuch as God bestows eternal life with no respect of persons on the basis of faith, then none can boast and none can offer excuse. Actually, grace is God's

dealings with man absolutely apart from the question of merit or demerit. L.S. Chafer writes, "Grace is neither treating a person as he deserves, nor treating him as better than he deserves."

The Response to Grace - Faith

"For by grace are ye saved through faith..." (2:8). As "grace" is God's part in salvation, "faith" is man's part. Faith is simply the response which man makes to God's revelation of His love. Faith is, however, a necessary response in order that salvation may be imparted.

★NOTE to instructor:

Questions to be answered by class discussion and/or other appropriate method:

★Does God intend that the believer manifest good works? What is the true source of good works?

The Result of Grace - Good Works

"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works" (Ephesians 2:10). Not only does God save the believer by grace, but He also, by the same grace, produces in the believer good works such as are acceptable. The believer does not produce good works by striving, but by yielding to and cooperating with the grace of God which operates in him. The Christian's life is God's workmanship.

The Eternal Purpose of Grace — God's Glory

"That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 2:7). This verse declares that the eternal purpose of God's gracious working in us is that He may display through all the ages the riches of His grace as it is seen in Christ Jesus. We could never produce, independently, works worthy to be displayed eternally before the heavenly hosts; but we can so cooperate with God in the working of His grace that the result will be a product displayed as divine workmanship.

Popular Misconceptions of Grace

The Basis of God's Grace

The liberal teaching of the day is that God, simply because He is gracious, will forgive men their sins; whereas the Bible teaches that His pardon is based upon the strict terms of justice. God can forgive sin because the broken law has been kept and the penalty for its breaking has been paid. Thus God can justify the ungodly and at the same time vindicate His holy, unchangeable law. We might say, then, that God's grace is manifested not in the forgiveness or overlooking of man's sin, but in the giving of Jesus Christ as the substitute and redeemer, who paid the penalty of sin, making it possible for God to forgive and cleanse men from their iniquity.

Law and Grace

There is no relationship between law and grace, as the sinner comes to God for salvation. If we endeavor to approach Him on the grounds of law, we are not coming under grace; and if we are under grace we are not under law. Under law one endeavors to secure salvation on

the basis of good works, religious ceremonies, or even doing penance. Under grace, salvation is secured on the basis, not of what we do for God, but because of what He has done for us.

Grace Is Entirely of God

"Salvation is the imputed righteousness of God; it is not the imperfect righteousness of man. Salvation is a divine reconciliation; it is not a human regulation. Salvation is the cancelling of all sin; it is not the cessation from some sin. Salvation is being delivered from and being dead to the law; it is not delighting in or doing the law. Salvation is being acceptable to God; it is not becoming exceptionally good. Salvation is completeness in Christ; it is not competency in character. Salvation is always and only of God; it is never of man." — Lewis Sperry Chafer

The Abundance of God's Grace

The following Scripture references show the abundance of God's grace. They have been arranged in such a way as to demonstrate the ever-ascending scale of grace.

"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" (Ephesians 2:8,9).

"But he giveth MORE GRACE" (James 4:6).

"And God is able to make ALL GRACE abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work" (2 Corinthians 9:8).

"And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and GREAT GRACE was upon them all" (Acts 4:33).

"As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the MANIFOLD GRACE of God" (1 Peter 4:10).

"For all things are for your sakes, that the ABUNDANT GRACE might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God" (2 Corinthians 4:15).

"And by their prayer for you, which long after you for the EXCEEDING GRACE of God in you" (2 Corinthians 9:14).

"And the grace of our Lord was EXCEEDING ABUNDANT with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus" (1 Timothy 1:14).

"Where sin abounded, GRACE did much more abound" (Romans 5:20).

REPENTANCE

★NOTE to instructor:

Question to be answered by class discussion and/or other appropriate method:

★Is repentance necessary to salvation? Why or why not?

Repentance is not a popular subject, yet it occupies a very important place in the outworking of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. There are those who tell us that it is not necessary to preach repentance since Jesus died, but that all that is necessary is for men to believe in order to be saved. Repentance of itself will never save a soul, to be sure, for there must be an active faith in the saving grace of Jesus; but this faith must be accompanied by a right relation toward sin in the heart of the one who is coming for salvation. Repentance is one of the necessary conditions of salvation.

Repentance has been defined as follows: "The true sorrow for sin, with sincere effort to forsake it," "godly sorrow for sin," "the conviction of guilt produced by the Holy Spirit's application of the divine law to the heart." A little boy defined repentance as being sorry enough to quit.

★NOTE to instructor:

Question to be answered by class discussion and/or other appropriate method:

★Illustrate the difference between true repentance and reformation or remorse.

We must not mistake reformation for real godly repentance. There may be a vast difference between these two. Reformation may only be outward, whereas repentance is a deep inward experience. Reformation may take care of the future but it can do nothing with regard to the sins of the past. Reformation is like a man who stops charging bills, but does nothing about paying all the old ones.

The Importance of Repentance

The importance of the subject is emphasized by the large place given to it in the New Testament Scriptures and in the ministry of Jesus and the early preachers of the gospel. Note the following facts:

- Repentance occupied the central place in the ministry of John the Baptist (Matthew 3:1, 2).
- Repentance occupied a large place in the preaching of Jesus (Matthew 4:17; 9:13; 11:20; and 12:41).
- The twelve disciples preached repentance (Mark 6:12).
- The command to preach repentance is in the Great Commission Jesus gave to His disciples (Luke 24:47).
- Peter preached repentance (Acts 2:38; 3:19; 5:31; 8:22; and 11:18).
- Paul preached repentance (Acts 20:21; 26:20; 2 Corinthians 12:21 and 2 Timothy 2:25).
- Repentance is the will of God for every man (2 Peter 3:9).

- It is the command of the Lord that all men repent (Acts 17:30).
- Men will perish eternally if they do not repent (Luke 13:3).
- In all biblical examples of conversion, the converted are said to have repented or they gave evidence of having done so. Study the following cases of repentance:

Josiah (2 Kings 22:19)
 Israel (Ezra 10:1)
 Job (Job 42:1-6)
 The Ninevites (Jonah 3:6-9)
 Peter (Mark 14:72)
 The Prodigal (Luke 15:21)
 The Publican (Luke 18:13)
 The Thief (Luke 23:29-43)
 Paul (Acts 9:1-6)
 The Jailer (Acts 16:27-32)
 Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10)

The Nature of Repentance

As to the intellect.

"He answered and said, I will not: but afterward he repented and went" (Matthew 21:29). "The word here used for 'repent' means to change one's mind, thought, purpose, views regarding a matter; it is to have another mind about a thing . . . Thus, when Peter, on the day of Pentecost, called upon the Jews to repent (Acts 2:14-40), he virtually called upon them to change their minds and their views regarding Christ . . . The result of their repentance or change of mind would be that they would receive Jesus Christ as their long-promised Messiah."
 — Great Doctrines of the Bible

As to the emotions.

"Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death" (2 Corinthians 7:9,10). "The Greek word for repentance in this connection means 'to be a care to one afterwards,' to cause one great concern. The Hebrew equivalent is even stronger, and means to pant, sigh, to moan. So the publican 'beat upon his breast' (Luke 18:13), indicating sorrow of heart."
 —Great Doctrines of the Bible

There is no way by which we may measure how much emotion is necessary in true repentance, but certainly there is a very real stirring of the heart when one is brought face to face with his own dread sin. Not uncommonly, tears accompany a repentant heart.

As to the will.

One of the words used for repentance means "to turn." This is illustrated in the story of the Prodigal who said, *"I will arise and go to my father. . . and he arose, and came to his father"* (Luke 15:18, 20). He not only thought on his evil ways and was sorry for what he had done, but he actually did something about it. Repentance is not only a heart broken for sin, but from sin also. As repentance touches the will it will result in:

Confession of sin. First, to God (Psalm 31:18; Luke 15:21). Second, to men whom we may have wronged by our sin (Matthew 5:23, 24; James 5:16).

Forsaking sin (Proverbs 28:13; Isaiah 55:7).

Turning to God (Isaiah 55:7; I Thessalonians 1:9; Acts 26:18).

The Manner in Which Repentance is Produced

Repentance is a gift of God (Acts 11:18; 2 Timothy 2:25). Repentance is not something which man can work up of himself. It is a divine gift. If one feels a disposition to repent he should most certainly do so. There may come a time he may wish to repent and cannot (Hebrews 12:17).

Repentance is also brought about through certain divinely ordained means.

Through the preaching of the gospel (Acts 2:37; Jonah 3:5-10).

By the very goodness of God (Romans 2:4).

Through the chastisements of the Lord (Revelations 3:19).

Through the loving reproof of a brother (2 Timothy 2:24-26).

The Result of Repentance

Repentance brings pardon and forgiveness of sin (Acts 3:19).

All heaven is made glad when a sinner repents (Luke 15:7,10).

Evidences of True Repentance

- A right attitude toward sin.

This right attitude is a deep sense of the sinfulness of sin; that is, seeing sin as God sees it. True repentance regards the sin itself with remorse rather than consequence of sin. The superficially penitent is sorry for himself.

- A changed attitude toward God and toward God's children.

- The truly penitent seeks communion with God and fellowship with the saints.

Abhorrence of sin that causes one to forsake it completely and do the will of God.

The sincerely penitent never says, *"let us continue in sin that grace may abound."* Presumptuous persons who continue in sin on the assumption that God in His mercy will overlook it, certainly do not show any evidence of sincere repentance.

- Restitution in so far as it is humanly possible. We do not mean to infer that restitution is in any way a payment of salvation, or an essential requirement for

forgiveness. We are forgiven first, then we make the restitution; but it is a natural result of true repentance and faith to desire to rectify the wrongs that we have committed against others.

ACCEPTANCE

Acceptance is simply the operation of faith in receiving the saving grace of Jesus Christ which is offered to mankind freely. Repentance is turning from sin; acceptance is turning to God. Repentance removes the obstacles which hinder our acceptance of the gift of salvation. Repentance is concerned with man's sin, while acceptance is concerned with God's mercy. It is very doubtful if one can sincerely repent without faith that God will save him. It is equally doubtful if one can actually accept salvation unless he has sincerely repented of his sin. These two conditions of salvation seem to go hand in hand. They are both necessary. One without the other is not sufficient.

Acceptance Is Necessary

There is nothing a sinner can do in order to become a Christian. On the other hand, the Bible insists that there is something the sinner must do. It is a very little something, but a very definite something just the same, and without it men will be lost. Salvation is a gift and a gift is never merited, but it must be received. Certainly there is no personal glory due an individual merely because he has received a gift. The glory all belongs to the giver. There is such a thing as positively refusing to accept a gift. This is what men are doing who will not, by faith, accept the saving grace of Jesus. Salvation is by grace alone, but it must be received individually, through simple faith in the promise and the power of God.

The Human Faculties Active In Acceptance

According to the divinely inspired Word (Romans 10:9, 10), the believer accepts Christ with the heart. The heart in its figurative meaning seems to include the three faculties of knowing, feeling and willing. A wholehearted acceptance of Christ, then, would arise from the exercise of the mind, the affections and the will.

★NOTE to instructor:

Questions to be answered by class discussion and/or other appropriate method.

★How is faith related to knowing, feeling and willing?

The Intellect

It is quite essential that one have a clear intellectual conception of the decision which he makes, that is, if he would stand permanently by that decision.

The Affections

To accept Christ one must be drawn by a feeling of love for Him. Acceptance may not be accompanied by an

immediate outward show of emotion, but the love which is created in the heart by faith and regeneration will sooner or later express itself in loving devotion to the Lord and joy over the new-found relationship.

The Will

Receiving Christ is a definite decision in which the believer chooses the Lord instead of the enemy. Decision and choice are functions of the will.

The Scope of Acceptance

Includes Faith

One does not accept what he does not believe.

Includes Repentance

Acceptance could be said to comprise the final stage of repentance, which, in its true biblical meaning, embraces conviction, remorse, resolve to live differently, and the acceptance of Christ in whom the penitent realizes newness of life.

Includes Confession

There is a sense in which acceptance is an aspect of confession, for a public acceptance of Christ is at the same time a public confession of faith in Christ.

The Alternative to Acceptance

There is really only one alternative to acceptance and that is rejection. The Spirit of God presents to the conscience only two ways: life and death. Christ speaks of two ways and two foundations, and He mentions only two masters whom one may serve. Everyone must choose between life and death, between Christ and Satan, between belief and unbelief, between acceptance and rejection.

The Rewards of Acceptance

★NOTE to instructor:

Questions to be answered by class discussion and/or other appropriate method:

★What are the rewards of acceptance? What is the evidence of acceptance?

Sonship

In the great initial chapter of John's Gospel, it is declared that as many as receive Christ receive authority to become the sons of God. One of the most precious rewards of faith is sonship; filial relationship in the family of God; the right to pray "Our Father who art in Heaven."

Eternal Life

The believer's position is not only a right; it is also life, eternal life in Christ. To accept Christ is to accept life.

Peace

"Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace" (Romans 5:1).

The Evidence of Acceptance

“As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him” (Colossians 2:6). Genuine acceptance must be followed by an attitude of willing submission to Christ and devoted obedience to His holy will. Receiving Christ is not merely entering a gate, but also choosing a way in which to walk. It is important to emphasize to the penitent that he is accepting a person, not merely a religion or creed. The acceptance of Christ means the beginning of a personal devotion to our Lord and Master.

The Consequence of Non-Acceptance

“ . . . He that believeth not is condemned already...” (John 3:18). Let not anyone suppose that he may reject Christ and be saved from wrath by religious performances or deeds of charity. There is none other mediator between God and man. Christ is the only Savior. He that comes up some other way is a thief and a robber. This condemnation is not something God inflicts in vengeance upon men because they refuse Christ. Men are already justly under condemnation because of sin; therefore, the refusal to accept Christ is simply the unbeliever's choice to reject his only avenue of salvation.

CLOSING ACTIVITY: Ask the class to answer the following questions to the best of their ability, drawing from those things learned in this lesson. Remember that someday an unbeliever may ask a similar question.

If you are studying alone, write your response on the back of the Individual Worksheet at the end of this lesson.

1. Does grace mean that God merely overlooks sin? Explain.
2. Are law and grace two different ways of attaining salvation? Explain.
3. What does repentance mean?
4. What are some Scripture references that urge repentance?
5. What are some of the results of true repentance?
6. What are the conditions for salvation?
7. How do we know that acceptance is necessary?
8. What will happen if one neglects to be saved?

SALVATION, REPENTANCE, AND ACCEPTANCE

INDIVIDUAL STUDY: If you are studying alone, answer the following questions. You may detach this page and submit it for grading.

GROUP STUDY: It is permissible to remove this page and photo sufficient copies for classroom use, if desired.

1. Define "grace" as outlined in Ephesians 2:7-10. _____

2. Does God intend that the believer manifest good works? What is the true source of good works? _____

3. Is repentance necessary to salvation? Why or why not? _____

4. Illustrate the difference between true repentance and reformation or remorse. _____

5. How is faith related to knowing, feeling and willing? _____

6. What are the rewards of acceptance? What is the evidence of acceptance? _____

THE NEW BIRTH

AIM: To explain the meaning and nature of the new birth and to show why it is the universally necessary condition for entrance into the kingdom of God. Also, to set forth the steps which lead to the new birth, the attitude in which one experiences it, and finally the results which follow it. In addition, to take a look at the subject of justification, which is actually the basis of the new birth.

KEY VERSE:

“. . . Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God” (John 3:3).

“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).

“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live: yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me” (Galatians 2:20).

OPENING ACTIVITY: Read John 3:1-9, 14-16 and make an outline of these passages of Scripture which relate the story of Nicodemus and his encounter with Jesus. Now, write down or share with someone nearby all that you have learned about the new birth from reading these verses.

INTRODUCTION

“We believe that the change which takes place in the heart and life at conversion is a very real one; that the sinner is then born again in such a glorious and transforming manner that old things are passed away and all things are become new; insomuch that the things once abhorred are now held most sacred and dear; and that now having had imputed to him the righteousness of the Redeemer and having received the Spirit of Christ, new desires, new aspirations, new interests, and a new perspective of life, time, and eternity, fills the blood-washed heart so that his desire is now to openly confess and serve the Master, seeking ever those things which are above.” (Foursquare Declaration of Faith by Aimee Semple McPherson)

The new birth is the result of repentance and acceptance of the salvation of Jesus Christ which is by grace. Everyone wants to enter heaven, to have eternal life, and there is within each heart a conviction that something is necessary. No one believes that he is qualified without some definite preparation. Even heathen men, who have never heard the gospel, are desperately endeavoring to make themselves pleasing to the god whom they have been instructed to worship. What is necessary? The words of Jesus give us the answer:

“Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God” (John 3:3). It is the new birth - regeneration.

WHAT IS THE NEW BIRTH?

Not Reformation

You tell the average person that he must be born again and he thinks you mean that he must reform; he must mend his ways, or turn over a new leaf. The new birth is not reformation, and reformation is not the new birth. Reformation, as good as it is, is only outward and man's need is inward. Imagine that I have a watch with its main spring broken. I take it in to a jeweler's and he puts a new crystal and polishes the case. He has not helped my watch to run in the least degree. So it is with reformation. Man has a heart that *“is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked”* (Jeremiah 17:9) and no outward change is going to affect it.

Not Becoming Religious

You tell the average church-goer that he must be born again if he would enter the kingdom of God and he has no qualms. He has always been a Christian. He belongs to such-and-such a church; makes regular contributions toward its support. He reads his Bible every day and says his prayers at night and treats his neighbor as himself.

Let us remember, however, that Jesus addressed the words, *“Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God,”* to a very religious man. Nicodemus was a Pharisee, and a very sincere one. He was a member of Israel's highest ecclesiastical court, the Sanhedrin. He was a teacher and a preacher of the Word of God. None was more zealous for the keeping of the law than he. He was ultra-religious. Yet Jesus said to him, *“Ye must be born again.”* No, Jesus did not mean that we must become religious.

Not a Change of Heart

This expression is often used with relation to the new birth, but it is not scriptural. The new birth is not the changing of something in man nor the removal of something from man, but the communication of something to man — something which he never possessed before.

The new birth is literally the impartation of the divine nature to the heart and life of the sinner. It is accomplished through a personal union with Jesus Christ. *“He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life”* (1 John 5:12) *“Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature”* (2 Peter 1:4).

★NOTE to instructor:

Question to be answered by class discussion and/or other appropriate method:

★How is the new birth experience described in the New Testament?

This experience is described in the New Testament as:

A Birth — *“Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him”* (1 John 5:1). The Father is the One who “begat” us and we are “begotten” of Him. John 3:8 speaks of the Christian being “born of the Spirit.”

A Cleansing — *“According to his mercy, he saved us, by the washing of regeneration”* (Titus 3:5). This suggests the complete cleansing of the soul from the defilements of the old life.

A Quickening — We are saved not only “by the washing of regeneration” but also by the “renewing of the Holy Ghost” (Titus 3:5). (See also Colossians 3:10; Romans 12:2; Psalm 51:10.)

A Creation — *“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature (literally, new creation): old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new”* (II Corinthians 5:17). (See also Ephesians 2:10; Galatians 6:15; Ephesians 4:24.)

A Resurrection — *“Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ. . .and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus”* (Ephesians 2:5,6). (See also Ephesians 2:1; Romans 6:4,5; Colossians 2:13.)

★NOTE to instructor:

Question to be answered by class discussion and/or other appropriate method:

★Why is the new birth necessary?

WHY IS THE NEW BIRTH NECESSARY?

“Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again (literally, Ye must be born from above)” (John 3:7). These are the words of Jesus. Yet we do marvel and wonder. Perhaps the chief question that persists in our minds is, Why must a man be born again? This is a legitimate question and calls for a straightforward answer.

Because of the Nature of Man's First Birth

A second birth is necessary because of the condition in which man is born the first time. One of the unbreakable laws of science is that “like begets like.” We were all born of sinful parents and thus are sinners.

David cried, *“Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me”* (Psalm 51:5). The deepest and universal need of mankind is for an out-and-out change of his whole nature and character. Sin has cast its blight upon every element of man's being. His entire nature has been warped by sin and before he can live a life that is pleasing to God he must undergo a transformation so radical that it is termed a second birth.

It is impossible for man to bring this about of himself. It must come from above. Man is limited by his nature in the development possible to him. *“That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit”* (John 3:6). Flesh is flesh, and it matters not how educated or cultured or even religious it may become, it is always just flesh (Jeremiah 13:23). The kingdom of God is spiritual and only spiritual beings can inherit its blessings. Therefore we need a spiritual birth in order to enjoy it. It is not possible to join the company of the saints. You have to be born into it. Flesh and spirit are two entirely different realms and the one cannot produce the other. The spiritual life, which is necessary in order that we may be sons of God, is only possible through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Because Man Would Not Be Happy in Heaven Without It

Heaven is not only a place, it is also a state or condition, and no one could possibly be happy in the presence of the Lord and the company of the redeemed unless his inner nature was in harmony with God. If it were possible for a man to enter heaven without being born again, one of the first things he would do, after having satisfied his curiosity with regard to the heavenly city, would be to look for some sinful indulgence. If his nature has not been changed, he will have the same sinful desires that he possessed before coming to heaven. Death is not going to work a transformation equal to the grace of God.

Because Man Without New Birth is Dead

The natural man is “dead in trespasses and sins” (Ephesians 2:1). He is devoid of spiritual life altogether and the only way in which life may be received is through birth. Let us realize that the sinner is not ignorant, needing instruction; he is not weak and in need

of invigoration; he is not sick and in need of doctoring. He is dead and needs to be made alive. What is the difference between one who is a Christian and one who is not? The answer is just one word - LIFE! One has spiritual life while the other is absolutely dead. Thus when Jesus said, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God," He was not stating a theological dogma nor laying down a divine edict. He was stating a simple fact — he CANNOT see (let alone enter) the kingdom of God." It is an utter impossibility. Yes, "Ye must be born again!"

HOW IS ETERNAL LIFE RECEIVED?

Life Is Received by Birth

We all received physical life by birth. Should it be considered strange that we should likewise receive spiritual life through birth — a spiritual birth? It is not enough to go through the forms of living a Christian life. It will be to no real avail unless that life is born within the human soul.

The New Birth Is Accomplished Through No Effort of Our Own

Eternal life is the gift of God (See Titus 3:5; Ephesians 2:8,9; John 1:13).

The Holy Spirit Is the Agent in Bringing About the New Birth

That is why it is referred to as the "renewing of the Holy Ghost" (Titus 3:5). The Holy Spirit, coming into the heart of the believer, brings the life of God and he becomes a partaker of the divine nature.

It Is a Divine Mystery

Can we understand just exactly what takes place when a sinner is born again? No. No more than we can understand the mystery of natural birth. God has thrown an impenetrable veil over the beginnings and processes of life. But, because I do not understand the miracle of life, I am not going to deny it nor seek to cease living. I shall enjoy life to the full. So, with my spiritual life in Christ!

HOW IS THE NEW BIRTH BROUGHT ABOUT?

Although there is nothing which man can do to regenerate himself, there is something which he must do to obtain the regenerating work of God in his own life. The following two facts are necessary:

Acceptance of the Gospel Message

The Holy Spirit uses the Word of God in bringing about salvation to the individual heart. Peter declares that we are "born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God" (1 Peter 1:23). In order to be born again it is necessary for the individual to hearken to and receive the Word of God — the message

of the gospel.

Personal Acceptance of Jesus as Saviour

"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" (John 1:12). By placing our faith in all that Jesus is and has done for us, we are receiving Him as our Saviour.

THE EFFECT OR RESULT OF THE NEW BIRTH

★NOTE to instructor:

Question to be answered by class discussion and/or other appropriate method:

★What are the effects or results of the new birth?

Condemnation Removed

Perhaps the first effect the newly born son of God is conscious of, is that a great burden has lifted from his soul. This is the burden of the condemnation of his sin. He realizes that Christ Jesus bore all that guilt and condemnation for him on the cross.

A Great Joy

Along with this release from the burden of the guilt of sin there most naturally comes a "joy unspeakable and full of glory." It is a full joy, a pure joy. It is so different from the "fun" that the world is seeking after. The experience of salvation is usually preceded by a season of conviction, and there is no experience quite as miserable as being under the convicting power of the Holy Spirit. When the sinner accepts Jesus and the terrible pangs of conviction are removed, and the reality of sins forgiven dawns upon the consciousness of the soul, it is no wonder that there follows a wonderful, overflowing joy. Philip went down to Samaria and preached with great spiritual results and we read, "There was great joy in that city" (Acts 8:8).

A Deep Peace

Another most precious accompaniment of the new birth is a deep settled peace and assurance in the heart. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Romans 5:1). When the soul is reconciled to God there naturally follows the sweetest peace. Assurance is that confident trust in the redemption which Christ has accomplished.

A Transformed Nature

Then there follows all the wonderful evidences of a transformation of nature. "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). This will be manifested in a hatred toward sin (1 John 3:9); brotherly love (1 John 4:7); victory over the world (1 John 5:4).

Union With Christ

The spiritual result of the new birth is that we have been united with God and Jesus Christ through the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. (See 2 Corinthians 6:16-18; Galatians 4:5,6; 1 John 3:24; 4:13; and Galatians 2:20.) We have the life of God within, and if that life is within us it follows that there will be the outward manifestations of which we have been speaking.

Adoption

There is one further result of the new birth which has sometimes been called the positional result because it affects our position or standing in relation to God. It is what Paul calls "adoption" (Galatians 4:4,5; Romans 8:15).

Adoption means "the placing of a son." It is a Roman word signifying the fact that those who are born into the family of God are given the position of full-grown sons, and thus are heirs of all that God has promised through Christ.

Ephesians 1:4,5 state that we have been predestined "unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ" "before the foundation of the world." The actual act of adoption takes place when we accept Jesus Christ as personal Saviour. Regeneration and adoption represent the twofold experience of sonship that comes when one accepts the Lord Jesus.

There is also a sense in which adoption, our sonship, will not be complete until Jesus comes again. Romans 8:23 says, "Waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." At that time we will be fully recognized as the sons of God.

We are granted adoption, or the placing as an adult son, immediately upon being born into the family as a child. Because of this, we can come boldly to the throne of God's grace and obtain whatever He has promised. We discover that the responsibility of His work rests upon us. We are looked upon as grown sons. It is indeed a wonderful experience and one which we should fully grasp.

THE BASIS OF THE NEW BIRTH — JUSTIFICATION

The Meaning of Justification by Faith

★NOTE to instructor

Answer the following by class discussion and/or other appropriate method:

★Define justification including the four elements it consists of.

Justification is a legal term which pictures the sinner before the bar of God to receive condemnation for the sins he has committed. But instead of his being condemned he is acquitted, being declared by God to

be righteous. It has to do with a change in the sinner's standing before God. Regeneration has to do with a change in the sinner's nature, but justification only implies a change in his standing before God.

Justification is more than forgiveness or pardon of sins and the removal of condemnation. It goes even farther than that. In justifying the sinner, God places him in the position of a righteous man. It is as though he had never sinned. Because of this, God does not see His children as forgiven sinners. He sees them as righteous children of the household of God. This is something that is not possible apart from God. Justification "is the judicial act of God whereby those who put their trust in Christ are declared righteous in His eyes, and free from guilt and punishment."

Justification, then, may be said to consist of the following four elements:

1. The forgiveness of sin.
2. The removal of its guilt and punishment.
3. The imputation of Christ's righteousness.
4. Restoration to God's favor.

The Necessity for Justification

The necessity for justification is seen in man's sin and the resultant condemnation which is his. We shall not fully understand the need for justification until we realize God's attitude toward sin. We have come to be used to sin, but God's holiness cannot bear with it. The greatest commentary on the awfulness of sin is the fact that God was willing to give Jesus to die that sinners might be saved from their sin. God cannot simply forget man's sin or accept him on the basis of merciful forgiveness. There must be something more. There must be a positive righteousness in the heart of the sinner before he can have fellowship with God. This is what the legal act of justification supplies.

The Bible looks upon all men as under the condemnation of sin. "There is no difference: for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:22,23). This statement is found at the end of the apostle Paul's analysis of every type of person in the first three chapters of Romans, wherein he shows that all men everywhere are sinners. He deals with the rank heathen in chapter one, showing how God may be known through nature and through conscience which approves or disapproves of man's deeds. Rejecting this revelation of God, the heathen turn to idolatry and through that to the grossest sins. The heathen world is "without excuse" in the sight of God (Romans 1:19,20). Paul then deals with the normal man (Romans 2:1-16) who feels that he is better than the gross sinners described in chapter one, but he is shown to be no better. We cannot be justified by our own morality. Then the writer of Romans turns to the religious person, represented by the Jew (Romans 2:17-3:8), and he shows that outward religion will never make a man righteous in the sight of God. The inspired apostle closes the door to every class of people declaring,

“Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God” (Romans 3:19). This is a black but true picture. Man just has no righteousness of his own. All his *“righteousnesses are as filthy rags”* (Isaiah 64:6). Having no righteousness he has nothing left but condemnation.

Thank God that Romans chapter three does not end with the nineteenth or twentieth verses, but the Spirit of the Lord goes on to say, *“But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe. . . being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus”* (Romans 3:21,22,24).

The Method of Justification

★NOTE to instructor

Question to be answered by class discussion and/or other appropriate method.

★Is man justified by the righteousness of the law or by the righteousness of God?

It is vitally important for us to understand the method by which God justifies the sinner. Justification is the very basis of our standing before God and it is not something that can simply be taken for granted. God cannot simply overlook sin out of the bigness of His heart; He must preserve His own holiness and justice. There is a definite and divine way by which sinners can be declared righteous and apart from this way such a thing cannot be possible.

Justification is:

- Not by the works of the law. If there is one thing made clear in the New Testament it is that man can never be justified by his own righteousness, his own good works or his keeping of God's law. Righteousness by the law would be possible if man could keep the law perfectly, but this can never be done. All that the law can

do is to make a man know he is a sinner — *“by the law is the knowledge of sin”* (Romans 3:20) — it cannot remove his sin.

- By the free gift of God's grace (Romans 3:24). Grace is the origin or source of justification. Justification cannot be received through works, therefore, the only way in which it can be obtained is through grace — and that *“freely.”* There is nothing which we can do to merit it.

- Because of the righteousness of Jesus Christ. The sinner is declared to be righteous on the grounds of the righteousness of Jesus Christ. He bore our sin that we might have His righteousness. This is made possible for us *“through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus”* (Romans 3:24). It was necessary that Jesus shed His blood to purchase such a salvation (Romans 5:9).

- Through believing in the Lord Jesus Christ. Martin Luther kindled the great Protestant Reformation as he realized that justification was by faith — by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the means by which justification becomes a reality in the individual life. *“Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ”* (Galatians 2:16). (See also Romans 3:26; 4:5; Acts 13:39.)

The Result of Justification

Whenever the truth concerning justification by faith alone is discussed, there is always the question of the believer's good works. Where do they fit in? For everyone agrees, or should do so, that it is not enough to claim Christ's righteousness and then live any way we choose. Of what good is it to put on clean clothes if we never take a bath. God expects that we shall bring forth the fruits of righteousness in our daily lives. This question will be fully dealt with in the next lesson under the topic of sanctification, but we would say this here: If our faith in the Lord Jesus is real it will be a living faith, and a living faith will bring forth a life that is pleasing to God.

The important thing is to keep works in their proper place. We are not justified by works, but we will bring forth acceptable works after we are justified. Our good works will be the manifestation of the faith which we have in Jesus Christ.

CLOSING ACTIVITY: Complete the following puzzle by answering the questions below:

1) B _ _ _ _
2) _ O _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
3) _ _ _ R _ _
4) _ _ _ _ _ _ N _ _ _ _
5) A _ _ _ _ _
6) _ _ _ G _ _ _ _ _
7) _ _ A _ _
8) _ I _ _
9) _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ N

- 1. The New _____ is the result of repentance and acceptance of the salvation of Jesus Christ which is by grace.
- 2. When we are born again we are aware that the great burden of _____ of our sin is removed.
- 3. Christians are born of the _____ (John 3:8).
- 4. The new birth is literally the impartation of the _____ to the heart and life of the sinner. (two words)
- 5. What result of the new birth affects our position or standing in relation to God? (See Galatians 4:4,5; Romans 8:15.)
- 6. Justification consists of the _____ of sin.
- 7. Therefore being justified by faith, we have _____ with God through our Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 5:1).
- 8. What is the difference between one who is a Christian and one who is not? _____
- 9. The basis of the new birth is _____.

Answers: 1) Birth; 2) Condemnation; 3) Spirit; 4) Divine Nature; 5) Adoption; 6) Forgiveness; 7) Peace; 8) Life; 9) Justification

THE NEW BIRTH

INDIVIDUAL STUDY: If you are studying alone, answer the following questions. You may detach this page and submit it for grading.

GROUP STUDY: It is permissible to remove this page and photo sufficient copies for classroom use, if desired.

1. How is the new birth experience described in the New Testament? _____

2. Why is the new birth necessary? _____

3. What are the effects or results of the new birth? _____

4. Define justification, including the four elements it consists of. _____

5. Is man justified by the righteousness of the law or the righteousness of God? _____

SANCTIFICATION

AIM: To understand how sanctification pertains to the Christian by defining it, with the object in view of clearing up the confusion which usually characterizes the average person's thinking on the subject. Also, to point out the importance of practical holiness and share helpful thoughts on how one may know what is pleasing to the Lord and what will be a hindrance in one's life.

KEY VERSES:

"For this is the will of God, even your sanctification" (1 Thessalonians 4:3).

"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).

"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. Having therefore these promises dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Corinthians 6:17-7:1).

OPENING ACTIVITY: Write down or share with someone else everything that comes to your mind when you hear the word "HOLINESS."

INTRODUCTION

"We believe that having been cleansed by the precious blood of Jesus Christ and having received the witness of the Holy Spirit at conversion, it is the will of God that we be sanctified daily and become partners of His holiness; growing constantly stronger in faith, power, prayer, love and service, first as babies desiring the sincere milk of the Word; then as dear children walking humbly, seeking diligently the hidden life, where self decreases and Christ increases; then as strong men having on the whole armour of God, marching forth to new conquests in His name, beneath His blood-stained banner, ever living a patient, sober, unselfish, godly life that will be a true reflection of the Christ within." — (Foursquare Declaration of Faith by Aimee Semple McPherson)

In the initial experience of salvation we are concerned with the doctrines of justification and regeneration, but in the continuance and growth of the seed of divine life, which has been imparted to the heart of the Christian, we are concerned with the subject of sanctification. Justification has to do with a change in our judicial standing before God whereby our sins are blotted out; regeneration has to do with our being born into the family of God whereby we become His children, with His life within; sanctification has to do with our service toward the One who has received us unto Himself.

About no other Christian doctrine is there so much confusion of thought as exists in respect to that of "sanctification" and "holiness." Yet nothing can be more important to the believer than right thinking about this teaching of the Word.

THE MEANING OF THE WORD "SANCTIFICATION"

★NOTE to instructor:

Question to be answered by class discussion and/or other appropriate method:

★What is meant by "sanctification"?

The word "sanctification" has been used and misused throughout the history of the Church. Much of its misuse has been due to a failure to understand the scriptural meaning of the word and thus of the experience it portrays. Let us clearly understand that sanctification does not mean perfection. It has often been given this meaning. However, God uses imperfect vessels, for there is none perfect. His only begotten Son was the only Man who ever walked this earth in perfection all the days of His life. Let us not set up unscriptural and impossible standards, but seek to know what is meant by sanctification.

The primary meaning of the word is "separation" or "consecration," while the secondary use of the word signifies "cleansing." To illustrate the first use, note the following:

- The firstborn of Israel were set apart, sanctified, unto the Lord. *"Sanctify unto me all the firstborn, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, both man and beast: it is mine"* (Exodus 13:2).

- Jeremiah was sanctified before he was born. *"Before*

thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations" (Jeremiah 1:5). This could not mean that Jeremiah was made perfect, but rather that he was set apart, consecrated, unto the service of Jehovah.

● Jesus was sanctified. John 10:36 speaks of "him whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world." "For their sakes I sanctify myself" said the Lord (John 17:19). Jesus was already perfect, but these verses mean He was especially set apart for the purpose of coming into the world to provide redemption for mankind. The Church which He has redeemed literally signifies "the called-out ones," the sanctified ones, set apart for Him.

God first lifts the sinner out of the trash heap of sin and then He begins to cleanse and polish His own until he shines with the radiance of the Saviour. This He is doing in our daily Christian life.

THREE PHASES OF SANCTIFICATION

★NOTE to instructor:

Question to be answered by class discussion and/or other appropriate method:

★What are the three phases of sanctification? Explain.

There are three phases to the complete experiencing of sanctification in our daily lives. Sanctification, or holiness, may be said to be imputed, imparted and developed. The complete enjoyment of the experience must embrace all three of these.

Imputed Sanctification

This means the fact that the righteousness of Jesus is imputed unto the believer. The Christian is seen clothed in the righteousness and holiness of Jesus. It is not his own, but Christ's holiness. Paul speaks of this in 1 Corinthians 1:30, "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."

It is a wonderful thing to know that I have the righteousness of Jesus Christ! But there is a danger here into which many have fallen. They say, "Well, God does not see me, He sees Jesus, so it does not matter what I do as long as I have Christ's righteousness." Many are presuming that they can live a carnal and worldly life and still count on the holiness of Jesus that has been imputed to them. This truth of imputed sanctification is real, but we must go further.

Imparted Sanctification

There are definite experiences with God whereby His Spirit is poured out on the earnest, seeking heart, and the believer is positively separated from things in his life which have been a hindrance and a sin. Every carnal Christian needs to earnestly seek the Lord for a real

experience of sanctification. This is the burden of Paul's plea in Romans 12:1,2: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

Progressive Sanctification

We believe in a definite experience of sanctification, but it must not be limited nor confined to but one experience. It is so possible to presume on something which we have experienced a number of years ago and which has ceased to have power in our lives today. Sanctification must be continual. "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth (literally, 'keeps cleansing') us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). It is a daily experience. Paul said, "I die daily" (1 Corinthians 15:31). The closer we get to the Lord the more we will see within us that which needs to be sanctified.

THREE AGENTS OF SANCTIFICATION

In the sanctification of the believer, the Bible makes reference to three agents which are used by God in bringing this about. They are the Blood, the Word and the Holy Spirit.

★NOTE to instructor:

Question to be answered by class discussion and/or other appropriate method:

★What is the light in which we must walk to know the continual cleansing of His blood?

Sanctification by the Blood

"Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate" (Hebrews 13:12). "For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" (Hebrews 9:13, 14). "The blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified" (Hebrews 10:29).

The shed blood of Jesus is our pledge of cleansing from sin. It is our receipted bill that the debt of our iniquities is paid. Hallelujah!

Sanctification by the Word

"Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth" (John 17:17). "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). What is the light in which we must walk to know the continual cleansing of His blood? Undoubtedly, it is the

light of His Word. *"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path"* (Psalms 119:105). *"The entrance of thy words giveth light"* (Psalm 119:130). Sanctification by the Word is a little harder than that by the blood of Jesus for it involves obedience to the precepts given therein. It is only as we walk in the light that the blood cleanses. We are sanctified by the blood through faith. We are sanctified by the Word through obedience. It is not always easy, but God graciously helps us by His Spirit.

Sanctification by the Holy Spirit

"Being sanctified by the Holy Ghost" (Romans 15:16). *"Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit"* (1 Peter 1:2). What a wonderful sanctifier the Holy Ghost is! How many have experienced that when they have been filled with the Spirit; the things of the world and of the flesh have simply dropped off. There is what has been called "The expulsive power of a new affection" and when the Holy Ghost fills the heart it has little relish for that which is displeasing to the Lord. *"Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh"* (Galatians 5:16).

THE HUMAN SIDE OF SANCTIFICATION

That there is both a divine side and a human side to sanctification must be apparent to all. It is God who imputes the holiness of Jesus to the believer because of the shedding of the blood of Jesus. It is God who has given the Word and the Spirit as a vital means of our cleansing, but the Christian does not just sit down and wait until he is sanctified. He must appropriate by faith all that God has made available. The blood will not sanctify if we do not believe it. The Word will not sanctify if we do not read and obey it. The Spirit cannot sanctify if we do not yield to Him. This is no doubt part of what the Scripture means when it says, *"Sanctify yourselves"* (Leviticus 20:7).

How many times we have prayed, "Lord, purge me." Perhaps if we would listen we might hear Him say, "Purge yourself." There is much that we can do to keep our feet out of paths that lead to temptation and our eyes from that which would lead us astray. We can read and study His Word, pray and seek His face and keep ourselves in the place of spiritual fellowship and help. If we do all we can to sanctify ourselves, certainly God will also do His part.

HOLINESS — THE STATE OF BEING SANCTIFIED

There are many who apparently believe that holiness is a nearly unrealizable state reached only by a certain few saints who belong in a special category; and that such a state is admirable, but not required of the average Christian. Nothing could be farther from the true teaching of the Word. Every Christian is called unto holiness and righteousness, inasmuch as God's sanctifying grace and power are available to all. It is not here contended that one earns salvation by works of

holiness, but it is here affirmed that we are saved for holiness, and that a lack of holiness shows one either not to have been regenerated or to be guilty of lack of cooperation for which he will surely be called into account. Holiness is not, then, a special accomplishment of the few, but the object of God's calling for all; it is not abnormal but normal; it is not optional but essential to the manifestation of God's glory in the believer.

We, further, make clear that holiness — the state of being sanctified — does not signify absolute ethical perfection, but rather full consecration to God and full yieldedness to the Holy Spirit's leading in the walk of love. Absolute maturity is the goal toward which we are progressively being sanctified. (See Philipians 3:10-21.)

What Is Holiness?

Not a Matter of Dress or Adornment

The moment the subject of holiness is mentioned in some Christian circles, immediately the minds of people go to matter of dress and physical adornment. Some, by their emphasis on these things, would lead us to believe that holiness depends upon the length of one's skirt or the color of the material of one's dress. Others insist that a man should not wear a necktie nor a woman jewelry of any kind. To cut or curl her hair would certainly disqualify a woman in certain circles. We are not making light of those who feel so strongly upon such matters, but we would press the question, "Is holiness dependent upon outward adornment of the body — or the lack of it?"

The reason why this emphasis is put upon outward adornment is because these good people believe that such things lead to pride. Now it is true that there is no characteristic more truly worldly than selfish pride, but it is also true that one may become proud of his humility. It is also possible to become so engrossed with the value of dressing a certain way that the heart becomes full of condemnation toward those who do not follow such extreme views.

We certainly do not believe a Christian should follow the fashions of Hollywood or Paris, but neither should he wear clothes that are so completely out of date as to make him look conspicuous. The chief business of a Christian is to reflect the beauty of Jesus, and when we go to one extreme or another we call attention to ourselves rather than to Him.

We believe very strongly that holiness is an inner characteristic and has nothing whatever to do with how a person clothes his body. Let us state it this way: Your clothes have nothing whatever to do with your holiness, but, and never forget this, your holiness may have a great deal to do with your clothes. Let an individual seek a close walk with the Lord and the guidance of the Holy Spirit on how he should adorn his body, that it might best be a vehicle for reflecting the holiness of Christ from within his life, and he will have no difficulty along these lines. Certainly a Christian should look different from the extreme, giddy, follower of the god, Fashion, whose only desire is to exalt the flesh.

Not a Matter of Conduct Only

There are other earnest followers of the Lord Jesus, whose thought concerning holiness seems to dwell almost entirely upon the conduct of individuals, chiefly in the matter of worldly pleasures. To be holy, in their thinking, means to stop going to places of worldly amusement such as the theaters, dances and card parties. Holiness means to quit using tobacco or intoxicating liquors, to cease swearing with outright oaths or modern slang expressions, which are in reality the same words with a few letters changed. Regardless of the way the word is spelled it expresses the same attitude from within the heart of the one who uses it. In other words, holiness would hereby be recognized as dealing with actions and words.

We agree completely that a true, fruit-bearing Christian will do none of these things, but it is possible not to err in anything which we have mentioned above, or with regard to a lot of other activities closely akin to these, and yet not have holiness. A man might stay away from everything that might be construed as worldly, and have no outward habit that would be considered harmful to his body, yet have a critical, gossiping spirit that would be anything but Christian. We do not believe a Christian should use tobacco, but let those of us who do not, look to our own selves lest we condemn one who uses nicotine, thus harming only his body, while we condone another who speaks words and manifests attitudes that pollute all who come in contact with him.

Holiness Is Something Positive

Let us clearly understand that holiness is not something negative but something positive. It is not a matter of what we do not do, but rather of what we do. It is not a case of merely putting off a lot of things, but rather of putting on the Lord Jesus. It is true that we are told to *"Put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts,"* but this is only part of the program. We are also instructed to *"be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness"* (Ephesians 4:22-24). (See also, Romans 13:12-14.)

Never forget that holiness is something positive. It is like the new life coming up from the roots of the tree in the springtime which forces off the old leaves that have clung to the branches throughout the winter. If Christians would give more concern to abiding in Christ so that His life might flow through them, they would have less trouble with the elimination of individual sins or worldliness from their lives. Man's heart cannot be a vacuum. You cannot take all his desires away from him and expect him to be satisfied, merely negatively holy. Every desire for the flesh and the world must be replaced with the satisfying life and presence of Jesus Christ. As He lives within we will find the true source of holiness.

MAINTAINING HOLINESS — WRONG VS. RIGHT

Earnest Christians everywhere are anxious to know

what is pleasing to the Lord and what will be a hindrance in their lives. So many times the question is asked, "Is there any harm in this, or that?" How are we going to be able to tell what a Christian may or may not do?

Quite obviously, it is not possible to make a list of prohibitions and send it out to all believers in the Lord. Any list that might be made would soon have to be amended as new devices to enslave the minds of men are brought forth. Then, there is such a variety of opinions in various parts of the country and the world. For example, among Christians in a certain European country whistling, even hymns, is considered most vulgar and sinful.

We are also faced with the fact that what may be wrong for one may be perfectly alright for another, or vice versa. How then can we decide what is right and what is wrong? We are not going to be able to name everything, but we can determine certain principles upon which it will be quite safe and spiritual to base our everyday life. Let us suggest some of these:

★NOTE to instructor:

Question to be answered by class discussion and/or other appropriate method:

★*What are some principles we can follow to maintain holiness?*

The Ten Commandments

That which constitutes a breaking of any one of the ten commandments is always wrong. These are great moral principles, written into the very constitution of human life, which cannot be transgressed anywhere without dire results.

Contrary to the Word of God

That which is contrary to the plain teaching of the Bible is always wrong. If the Word of God condemns some particular act or attitude, then we know that it is sin. There is no need whatsoever to pray about something that the Bible says is wrong. The Scriptures are the revelation of the will of God and all the praying in the world will not get God to change His mind regarding what He has stated in His Word.

The Conscience

That which brings condemnation to the individual conscience is wrong. Paul laid down this principle for the Christians at Rome with regard to eating certain things. Some of them were troubled about eating meats that had been offered to idols. *"Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth. And he that doubteth is damned (condemned) if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin"* (Romans 14:22,23). There is such a thing as the law of conscience, and when a man's conscience condemns him then it is wrong for him to do that thing.

Here we must be careful to notice that the first two principles stated above hold precedence over this rule. This one only applies to things not specifically condemned by the plain statement of Scripture. Also, it is important to notice that there will be a difference in individuals' consciences. What may be right for one may be wrong for another. A great deal depends upon our various temperaments. We must learn in these things the truth of the statement, "Others may, I cannot." Just because another Christian does certain things it does not mean that we may. God leads us all individually in these matters of conscience. *"Every one of us shall give account of himself to God"* (Romans 14:12).

Stumbling Block

That which becomes a stumbling block to another Christian is wrong. Here is the great law of love for our brother. Paul said, *"Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way. . . If thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died. Let not then your good be evil spoken of. . . Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another"* (Romans 14:13-19).

Bondage

That which brings a Christian into bondage is wrong. *"All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any"* (1 Corinthians 6:12).

There are actually two principles laid down here. The first is the law of expediency; Paul would have his life guided by that which is expedient, or profitable. If an undertaking were not profitable he would not go through with it. The second states that, even though all things are lawful for him, he refuses to be brought under the power, or sovereignty, of anything. By this he means that he will allow nothing in his life that will make him a slave to it, even though it may be perfectly lawful. Christians are called to liberty. That which brings them into bondage, or becomes priority over their relationship with Jesus Christ is wrong.

Those who do not know the Lord think that a Christian is bound because there are certain indulgences which he does not allow. Actually the sinner is bound for he is not able to quit his habits. The Christian is free for he can say, "No." Paul wanted always to be master of his body that, in turn, he might yield it unto God. If you cannot quit anything, you are a slave, and not free. Let us not become bound to anything but the will of God.

The Personal Test of Experience

"Walk as children of light. . . proving what is acceptable unto the Lord" (Ephesians 5:8,10). This may be considered the final test. It is possible to know from our own experiences when something is displeasing to the Lord, or hurtful to our own Christian life. God will lead us individually and when we find that something is not acceptable unto Him, that it mars the blessing of the Spirit upon our lives, then we know that that is something which should not be allowed. Learn to do this — to prove what is acceptable unto Him.

CLOSING ACTIVITY: Ask the students to complete the following statement in their own words: "Today I learned that sanctification is. . ." Then review the six principles which can help us to determine what is right and wrong for our own lives. Put these important principles to work in your life this week!

If you are working alone, write your response on the back of the Individual Worksheet at the end of this lesson. Make it a point to share with someone, as soon as possible, the exciting things that have been revealed to you in the Word of God.

★For further information on the subject of sanctification, you may study the supplement on the next few pages, which contains an exposition on Ephesians 4:17, 20-32 and Romans 12:1-10.

EXPOSITION
Text: Ephesians 4:17, 20-32

Verse 17 — The believers are here called upon to separate themselves from the life which characterized the unregenerate Gentiles, and to devote themselves unto God. There can be no question about whether God has called His people to a separated life. The Christian life is a separated life, because it is for God. The idea of holiness in the Old Testament is invariably that of separation from a profane purpose to a divine purpose. Holy things are God's things. The Hebrew word for "holy" is "quadosh" which means: separated, rendered sacred, consecrated, devoted, set apart for divine use. The idea of holiness originally had no ethical import. Anything was "holy" which was consecrated to exclusively sacred uses. However, whatever was set apart for God, had to be consistent with the nature of God; had to portray in some manner the character and purposes of God; so, in reference to persons, "quadosh" came to have an ethical and moral significance, because a person cannot portray the character of God as long as he walks in unrighteousness.

It is important for the believer to remember that he is "holy" (Greek — "hagios"; Hebrew — "quadosh") because he is devoted to the glory of God. Holiness requires right ethics, because God is, in His very nature, ethical, or righteous.

Holiness is much more than "not-badness," much more than abstract morality, it is "separateness," "devoutness," and "godliness." A recent writer has said that holiness in the Old Testament is "Jehovah-ness." One does not become holy or sanctified by the gradual elimination of all things unethical, but rather by complete devotion to Christ.

Verse 20 — Those who have learned Christ and who really know Him, know that He is purity, truth, love, and peace. If one has learned Christ, he knows that the walk of the Gentiles is as unlike the character of Christ as hell is unlike heaven. The greed, lust, avarice, strife, selfishness, and pride of the world order represent that which is the very antithesis of the character of the Lord. When one learns Christ, he becomes aware that his former manner of life was the very opposite of that life he must live to portray the character of Christ. If being holy, means being set apart for divine service and, consequently, to live a life consistent with the nature of the Holy God whom we serve, then sanctification which is the act by which God declares the believer to be set apart, must be an experience through which divine nature is imparted to the believer.

Verse 21 — The apostle here infers that those who continue to walk in sin give the impression of never having heard of Christ and of never having been taught by Him. Not that they had not known Christ, for they had

learned the truth which is in Jesus. Here they are being shown, in a tactful yet rather pointed manner, that the life of the old man is inconsistent with the truth which is in Jesus. It is this very inconsistency in the lives of many that grieves the Lord and puzzles the sincere seeker after Christian truth.

Verse 22 — Here the truth which is in Jesus is defined. At the new birth sins are forgiven and one is given the capacity to live for God. The new birth is also the initial experience of sanctification inasmuch as the believer becomes the possession of the Lord, but sanctification does not stop with conversion. It is a progressive experience in which the Christian keeps on cooperating with the Holy Spirit in the maturing of the Christian life.

This maturation consists negatively in stripping off the old man. The grace of God provides the power and wisdom for putting off the old man, but the believer has the responsibility to exercise that God-given power in putting him off. If this "putting off" were not the believer's responsibility, it would be meaningless to so command him. Christ on the cross put to death the old man; now it is the believer's task to strip him off.

Verse 23 — Putting off the old man is not the sum total of holiness, but only its negative aspect. We must be separated from the world, but we must also be devoted to God. The old man is put off in order to put on Christ. The Christian may fail in two ways. First, by failing to put off the old man; and second, by failing to put on the new man to take the place of the old. There is not much value in forsaking the old way unless one takes the new way. Being sanctimonious is not the same as being sanctified.

The word "renew" in this verse means constant growth and progression in one's mode of thinking about Christ's truth and nature. Romans 12:1-2 sets forth the same idea.

Verse 24 — While the verb "renew" is used in a tense that expresses a continuous action of renewal, the verbs "to put off" in verse 22, and "to put on" in this verse express single acts. Our minds are being constantly enlightened in the deeper phases of Christ's truth, which is a progressive sanctification. There is, however, an experience in which the believer, after conversion, once and for all puts off the old man, reckoning him dead with Christ; and in which he puts on the new man reckoning himself to be alive unto God to do work consistent with the holy nature of Christ. This would mean that there are three stages of sanctification. The first is at conversion at which time the holiness of Christ is *imputed* to the believer. The second comes later when one acts in response to his new position by separating himself from the walk of the Gentiles in order

to serve God in righteousness. The second phase may be accomplished very soon after conversion, or while one is seeking to be filled with the Spirit.

The third phase is progressive and goes on during one's whole life as he walks in the Spirit. The Christian is both "holy" as a position, and "becoming holy" as a growth in grace.

The words righteousness and holiness in verse 24 express the two qualities of the Christian life. Righteousness refers to the moral standard of life, and holiness to the spiritual standard. The first word means right conduct, while the second means right spiritual relationship. The word here translated "holiness" is not the usual word, but one which means "piety," "devotion," or "reverence." True Christian goodness is right conduct, right worship, and right service.

Verse 25 — Now some of the specific traits of the old man are enumerated and contrasted with the opposite traits of the new man by which he portrays Christ. The first contrast is between lying and truth. One must put off lying because it is inconsistent with the character of Christ who is the truth. If one is devoted to Christ, he is also devoted to truth. Satan is the author of falsehood and every deceiver is under his influence. Truth telling will not save one, but every truly saved person will embrace the truth.

Christians are particularly enjoined to deal with one another in truth, for they are mutually members of Christ's body. The new man, who is God's creation, is a community man, a part of the body of believers all mutually benefited and mutually benefiting. There is no place here for self-centeredness or egocentricity. Every member of the body is Christ-centered. Lying is a protective mechanism of the selfish and is out of place among the followers of Him whose very nature is love and truth.

Verse 26 — The saints of God put off selfish anger in order to put on charity. Perhaps there may be a righteous indignation over injustice, but anger with persons must not become an attitude. Anger must not be carried over from one day to another, because it must always give way to charity and forgiveness. Anger is to be put away because it is inconsistent with the character of Christ to whom we are devoted. When

anger persists it always leads to sin, because it is basically selfish.

Verse 27 — This verse points out another danger of anger, which is that of giving place to the enemy, whose aim it is to provoke sinful emotions, by which he is able to enter the heart and life of the believer, and thereby detract from the glory of Christ. Anger is one of the favorite doors by which the devil enters.

Verse 28 — In this verse the truly Christian argument against stealing is advanced. It is not the sacredness of private property which is violated but the character of the one who steals. The thief robs himself more than the man from whom he steals. The thief is a parasite in the community rather than a contributor. He is depriving himself of the three greatest sources of happiness which are: honest toil, creative helpfulness, and glorifying God by one's actions. Stealing is one of the graver perversions of selfishness, which is living for self at the expense of others. The Christian practice is sacrificing self for the blessing of others, and in this God is glorified in us, for such was the very character of Christ.

Verse 29 — Just as one may be a blessing or a curse by the use of possessions, so may one be by the use of words. Words are a powerful avenue of blessing. The sanctified believer has put off evil speaking, in order that he may do only good with words. On no score is one more closely judged than on that of his speaking. If one is devoted to the One who "*spake as never man spake*," let him be devoted to speech which blesses and edifies.

Verses 30-32 — Let all conduct which is selfish and characteristic of the old man be put off, because all such conduct grieves the Holy Spirit by which our redemption is sealed. The Holy Spirit is grieved because His office work is that of glorifying Christ, and any sin in the life of a believer detracts from His glory. The Christian must put off sin; he is called unto righteousness and holiness and love. The work of the Holy Spirit in the believer's life is to perfect holiness. There is sound reason to doubt genuineness of the experience of any person who makes no progress toward the perfecting or maturing of practical holiness. If Christ abides in one, he will sooner or later exhibit the character, mind and love of Christ. Let us sound a trumpet call to a life of holiness, lest we as a Church cease to be a vehicle of the Spirit for the glory of God.

EXPOSITION
Text: Romans 12:1-10

It would hardly be possible to overemphasize the importance of this twelfth chapter of Romans. Every believer should read this chapter at frequent intervals. It is not too much to recommend that it be read once each week before prayer and meditation. This portion has been selected, perhaps, more often than any other by pastors when it has been their aim to lift their people to a higher level of practical Christian living. Romans 12:1-2 is one of the favorite memory texts of Christians of all denominations. Every believer would do well to commit it to memory, to engrave it on his heart as well as in his mind.

Verse 1 — The word “*beseech*” here demonstrates the deep intensity of the apostle’s desire that his readers give heed to his counsel. If it is not meant that his instruction which follows is binding upon all Christian brethren, then words mean nothing. Nowhere in the epistles is Paul more intense in his language. Nowhere is he more earnestly pleading for a hearing. That this is a crucial appeal is made even more certain by the grounds he gives for his plea. “*By the mercies of God*” is both the reason for being holy and the basis for the achievement of it. Some reason that the failure to live a consecrated life will be passed over by God because He is merciful. Such is a sinfully presumptuous reasoning. God has mercifully set us free from the power of sin in order that we might live consecrated lives; and at the same time He has revealed His mercy with the object of constraining us to live up to our possibilities in Christ. Failure to go along with God in the attainment of that which He has purposed is shameless ingratitude, if not an indication of the falsity of one’s professed experience. Let it be noted that “*the mercies of God*” include the provision of divine power in the believer’s life for living devotedly and righteously. Herein lies the difference between the Bible and the systems of the moralists. Philosophy exhorts to morality because it is reasoned to be expedient. The Bible exhorts to holiness, because God in His mercy has willed it and at the same time made provision for it. The moralist becomes good by striving; the Christian becomes godly by consecration. The first does good works; the second does God’s works.

The word “*present*” is here important for several reasons. It means to present in the sense of dedication. It is the word used in Luke 2:22, to describe the presenting of Jesus as a child, in the Temple. Further, its tense (Greek) denotes a decisive single act of dedication which is once for all. Now, the fact that it is urged upon the whole body of the Church implies that it signifies a crisis decision and experience subsequent to regeneration in which the believer by the exercise of his will gives himself wholly to the divine purpose for which he was redeemed, in which experience, also, he is further empowered to fulfill that purpose. This is not equal to being baptized in the Holy Spirit, but may take place while one is seeking the fullness of the Spirit or at the moment of being filled. It appears, however, that the experience of sanctification — consecration — is a

prerequisite for being filled. The apostles probably had this experience before the day of Pentecost.

The believer is urged to present his body, because real, practical, holy living is intended to be the result, and not some mere ceremonial holiness. This consecrated and holy life is in the body which becomes a temple for the Holy Spirit. Only the visible acts of love and service glorify God. What one is only in the secret recess of his heart is no testimony.

The believer’s sacrifice is not one of a substitute for sins, nor the offering of “things” to God; it is a living sacrifice, the presentation of one’s self. Yet, it is to be doubted whether God will accept anyone’s gift until He first possesses the giver. If God possesses the believer, He can trust him for the payments of his material means.

This “*present*” is a “*holy*” offering because it is by one’s purposeful decision dedicated, or better, “*devoted*” to God. It is holy because it has been sanctified, that is “*set apart*” for divine purpose. The offering is acceptable unto God, because it is offered in a spirit of consecration. The merit of sacrifice was in the attitude of the worshipper more than in the nature of the offering. (Mark 12:33; Isaiah 1:11-18.) A holy heart makes a holy offering.

“*Your reasonable service,*” as all commentators agree, should be translated “*your spiritual service of worship.*” The word translated “*reasonable*” means that which pertains to the soul in contrast with what is external. No mere external liturgy or system of formal worship is well pleasing to God. Our acceptable service must consist in holy living which has as its source a wholly consecrated heart and mind.

Verse 2 — The consecrated life admits of no conformity to the spirit of the age (world). So habitual is conformity to the prevalent customs and practices of this materialistic age that one must give special attention to overcoming the conformity. Further, while we live in the world, the temptation to conform to the greed, pride, competition and selfishness of the age will always be present. It must be noted that overcoming and resisting conformity is not accomplished merely by moralistic programs, but rather, by a transformation and renewing of the mind. Only a transformed (Greek: *metamorphosis*) mind, renewed day by day by the Holy Spirit can resist the urges to imitate the age. God’s plan of battle calls, first, for a full consecration without which there can be no successful transformation. However, where there is first a dedication, God effects a constant renewal by His Holy Spirit who keeps the believer in victory and leads him ever higher from plane to plane. “*Be ye transformed,*” is the continuous tense of the verb which makes it mean literally, “*keep on being transformed.*” This proves that sanctification, besides being a once for all act of consecration, is a continuous process of enlightenment, cleansing, empowering, and maturation. No single act or experience can bring

complete maturity; it takes a lifetime of testing and fellowship to bring one to the stage of full Christian growth. In the light of these verses we see that holiness is:

1. Imputed 2. Implanted 3. Imparted 4. Progressively matured 5. Finally attained in full.

"That ye may prove," means literally, "that ye may discern through experience." It is one thing to be told what God's will is, but it is another thing incomparably more glorious to so live in Christ and to share his nature and mind as to be able to feel within and be assured of the will of God. The reason why so many live contrary to the will of the Lord, is not that they are ignorant of His will, but, rather, that they have not yet shared divine nature to the point of maturity where they approve God's will with every faculty of their hearts. "Prove" in this verse is better rendered "approve."

Verse 3 — The verses which follow describe the manner of life to which a full consecration leads. First of all, holiness leads to a sound attitude toward one's self and toward others. The sanctified believer is not high-minded, pretentious, nor officious. He does not try to exercise gifts, perform Christian duties, nor occupy positions in the body of Christ which are beyond the measure of grace and faith with which God has endowed him. Much friction as well as fleshly manifestation in connection with spiritual gifts is due to pretensions beyond one's divinely appointed capacity, and beyond one's proportion of God-given faith. Let one attempt only that which falls within his divinely appointed sphere. Were all believers more humble in the estimation of their capacities, there would be a great diminution of church trouble. Let us remember that "holiness" is not great pretension of spiritual power, but the very opposite — meekness and humility.

Verses 4-5 — Here it is shown that every believer is an integral part of a Christian society, whose excellence

resides not in his works as an individual, but in his cooperation with all for the building up of the body. We do not need to be pretentious, because only what we do within the body together with and in consideration of all believers will be accepted of the Lord, and will endure eternally. Any selfishness or self-display within the body only defeats and betrays holiness.

Verses 6-8 — Every gifted person in the Church body is to exercise his divinely appointed office with a view to being a blessing to the rest. He is to exercise his duties humbly within the limits of his divinely bestowed faith and grace, for anything beyond this will be futile. He who ministers is to wait on God for his ministry, and to apply God's grace bestowed only in the office for which God has gifted him. If one is gifted to teach, let him pretend to be no more than a teacher. If one is gifted to exhort, let him exhort only and that according to his faith. If one is called to be a giver, let him do it unpretentiously, not for glory, but to do good. If one is called to be a leader let him do so with sincere earnestness. If one is called to deeds of charity, let him do so cheerfully. For every office or gift there is a way of holiness.

Verse 9 — We all know that love of the brethren is the Christian standard, and because of this, we often pretend to love when we do not love, or to love more than is sincere. This verse exhorts the believer not to make his love of the brethren simply a staged pretense. It is literally, "let love be without hypocrisy." In early Greece a "hypocrite" was a stage actor. Unfortunately too much which passes for love is only a dramatic display not true in real life. But a holy life is in very essence a life of Christian love. Sham love is sham holiness.

Verse 10 — There is no greater proof of sanctification than that attitude which seeks to honor other more than self, and prefers the blessing and progress of others over selfish blessing.

SANCTIFICATION

INDIVIDUAL STUDY: If you are studying alone, answer the following questions. You may detach this page and submit it for grading.

GROUP STUDY: It is permissible to remove this page and photo sufficient copies for classroom use, if desired.

1. What is meant by "sanctification"? _____

2. What are the three phases of sanctification? Explain. _____

3. What is the light in which we must walk to know the continual cleansing of His blood? _____

4. What are some principles we can follow to maintain holiness? _____

FAITH

AIM: To understand the relationship of faith to the Christian life. Faith, as it will be treated in this lesson, is not the initial saving faith, but faith as it pertains to the whole Christian life, although the two are merely two views of the same quality.

KEY VERSE:

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. . . .But without faith it is impossible to please him (God): for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.” (Hebrews 11:1-10).

(For a verse by verse exposition of Hebrews 11:1-10 and 23-29 see the supplement to this lesson on pages 81-83.)

OPENING ACTIVITY: In olden days there was a group of Christians who had a unique and blessed way of greeting one another. Whenever one would encounter another their greeting would be, “How is your faith?” What a blessed thing it would be if we could revive the old custom! What a stimulus to believing it would provide! We have slightly altered the custom, and, today, the usual salutation is, “How are you feeling?” Faith has given place to feeling, and where once faith was so mighty and so prevalent that it had to be inquired about, now feelings predominate and must be kept account of! What is the result? We are living in the realm of the seen rather than in that of the unseen; and “*the things which are seen are temporal,*” while “*the things which are not seen are eternal*” (2 Corinthians 4:18).

HOW WOULD YOU RESPOND IF SOMEONE ASKED YOU TODAY “HOW IS YOUR FAITH?” ARE YOU EXPERIENCING “ACTIVE” FAITH IN YOUR DAILY CHRISTIAN WALK?

Read the definition of “active” faith below, then jot down some areas where you see that your faith needs to be more active!

“Faith is the victory that overcomes the world.” Faith is not a word merely of acquisition; it is mainly a word of victory. Faith not only acquires; it also overcomes. Further, faith is not so much a kind of attitude as it is a kind of action. It does more than accept as true that which is not seen; it acts in pursuit of that which is not yet seen. Faith is not passive; it is active. It is not only the pilgrim’s staff; it is more truly the warrior’s sword. Faith does not merely sit and hope for treasures; it goes in search of them.

INTRODUCTION

Faith is just as essential to every phase of the believer’s life as it is to his salvation in the beginning. Every benefit for spirit or body is dispensed in response to faith on the part of the believer. In fact, Christians are called believers because their lives are lived in continuous faith.

When one realizes that every divine provision becomes a fact in experience only as a result of faith, he at the same time is struck with its tremendous importance. Does not the Bible teach that faith, next to love, is the greatest virtue? (See 1 Corinthians 13:13; Galatians 5:22.) It is probably true that all Christian emotions and attitudes are contained in love; and if it is so, faith is love appropriating; it is love trusting and entrusting. A lack of faith would be also a lack of love. To love God with all the heart is at the same time to trust in God with all the heart. By the same token anything that augments and intensifies love also increases faith.

THE IMPORTANCE OF FAITH

Faith Is That Characteristic of the Soul Which Brings Man in Contact With God

As the five physical senses bring us in contact with, and make us conscious of, the physical world about us, so faith is that sense of the soul which brings us in contact with God.

Faith is the avenue of approach to God. There is no other way. “*He that cometh to God must believe*” (Hebrews 11:6).

God is desirous of blessing man, but man hinders Him from doing it by his lack of faith. “*And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief*” (Matthew 13:58).

★NOTE to instructor:

Question to be answered by class discussion and /or other appropriate method:

★*What is absolutely essential in order to please God? Give Scripture references.*

Faith is the Thing, Above All Else, Which Pleases God

But without faith it is impossible to please him” (Hebrews 11:6). “Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith” (James 2:5).

Some people feel that they can please the Lord by their much praying and by their self-sacrifice, when the greatest thing we can do to please Him is to believe. Note how important it is to please Him. Can there be anything more needed, much more important, than to walk in His divine will, well-pleasing unto Him? It is more important than preaching or serving, for if not in His will, these will be unfruitful. Jesus chided the disciples for their lack of faith more than any other thing. (See Mark 16:14; Matthew 17:17; and Matthew 14:31.) It follows, then, that not only does faith please Him, but unbelief displeases Him. He can bear with our mistakes and have patience with our dullness of learning, but God does ask that, whether we understand or not, we do believe Him; and with that He will be well pleased. (See also Matthew 6:30; Matthew 8:26; Matthew 16:8; and Luke 24:25.)

The Ministry of the Disciples Was Hindered Because of Lack of Faith

“Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him (a demon) out? And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief” (Matthew 17:19,20). If this tremendous fact were true with the disciples of our Lord in the days of His flesh, undoubtedly it is also true with a very large number of the ministers of the gospel today. The great ministry of the Word of God is being hindered, thwarted, bound—and all because of lack of faith!

Unbelief (Lack of Faith) Is Sin

Unbelief is not just a little weakness, nor a rather unhandy infirmity. Unbelief is sin! *“Whatsoever is not of faith is sin” (Romans 14:23). “Of sin, because they believe not on me” (John 16:9).* To believe is a command of the Lord, and to doubt is disobedience to this command, and thus it is sin (1 John 3:23).

The Word of God Is Only Made Profitable by Faith

“The word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it” (Hebrews 4:2). The inspired writer is speaking particularly about the children of Israel, who had heard about the wonders of the promised land, but the word they heard did not profit them for it was not mixed with faith. How many, today, are hearing the message of the gospel, but it is not profitable unto salvation to them for there is no faith mixed with it? How tremendously important this fact makes faith!

The Whole Christian Life Is Dependent on Our Faith

Without faith there could be no experience of the Christian life. *“If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established” (Isaiah 7:9).* We stand by faith (Romans

11:20,21; 2 Corinthians 1:24). We only overcome by faith (Luke 22:31,32). Failure to obtain God's blessings and the accompanying judgment, came upon God's people because of lack of faith (Hebrews 3:18,19).

WHAT IS FAITH?

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen” (Hebrews 11:1). Weymouth's translation of this same verse reads: “Now faith is a confident assurance of that for which we hope, a conviction of the reality of things which we do not see.”

Faith Seems Strange and Paradoxical

You do not have the thing you desire, yet, by faith, you have the substance, or assurance of it. You cannot see it, yet, by faith, you have the evidence of it. This is the strange result of faith; and yet it is proven to be a sound position, for it does not leave one there; it really produces the results. David says: *“I had fainted, unless I had believed to see” (Psalm 27:13).*

Faith looks into the unseen and reckons what it sees as in the realm of the seen. It brings the improbable into the realm of the probable; and it brings the impossible, from all human viewpoints, into the realm of the possible. *“Through faith we understand. . . things which are seen were not made of things which do appear” (Hebrews 11:3).*

Faith does not lie. Faith does not say you have a thing when you do not have it; nor does it say you do not have something when it is very evident that you do. Faith is not deception. The thing that faith does is to cause one to be just as sure he is going to receive that for which he is believing, as though it were already his. He could not be more certain if the needed thing were already in his possession.

Faith is not something strange and unreal and intangible. Faith is substance — spiritual substance — just as real in the spiritual world as any substance we know in the material. It is not some peculiar, mysterious quality which one must strive desperately to generate.

Faith Is Based on Three Very Definite Things

★NOTE to instructor:

Question to be answered by class discussion and/or other appropriate method:

★*What three things is faith based on? In what ways?*

1. Knowledge — Faith is not walking in the dark; it is, rather, stepping in the light. True, the light may not shine very far ahead, but it always shows the next step, and, after all, that is all we can take at one time. Then when we do take that step, there will be enough light to show the next one. God does not ask His children to do the impossible; nor does He allow us to see the full length of

the journey before we start out. So if we walk by faith in the light God sheds on our pathway, the light will move on before us. If perchance there is absolutely no light ahead, then God would have us stand still.

Faith is not believing a thing without evidence. Faith is based on the best of evidence — the Word of God. He has spoken, and faith simply expects Him to fulfill His Word. There is nothing mysterious about it. It is just plainly and simply taking God at His Word.

Believing with the heart without the head is out of the question. There must first be the knowledge that God has promised. One does not need to understand how, or even when, God will fulfill His promise. All one needs to know is that He has said it, and thus he is assured it shall be done. Hence, we see the tremendous necessity of knowing what God has said — of an intimate knowledge of the Word of the Lord. (See Psalm 9:10; Romans 10:14,17).

Yes, faith is based on knowledge, but not on knowledge alone. There are two other important things — assent and appropriation.

2. Assent — There must be an assent of the mind to the truth of the promise. If one will not agree to the truth of what God has said, there can never be any faith. Assent is simply an act of agreeing. (See Mark 12:32.)

3. Appropriation — After knowing what God has promised, and after assenting to the truth of that promise, then faith reaches out and takes or appropriates what is promised.

Knowledge itself is not enough. Man may have the knowledge that Christ is divine and yet reject Him as Saviour. Knowledge affirms reality of these things, but it neither accepts nor rejects. Nor is assent enough. There is an assent of the mind which does not convey a surrender of the heart, and it is *“with the heart man believeth unto righteousness”* (Romans 10:10).

Real faith is in the realm of will and action. It appropriates. It takes. Faith always has the idea of action in it. “Faith has legs.” It is the soul leaping up to embrace the promise. (See Romans 4:21.) To believe means “to live by,” implying a real surrender and dependence. Phillip Brooks’ definition of faith was:

Forsaking
All
I
Trust
Him

THE POSSIBILITIES AND POWER OF FAITH

There is absolutely no limit to what we may have, and what may be accomplished, if we will believe. Faith lifts one out of the merely natural into the supernatural. It brings you in contact with the infinite, and brings the infinite into your life and surroundings. *“Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them”*

(Mark 11:24). *“All things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing ye shall receive”* (Matthew 21:22). It might be well to stipulate some of the definite things which are promised to the one who will believe.

★NOTE to instructor:

Question to be answered by class discussion and/or other appropriate method:

★*What are some of the definite things which are promised to the one who will believe?*

Obtaining the Supply of Our Personal Needs

- Salvation by faith. (See Ephesians 2:8; Mark 16:16; Acts 16:31; John 1:12; Romans 4:5; 5:1; and Hebrews 10:39)

- The fullness of the Holy Spirit. (See Galatians 3:14; John 7:39.)

- Victories over our adversaries by faith — the world overcome by faith (I John 5:4); the flesh, or old man, overcome by faith (Romans 6:11); victory over the devil by faith (Ephesians 6:6-16; Daniel 6:23; and Luke 22:31,32).

- The entire Christian life is lived by faith. (See Galatians 2:20; 3:11.)

- Perfect peace through faith. (See Isaiah 26:3; Hebrews 4:3.)

- Sanctification by faith. (See Acts 15:9; 26:18.)

- Every blessing we receive is ours by faith. (See Hebrews 11:6.)

Obtaining Things for the Benefit of Others and the Glory of God

We dare not be selfish and merely pray for blessings for ourselves. Selfishness will be a real hindrance and will paralyze faith. Faith is utterly unselfish. It is possible to so believe that we can precipitate the blessings of salvation and real revival upon others. Just a few of God’s challenges on this aspect of faith are found in: Mark 9:23 (in connection with the healing of a demon-possessed child); Luke 8:50 (with reference to the raising of one who was dead); Luke 8:25 (referring to stilling a storm on the Sea of Galilee); Matthew 17:20; 18:19; and John 14:12.

The Measure of Accomplishment

How much will I see done? *“According to your faith be it unto you”* (Matthew 9:29). God will give us whatever we believe for. If it is for little, or for much, He will honor our faith.

The story is told of an imaginary scene in heaven. An angel comes to God and informs Him that a certain

individual, down on earth, has just prayed and sent a request to heaven. The Father asks, "What did he send up his faith in?" The angel looks around and searches under all the furniture and finally, after some time and effort, he locates a thimble. "Here it is" he says. "Here is what he sent his faith up in." The Lord replies, "Fill it up for him and send it down." And the angel fills the thimble up and sends it back full of the requested blessing. Some time later, the angel comes into the presence of the Lord and informs Him that someone else is praying, someone else has sent up a request. "In what did he send up his faith?" is the question that is again asked. The angel knows better than to look around inside, and so goes outside to find what the faith was sent up in. After some time, six stalwart angels come trudging along with a great hogshead on their shoulders. "Here is what he sent up his faith in," they say. "Fill it up for him and send it down," the Lord says, and so they fill the great hogshead to the brim and it is sent down laden with blessing. "According to your faith be it unto you."

HINDRANCES TO FAITH

★NOTE to instructor:

Question to be answered by class discussion and/or other appropriate method:

★How is faith hindered?

"If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth" (Mark 9:23). Notice that Jesus did not say, "If thou wouldst believe," but "If thou canst believe." There are times when we would like to believe but are utterly unable to do so. There are times when certain hindrances come in the way, making it impossible to believe. We must know, then, what these hindrances are so that we may have them removed and be able to believe God as He desires that we should. Here are some of the main hindrances to faith:

Satan

There is no doubt that Satan is the chief foe of every child of God who seeks real victory and power. He concentrates on hindering our faith. This he does in several ways.

1. Hindering the Word of God from bringing forth faith in the heart, by taking the Word away from our heart before it has a chance to generate faith therein. "Then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe" (Luke 8:12). His methods of doing this are varied, but we suggest two: causing us to neglect the reading and study of the Bible; filling our minds with so many other things that we do not seem to have room to retain the Word.

2. Throwing doubt and questioning on what God has said. If he cannot get the Word out of our heart immediately, he will then make us doubt it. Thus he dealt

with our first parents in the garden of Eden.

3. He will also seek to foster and bring about the following other hindrances to our faith. We may see him behind every one, using each to the limit.

Sin

Sin in the life of God's children utterly paralyzes faith. "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me" (Psalm 66:18). There can be no confidence that God will hear if our heart and conscience condemn us (1 John 3:20,21).

Disobedience

"Faith is a flower that grows in the pathway of obedience." Nothing stimulates faith more than perfect obedience to God's commands. There are always conditions to God's promises, and when we obey His commands and fulfill our part of the conditions, we have nothing but perfect confidence that God will fulfill His part. Disobedience, of course, completely destroys this confidence. (See 1 John 3:22.)

Refusal to walk in, or pray according to God's will constitutes disobedience, and faith can only operate when we ask according to His will. (See 1 John 5:14,15.)

Lack of Love Toward God

Faith works by love (Galatians 5:6). Often, as we mentioned above, we do not have faith because we do not obey His commandments. The reason that we do not obey His commands is because we do not love Him as we should. (See John 14:21-24.) Thus it goes: Love brings obedience, and obedience brings faith.

Selfishness — Lack of Love Toward Others

If more of the children of the Lord would enlarge their horizon and begin to be concerned about others, both Christian and non-Christian, there would be a great deal more faith springing up in their hearts. So many have become so self-centered that all they can see is their own need, and they have not been able to get that met, and, as a result, what faith they had has gone. If we would forget our puny self for a while and begin to take on our heart the burden of others, many of our own needs would be met in the very process of believing for others.

Doubt

Fear — The words "fear not" occur about 86 times in the Bible. How necessary that we hear them today.

Where there is fear, there cannot be faith. Fear intimidates; timidity is the very opposite of confidence, or faith. Faith brings courage. Fear paralyzes. Fear paralyzes spiritual movement, but faith is active. Fear magnifies difficulties. Fear causes present difficulty to appear insurmountable, whereas faith minimizes every obstacle.

Worry — "Fret not thyself" (Psalms 37:1). "Let not your heart be troubled" (John 14:1). "Be careful (anxious) for

nothing" (Philippians 4:6). If we trust we do not worry, and if we worry we do not trust. Here is an absolute test of your faith: How much do you worry? How often we have excused this characteristic of ours! We have felt that we just must do a certain amount of it. We are prone to think that things would not keep going if we did not worry just a little. The sooner we condemn this thing that we have been excusing and see it in its true light, as robbing us of much that God has for us, the sooner will our faith increase. When tomorrow comes, grace will come with it, and sufficient for the tasks, the trials, or the troubles.

Indolence — Plain Old-Fashioned Laziness

This modern age is full of ease, and ease is no stimulus to faith. Faith grows and develops in the heat of the battle. Others are too lazy when it comes to service. Faith is restful but not lazy. Let us stir up ourselves to take hold of God. (See Isaiah 64:7.)

THE SOURCE OF FAITH AND HOW TO OBTAIN IT

Faith as a Gift

Faith is not something that we generate ourselves by knitting our brows and going through a lot of mental concentration or contortions. Neither can it be worked up by desperate shouting and various physical manipulations. Faith is given by God, and not one atom of faith exists in the world except as God has given it.

It is a gift of all the members of the Godhead: the Father — *"According as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith"* (Romans 12:3); the Son — *"Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith"* (Hebrews 12:2); the Holy Spirit — *"To another, faith by the same Spirit"* (I Corinthians 12:9).

★NOTE to instructor:

Question to be answered by class discussion and/or other appropriate method:

★*What is the difference between defeat and victory in the Christian life?*

The secret of living a victorious Christian life, be it in the realm of our faith or any other spiritual characteristic, lies in our appropriation of the blessings and victories of our risen Lord for He tells us, *"The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me"* (Galatians 2:20). In other words, he was appropriating Christ's faith, and every one of us can do that! If Christ abides within, then I can have His faith. Hallelujah!

If faith is a gift then let us ask for it. A gift is never merited. It is always of pure grace. Do not try to work up your faith. Just ask God to give it to you. Also, it is important to realize that it is not the quantity of faith that counts; it is

just having it. If God is as pleased with faith as He said, surely He will be especially pleased to give us the faith we desire of Him.

Faith as a Development

The fruit of the Spirit — *"But the fruit of the Spirit is. . .faith"* (Galatians 5:22). Faith is the only characteristic which is said to be both a gift and a fruit of the Spirit. The significant thing about fruit is that it does not grow suddenly nor of its own strenuous efforts. Fruit develops gradually, steadily, and each day there is a further development in its progress. So it should be with our faith. The one requirement for fruit growing is abiding. In John 15:5, Jesus said, *"He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit."* A continual, steady, abiding walk in the fellowship of Jesus will, without any conscious effort on our part, result in the growth of the fruit of the Spirit-faith upon the branch of our life. Do not try to force it, or generate it. Keep abiding in Christ and it will automatically grow, slowly, steadily, but surely.

As a result of reading and studying the Bible — *"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God"* (Romans 10:17). "Faith cometh by the Word of God."

Faith must be based on facts and not on feeling. Faith is not something you feel, something which you are conscious of. Faith does not stop to feel; it simply stands on the Word of God, regardless of feeling. Do not constantly look to your faith and try to generate more. Simply keep your eyes on the promises of God and faith will automatically take care of itself. Faith is not based on the observance of miracles. Real faith must be based on the Word of God, not on anything we see.

In answer to, and as a result of, prayer — *"And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith"* (Luke 17:5). God will answer this prayer.

Then, too, the very act of praying, whether we are asking for faith specifically or not, will increase faith. Prayer brings the soul into the very presence of God so that He is made real and His promises become tangible, and spiritual things become vital and near, making it easy to believe.

Faith is developed and strengthened through use and testing. The trial of faith is not to be feared. It is rather to be welcomed, for of what good is faith if it cannot stand the test? (See I Peter 1:7; John 11:14,15.)

Three Suggestions to Increase Faith in Your Heart

★NOTE to instructor:

Question to be answered by class discussion and/or other appropriate method:

★*What are three suggestions for increasing faith in one's heart?*

1. Settle it once and for all in your mind that the Word of God is true. So many attacks are being directed against the Bible today that many Christians are wavering in their confidence in it. It is a good thing to be dogmatic and settle this matter once and for all. Wavering will bring no blessing and certainly no faith. Modern Science, so called, is changing every few years and its books must be constantly revised and rewritten. God's Word has never changed through the centuries. True science corroborates, but never contradicts the Bible. Let us not be afraid of the Bible failing or being overthrown. Spurgeon was once asked if he could defend the Bible. "Defend it?" he replied, "I would just as soon defend a lion. Let it out, it will defend itself." *"Forever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven."*

2. Consider the Holy Spirit's dealings in your life. Think back over all the way you have come. Has God ever failed you? Have you ever known a time when you earnestly called upon Him and he failed to hear and

meet your need? Look back, and, like Samuel, raise a few Ebenezers over the places of God's great deliverances in your life and say, *"Hitherto hath the Lord helped us"* (1 Samuel 7:12), and remember that *"hitherto" argues "henceforth."* If He is *"the same yesterday, and today, and forever"* (Hebrews 13:8), will He not still deliver as He has in the past? Note 2 Corinthians 1:10: *"Who delivered us. . .and doth deliver . . .we trust that he will yet deliver."*

3. Never relax confidence in the fact that God answers prayer. This has been proven through the ages. Never doubt it. Do not let Satan cheat you out of your faith by whispering that those blessings and deliverances for which you prayed just happened to come and would have come if you had not prayed. He could not tell the truth if he tried. God answers prayer. He has placed Himself in that position where He is bound, by His own Word, to hear and answer prayer — your prayer! He has even said, *"Concerning the work of my hands, command ye me"* — (Isaiah 45:11).

CLOSING ACTIVITY: Each member of the class should write a paragraph they could give to encourage someone who is lacking in faith. They may want to include a definition of faith, thoughts on its importance in the believer's life, how to overcome hindrances to their faith, and finally how to obtain faith. Try to make the paragraph simple enough for someone else to understand. And be practical.

If you are working alone, write the paragraph on the back of the Individual Worksheet at the end of this lesson.

★For further study on faith, study the supplement on the next few pages; it contains an exposition on Hebrews 11:1-10; 23-29.

EXPOSITION
Text: Hebrews 11:1-10

Chapter eleven is a roll call of those distinguished heroes of the Old Testament whose victories are invariably the outcome of faith. The chapter begins with a definition of faith followed by a number of biographical illustrations of its meaning, exercise and importance. A frequent perusal of this key chapter cannot but richly repay the reader.

Verse 1 — While some do not agree that verse one is meant to be an exact or complete definition of faith, such it is in the judgment of this writer. It is a brief definition, but it certainly does describe clearly and adequately what faith is. The value of this verse as a definition of faith is more obvious when we detain ourselves to examine closely the meaning of several words here used. Faith is said to be the “*substance*.” The word “*substance*” comes from a word that literally means “*foundation*” or that which underlies our hope. “*Foundation*” speaks of that covenant relationship of mutual love between the Lord and the believer which is our ground of hope. Faith is not blind groping in the dark but the certain conviction, born of love and experimental relationship, that God’s revealed Word is true. Faith is more than a mere hope; it is “*substance*,” which was, in legal affairs, translated “*title deed*.” He who believes divinely, in whose heart love amounts to persuasion, has a “*title deed*” to God’s full provision.

Faith is persuasion as it applies to the invisible. The realities of God’s kingdom are by nature invisible realities, that is, invisible to natural sight. Faith is that faculty by which the spiritual realities are perceived as being real, and capable of being realized. He who has faith has eyes for the spiritual. Faith is to the Christian real “*evidence*.” He needs no other evidence in order to proceed in accord with the revealed will of God. In classical Greek, the word for evidence was often translated “*proof*.” Faith is a “*foundation*” and a “*proof*.” The history of the expansion of Christianity demonstrates that believers have acted with a conviction just as profound as that of those who have acted in the promotion of purely earthly causes. To many, heaven has been more real than earth. Without faith (the Christian’s foundation) the Church would have had no more history than the birds of the air or the fish of the sea.

Verse 2 — The fact is here affirmed that the history (witness of achievement) of the elders of Israel is the result of faith. Israel has made the greatest religious contribution to the world of any people. Yet even Israel’s wisest heroes acted by faith, not being aware of the full significance of Israel’s mission in the world. Had there been a clear awareness of their specific mission, they would not have crucified the Lord. However, in spite of

Israel’s ignorance of God’s final purpose, there were always those prophets who aroused in the people faith to believe that they were a covenant people fulfilling divine purpose in a way characteristic of no other nation. Faith did not see all, but it saw enough to fashion an incomparable history. There can be no real victory in the individual’s life, nor will he leave behind any testimony, unless he acts by faith, on the principle that he is a divine instrument devoted to the accomplishment of divine purpose. We now know, too, that that purpose is the glory of God by means of Christ’s residence in the believer. (Ephesians 1:4-6; 2:6-7.)

Verse 3 — The believer’s faith goes back to the very beginning. We believe that God is creator and original source of all things. Whether one’s life has meaning or not depends upon his faith in the divine origin and purpose of things. If the universe is only, as someone has said, “a fortuitous (accidental) concourse of atoms,” then human history is only an accidental concourse of conflicting actions having no real purpose. If my life is only foam cast up on the restless waves of humanity, then my end is dissolution, and my existence has no significance. But there is something within me which spiritual experience has imparted, which is so persuasive as to amount to evidence, that convinces me of the divine origin and purpose of human life. That inward something is *faith*. Faith makes me see God in every manifestation of nature and in every turn of history.

Verse 4 — Faith in God and the knowledge of God gave to Abel an insight into true religion. Because he knew God, he knew what God required. Abel’s sacrifice was one of faith because it was offered on principle apart from his own reasoning. Cain’s sacrifice was one of reason, concluding that while it was not exactly according to divine specification, it really did not matter; for he could see no superior logic in the divine plan. There are many who, like Cain, are lacking in the faith to see that it does matter what kind of sacrifice is offered to God. Divine revelation has set forth the way of the cross, and the “Lamb of God” offered on the cross, to be the central redeeming fact. Yet, how many there are who pass the cross by, lightly esteeming what does not appeal to the carnal mind, and offer vainly to God the works of their own hands. No matter how good may be the works of our hands, they do not constitute an acceptable sacrifice, because they are not presented in faith. Cain killed Abel, but Abel’s faith lives on. It is clear that the works which live on are the works of faith. There need be no conflict between faith and works. God requires both but the works must be works of faith. Faith without works is dead, but works without faith are vain.

Verse 5 — Perhaps the faith of Enoch was the most perfect faith of all the patriarchs, for he walked with God right into glory, by-passing death. After all, what is faith but walking with God step by step? When we walk by faith we cannot see what is before us. We cannot see what the future holds but we do see who holds the future. It is not said that he had faith to escape death, but that his life of faith was so pleasing to God that He took him by direct transformation. This shows that faith is that "trust" which is the basis for divine fellowship. We should not think of faith as a device for getting things, but that trust which puts God first and in which all things are added as the natural benefits of fellowship. We should only want things because God wants them.

Verse 6 — This verse carries the thought further, declaring that faith is an indispensable ingredient in the life that pleases God. Faith is said to be essential in coming to God and essential to obtaining the rewards of God. There are times when God's obvious will seems to

conflict with what we reckon to be our interests. Faith does God's will, with the conviction that God will reward the obedient, even though obedience means temporary self-sacrifice. No one who earnestly seeks God (Greek: seeks out God), not for rewards but for fellowship, will go unrewarded.

Verse 7 — Noah is a perfect example of a man of faith. He proceeded on a course whose only logic was God's promise. What he prepared for had never happened, and was in his day unscientific. There existed no visible evidence to substantiate God's revelation; yet, the faith of Noah was all the evidence (substance, proof) that he needed. His persuasion of the truth of God was such that he preached for 120 years in the face of almost unanimous unbelief and opposition. By his faith, he saved his family and condemned the unbelieving world. True Christian faith shines as a beacon light in a dark world, and has as its purpose to point to salvation by example; but where the testimony of faith is rejected, the result is always a severer condemnation.

EXPOSITION
Text: Hebrews 11:23-29

Verse 23 — It is clear from the Greek text that the parents of Moses in some way were aware that he was divinely set apart for a sacred purpose. They had the kind of deep, religious faith that can see divine "comeliness" in that which God sets apart. Their faith consisted in acting in accordance with what divine insight made clear. It further consisted in their taking action contrary to the law of Egypt even though they could not know the outcome. Faith moves one to act in obedience without consideration of the probable outcome. Faith acts in respect to God's will, not in respect to success or failure, nor in respect to loss or gain.

Moses' parents were willing to risk any peril or punishment, if by their faithful obedience one might be preserved who would be instrumental in the emancipation of God's enslaved people. Three stages of faith can be distinguished here:

1. Faith recognizes the divine.
2. Faith disregards personal peril.
3. Faith takes action without being able to see the outcome, and leaves the results to God.

Verse 24 — Moses refused to be called the son of the king's daughter, not because he lacked appreciation of their favors, but because he would not relinquish his identity with God's people. He loved God, God's people, and God's causes. One cannot easily divorce himself from what he sincerely loves. His reason may have tempted him to take advantage of a life of earthly glory, but his heart was against it, and his heart prevailed. The spirit of the world is always that disposition of mind which highly esteems great names and titles; which highly esteems rank, position and the honors of men. The Spirit of Christ disposes the believer to esteem above all honor and rank the privilege of being a participant in God's great plan of redemption. He has faith who sees beyond the present glamour of earthly glory to the consummate glory of the redeemed family of God.

Verse 25 — Faith moves one always to choose suffering and self-sacrifice in preference to that which is sordid from sinful indulgence and selfish greed. Moses saw by faith that his identification with the people of God was his opportunity to live a life in unselfish service to humanity; to do work that would outlast the fleeting decades of royal privilege. Here is a faith so perfect, so noble, so exemplary that the writer of this great roll-call of Israel's heroes devotes more space to its display than is given to that of any other person. Here is an attitude worthy to be called "faith." Here is faith with a capital "F."

Verse 26 — Only by faith can one see riches in reproach. The believer, however, sees in the reproach of Christ supreme value. Moses is said to have chosen the reproach of Christ, even though Christ was not yet in

view, because Christ stands for redemption. He has always been behind all redemption as its active agent. God's plan of redemption has always been esteemed a reproach by the natural man, because in his pride he refuses to confess his need of salvation. The natural man is always self-sufficient and seldom, except in a crisis, calls for help. Worldly minded theologians have always tried to divest the Christian gospel of its redemptive aspects, endeavoring to fashion a system of works which needs no vicarious atonement. Real faith has always rejected such humanly devised creeds which make Christ only a philosopher. The believer is not ashamed of the reproach. Real faith discerns the highest value in that very reproach of Christ which the natural mind avoids. He whose faith is like that of Moses not only identifies himself with the redemptive plan of God, but gives himself to active participation in it.

Verse 27 — Some have imagined a contradiction between the statement here that Moses forsook Egypt not fearing the king, and the statement in Exodus that he fled because he feared the king. The two fears are not of the same thing. The fear mentioned in Exodus is fear of the emotional revenge that might result from his having killed the Egyptian. The reference here is to the wrath of the king in consequence of forsaking Egypt. Moses feared not to abandon Egypt, which he did because he realized the time was not opportune to deliver his people. His faith is evidenced in his patience in the wilderness where, though separated from his people, he persisted in believing in their ultimate deliverance. There on the back side of the desert he could see no progress toward the fulfillment of his mission, but he endured because with eyes of faith he could see Him who is invisible. If we keep our eyes on God, we cannot doubt the final triumph of His cause.

Verse 28 — Faith again enters into the conduct of Moses regarding the Passover. To believe that the death angel would take every first-born was an act of faith, just as it was to believe that the sprinkling of blood would assure salvation to every first-born of Israel. Both, however, were facts that night in Egypt just as they are ever present facts today. The judgment which will be passed upon every unregenerate soul will be death, the only remedy for which still is the blood of the Lamb of God.

Verse 29 — Perhaps, the greatest single act of faith in the life of Moses was his leading of Israel through the Red Sea. It is one of the most notable miracles of faith in the whole Bible, but its value is not wholly in its miraculous character; it is a great spiritual experience of baptism by which God's people are cleansed from the defilement of Egypt. Sometimes our difficult Red Sea crossings which test our faith to the utmost, prove to be the king of crisis necessary to cleanse and purify us.

There is a vast difference between faith, as seen in the Israelites, and mere presumption, as seen in the Egyptians. Faith carried the Israelites through, while

presumption drowned the Egyptians. It is hoped that hundreds of superficial Christians who do not know the difference between real faith and presumption will discover the difference before they are drowned in the

sea of circumstances. Real faith always is exercised in cooperation with the leading of the Spirit and with the accomplishment of God's plan of redemption always in view.

FAITH

INDIVIDUAL STUDY: If you are studying alone, answer the following questions. You may detach this page and submit it for grading.

GROUP STUDY: It is permissible to remove this page and photo sufficient copies for classroom use if desired.

1. *What is absolutely essential in order to please God? Give Scripture references.* _____

2. *What three things is faith based on? In what ways?* _____

3. *What are some of the definite things which are promised to the one who will believe?* _____

4. *How is faith hindered?* _____

5. *What is the difference between defeat and victory in the Christian life?* _____

6. *What are three suggestions for increasing faith in one's heart?* _____

