

**Keys
To
What
Every
Christian
Should
Know**

*What We Are To Believe
What We Are To Do*

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WHAT EVERY CHRISTIAN
SHOULD KNOW**

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To

Maikle

&

Samuel

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INTRODUCTION

Suppose you want to explain your faith to someone and you need to define the meaning of being a Christian. What is Christianity? It may be that you would like to ask me that same question.

First of all, we need to define terms. Even for many of us who are called Christians it is necessary to do this.

"Christian" is a word that is used very loosely today. It is made to mean almost anything. If a man is not a pagan, and born within a Christian family, he automatically wants to count himself as a Christian. Quite often in a so called Christian country, if you ask a person if he is a Christian, he may feel insulted and say, "Why, of course, I'm a Christian. Don't I live in a Christian country?" "Don't you know that my grandfather was a priest", etc

Thus, the word "Christian" has come to have a very broad and indecisive meaning.

By the term "Christianity" I mean the true faith of the New Testament, the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ as revealed in the Bible.

What is Christianity? I think that question can best be answered by asking another question. What does true Christianity demand of its followers? Whatever a religion demands of its followers tells what that religion is.

So in this book, we shall look at three important topics;

- First: What We Are To Believe
- Second: What We Are To Understand
- Third: What We Are To Do

Part 1

WHAT WE ARE TO BELIEVE

Christianity demands that we believe something. It demands that we believe certain foundational truths. Christians believe things that are unique to their Christian faith. It is what Christians believe that makes them Christians.

CHAPTER 1

The Basics- The Bible

The first thing Christianity requires us to believe is that the Bible is The Word of God. In some ways the Bible seems like any other book today. It printed on paper of various kinds, bound between all kinds of covers, and published in a number of sizes. And yet the Bible is a one-of-a-kind book that grew out of the relationship between a Sovereign God and His people.

The Christian believes that the Bible is the inspired Word of God. The Bible is the foundation of our Christian faith.

The Bible tells the story of God and how He made Himself known to mankind. We cannot know God or relate to Him unless He reveals Himself. In other words, we don't find God; He reveals Himself to Us. The Bible tells us that God reveals Himself in two ways – general revelation and special revelation.

God's general revelation is His communication to all people, at all times, in all places. God's general revelation is found in creation, both in nature (Psalm 19:1-4; Romans 1:18-25) and in human beings created in God's image (Roman 2:14-16). The content of general revelation is only broad truths about God: He exists, He is powerful, and He is the Creator and Judge. But general revelation alone does not provide enough information to be saved; only enough to be without excuse for rejecting God.

The Bible tells us about God's special revelation to various ancient people, first the patriarchs and then later the prophets, who were His chosen spokesmen. That revelation was given through unusual historical events like the Exodus, or through divine speech as recorded in the Bible (Jeremiah 18: 1& 1Timothy 3:16).

Finally, God made Himself known in fullness in the incarnation of His Son Jesus Christ (Hebrews 1:12), the most complete revelation of all.

The Salvation Book

The Bible is concerned primarily with our redemption. Its purpose is not to discuss the age of the world, or to explore its many interesting scientific facets, or to give the exact dates of the patriarchs or of Israel. The Bible does not bother with many of the questions modern scholars address. Instead, it concentrates on God's saving acts.

The Book of Life

Some Christians people spend much time and energy searching for the answers the Bible gives to all critical questions of history and other fields. How sad and useless! We should instead listen to what God inspired the biblical writers to say- to look at what the Bible says about itself and its aims.

For example, the writer John tells us near the end of his Gospel that there were many stories about Christ still untold, good words still unquoted. Then he adds with complete openness: ***“But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name”*** (John 20:31).

Sufficiency of The Bible

Apostle Paul reminded Timothy of how he “from infancy” had known the Holy Scriptures (of the Old Testament) adding, “which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.” Then Paul makes a remarkable statement: “All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness,

so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2 Timothy 3: 15-17).

In the ‘sixteenth’ century, the Reformers’ rallying cry was the Latin phrase *Sola Scriptura*, which means “**Only Scripture.**” They meant that God had revealed in the Bible all He wanted us to know and do. In other words, the Bible contains everything we need to know God and living a happy and godly life.

The Necessity of Studying The Bible

By studying the Bible daily we can both know God and learn how to live. The Christian response to any case should be a consistent diet of God’s truth in Scripture, to inform and guide us through life in this world.

No matter how long we’ve known the Lord, we never outgrow our need to return to the basics. Actually, that is one of the best ways to grow deep in our Christian life!

The best way to become firmly grounded in the basic truths of our faith is by the systematic teaching and study of the Bible, which is just another word for the truths we live by.

Someone may say, “Studying Bible basics is fine for Bible students, but why do I need to study the basic of Christianity in a systemic way?” That’s fair question...

So here are six reasons why it is important to review and study the essentials of our faith:

First: Learning truth gives substance to our faith. Those who do not know the truth rely on feelings, emotions, someone else’s opinion, or traditional teaching not found in the Bible. Their faith lacks substance- a deficiency that is painfully obvious when they are under Satan’s attack.

Second: Knowing the truth stabilizes us during times of testing. Even when the bottom virtually drops out of lives, when we know what God has said, we don’t give up the faith. We are stabilized and strengthened by our knowledge of the truth when the trials come.

Third: Knowing the essential themes of Scripture enables us to handle the Bible accurately. We don't have to become world class theologians in order to possess a knowledge of the truth that allows us to "*accurately handle*" the Bible, so we can "*give an answer to everyone who asks*" us to give a reasoned explanation in defence of our faith (2Timothy 2:15 & 1 Peter 3:15).

Fourth: Knowing the truth equips us to confront falsehood. When we know what the Bible says, we don't have to hesitate when we hear teaching that doesn't ring true. God wants us to distinguish between "the spirit of truth and the spirit of error" (1 John 4:6).

Fifth: A solid hold on Scripture makes us more confident in our Christian walk. The more we learn of God, the more confidence we have in Him and His promises.

Sixth: The truth gives us a filter that screens out fear and superstition. "God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline" (2 Timothy 1:7). One of the best ways to acquire these qualities is by the careful, prayerful study of God's Word.

These six reasons help us see how essential it is to possess a sound knowledge of the Bible.

From this we learn, that the Bible contains:

- (1) Truth to be believed.
- (2) A salvation to be received.
- (3) Experiences to be realized.
- (4) Commandments to be obeyed.
- (5) Promises to be claimed.
- (6) Warnings to be heeded.
- (7) Food for the devotional life to be nourished.

The Shorter Catechism helps us to see that Bible is the only rule to direct us how to glorify God and enjoy Him. The Bible teaches what man is to believe concerning God and what duty requires of man (TSC: Q: 1; 2; 3).

CHAPTER 2

God The Creator and Sustainer of All Things

A second thing that Christians believe is that God is the Creator and Sustainer of all things.

The opening statement of the Bible declares; “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Genesis 1:1). Here is the key to creation and the light that falls on every human life. Here we are told that the secret of the universe is not a formula but a person.

At the center of a Christian’s understanding of the origin of things and their ongoing existence is the personal Creator and Upholder of all things: the God of wisdom, power and goodness in infinite degree. Early Christians considered this truth so important that it forms the first sentence of the Apostles’ Creed: “I believe in God the Father, Almighty, maker of heavens and earth.”

God has made a good creation, and, as the climax of his work on this planet, he has made human beings in his image, for his glory and for personal fellowship with Him. In Genesis 1, God is mentioned 34 times in 36 verses and the revelation we have of Him sets the foundation for the rest of Scripture.

From Genesis 1 then, we learn not only what God is but also who we are. It proclaims the God of grace and power who undergirds the world and gives it purpose. Genesis 1, by further affirming the unique status of man, his place in the divine program and God’s care for him, gives a hope to mankind that atheistic philosophies can never legitimately supply. We need this affirmation of our worth and place in the creation, which is to be found neither in the measurement of time nor the investigations of science, but in the decision

and purpose of God. It is from him in whose image we have been made that we get our true self-esteem and full value.

Believing in God as Creator reminds us that we, like the rest of creation, were fashioned by God and we belong to Him. This allows us to feel at home in the world. We are here because God wants us to be here. We are not alone, but are in the very presence of the God who made and owns everything. We are in the presence of a friend, who knows us and cares for us.

The revelation of Genesis 1 is not given to leave us informed but unchanged; God's purpose is not to satisfy our curiosity, but to direct our activity. It is also given as a call to worship the Creator in the midst of his creation:

*“You are worthy, our Lord and God,
to receive glory and honor and power,
for you created all things,
and by your will they were created
and have their being.” (Revelation 4:11)*

God The Sustainer

Today, between an unbelieving secularism and naturalism, we hear little or nothing about the doctrine of the divine providence. The sense of God at work in nature or human history has been largely lost in Western society. God's marvelous creation around us has become simply 'the environment', and in the story of human affairs, 'progress' has replaced 'providence'.

Biblical faith rescues us from such blindness, and we are able to recognize the Creator in his works and to trust his power to lead history towards his destined end.

The two main aspects of God's providence in the teaching of the Bible are *God's sustenance of all things* (holding all creation in being, with all its laws of growth and development) and *God's government over all things* (overruling all events in the world and in the history of

mankind in order to lead them to his final purposes of judgment and salvation).

When we see life's tragedies, we wonder "why?" We ask; how evil can coexist with an all-knowing, all-powerful, and all-loving God. Perhaps the most distressing question- why doesn't He stop them?

The biblical faith teaches us that: God didn't make the universe, and then abandon it! He stays in touch, preserving and guiding it toward His purposes. "In Him all things hold together" (Col. 1:17). God is "sustaining all things by his powerful word" (Hebrews 1:3). None of creation is self-sufficient; everything depends on Him, including the processes of nature, the events of human history, and the circumstances of individual lives. His rule is hidden, but total.

So how can the sovereign God, who created and controls His world, allow evil and suffering within it?

The puzzle remains unsolvable in this life, but two factors help us comprehend it better. First, evil is the result of sinful decisions made by beings whom God created with choice. Yes God is all knowing, powerful, and loving; yet evil does exist, because of the sinfulness of the sinful acts of men that entirely belongs to their choice.

That brings us up the second factor- eternity. This world's evil is not the end of the issue. The big ball game is not over, and we don't have the final score. Christianity believes that when time is swallowed by eternity, we'll understand better why God allowed evil. We may partially grasp how God transformed evil into His greater glory and our greater good.

The universe and all within it, including us, follows God's blueprint. We're not left to the fate of impersonal forces. God remains concerned and active in human affairs. All the events in our lives are opportunities for us to trust Him. Much mystery remains, but we trust that in His love, wisdom, and power, He will do what's right.

Meanwhile, in health and in sickness, in our expectation of an ordered world and in our sufferings when our own private world is disordered, we can trust the God of the ordinary and

the extraordinary that our times are in his hand. Nothing is impossible for him - except to go back on his promise of the day when the dwelling of God will be with humankind, when “There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away” (Revelation 21:4).

Psalm 119 speaks to us about the faithfulness of God, the Creator and Sustainer of all things:

***“Your word, O Lord, is eternal;
It stands firm in the heavens.
Your faithfulness continues through all generations;
You established the earth, and it endures.
Your laws endure to this day, for all things serve you”.***

Q: What is the work of creation?

The work of creation is the making by God of all things from nothing, by His powerful word, in the space of six days, and all very good (Heb:3; Gen 1:31).

Q: How God create man?

God created man, male and female, in his own image, in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, with rule over the creatures (Gen 1:27-28; Col 3:10; Eph 4:24).

Q: What are God’s works of providence?

God’s works of providence are his most holy, wise, and powerful preservation and control of all his creatures, and all their actions (Ps 145:17; 104:24; 103:19; Heb 1:3; Matt 10:29-31).

The Shorter catechism (Questions: 9; 10; 11).

CHAPTER 3

God Incarnate

The third thing that Christians believe is that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, who appeared in flesh.

Christians believe in one eternal God who has revealed Himself to mankind as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God is One, and yet there is threeness about Him, which the ancient Greeks called *Trias*, the Latins called *Trinitas*, the English called *Trinity*, and the Arabic called *Thaloth*. But we do not mean three gods. Rather, we mean that the One True God makes Himself known as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

The Trinity is the Christian term for summarizing the biblical teaching about the oneness and diversity of the self-revealed God of the Bible.

God the Father is the eternal One. He created all things by His Son, sustains the universe, and orders the affairs of men.

The eternal Son came to earth as a man and lived in Palestine at the beginning of the Christian era. He is called the Word of God. His name, Jesus, pointed to the truth that He was the Saviour. He is often referred to in New Testament as the “Anointed One” (the Greek word is Christ and the Hebrew word is Messiah). That is, He was “anointed” or ordained to come as the promised Saviour and Lord and to die for the spiritual salvation, (redemption) of the race. He is enthroned at God’s right hand as the Sovereign Rule of the world. He is the Head of His church or body of believers.

The Holy Spirit brings people to repentance, faith, and holiness, and guides and empowers the church to carry His message of the Good News to the world.

The Gospel of John introduces us to Jesus Christ, not as the familiar baby of Bethlehem, but as the eternal Word, the one who has always been with God and who alone can express God; the one who can make the unknown known; the one

who is God's supreme self-revelation; the one who, by his Spirit, inspired the prophets and the one who, in his own person, enters our world: God speaking, God coming, God saving.

The doctrine of Trinity may be difficult to understand but does not make it untrue. Difficulty does not equal falsehood. Since God is infinite and we are finite, we cannot fully understand the Trinity. But our limited understanding does not mean that it's untrue. The Bible does not attempt to explain it completely, but it does teach it.

The apostles of Jesus and all Jewish believers of the first century believed that Jesus Christ is the eternal Son sent by the Father to become fully man while remaining fully divine to be the mediator between God and man.

Matthew introduces Jesus' divine reality at His birth, "The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel which means, 'God with us'" (1:23).

Paul, the conservative Pharisee, reveals his theology of the incarnation by recording an early hymn about Christ: "Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness" (Philippians 2:6).

When we say God, we mean Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Trinity simply is the Christian name for God. The Trinitarian being of God is what distinguishes Him from all other supposed gods and alternative mysticisms and philosophies. Our belief in God as being Father, Son and Holy Spirit distinguishes us as Christians who know and worship the true and living God.

That it is foundational to the church's existence and her proclamation is the burden of the great early church creeds, including the 'Nicene' Creed and the Apostle Creed.

The Bible plainly tells us that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and that truth is the very cornerstone of the Christian faith. Jesus was not just a man. If he was, he would be subject to mistakes. If he could not be perfect, how could we trust Him as our Saviour?

The Gospel is woven around Christ's deity, around the fact that He is the eternal Son of God. How wonderful to know that our Saviour is not just another religious leader, not just another human being. He is the living Son of God. (John 3:16; 20:31; I John 5:11-15; 2:23; Acts 9:20).

Even history testifies to the fact that He is the Son of God. He changed the course of history. The calendar is dated from Christ. He was a peasant who lived most of his life in Galilee. He never led an army or a navy, never carried a sword and never held public office. He had no wealth; He was never formally educated, and yet He changed the history of the world because He is the Son of God.

The four Gospels - Matthew, Mark, Luke and John; take us on from the incarnation and the teaching of Jesus to the essential work of his sin bearing, sacrificial death and personal resurrection. As in all the Gospels, so we learn from the New Testament teaching as a whole, Jesus of Nazareth was and is the one and only Son of God who came not only to enlighten but to save, who saves by his reconciling death, and who calls the world, not simply to his teaching but to himself.

That is the great good news that the Bible wants to bring to the whole world. The Son of God has come to seek and to save the lost, to offer righteousness infinitely beyond our own, and an eternity infinitely above our highest thoughts.

CHAPTER 4

God The Redeemer

The fourth thing that Christians believe is that the Son of God, Jesus Christ, died in our place as our Redeemer and Saviour.

Unlike other world religions, Christianity centers on the death rather than the teaching of its founder. Christians believe that the death of Christ is climax of God's plan to atone for our sin.

The Bible says: "That Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures"(1Cor. 15:3). "Christ also has once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God"(1 Peter 3:18). "Who in his own self bore our sins in his own body on the tree"(1 Peter 2:24).

The apostle declared that we were not redeemed with perishable things like silver and gold "but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Peter 1:19).

The prophet Isaiah said, "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Isa. 53:6)

How Sin Entered This World- its Results

The historic origin of evil itself is involved with mystery, but appears to have had its first inception in the mind of Lucifer (Ezek. 28, Isa. 14) who in the account of Genesis 3 is identified with the Serpent. Evil as it entered the lives of Adam and Eve, did so by their permission. It is true that they were deceived; but the deception was made possible only as they decided to follow their selfish desire and disobey God their Creator.

The result of unforgiving sin leads to death appearing in three forms:

1. **Physical death**- separation of soul and body which all humans will see (James 2:26).
2. **Spiritual death**- separation from God, which is the current status of all unbelievers (Ephesians 4: 18).
3. **Eternal death**- the permanent condition of separation from God in a place the Bible calls hell, the final destiny for all who never receive Christ's liberation and new life (Luke 12:5).

The Bible also identifies three kinds of sin:

- I. **Imputed Sin**- Adam's sin is credited to our account, because he's the head of the human race, therefore we're each charged with the guilt of his sin (Roman 5:12).
- II. **Inherited Sin**- which is our sinful nature, it is more than simply a physical inheritance (Psalm 51:5, Ephesians 2:3).
- III. **Personal Sin**- the acts, words, and thoughts we all commit (Galatians 5:19-21).

Sin's impact is massive, but God's grace is sufficient and available to all. God erases our imputed sin, however, by charging it to Christ on the cross and crediting or imputing His righteousness to us (2 Cor 5:21).

We are all born with the sinful nature, but God's redemptive plan addresses this kind of sin also. "Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires" (Galatians 5:24).

Personal sins cannot be blamed on Adam's first transgression or our parents' genes, but are the sins we ourselves commit. By means of Christ's death God makes available His forgiveness for these violations (Eph 1:7).

Threefold Pictures of Christ's Work On The Cross-

In Romans 3:21-26 apostle Paul introduces us to three pictures. He said, "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. God presented his as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood".

Scripture	The Picture	The work of Christ for us
Rom 3:24	A Law- Court	Justification
Rom 3:24	Slave Market	Redemption
Rom 3:25	Sacrifice on Altar	Atonement

The first picture is that of a law-court and it appears in the term 'justified' in verse 24 where believers 'justified by his grace' in the law court of God.

The word 'justify' is a legal term, which literally means 'to declare someone to be righteous'. It is a verdict, a pronouncement. Justification is not an ethical term but a legal one; it speaks not of a person's character, but of their status before the law, their legal standing.

The good news here is that 'the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes', where God in Christ is justifying the wicked and the guilty, removing their guilt and investing them with his own righteousness.

The Bible uses 'law-court' image for our salvation in three ways;

- (1) First, Adam's sin was charged or imputed to everyone in the human race. "The result of one trespass was condemnation for all men. Through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners" (Romans 5:18-19).

- (2) Second, our sin and guilt were imputed to Christ on the cross. “The Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all”(Isa 53:6). Paul writes of this in 2 Cor 5:21, “God made him who had no sin to be sin for us.”
- (3) Third, Christ’s righteousness is imputed to the believer’s account. “God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God” (2 Cor 5: 21).

Our new status in God’s eye is not based on any actual condition of righteousness in us but on Christ’s imputed righteousness that God considers ours. Jesus died in our place, becoming God’s substitute for us, and ‘bore our sins on the cross’, where ‘the judge was judged in our place’.

By His death on the cross Jesus reconciled the believers to God. “God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ’ by meeting on our behalf his law’s full claims (2 Cor 5:19).

There on the cross, ‘Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us” (Gal 3:13).

It is in knowing our free justification in Christ Jesus that we have peace with God, a confidence without anxiety as we face the judgment day of God. For us the verdict has gone out already: “**Not guilty!**” because of Jesus.

The second picture is that of a slave market and it appears in the term ‘redemption’ in verse 24 where Jesus Christ redeemed the believers from the law of sin and death.

In ancient cultures, buying a slave or freeing a hostage from captivity was by payment of a price called a ransom.

Our Lord Jesus said: “The Son of man came to give his life as a ransom for many”. That describes what Christ did for us. We were held captive, enslaved to sin, unable to free ourselves. Christ paid the purchase price, His own blood shed on the cross, to buy us out of the slave market of sin.

Apostle Paul pictures Christ's transaction for us as freeing us from sin and its penalty. We are redeemed from the law of sin and death, thus gaining our forgiveness from God. We "are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus".

The result is that we are no longer slaves to sin, and we are released from the court of God's justice. Yet we are now owned by God our new Master: "You are not your own; you were bought at a price" (1Cor 6: 19-20). That was a real and legal transaction. Paul's conclusion is simple and direct: "Therefore honor God with your body." Considering the price He paid to free us, it's not unreasonable for Him to demand that our lives be lived for His honor.

The third picture is that of a sacrifice on the Altar and it appears in the term 'a sacrifice of atonement' in verse 25 where believers are saved from the wrath of God.

When a person commits a crime, payment is required, often time in jail. After the sentence is complete, the legal system is satisfied and the prisoner set free. The human legal setting parallels God's salvation project described by the doctrine of atonement. Christ's atoning work for us involved three aspects. In each of these, man stands in a different relationship before God.

First: Man stands before God as **a guilty person**; he needs expiation, which is the answer to our guilt. Thanks be to God, the payment for our sin's debt has been made by Christ' death who took the punishment in our place and freed sinners from sin's debt.

Second: Man stands before God as **an object of God's wrath**; he needs propitiation, which is the removal of the wrath. But God, when sin against him, is satisfied with the payment of Christ's death and the wrath has been removed.

Third: Man stands before God as an enemy; he needs reconciliation, which is the answer to God's alienation from us. God made us for fellowship with Himself, but sin broke the relationship. The resulting enmity between us and God is so serious that Paul says, "we were God's enemies", "hostile to God", "and deserving His wrath" (Rom 5: 9-10; 8:7; 1:18).

Reconciliation means a broken relationship with an offended person has been fixed. The basis for this renewed fellowship is that the offense that caused the hostility has been erased. Theologically, the alienation between God and us has been removed and the relationship restored. Because the barrier separating us from God has been taken away, we have peace with God. Thanks be to God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, not counting our sins against us. "God made Christ, who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God" (2 Cor 5: 17-21).

The essential thing about the sacrifices for sin in the Old Testament is that in all of them the sacrificial animal was a substitute for the worshipers and died in their place. All of them 'atoned' for sin and cleansed the worshipper. Indeed, "without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness."

Paul often speaks of the death of Christ as the only atonement for sin, of faith in his blood, of being justified by his blood, of redemption through his blood and of peace with God by the blood of the cross (Rom 3:25, 5:9; Eph 1:7).

Also the book of Hebrews, chapter 9 and 10, looks back at the long line of Old Testament sacrifice for sin and sees Jesus Christ, in his death for us, as the "once for all" sacrifice for sin which 'makes perfect for ever' the people of God. In Christ our Lord, the loving God draws us to himself, removing the barrier that had existed, and no longer looks upon us with his holy anger, but now looks at us as His friends. Christ our Redeemer bore the judgment we deserve in order to bring us the forgiveness we do not deserve.

I am a Christian today because I believe and have personally accepted by faith the fact that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, died for my sins. By faith in Him I am justified before God and set free from my guilt (Rom. 3:24-26). Through the shed blood of Jesus Christ, we can come boldly to God (Heb. 10:19).

So far, we have seen the foundational truths that are basic to Christianity, about the Bible and God, our Creator and our Redeemer in Christ. In the Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed we can find a neat summary of foundational Christian truths;

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God the Father Almighty,
Creator of heavens and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended to the dead.
On the third day He rose again.
He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic (universal) Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

The Nicene Creed

We believe in One God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and all that is seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten not made, of one Being with the Father.

Through Him all things were made.

For us men and for our salvation, He came down from heaven. By the power of the Holy Spirit He became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man.

For our sake He was crucified under Pontius Pilate; He suffered death and was buried.

On the third day He rose again in accordance with Scriptures; He ascended into Heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and His kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshipped and glorified.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Part II

WHAT WE ARE TO UNDERSTAND

In part one, we have been discussing the foundational truths of Christianity. Now we come to a more personal aspect and ask, “What is a Christian? What is happening in his life, from A to Z?”

CHAPTER 5

The Second Birth The Christian Has a New Life

Christianity is more than just believing the foundational truths. We must grasp something with our understanding, to be real Christians. Some people who have grown up in Christian homes and who have listened all their lives to instruction in a Bible-believing church have always believed the foundational truths of Christianity. They have never doubted any of these truths, but they have never had a vital personal relationship with Jesus Christ. They do not really know what it means to be a Christian.

Mental assent without heart acceptance of the gospel does not represent Christian reality. Imagine a sick man who is suffering from a disease. On the table is a remedy, a medicine that will cure him. Does the mere knowledge of that medicine's availability or even confidence in its power save him? No, he must actually accept and take the medicine in order to know its healing and saving power. And so it is with Christ. A mere intellectual assent to the foundational truths of the Bible or to the doctrines of Jesus Christ does not constitute real salvation. We must accept Him by faith as our Saviour in order to know His saving power.

For a more detailed answer to the question "What is a Christian?" we must go the Bible. It is the final authority for all questions pertaining to the spiritual realm and to a person's relationship with God.

We not only read in the Bible about faith and belief, but also about a "New Life," a "New Birth," a "Newness of Life," a "New Creation," a "New Walk," a "New Hope" and "New Desires." In other words, a transaction brought about by the power of the Spirit of God takes place within a person.

Jesus said to Nicodemus, "You must be born again", but Nicodemus asked, "How can a man be born when he is old?"

Surely he cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb to be born" (John 3: 1-21). He could not understand it. Here becoming a Christian is spoken of as a new birth.

Birth is entrance into the physical world. We have all been born of flesh, which came from our natural parents. But Jesus declared, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh". In other words, "That which is born of sinful flesh is obviously sinful flesh." So we must be born from above; we must enter a new life. Of course, to enter a new life means we must have a new birth. So, to be a Christian means that we must understand something. Christianity is not only something we believe with our intellects but is what we accept by the act of our wills.

Jesus said, "He who hears my word, and believes on him who sent me, has everlasting life" (John 5:24). Such a person possesses a new life, an everlasting life. It is not the physical life that he received at his physical birth but a new kind of life, a divine life. Jesus also said he "is passed from death unto life" and he "shall not come into judgment" (John 5:24). What a promise this is!

The Bible says that by nature we are dead in sin (Eph 2:1). Death means separation. Our sins have separated us from God, and the individual who has never trusted Christ as Savior is in his own natural state - dead in sin, separated from God. But the one who believes in Jesus passes out of death into life. In other words, a spiritual resurrection takes place in his life, just as Christ was raised from the dead (Rom 6:4-6).

Paul said in 2 Cor 5:17, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new". Anyone who is in Christ, who is a genuine Christian, has become a new creation. Old things have passed out of his life; everything has changed and become new. He is born from above".

CHAPTER 6

Adoption

The Christian Is a Child of God

Just as loving human parents may adopt a child, God in his love and mercy adopts us when we believe in Christ. The Bible says in John 1:12; “To all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God”. Many other Bible passages could be cited which declare that a Christian is, above all, a child of God in a personal and individual sense.

Someone may ask, “Aren’t all people children of God?” No. The Lord Jesus said to evil men; “You are of your father the devil” (John 8:44). “In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil” (1 John 3:10).

What actually makes the difference between a person who is a child of God and one who is not? How does a person become a child of God, thus distinguishing him from other people?

Obviously there is only one way to sonship- by birth. This is true in the physical and in the spiritual realms. No person can be a true son of another person without actually having been born to that person. So, by spiritual birth people become children of God.

The background for adoption originates in the Garden of Eden. God created Adam and Eve for a relationship with Himself, but their sin brought an end to that. God became an object of hostility to them and to us (Rom 8:7), and we all became “object of wrath” to Him (Eph 2:3). But on the cross, Christ took God’s wrath for us. Now, if we drop our hostility to Him and receive Him by faith, God revives the relationship with us by adopting us as His children (Galatians 3:26).

As God's children we receive extraordinary benefits consistent with our new family relationship. For instance, God provides for our needs in this life. We enjoy divine guidance from His Spirit and we become coheirs with Christ for eternity (Philippians 4:1-7; Romans 8: 14-17).

Our adoption process includes a yet further aspect. It won't be complete until we receive our resurrection bodies. Apostle Paul says; "We ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies" (Romans 8:23). In the meantime the Spirit of God assures us of our status in God's family: "The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children" (Romans 8:16).

Since Christians are God's children, he has infused into them a new life, and this new life is in Christ, as it is written in 1 John 5:12; "He that has the Son has life; and that has not the Son of God has no life". Therefore, their new lives should confirm their family ties.

Do you know a time in your life when you had this new birth, when you began to possess the new life that you did not know before?

Have you been born again? Do you see evidence of God's "bloodline" in your life? Does your relationship with your heavenly Father reflect the joy and responsibility of being His child?

The answer to these questions will determine whether or not you can answer affirmatively, "Am I a Christian?"

CHAPTER 7

Sanctification

The Christian Is Sanctified In Christ

Christians are people who have been made holy in and by Jesus Christ. The new life, which we receive in the new birth, is a divine, holy life. Holiness is the very nature of this new life because it is the very life of God implanted in His child.

If a person has been born of God and received this holy life, it will necessarily manifest itself in holy acts and in holy living. A holy character and a holy walk are the inevitable consequences of a holy birth. After birth comes growth - sanctification.

It is true that Christianity teaches salvation by pure grace and simple faith. It is true that we are not saved by our own works- “not by works of righteousness which we have done” (Titus 3:5) or by our self-righteousness. Salvation comes through simple faith in the fact that Christ died for my sins. But the faith that saves is not a dead faith. It produces good works after we are saved.

Once we are saved, we have a new life. This new life will manifest itself in the things we say and do. The Apostle Paul stated in Ephesians 2:8-10, “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith and not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do”.

We were saved in order to serve God with our whole being through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. Because of this, our entire heart, soul, mind and body can be given over to the service and worship of the Lord Jesus Christ. We work, not in order to be saved, but because we have been saved.

Works are not the reason for, or the means of, salvation; they are the result of salvation. I want to do all the good works I can, not because I desire to earn my salvation (Christ alone could do that) but because I desire to serve God, who has saved me. But as we grow in grace, our lives become increasingly more saintlike and more conformed to the image of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Bible identifies three phases of sanctification: positional, progressive, and ultimate.

Positional sanctification is our new status in Christ. Christians are called saints of God (sanctified) in this sense: “To the church of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints which are in all Achaia” (2 Cor. 1:1).

Progressive sanctification is the process of becoming like Christ now, after salvation and until the coming of Christ. As we grow in grace, our lives become increasingly more saintlike and more conformed to the image of our Lord Jesus Christ. The target of our sanctification is Christlikeness: a Spirit - produced change, freeing us from sinful habits and reforming us to the model of Christ. “For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his son” (Romans 8:29).

Ultimate sanctification is complete Christlikeness and freedom from sin after we die and enter heaven. All believers will eventually experience that “we know that when he appears, we shall be like him” (1 John 3:2).

Regeneration is the start, God’s conceiving life in us. Glorification is the end, His destination for us. Sanctification is the middle, the route on which He leads us from start to finish. In Philippians 1:6 we read; “He who began a good work in you will carry it on to the completion until the day of Christ Jesus”.

The Spirit is the primary agent of sanctification, and the Word of God is His principal tool, and “it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.” Please see (Romans 12: 2; 15:16, 1 Peter 1:2; and also read Philippians 2:12-13.)

There is a constant emphasis throughout the Bible on a holy walk for the child of God. If a person does not live a holy, godly and righteous life, we may assume, on the basis of the Lord's own words, "By their fruits you shall know them", that he is not a true child of God (Matt. 7:20). The world will inevitably draw this conclusion, and rightly so.

The Bible emphatically declares that "without holiness no man shall see the Lord" (Heb 12:24). Therefore, our role in sanctification is passive as we submit to the Spirit of God and trust Him to do His work, and active as we "press on to take hold of that for which Jesus Christ took hold of us" (Philippians 3:12).

Our Lord Jesus assigned two definite tasks to His Church, which will manifest the very life of God implanted in us. One of them is "A new commandment I give to you, love one another" (John 13:34). The second is "Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). But remember, He said, "If you love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15).

My works prove the reality of my faith. My good deeds, the good works in my life, demonstrate to the world that I am a Christian. How can people ever believe that I am a Christian if my life is evil? It is obvious that nobody will believe me. My actions must be agree with my words. My life must be a living proof of my faith.

May God grant each of us a life full of good works to prove to the world that we really are children of God through faith in Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER 8

Perseverance

The Christian Has Eternal Security

Some people may ask, “Can Christians lose their salvation?” The subject is often debated under the title “eternal security.” Our loving God revealed to us in His Word that the redemptive process is one continuous piece of work - His work. The Bible stated in Romans 8, “For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of His Son. And those he predestined, he also called, those he called, he also justified, those he justified, he also glorified” (Romans 8: 29-30).

Paul concludes that nothing can separate the true believer from God’s love, and the Spirit Himself gives us a sense of assurance as He “testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children.” His inner witness to us is part of what assures us that we are truly saved (Romans 8:16).

The apostle Peter stated in 1 Peter 1: 3-5, “You are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.”

The death of our Lord Jesus finished the work of redemption, and God sealed us by His Spirit. He who began a good work in us will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ’s coming. The fulfillment of God’s salvation project depends on His faithfulness, not our effort. The truly saved are secure in Christ (Ephesians 1:13, 4:30; Philippians 1:6).

We can rest in the Bible’s assurance that God “is able to keep you from falling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy” (Jude 24).

Be assured that our failures (and we all have them) are temporary. God will keep His own forever. The truly saved cannot lose their salvation.

CHAPTER 9

Glorification

The Christian Is Glorified in Christ

The apostle Paul lists glorification last in God's salvation process because it's not until Christ's return that we receive our resurrection bodies (Romans 8:28-30). Our present bodies are designed for life on earth, and the Bible says, "that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." But when Christ returns, our earthly bodies will be transformed into bodies like His, fit for heaven (1Cor 15:50; Philippians 3:21).

Our mortal, perishable, dishonorable bodies will become immortal, imperishable, and glorious, never victimized by sickness, disease, or death, or subject to sin.

Our moral and spiritual sanctification will also be complete when Christ comes and present His Church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, holy and blameless" (Eph 5:27).

Our glorification will include vastly expanded knowledge "Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known" (1 Cor 13:12).

The believer's hope is more than escape from judgment; it's eternal glory. We're encouraged by knowing that God is working toward our future glorification, the goal of His eternal plan for us. Our spiritual struggles and failures will not continue forever. We will eventually be what God intends. He will make us like His glorious Son.

CHAPTER 10

The Christian Is a Servant

The Bible pictures and calls the Christian as a servant of God: “But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end everlasting life” (Rom 6:22).

The word “servant” which is used in the New Testament to designate the believer does not refer to a person hired to work for someone else. The Greek word means a slave, or servant. Now there is a vast difference between a slave and a hired worker. The slave must live and work in subjection to his master’s will continually; the hired worker may still follow his own likes and dislikes. When the work does not please him, it is his privilege to quit. The slave, on the other hand, cannot quit whether he likes the work or not. He has no will of his own and is not the lord of his own life. In all things he is subject to his master and his master’s will.

It is this biblical view of the Christian life, which believers in our generation need. If all Christians would recognize that they belong to the Lord and would be in full submission to His will, the spiritual atmosphere of the entire world would be changed. How different it would be if they all took the position before God that they are His slaves, seeking His will for their lives before making plans of their own.

A slave cannot live where he wants to; he cannot do the kind of work he chooses; he cannot regulate his life from day to day as he desires; and he cannot make his own choices. This is a true Christian in the biblical sense of the word.

A slave has been bought. He belongs to his master by the right of purchase. So does the Christian. He has been redeemed to God by a price - the high price of the blood of Christ. The Bible says: “You were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot” (1 Peter 1:18-19).

The apostle Paul asked the church of Corinthians, “What? Do you not know, that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, and you are not of your own? For you are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s” (1 Cor 6:19-20).

You might think that this is a very severe attitude and that such a Christian life would be one of total bondage. Well, the Christian life is indeed bondage; we are slaves of Christ. But it is a bondage of love. Just as there is no happier human relationship than a loving marriage bond, so there is no happier experience in the Christian life than to recognize the love bondage that we owe to the Lord Jesus Christ. The bonds of love make His servitude sweet. He said, “My yoke is easy, and my burden is light” (Matt. 11:30).

Therefore let us take our place at our Master’ feet and say, “Lord Jesus, I recognize that I am your servant. Here is my life. Not my will but Yours be done.”

The Commands of Christ

Our duty to God:

“If any man serve Me, let him follow Me”.

“Worship the LORD your GOD, and serve HIM only”.

Our duty to Men:

“Love your neighbor as yourself”.

“Do to others as you would have them do to you”.

“Love one another, as I have loved you”.

“Give to Caesar what is Caesar’s and to God what is God’s”.

“Judge not .. Condemn not .. Forgive, and you shall be forgiven”.

We are to love and serve God completely. We are to love our neighbor, those who are in need. We are to obey men in authority. We are to forgive and forbear condemnation.

(John 12: 26, Matthew 4: 10, 19:19, Luke 6: 31, John 15:12, Mark 12: 17, Luke 6: 37).

CHAPTER 11

The Christian Is A Soldier

The Bible in numerous places designates the Christian as a soldier: “Endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ,” Paul exhorted the young Christian, Timothy (2 Tim. 2:3). Christians are exhorted to “fight the good fight of faith” and to “put on the whole armour of God ... to stand against the wiles of the devil”. “We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places (spiritual realms)” (1 Tim 6:12; Eph 6:11-12).

No one has been a Christian very long or proceeded very far in the spiritual life without realizing that he is involved in a tremendous conflict. It has been said that, “The Christian life is not a game; it’s a battle”. The Bible pictures it so, and the Christian proves it to be true.

Do not expect to find it very easy to live the Christian life, and do not be surprised if you find yourself facing battles. This is exactly what must be expected –Christianity engages every believer in a spiritual conflict. The conflict may be internal or external or both. Within is the old sin-corrupted nature common to all mankind; without is a scoffing and skeptical world, indifferent to things of God or at enmity against them. The believer must be at variance with both, and so conflict inevitably follows.

In the Bible, Satan is seen as the enemy and opponent of God. The one who assails every person who repents of his sins and turns to God. Therefore, the born-again Christian is soon aware that the fight is on! New Christians, not aware that the Christian life is a conflict and that every true Christian is a soldier of Jesus Christ, are sometimes mystified at the struggles they encounter in living for God, and they often become discouraged and filled with doubts. But if we face the facts of the Bible and of universal Christian

testimony and if we prepare ourselves accordingly for the inevitable conflict ahead, this will not happen.

Warfare is never easy; no soldier's path is strewn with roses; his life is never one of ease. These things apply to the Christian soldier in a spiritual sense in the same way that they do to military personal in a physical sense. Anyone who desires to equip himself to be a true soldier of Christ should study such Bible passages as Ephesians 6:10-18; Galatians 5:16-25; 1 Peter 5:8-9; James 4:1-10.

Thank God, we are not left to fight the battle in our own strength alone. We have the indwelling presence and power of God's Holy Spirit, and with His strength we can be victorious and always triumphant. The Bible assures us, "Greater is he that is in you (the Holy Spirit of God), than he that is in the world (Satan)" and that we, therefore, are able to overcome rather than suffer defeat (1 John 4:4). The apostle John wrote: "I have written to you, young men, because you are strong, and the Word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the wicked one" (1 John 2: 14).

We are assured that the identical supernatural power is available to us that God used when He raised Christ from the dead - the greatest power in the universe! (see Eph 1:18-22). By communion with God through prayer and through His Word, we can draw on this source of power and stand up as true Bible soldiers - soldiers of Christ and His cross – real Christians.

***Stand up, stand up for Jesus,
You soldiers of the cross!
Lift high His royal banner
It must not suffer loss.
From victory to victory
His army shall He lead,
Till every foe is vanquished
And Christ Is Lord Indeed.***

George Duffield

CHAPTER 12

The Christian Is A Steward

A Christian is also a steward of God: “As every man has received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God” (I Peter 4:10).

The word “steward” also is one that needs some explanation in the light of oriental life. When a prominent person of Bible times wanted to take a journey to another part of the world to visit some fellow ruler or friend, travel conditions often required him to be absent for many months or even years. During his absence all his business and material goods would be entrusted to some faithful friend or servant. His belongings were placed in the hands of that steward, not for the steward to consider as his own but merely for him to administer according to his master’s direction. His business was to be carried on, as he would have done had he been there.

Jesus taught the right use of money and treasure in Luke (12:16-34). The treasure was not for the rich man’s personal gratification for he was a “fool”; the true treasure (verses 33,34) was that which was sent to the Lord ahead of time.

When the woman gave two small coins in Mark (12:41-44), Jesus commended her very highly, because she was not rich: she had given in spite of being very very poor.

In Matthew (25: 14-30), Jesus taught us to use our God-given talents for His glory.

In Luke (19:11-27), Jesus gave to His disciples the command to “occupy till I come”; we are to use the money that He gave us for the Lord’s glory and extension of the kingdom.

Christians are stewards of their money, time, talents, gifts and opportunities. A steward, then, is one who has been entrusted with another’s business and household goods to administer as the owner has given direction. Christians are stewards of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. As the

apostle Peter said, “stewards of the manifold grace of God”. This Gospel and grace have not been given to us for our benefit alone, but we are to execute and disperse them as He has commanded us.

Our Lord Jesus gave us commandment to carry the good news of salvation to all people: “go to the world and preach the Gospel to every one” (Mark 16:15). Paul said: “It is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful”(1 Cor 4:2). Are we faithful stewards of the Gospel? Are we doing everything within our power to take the message of Christ to the world? Are we conscientiously seeking to evangelize our generation? Is the Church being faithful to her sacred trust and stewardship?

One day God will call us to give an account of what He has entrusted us during this lifetime. When that day comes and when we stand before the Judgment seat of Christ, will our works prove to be gold, silver and precious stones? Or will they merely be wood, hay and stubble to be burned? (See 1 Cor 3:11-15).

All that has been done for ourselves in the energy of the flesh will be burned up like chaff, but all that has been done in fulfillment of our divine trust, as Christian stewards will abide. And we shall hear the master’s words: Well done, you good and faithful servant, enter in to the joy of your Lord” (Matt 25:21).

PART III

WHAT WE ARE TO DO

The Duty of The Redeemed

CHAPTER 13

Obedience To The Moral Law

Our first duty to God our Maker, is to obey His revealed will, the moral law, which is set briefly in the Ten Commandments (Ex 20:2-17; Matt 19:17; 22:37-40).

1	You shall have no other gods before Me
2	You shall not make for yourself an idol.
3	You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain
4	Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy
5	Honor your father and your mother
6	You shall not murder
7	You shall not commit adultery
8	You shall not steal
9	You shall not bear false witness
10	You shall not covet

In Matthew 22: 36-39, one of the Pharisees asked our Lord Jesus Christ saying: “Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the law?” Jesus replied: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your mind. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

The first four commandments demand perfect love to God of everyone of us, while the last six commandments demand of everyone of us perfect love to all our fellow men.

We should trust God above all things and with our whole heart commit our lives to His keeping and rely on Him for help in every need. The fulfillment of all commandments must flow from fear and love to God.

Some people may ask; “*Are the Ten Commandments still relevant to Christians today?*”

Absolutely. Our Lord Jesus Christ insisted that His followers honour them (Matt. 5:17-48).

What is to be a Christian’s attitude to the moral law of God?

Is the very category of law abolished in Christian life, and are we free not to follow the moral law?

No. On the Sermon of the Mount, our Lord Jesus spoke of the Christian’s relation to the Law. He said to the Jews: “Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets, but to fulfill”.

We need to understand that “the law and the prophets”, namely the Whole Old Testament, contain various kinds of teaching.

<i>Doctrinal Teaching</i>	<i>Predictive Prophecy</i>	<i>Ethical Precepts</i>
Jesus ‘fulfilled’ it by his person, his teaching and his work.	Jesus ‘fulfilled’ it all in the sense that what was predicted came to pass in Him.	Jesus ‘fulfilled’ the moral law of God by obeying it.

Bishop Ryle said;

“The Old Testament is the Gospel in the bud, the New Testament is the Gospel in full flower. The Old Testament is the Gospel in the blade; the New Testament is the Gospel in full ear.”¹

Our Lord Jesus Christ does more than obey the moral law himself; He explains what obedience will involve for his disciples. He rejects the superficial interpretation of the law given by the scribes; He himself supplies the true interpretation. His purpose is not to change the law, but to reveal the full depth of meaning that it was intended to hold.

So then He fulfils it by declaring the radical demands of righteousness of God.

Our Lord Jesus summed up his position in a single word, not ‘abolition’ but ‘fulfillment’. The righteousness, which is pleasing to God, is an inward righteousness of mind and

¹ *Expository Thoughts On The Gospels, by J. C. Ryle, p 38.*

motive. It is a new heart-righteousness which the prophets foresaw as one of the blessings of the messianic age. "I will put my law within them, and I will write it upon their hearts," God promised through Jeremiah (31:33). How would he do it? He told Ezekiel: "I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes" (36:27).

The Pharisees thought an external conformity to the law would be righteousness enough. Yet Jesus demands "deeper and deeper obedience" which is a righteousness of the heart and is possible only in those whom the Holy Spirit has regenerated and now indwells. Righteousness is therefore evidence of the new birth, and no one enters the kingdom of heaven without being born again.

To Jesus, Moses' law was God's law, whose validity was permanent and whose authority must be accepted. In the Sermon of the Mount, we see our Lord Jesus as the faithful expounder of the law, which had been already given. The Pharisees had 'obscured' the law; Jesus 'restored' it to its integrity.

Our Lord disagreed with the Pharisees' interpretation of the law; he never disagreed with their acceptance of its authority. Rather the reverse. In the strongest possible terms he asserted its authority as God's Word written, and called his disciples to accept its true and deeply exacting interpretation.

Our Lord Jesus went on to state both that greatness in God's kingdom was determined by conformity to the law's moral teaching, and even that entry into the kingdom was impossible without righteousness greater than that of the scribes and Pharisees. Let us hear what He said:

"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them ... Anyone who breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the

same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven” (Matt 5:17-20).

Of this greater Christian righteousness he then gave six illustrations (5:21-41), relating to murder, adultery, divorce, swearing, revenge and love.

In each antithesis (‘You have heard that it was said ... but I say to you...’) he rejected the easy-going tradition of the scribes, reaffirmed the authority of Old Testament Scripture and drew out the full and exacting implications of God’s moral law. Let us hear one illustration;

“You have heard that it was said, “Love your neighbor and hate your enemy. But I tell you: love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? And if you greet only your brothers, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? Be perfect, therefore as your heavenly Father is perfect” (Matthew 5: 43-48).

And in this matter Christian disciples must follow Christ, not the Pharisees. We have no liberty to try to lower the law’s standards and make it easier to obey. But as God promised, He will help us through His Holy Spirit, who dwells in our hearts, and causes us to walk in His statutes. (Ezek 36:27).

CHAPTER 14

Following The Golden Rule

“Whatever you wish that men would do to you, do so to them; for this is the law and the prophets”.

“The followers of Jesus are to be different, different from both the nominal church and the secular world, different from both the religious and the irreligious. The Sermon on the Mount is the most complete delineation anywhere in the New Testament of the Christian counter-culture. Here is the Christian value - system, ethical standard, religious devotion, attitude to money, ambition, lifestyle and network of relationships - all of which are totally at variance with those in non-Christian world. And this Christian counter-culture is the life of the kingdom of God, a fully human life indeed but lived out under the divine rule.”²

Perhaps a brief analysis of the Sermon of the Mount will help us to demonstrate our relationship to God and to our fellow men. The Sermon of the Mount emphasizes eight principal marks of Christian character and conduct, especially in relation to God and to men, and the divine blessing, which rests on those who exhibit these marks.

(1) A Christian’s character and influence:

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall see God. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called

² John Stott, *The Message of The Sermon of The Mount*, p19.

sons of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when men revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so men persecuted the prophets who were before you (Matt 5:3-12)

You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trodden under foot by men.

You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid. Nor do men light a lamp and put it under a bushel, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven (Matthew 5:13-16).

If a Christian knows anything at all of Jesus' teaching, he must surely be familiar with the beatitudes with which the Sermon on the Mount begins. The beatitudes are eight qualities of Christians who are at one and the same time meek and merciful, poor in spirit and pure in heart, mourning and hungry, peacemaker and persecuted.

The beatitudes are Christ's own specification of what every Christian ought to be. All of these qualities are to characterize all his followers. Just as the ninefold fruit of the Spirit, which Paul lists, is to ripen in every Christian character, so the eight beatitudes, which Christ speaks, describe his ideal for every citizen of God's kingdom.

Perhaps the simplest division is to see the first four as describing the Christian's relation to God, and the second four his relation and duties to his fellow men.

The two metaphors of salt and light indicate the influence for good, which Christians will exert in the community if (and if only) they maintain their distinctive character as portrayed in the beatitudes. Our influence depends on our character.

It may be helpful to look back and read vv 3-16 and note three things;

First, this is the way we ourselves will be blessed. The beatitudes identify those whom God declares to be ‘blessed’, those who please him and who themselves find fulfillment. True blessedness is found in goodness, and nowhere else.

Secondly, this is the way the world will best be served. Jesus offers his followers the immense privileges of being the world’s salt and light if only they will live by the beatitudes.

Thirdly, this is the way God will be glorified. Here, at the beginning of his ministry, Jesus tells his disciples that if they let their light shine so that their good works are seen, their Father in heaven will be glorified.

(2) A Christian’s piety

In their ‘piety’ or religious devotion Christians are to resemble neither the hypocritical display of the Pharisees nor the mechanical formalism of pagans.

“When you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by men. I tell you the truth; they have received their reward in full. But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

When you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men. I tell you the truth; they have received their reward in full. But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like

pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show men they are fasting. I tell you the truth; they have received their reward in full. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that it will not be obvious to men that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is in heaven; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you” (Matthew 6:1-18).

Christian piety is to be marked above all by reality, by the sincerity of God’s children who live in their heavenly Father’s presence.

(3) A Christian’s ambition

The ‘worldliness’, which Christians are to avoid, can take either a religious or a secular shape. So we are to differ from non-Christians not only in our devotions, but also in our ambitions. In particular, Christ changes our attitude to material wealth and possessions.

No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and Money. Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear ... For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own (Matthew 6:19-34).

It is impossible to worship both God and money; we have to choose between them. Secular people are preoccupied with the quest for food, drink and clothing.

Christians are to be free of these self-centered material anxieties and instead to give themselves to the spread of God's rule and God's righteousness.

That is to say, our supreme ambition is to seek the glory of God, and neither our own glory nor even our own material well-being. It is a question of what we 'seek first'.

(4) A Christian's relationships

As Christians, we are caught up in a complex network of four relationships, each of which arises from our relation to Christ our Lord.

Once we are properly related to him, our other relationships are all affected. New relationships are created; old relationships are changed.

I. Christian's attitude to his brothers.

We are not to judge our brother but to serve him.

“Judge not, that you be not judged. For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and the measure you give will be the measure you get. Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when there is the log in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye” (Matthew. 7:1-5).

II. Christian's attitude to 'dogs and pigs'.

As Christians, we are privileged to handle the “holy things” of the Lord. He has entrusted us the precious truths of His Word (2 Cor 4:7), and we must regard them carefully. No dedicated priest would throw meat from the altar to a filthy dog, and only a fool would give pearls to a pig. While it is true that we must carry the Gospel “to every one” (Mark 16:15), it is also true that we must not cheapen the Gospel by a ministry that lacks discernment. Even Our Lord refused to talk to Herod (Luke 23: 9), and Paul refused to argue with people who resisted the Word (Acts 13:44-49).

**We are to avoid offering the Gospel
to those who have decisively rejected it.**

“Do not give dogs what is holy; and do not throw your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under foot and turn to attack you” (Matthew. 7:6).

Our Lord always dealt with individuals according to their needs and their spiritual condition. He discussed the new birth with Nicodemus, but He spoke of living water to the Samaritan woman. When the religious leaders tried to trap Him, He refused to answer their question (Matt 21:23-27)).

It is a wise Christian who first assesses the condition of a person's heart before sharing the precious pearls.

III. Our attitude to our heavenly Father.

“Ask, and it will be given you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For every one who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. Or what man of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your

children, how much more will your heavenly Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him?” (Matthew. 7:7-12)

We are to keep praying to our heavenly Father. Prayer sounds very simple when our Lord teaches about it. Just Ask..., seek..., knock..., and in each case you will be answered. But prayer is not simple, however; its involved at least three important things;

First, prayer presupposes knowledge.

Since God gives gifts only if they accord with his will, we have to take pains to discover his will- by Scripture meditation and by the exercise of a Christian mind schooled in Scripture meditation.

Secondly, prayer presupposes faith.

It is one thing to know God’s will; it is another to humble ourselves before him and express our confidence that he is able to cause his will to be done.

Thirdly, prayer presupposes desire.

We may know God’s will and believe he can perform it, and still not desire it. Prayer is the chief means God has ordained by which to express our deepest desires. This is the reason why the ‘ask – seek - knock’ commands are in the present imperative and in an ascending scale to challenge our perseverance.

Thus, before we ask, we must know what to ask for and whether it accords with God’s will; we must believe God can grant it; and we must genuinely want to receive. Then the gracious promises of our Lord will come true.

IV. A Christian’s attitude to all men (Matt.7: 12).

We have to put ourselves in the other person’s shoes, and ask, ‘How would I like to be treated in that situation?’

“So whatever you wish that men would do to you, do so to them; for this is the law and the prophets”

From this we learn that our Lord has introduced us to these basic relationships. At their center is our heavenly Father God to whom we come, on whom we depend and who never gives his children other than good gifts. Next, there are our fellow believers. If they are truly our brothers and sisters in the Lord, it is inconceivable that we shall be anything other than caring and constructive in our attitude towards them.

As for those outside the family, there is the extreme case of the 'dogs' and 'pigs', but they are not typical. They are an exceptional group of stubborn people who are 'dogged' and even 'pig-headed', one might accurately say, in their decisive rejection of Jesus Christ. Reluctantly we have to drop them.

But if verse 6 is the exception, verse 12 is the rule, the Golden Rule. It transforms our actions. If we put ourselves sensitively into the place of other person, and wish for him what we would wish for ourselves, we would be never mean, always generous; never harsh, always understanding; never cruel, always kind.

CHAPTER 15

Preaching The Gospel Till He Comes

Our Lord Jesus has assigned a definite and tremendous task to His Church. He said, “*Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation*” (Mark 16:15).

This is the greatest task that has ever been assigned to any group of people. It is included in the works, which we are to do for Him. He said, “*If you love me, keep my commandments*” (John 14:15).

I have made a study of the definite commandments of Jesus and found that there are not very many of them. Not many commandments were from His lips while He was on the earth. Numerous commandments were given to individual people in local places. He commanded certain people to do certain things when He addressed them, but I think there are only two commandments, which He gave to the Church for all time.

One of them is “*A new command I give: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another*” (John 13: 34-35).

The second is “*Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age*” (Matt 28: 18-20).

How would you summarize the Gospel?

Of course John 3:16 is excellent. The heart of the Gospel message is in 1 Cor.15:3-5, which gives a more complete summary:

“For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve.”

The Gospel is the good news of what God has done for us. After the resurrection, this good news was shared with both the Jews and the Gentiles. Paul described himself as a debtor, as a person obligated to others. He said, ***“Woe is me if I preach not the Gospel”*** (1 Cor 9:16). To the Roman Christians he wrote, ***“I am not ashamed of the Gospel, because it is the power of salvation to everyone who believes”*** (Rom 1:16).

Every Christian is a witness. The responsibility of all of us as Christians is to faithfully deliver the message of the good news. We are ambassadors of Christ (2 Cor 5:20). The message of Christ is the important thing. The messenger must be a faithful person. If we remember this, our conversation will be about Jesus, who He is and what He did, rather than about the church and some hypocrites who may attend the church. Let us remember the important of the message.

When a person becomes a Christian, friends and family members will watch his or her life carefully. He or she becomes either a good or a bad witness. Friends will ask her or him questions and this will be a good opportunity to witness.

Our preaching and witnessing must always be motivated by a love for Jesus and a love for other people. May we labor faithfully and hear the words of our Lord Jesus, ***“Well done, good and faithful servant.”*** Amen.

Conclusion

In this conclusion we attempt to summarize the main teachings of Christ while on earth.

I. Jesus' Teaching about Salvation

- In His conversation with Nicodemus He told him that he had to be born again, John 3:1-15.
- In His talk with the Samaritan woman He made her thirsty for Himself, the living water.
- In John 6, He revealed Himself as the true bread that could satisfy true soul-hunger.
- In Luke 7: 47-48 Jesus taught that He had the power to forgive sins of the penitent.
- In John 10, the discourse on the Good Shepherd, Jesus revealed that He was the only door to salvation, and that no man could be saved except through Him.
- In Matthew 11:28-30 Jesus gave an invitation for the laborers and weary- laden to come to Him for salvation and soul-rest.
- This wonderful salvation invitation is further expanded in Luke 14:16-24 to include the wanderers on the highways and byways- the poor, maimed, faltering and the blind.
- The best loved of all salvation stories is the recovery of the Prodigal in Luke 15.

"Repentance is twofold: turning *from* sin and turning *to* God".

"Repent and believe the Gospel" (Mark 1: 15).

"Make every effort to enter through the narrow door" (Luke 13: 24).

"You must be born again" (John 3:7).

II. Jesus' Teaching about Daily Christian Living

- In Matthew 5:33-48 we are taught 1) not to swear 2) to turn the other cheek 3) to love enemies.
- In Matthew 6:1-4; 19-21 about giving 1) to be secretly 2) an eternal investment.
- Jesus taught a great deal about prayer. It was to be 1) done in secretly 2) continuous 3) unlimited in scope and power (Matt 6:5-13, Luke 11:1-13, John 14:13-14 & 16:23-24).
- Jesus taught that we must forgive others before He will forgive us (Matthew 5: 23-24, 6:14-15).
- Jesus practiced fasting and taught it (Matthew 6:16-18; Luke 4:2 before the Temptation).
- Jesus cautioned against setting our affections on the necessities of life but taught that the Lord would provide these daily needs of food, shelter and clothing if we sought first the kingdom of God (Matthew 6: 25-34).
- Jesus taught that it was necessary to confess Christ as Lord openly (Matthew 10:32-33; John 9:38).
- Jesus instructed His converts to go home and witness to their relatives first (Mark 5:19).
- Jesus' teaching rang with assurance of salvation to the saved (John 3:16-18,36; John 5:24).
- A great deal of the Upper Room Sermon speaks of the ministry of the indwelling Holy Spirit who guides, conducts, energize and strengthens the believer (John 14: 16-26).
- Jesus did not promise His believers and disciples an easy time but mentioned persecution freely and promised help and grace for every trial (John 16:1-6, Luke 12:11-12).

“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and praise your Father in heaven”(Matt 5:16).

III. Jesus' Teaching about Fruit Bearing

- John 15:1-17, the heart of the Upper Room Sermon, deals with the vine and the branches; with the desire that we should bear “fruit”; “more fruit”; “much fruit.”
- In Luke 13: 6-9; the parable of the barren fig tree, teaches us that the tree that does not bear fruit was to be cut down, destroyed and cast into fire.
- In Matthew 7:16-20 Our Lord teaches, “By their fruits you shall know them”.
- In the Parable of the Sower and the Seed in Matthew 13:1-23, Jesus expresses His desire that each Christian should bear fruit- some thirtfold, others sixfold; others one hundredfold.
- As Christians we should be purged in order that we will bear more fruit, John 15:2.
- The purging is a bitter experience of “digging and dunging,” (Luke 13:8), but essential.
- Luke 6:43-46, we as Christians are to bear the fruit of the Spirit and win souls for Him.

IV. Jesus' Teaching about Heaven and Hell

Our Lord spoke of hell and eternal punishment at least 70 times in the Gospels.

- In Matthew 25:41, we read: “Depart from Me, you cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.
- It was Jesus who gave us the clearest picture of torment in hell in Luke 16: 19-31.
- In Mark 9: 42-48, we have a solemn warning to avoid hell.
- In the Upper Room sermon, Jesus left the reassuring Word that He was going away for a little while to prepare the mansions and return to receive us (John 14: 1-3).

- To the dying repentant thief, the Lord said, “Today you shall be with Me in paradise”.
- Our Lord pictured heaven as a home with the Father God (Matthew 6:9).
- Our Lord Jesus came from heaven to die and bring many sons home to heaven (Hebrews 2: 10).

V. Jesus’ Teaching about His Coming

- The Lord taught that we must be ready for this event at any moment. **His coming will be suddenly.**
- He said: “You must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him” (Mark 13:36, Luke 12:40).

Also the manner of the coming of our Lord will be;

- **In the clouds.** Matthew 24:30 “ ... see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven.”
- **In the glory of His Father.** Matthew 16:27 “For the Son of Man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels.”
- **With power and great glory, accompanied with angles.** “.. Clouds of heaven with power and great glory” (See also Matt.24: 30, 25:31, 16: 27).
- **Publicly as He ascended, in bodily form.** (See Acts 1: 9-11, Matt. 24: 30, Revelation 1:7, Titus 2:13, 1 Thessalonians 4:16).
- **In flaming fire.** 2 Thessalonians 1:8 “In the flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ”.
- **With a shout and the voice of the archangel.** “For the Lord Himself shall descend.. with a shout, with voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God” (See 1 Thessalonians 4: 16).

So far in part one, we have seen the importance of knowing what we believe. We have been discussing the foundational truths of our faith. The Christian believes that the Bible is the only inspired Word of God. He believes that God is the Creator and the Sustainer of the universe. In his mercy and grace He appeared in the flesh; He became man in order to redeem us from our sinful life.

In part two, we have seen that these foundational truths of our faith must be apprehended and demonstrated in our life.

In part three, we have come to our duty as a redeemed people that we have been saved to do good works, to be light to the world and witnesses for the Gospel of Christ.

But again we need to remember what Jesus our Lord said, ***“If you love me, keep my commandments”*** (John 14:15).

My works prove the reality of my faith. My good deeds, the good works in my life, demonstrate to the world that I am a Christian.

How can people ever believe that I am a Christian if my life is evil?

It is obvious that nobody will believe me. My actions must agree with my words. My life must be a living proof of my faith.

The essential theme of the whole Bible from the beginning to end is that God’s historical purpose is to call out a people for himself; that this people is a ‘holy’ people, set apart from the world to belong to him and to obey him; and that its vocation is to be true to its identity, that is, to be ‘holy’ or ‘different’ in all its outlook and behavior.

This is how God put it to the people of Israel soon after he had rescued them from their Egyptian slavery and made them his special people by covenant:

“I am the Lord your God. You shall not do as they do in the land of Egypt, where you dwelt, and you shall not do as they do in the land of Canaan, to which I am bringing you. You shall not walk in their statutes. You shall do my ordinances

and keep my statutes and walk in them. I am the Lord your God” (Lv. 18:1-4).

This appeal of God to his people, it will be noted, began and ended with the statement that he was the Lord their God. It was because he was their covenant God, and because they were his special people, that they were to be different from everybody else. They were to follow his commandments and not take their lead from the standards of those around them.

Our Lord Jesus emphasized that his true followers, the citizens of God’s kingdom, were to be entirely different from others. They were not to take their cue from the people around them, but from him, and so prove to be genuine children of their heavenly Father. The key text of the Sermon of the Mount is (6:8): **“Do not be like them”**. It is the same command of God’s Word to Israel in olden days: **“You shall not do as they do”** (Lv 18:3). It is the same call to be different. Apostle Paul wrote in his letter to Titus;

“For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope - the glorious appearing of our great God and savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good” (Titus 2: 10-14).

The New Testament makes it clear that the early Church’s message always had two aspects: one theological, the other ethical.

First, there was the Gospel, which the apostles preached; and then there were Commandments, growing out of the Gospel, which they taught to those who accepted the Gospel.

The Gospel was a declaration of what God, in his grace, had done for men through Christ. The Commandments were a

statement of what God required from men who had become the objects of his gracious action.

Therefore, it is not enough either to call Jesus ‘Lord’ or listen to his teaching. The basic question is whether we *mean* what we say and *do* what we hear.

On this commitment hangs our eternal destiny. Only the one who obeys Christ, as Lord is wise. For only he or she is building his or her house on a foundation of rock, which the storms neither of adversity nor of judgment will be able to undermine (Matthew 7:21-27).

May the Lord God bless and keep you. May His face shine upon you and be gracious to you. May He look upon you with kindness and give you His peace.

**Our Attitude to The Lord's Table
1 Cor 11: 23-34, Matt26:26-29**

First, We should look back

Remember His death for us

"This is My body, which is for you, Do this in remembrance of Me"

Secondly, We should look ahead

Preach the Gospel, and be ready, the Lord is coming.

"For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes"

Thirdly, We should look within

Examine yourself and forsake sin

"A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup"

Fourthly, We should look around

Discern the Lord's body

Communion of the one family

"Because there is one loaf, we who are many, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf"

Fifthly, We should look up

Give thanks and adore Him

"Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, and with your blood you purchased us for God"

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