

BIBLE LESSONS

THROUGH THE BIBLE IN 52 LESSONS

LESSON NUMBER THIRTY ONE

THE WORD BECAME FLESH

As we open the Gospel of Mark we are introduced to the Lord Jesus Christ at the age of thirty. There we find nothing of the ancestors, birth, or childhood of Jesus, the Son of God.

We must turn to Matthew and Luke to learn what little is recorded concerning the birth and childhood of the Holy Child Jesus. Let us see how John's Gospel begins:

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God." John 1:1 and 2.

Nothing here of the human ancestors of Mary the virgin. Nothing here of the birth of the Babe in Bethlehem.

We read these words in John 1:10, 14 and 18:

"He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not " "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."

The Creator of all things was God in the beginning and now He has become flesh to be the Lamb of God and the King of Israel.

Note John 1:29:

"The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!"

And John 1:49:

"Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel."

The Lamb for sacrifice.—The King to reign in glory.

Here we have the order mentioned in I Peter 1:11, the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow. In Matthew, Mark and Luke, we have Christ as King, first, and then rejected to become the Lamb.

But let us see how this first chapter of John agrees with Philippians 2:5 to 8:

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

Also Hebrews 2:9:

"But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man."

Now let us read again John 1:29:

"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 1:47 to 49:

“Jesus saw Nathanael coming to Him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile! Nathanael saith unto Him, Whence knowest Thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee. Nathanael answered and saith unto Him, Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God: THOU ART THE KING OF ISRAEL.”

Here we have Christ presented as “The Lamb of God” going to the tree to be crowned with thorns. We have Him saluted as “The King of Israel,” going to the throne to reign over the House of Israel (Luke 1:33).

Israel’s prophets for centuries had foretold Israel’s future history, prophesying concerning “the tree,” “the tribulation” and “the throne.”

When we compare Isaiah 53, where Christ is pictured as the suffering Messiah dying for His Nation, with Isaiah 9:6 and 7, where Christ is seen on the throne of David as a conquering King, reigning in power and glory, we understand something of the two lines of Prophecy concerning Israel’s coming Messiah and King. Some one has referred to Christ as the Lamb on the cross and King on David’s throne, as the crimson and purple lines of Prophecy. Note Hebrews 9:28:

“So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.”

Note Acts 1:11:

“Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.”

THE SON OF MAN GOETH AND COMETH

Now compare Matthew 26:24:

“The Son of man goeth as it is written of him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born.”

with Matthew 24:30:

“And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.”

In Matthew 26:24, we read, “the Son of man goeth.” This speaks of Calvary and His suffering.

In Matthew 24:30, we read, “They shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.”

Thus we have the story of the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow, which Israel’s prophets told of aforetime. I Peter 1:11.

Nathanael was an Israelite, in whom there was no guile, under the fig tree. Nathanael means “the gift of God.” The fig tree stands for Israel. Nathanael was a guileless Israelite. God is going to send the Lord Jesus to His fig tree.

Note what God is yet to do for Israel according to Ezekiel 36:24 to 29:

“For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you. and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God. I will also save you from all your uncleannesses: and I will call for the corn, and will increase it, and lay no famine upon you.”

Why will God do this?

Note Ezekiel 36:21 and 22:

“But I had pity for mine holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the heathen, whither they went. Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord God; I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name’s sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went.”

Why will Israel be saved when the Deliverer comes out of Zion, according to Romans 11:25 and 26?

“For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits, that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.”

Hear God’s answer:

“For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.” Romans 11:29. “For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.” Romans 11:27.

God is going to cleanse, sanctify and restore Israel for His own holy name’s sake; because His gifts and calling are without repentance. Then redeemed Israel will be “Nathanael (the gift of God) in whom there is no guile.” And Israel will join with Nathanael, “Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God: Thou art the King of Israel.” John 1:49.

The heaven must retain Jesus Christ until the restitution of all things spoken by the holy prophets since the world began. Acts 3:21.

He will return in the clouds with power and great glory for Israel’s redemption. Luke 21:25 to 33. When? When the fig leaf is tender, “Behold the fig tree and all the trees.”

Yes, the Word became flesh to go to the cross of Calvary and to go to David’s throne.

In the gospel of grace the sinner begins with the death and resurrection of Christ. In all of Paul’s ministry we shall learn that in presenting the gospel of grace he had little to say about the birth and earthly ministry of Jesus Christ.

Christ began His earthly life with His miraculous birth. The sinner begins his spiritual life with his new birth, which is miraculous. Then God’s instructions are found in I Peter 2:2:

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

The sinner must begin at Calvary. Then he can join with Paul. Galatians 2:20:

“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.”

Note again John 1:14:

“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.”

“Dwelt” should be translated “tabernacled.”

Now note Luke 1:35:

“And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee : therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.”

“That Holy Thing” “tabernacled.” In the Old Testament God’s sanctuary for Israel was in the tabernacle. That “holy thing tabernacled.” There was the gold and the silver, the blue and the purple and the crimson and the white. All spoke of the Lord Jesus Christ. There was the brazen altar, the laver of water, the bread, the light, the altar of incense, the interceding high priest.

Now note in John:

1. Christ is the Lamb of God. John 1:29.

2. In John much is said about water. John 4. John 5:5. In chapter 13 Christ is washing the disciples' feet.
3. Christ is the Bread of God. John 6:51.
4. Christ is the Light of the world. John 9:5.
5. Christ in John 17 is the interceding highpriest.

Surely the sanctuary and the tabernacle spoke of the Word which became flesh, the Holy God Who tabernacled among us. Thus we see in John's Gospel we have the record of One Who being a man is making Himself equal with God.

Note John 8:58:

"Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am."

Now note also John 8:24:

"I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins."

Here we note that the penalty for not believing that Jesus Christ is the eternal "I AM" means for the unbeliever to die in his sins. In the Gospel of John, Christ calls Himself the "I AM" about twenty times.

CHRIST AND THE WORLD

Note these statements in:

John 1:10: "He was in the world and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not."

John 1:29: "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 3:16: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that Whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

John 8:12: "Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the Light of the world: he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the Light of life."

John 15:18 and 19: "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated Me before it hated you. If ye were of the world the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you."

John 12:31: "Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out."

The word "world" occurs more than 75 times in John's Gospel. In that Record we learn that the world belongs to Christ by right of creation and by right of redemption.

Note in Christ's prayer for His disciples several statements concerning them and the world: "I have manifested Thy name unto the men that Thou gavest Me out of the world; Thine they were and Thou gavest them Me; and they have kept Thy Word." John 17:6.

CHRIST IN THE FIRST CHAPTER OF JOHN

Let us note in the following verses of the first chapter of John's Gospel: verses 1, 5, 9, 10, 14, 18, 34, 36 and 49—that:

Christ is God.

Christ is the True Light.

Christ is the Creator Of All Things.

Christ is God Manifest in The Flesh.

Christ is the Only Begotten Son.

Christ is the Son of God.
Christ is the Lamb of God.
Christ is the King of Israel.

JOHN 1:51 AND GENESIS 28:12 TO 15

Let us compare Jacob's dream with Christ's statement in John 1:51:

“And he saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of ascending and descending upon the Son of man.”

We quote Genesis 28:12 and 13

“And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. And, behold, the Lord stood above it, and said, I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed.”

Surely here we find that Jacob's ladder spoke of the Son of man. (Genesis 28:12 to 15); giving assurance that God will be faithful to Israel; to do all that He promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Note this statement of Christ is made in connection with His conversation with Nathanael; that is, His statement concerning the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.

CHRIST CAME UNTO HIS OWN

Note John 1:10 and 11:

“He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not.”

In John 1:3 and 1:10, we learn that all things are created by Jesus Christ when He was the Word with God in the beginning. “He came unto His own.” “His own,” here, is neuter and refers to His own world or His own things. “His own received Him not.” “His own,” here, is masculine and refers to His own people; His own nation.

Jehovah was both the Creator and Redeemer of Israel:

“But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name: thou art mine.” Isaiah 43:1. “I am the Lord, your Holy One, the Creator of Israel, your king.” “This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise.” Isaiah 43:15 and 21. “Thus saith the Lord the King of Israel, and his Redeemer the Lord of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God.” Isaiah 44:6.

In the earthly ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ, in His visit to this earth, surely we have the story, “Christ came unto His own and His own received Him not.”

GRACE—THE LAMB OF GOD

Perhaps we noticed the absence of the word “grace” in the Gospel of Matthew. To be sure there was grace in some of the messages of Christ, such as, “Come unto Me and I will give you rest.” But there was also much of law in the Lord's messages in Matthew. In this respect there is a great difference in the Gospel of John. In the very first chapter we find Christ rejected by Israel. “He came unto His own and His own received Him not.” John 1:11. Thus we see that we have in the first chapter of John what we have in the closing chapters of Matthew namely, Israel's rejection of their Messiah; the Stone rejected by the builders.

It was this rejection by Israel and the death of the Lamb of God that brought in God's reign of grace through Jesus Christ. Read carefully Romans 11:11 to 15 and Romans 5:20 and 21.

We have already learned that John's Gospel is filled with messages of grace. But in Romans 8:1 and 2 we have the great "grace" message. "No condemnation in Christ" because of the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus.

Note again John 3:18 and John 6:47:

"He that believeth on Him is not condemned: but He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life."

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ;" "not condemned;" "hath everlasting life."

Note again John 6:29:

"Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him Whom He hath sent."

The first work which God gives to any man is to believe on Him Whom God hath sent.

Surely we must learn this most important lesson, if we would understand John's Gospel, so radically different from the Synoptics in many respects; namely, that, in applying the grace message of the Gospel of John we must look at Christ as having already been rejected, crucified and raised from the dead, when we begin the very first chapter and read John 1:12. "As many as received Him."

In no other way can we reconcile the messages of John 1:12 and 3:16 with Matthew 15:24.

Remember the words of the Lord Jesus in Matthew 15:24: "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

Here note that Christ is sent only to Israel. But in John 3:16 we find Christ given to the world; that "whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." In John 1:11 Christ is rejected by Israel. In John 1:12, "As many as received Him to them gave He power to become the sons of God."

CHRIST'S MIRACLES IN THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

There are twenty-one chapters in the Gospel of John. Matthew, Mark and Luke are called "the synoptic Gospels." By "synoptic" is meant "presenting, or taking the same or a common view." It is generally believed that the Holy Spirit led John to write the Fourth Record about fifty years after He led Matthew to write the First Record. Matthew and John were two of the twelve apostles. By carefully studying "The Gospel of John" we learn that more than eighty per cent of the contents of John cannot be found in the Synoptics. There are sixteen complete chapters in John in which are recorded facts as to the life, ministry and miracles of the Lord Jesus Christ, not found in Matthew, Mark and Luke.

In Matthew are recorded many of the kingdom parables taught by the Lord Jesus. Not one of these is recorded in John. We have in John no record of "The Sermon on the Mount" and the "Our Father" prayer, which are given in full in Matthew. On the other hand in Matthew we have no record of the prayer of the Lord Jesus Christ recorded in the seventeenth chapter of John.

CHRIST'S MIRACLES

Before the death of the Lord Jesus Christ we find recorded in John's Gospel in detail seven of the miracles performed by the Saviour.

1. TURNING THE WATER INTO WINE. John 2:9.
2. HEALING THE NOBLEMAN'S SON. John 4:50.

3. WALKING ON THE WATER. John 6:19.
4. HEALING THE IMPOTENT MAN AT BETHESDA. John 5:2.
5. FEEDING THE FIVE THOUSAND WITH THE LOAVES AND FISHES. John 6:10.
6. HEALING THE MAN BORN BLIND WHO WASHED IN SILOAM. John 9:7.
7. RAISING LAZARUS FROM THE DEAD. John 11:43.

Of these miracles we find that numbers 1-2-4-6 and 7 are not mentioned in the Synoptics.

Now let us note John 5:36 and John 20:30 and 31:

“But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me.”

“And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through: his name.”

Read the account of the healing of the man born blind, in the ninth chapter of John. Note what the Lord told him to do: “Go wash in the pool of Siloam.” John 9:7. Here the Holy Spirit is very careful to tell us that Siloam means “sent.” In John we learn that every man born of woman is not only dead in trespasses and sins but blind from birth. He must be born from above to see spiritual things and to enter God’s spiritual kingdom. He must be washed in the pool of “Sent.”

We find that Christ is mentioned in John’s Gospel more than forty times as the One Whom the Father sent. Every sinner must be washed in the blood of Christ or remain spiritually blind and dead in trespasses and sins.

TURNING THE WATER INTO WINE Christ and Nicodemus

Now read about the first miracle of Christ at the wedding in Cana of Galilee, turning the water into wine.

“And there were set there six waterpots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece. Jesus saith unto them, Fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them up to the brim. And he saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare it.” John 2:6, 7 and 8.

We note in John 2:6 that the vessels were used in the religion of the Jews. They were filled with water. A miracle was performed by the Lord. The vessels were filled with wine. Let us think of wine as symbolizing joy. The greatest joy comes from salvation. Salvation, like the wine in those Jewish vessels, is of the Lord. Salvation in John’s Gospel comes from regeneration. The religious Jewish leader, Nicodemus, was unregenerated.

Like the vessels used in Israel’s religious services, Nicodemus was used in Israel’s religious services. He was “a ruler of the Jews.” “Nico”—“ruler”; “demus”—“people.” Note Christ’s words to him: “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.” John 3:5. “Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.” John 3:7. Nicodemus had to receive the water of life. Nicodemus had to be born anew. Note Titus 3:5 and 6: “Saved—“Not by works.” Saved? “By the washing of regeneration.” “That He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word.” Ephesians 5:26. “. . . And whosoever will let him take the water of life freely.” Revelation 22:17.

Note what the Lord Jesus said to the woman at the well, in the fourth chapter of John:

“But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.” John 4:14.

There has been much difference of opinion as to the meaning of “born of the water.” Whatever the meaning may have had for Israel, when Christ was here on earth, we may be sure that there is nothing in the gospel of the grace of God to suggest that the application of water will in any way aid in the regeneration of a sinner. Undoubtedly the turning of water into wine spoke of regeneration.

THE IMPOTENT MAN

In John 5:1 to 9, we learn how the Lord Jesus Christ healed an impotent man who could not do anything for himself. Surely this also speaks of the message of grace. God’s grace is for the sinner who can do nothing for himself. Every man, by nature, is a spiritual bankrupt. “So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.” Romans 8:8.

Note John 3:27:

“John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven.”

John 6:44:

“No man can come to Me, except the Father Which hath sent Me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.” John 6:65:

“And He said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto Me, except it were given unto him of My Father.” John 17:2:

“As Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as Thou hast given Him.” John 6:37:

“All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me: and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.”

God’s grace is altogether sufficient for the helpless impotent sinner.

Now let us note John 6:37:

“All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me; and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.”

Here we note that the Father gives them to the Son and those who come unto Him He will never cast out.

Let us study John 17:2 and 17:24 together. In verse two we learn that the Father gave them to the Son and the Son gave them eternal life.

Now note Christ’s prayer in verse twenty-four

“Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which thou hast given Me . . .”

Surely the Father will hear that prayer.

Thus we see that the sinner in John’s Gospel is impotent.

LAZARUS RAISED FROM THE DEAD

We have the record of the resurrection of Lazarus in John 11:1 to 46. Note several verses: “Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead.” John 11:14.

“Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hast been here, my brother had not died. But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee. Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again. Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. Jesus said unto her, I am the Resurrection, and the Life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world.” John 11:21 to 27.

Note also:

“Jesus said, ‘Take ye away the stone.’ Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, ‘Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days.’ And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, ‘Lazarus, come forth.’ And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, ‘Loose him, and let him go.’” John 11:39, 43 and 44.

In John 11:25 and 26, we have the answer to the question, “if a man die shall he live again?”

Christ was here among men as the Resurrection and the Life. In II Timothy 1:10 we learn that Christ Jesus, by His death and resurrection, hath brought life and incorruptibility to light in the gospel. To learn of a power that can guarantee to a believing sinner both a spiritual and a physical resurrection, is certainly the gospel.

Note the records of the Lord Jesus in John 5:24 to 29:

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.”

In Ephesians 4:18, we learn that the sinner is alienated from the life of God.

But note again Ephesians 2:1:

“You hath He quickened (made alive) who were dead in trespasses and sins.”

Here we have the spiritual resurrection experienced by the believing sinner this side of the grave.

Then note I Corinthians 15:20 to 23:

“But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits: afterward they that are Christ’s at His coming.”

Thus we learn that the believer has been made alive and that at the coming of Christ the believer will be made alive. So we can join with John in the blessed assurance of I John 3:2:

“Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is.”

At the time Lazarus was raised from the dead, he had been dead four days. A thousand years with the Lord is as one day. II Peter 3:8. At the time Lazarus was raised from the dead the descendants of Adam had been dying for four thousand years.

Christ overcame the world. Christ lived under the law with out breaking the law. Christ was victorious over Satan. He destroyed Him Who had the power of death, that is, the devil. Hebrews 2:14. Christ put away sin. Hebrews 9:26. Christ abolished death. II Timothy 1:10. Christ spoiled principalities and powers. Colossians 2:15.

The believer’s present and future resurrections are declared in Colossians 3:1 to 4:

“If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.”

Note also Philippians 3:20 and 21:

“For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: 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.”

We learn in Romans 6 that the believer is dead with Christ, buried with Christ, and raised with Christ. The unbeliever is dead in sin. The believer is dead to sin. According to John 5:24, the believer has passed out of death into life. Christ is the believer’s life. In John 14:6, Christ declared, “I am the Life.” In John 11:25, Christ declared “I am the Resurrection and the Life.” In Romans 6:23 we read, “the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

So we learn in John’s Gospel that the sinner is a dead man. We have also learned that he is an unregenerated man, an impotent man, a man blind from birth. The Lord’s miracles, found in John’s Gospel and not in the Synoptics, are to teach us the spiritual condition of the sinner and God’s remedy; that grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

“For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.” Romans 8:3.

“And by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.” Acts 13:39.

It is interesting to study in John’s Gospel the many verses in which Christ speaks of Himself as the One Whom the Father sent. His miracles were His credentials.

And as we study the message of grace in John’s Gospel, we can appreciate the statement in John 1:17, “grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.” We can also appreciate the statement in John 3:17, “For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world: but that the world through Him might be saved.”

Note in John 17:21 why Christ prayed to the Father for the unity of His disciples.

“THAT THE WORLD MAY BELIEVE THAT THOU HAST SENT ME.”

Christ’s miracles were performed that the world would believe that the Father had sent the Son into the World. Christ wanted unity to prevail among His disciples, so the world would accept Him as “the sent” of God.

Note what is written in I John 4:9 and 14:

“In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.” Yes, the Father sent the Son!

BELIEVE ON THE SENT ONE

Note “the work of God” and “the will of God” in John 6:29 and 40:

“Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him Whom He hath sent.”

“And this is the will of Him That sent Me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.”

Christ was in earnest in the matter of convincing the world that the Father had sent Him. He wanted the sinner to be in earnest about believing that the Father had sent Him to be the Saviour of the world. The sinner’s eternal destiny depended upon his belief or his unbelief concerning this fact. Note John 14:6.

THE SIN QUESTION

We note in the study of John's Gospel that the "sin" question is the "Son" question. Note that Christ declared in John 16:7 to 9 that the Holy Spirit was to be sent to convict the world of sin, "because they believe not on Me."

Note what Christ declared in John 8:24 and John 6:47: "I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins." "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life."

Note again John 3:18 and 36:

"He that believeth on Him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."

Thus we see the difference between believing on Him Whom the Father sent and not believing. The difference is eternal life or the wrath of God.

Now note again John 20:31:

"But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His name."

We should diligently study every single word in the Divine Record, so that we may be thoroughly convinced that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and have eternal life because of our belief.

We read in Romans 8:1 to 4 that by the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus the believer is saved from the law of sin and death and from the law of Moses.

Note John 1:17: "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."

This brings to mind Romans 5:20 and 21: "Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord."

Note what the Lord Jesus Christ said to the poor sinful woman caught breaking the law of Moses: "And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more." John 8:11.

Christ never condoned or minimized sin. But God sent His Son into the world not to condemn the world but that the world might be saved.

But the world found Christ worthy of death, hated Him without a cause, and condemned Him to die.

So He cried, "now is the judgment of this world." He spoke of His death on the cross. Note I John 4:10 and 11: "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another."

The measure of God's love is Jesus Christ on the cross. Note Ephesians 2:4 and 13; Romans 5:8 and Colossians 1:14 and 15.

QUESTIONS— LESSON THIRTY-ONE

1. Quote the first verse of the Gospel of John and tell how this differs from the beginning of Matthew, Mark and Luke.
2. In what verse do we read that the Word became flesh and tabernacled?
3. Who called Christ the Lamb of God in John 1? Who called Him "the King of Israel?"
4. Why was the Word made flesh according to Hebrews 2:9?
5. Where did Christ see Nathanael before Philip brought him to Christ? Tell how Nathanael and the fig tree speak of Israel's redemption.
6. In what way did the sanctuary in Israel's tabernacle speak of Christ and His work in the Gospel of John?
7. What is Christ called in the first chapter of John besides "the Lamb of God" and "King of Israel?"

8. What came by Jesus Christ according to John 1:17?
9. Name the seven miracles recorded in John's Gospel before the death of Christ.
10. Give the spiritual application or interpretation of the resurrection of Lazarus.
11. What was Christ's message to Nicodemus? What meaning would you give to "born of water?"
12. Why was John's Gospel written according to John 20:31?
13. Quote John 3:17 and explain the statement in the light of God's gospel of grace.
14. Give the spiritual application of the healing of the blind man who was told to wash in the pool of Siloam.
15. How many times does the word "believe" occur in John? (Once the Greek word is translated "commit".)
16. Quote John 11:25 and state when and how the believing sinner receives his spiritual resurrection.
17. What was the petition in Christ's prayer in John 17 that the world may believe that the Father sent the Son?
18. Quote Romans 8:1 to 3 and tell how the message of salvation in John's Gospel agrees with this statement.
19. Quote John 8:24 and John 16:7 and mention the great sin in John's gospel.
20. What work of God must the sinner do according to John 6:29?

LESSON NUMBER THIRTY-TWO

"NEVER MAN SPAKE LIKE THIS MAN." John 7:46

As we carefully meditate upon the sayings of the Lord Jesus in the Gospel of John we too say, "never man spake like this man."

He said, "Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was." John 17:5.

"He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." John 14:9.

"I and My Father are One." John 10:30.

"Before Abraham was I AM." John 8:58.

"I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish." John 10:28.

"No man cometh unto the Father but by Me." John 14:6.

We could quote statement after statement in John's Gospel in which Christ claims unity and equality with God, One with the Father in the eternal Godhead.

Christ refers to Himself in the first person pronoun more than 650 times in John's Gospel. Note again John 1:1:

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

Then note John 20:28; Thomas worships Christ as God

"And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God."

Now in the middle of John's Gospel:

"The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God." John 10:33.

In these verses we have the wonderful story of the One Whom God calls in Isaiah 9:6: "Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."

He is God in the beginning of John's Gospel. He is God at the end. In the middle of the Book He is being stoned because He is a Man making Himself God.

And note John 5:18:

"Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill Him because He not only had broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God."

NEVER MAN SPAKE LIKE 'THIS MAN'

Several times in the Scriptures the Lord Jesus Christ is referred to as "this Man."

Luke 23:41: "THIS MAN hath done nothing amiss."

John 7:31: "And many of the people believed on Him, and said, When Christ cometh, will He do more miracles than these which THIS MAN hath done?"

Hebrews 10:12: "But THIS MAN after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God." Acts 13:38: "Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through THIS MAN is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins."

Luke 15:2: "THIS MAN receiveth sinners and eateth with them."

It seems that sometimes Christ was called "THIS MAN" in derision. At other times it seems that it was because of perplexity. Note this question in John, "Who is this Son of man?" John 12:34.

This man was sinless, He did nothing amiss. Can one perform greater miracles than those this man performed? He has more than 350 titles in the Bible. Blessed is the individual who can correctly answer the question, "Who is this Son of man?"

"Never man spake like this Man." This Man on the cross offered one sacrifice for sins and then sat down in heaven. "Through this Man is preached the forgiveness of sin." "This Man receiveth sinners."

In John's Gospel Christ is called "the Son of man" nine times. Note the verses: John 3:13 and 14; John 6:27, 53 and 62; John 8:28; John 12:23 and 34; John 13:31. When you have read them you will have learned that it is no less difficult to understand the personality of the Divine human Christ than in the verses calling Him the Son of God.

Note why this message was written: "But these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God and that believing ye might have life through His name." John 20:31.

In John's Gospel Christ is called the Son of God eleven times.

The word "believe" is found 100 times in John's Gospel. "Life" or "eternal life" is found 44 times in John's Gospel. Christ is the life. John 14:6. Christ gives unto His Sheep eternal life. John 10:28. The word "world" is found about 77 times in John's Gospel. The word "Jew" ("Jews") is found 66 times in John's Gospel.

It is noteworthy that although we find in John 3:16 this statement, "for God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life," we find no reference in John's Gospel to Christ's dealing with the Greek Gentile woman of Matthew 15 and Mark 7, and His dealing with the Roman Gentile man of Matthew 8 and Luke 7.

We read in John 12:20 to 23 that certain Greeks said to the Lord's disciples, "Sir, we would see Jesus." But so far as we have any record, Christ did not see these Greeks and talk to them. He dealt with the woman of Samaria in John 4. But there is no record in John's Gospel that Christ dealt with Gentiles.

THE FOUR "MUSTS" OF JOHN'S GOSPEL

John the Baptist said, "He must increase, but I must decrease." John 3:30.

“And no man hath ascended up unto heaven, but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of man Which is in heaven. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up.” John 3:13 and 14.

“Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.” John 3:7.

“God *is* a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.” John 4:24

CHRIST THE BREAD OF LIFE

John 6:32 to 35, 41, 48, 50, 51, 58

“Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true Bread from heaven.” John 6:32. “For the Bread of God is He That cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.” “Then said they unto Him, Lord, evermore give us this Bread.” “And Jesus said unto them, I am the Bread of life: he that cometh to Me shall never hunger; and he that believeth. on Me shall never thirst”

“The Jews then murmured at Him, because He said, I am the Bread Which came down from heaven.”

“I am that Bread of life.”

“This is the Bread Which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die.” “I am the living Bread Which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this Bread, he shall live for ever: and the Bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.”

“This is the Bread Which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this Bread shall live for ever.”

THE MANNA FROM HEAVEN

“And the house of Israel called the name thereof Manna; and it was like coriander seed, white; and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey.” Exodus 16:31.

“Manna” means “what is it.” It came from heaven. It was white. Thus we see that this manna in its purity, origin and as a heavenly food spoke of Christ as the Bread of life which came down from heaven. The Israelites who ate the manna died. But Christ said, “Eat of Me and live forever.” We too should say, “Evermore give us this Bread.”

As the Israelites were startled by the Lord’s feeding them from heaven and said “what is it?” so the Israelites were bewildered as to the true personality of the Lord Jesus Christ, Who claimed pre-existence with His Father. He claimed unity and equality with God. That He was the sinless Christ Who came down from heaven. They could not understand how He could be both God and man. When Peter gave the correct answer, the Lord Jesus said, “Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father Which is in heaven.” Matthew 16:17. And let us remember I Corinthians 12:3: “Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.”

Note again:

“All things are delivered unto Me of My Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him.” Matthew 11:27.

The natural man, by the wisdom of this world, might call Jesus Christ the greatest man who ever trod the globe or the fairest flower of humanity or the greatest of all religious reformers, but only by the Holy Spirit can one say that Jesus Christ is the Lord from heaven.

BELIEVE—HAVE ETERNAL LIFE AND KNOW IT

Note I John 5:13: "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son. of God."

As John's Gospel was written that we might believe and receive eternal life John's First Epistle was written that we who believe might know that we have eternal life. Any person who will read and believe John's Gospel will believe that Jesus was, the Son of God and also that He was God the Son.

Note John 14:9 and John 17:5:

"Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father: and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?"

"And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."

God, the Father, wants the believer to know that he is saved by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

THE FATHER LOVETH THE SON

So many times we quote John 3:16 about God's great love for the world. When we try to realize God's great love for His Son, then we can better appreciate God's great love in giving His Son on the cross for ungodly enemies.

Note these statements of Christ:

John 5:20: "For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth Him all things that Himself doeth: and He will shew Him greater works than these, that ye may marvel."

John 17:24: "Father, I will that they also Whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given Me: for Thou lovest Me before the foundation of the world."

John 10:17: "Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again."

The Father loved the Son before the foundation of the world. Then the Father loved the Son because the Son laid down His life as the expression of the Father's love for lost sinners, that by His Son's act of obedience unto death God might be just and the Justifier of all who believe on Christ.

Note Christ's words in John 18:11: "Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which My Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it?"

Now note John 8:29: And He That sent Me is with Me: the Father hath not left Me alone; for I do always those things that please Him."

From these words we can understand the meaning of Romans 15:3: "For even Christ pleased not Himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached Thee fell on Me."

The Son came from heaven to earth to do the Father's will. That meant Gethsemane's cup and Calvary's cup. The Son always pleased the Father. "Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him; He hath put Him to grief: when Thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see his Seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand." Isaiah 53:10.

Is it any wonder that God declares "without faith it is impossible to please Him?" "But without faith it is impossible to please Him: for He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." Hebrews 11:6.

AND I WORK

John 5:17: "But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work."

The Psalmist said, "It is time for Thee, Lord, to work: for they have made void Thy law." Psalms 119:126.

In other words, if a work of righteousness is to be done, it is not to be done by man and God's holy law, but by Jesus Christ the Righteous. He was made sin on the cross at Calvary that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. II Corinthians 5:21.

THE FATHER'S WORK IN JOHN

"Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent" John 6:28 and 29. "Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." John 4:34. "But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." John 5:17. "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." John 17:3 and 4. "When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost." John 19:30.

Thus in John's Gospel we find that the work of redemption is being accomplished by the Christ who is called in Colossians 1:13 "the Son of God's love."

"The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." John 1:17.

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works lest any man should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Ephesians 2:8 to 10. "Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded grace did much more abound: That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." Romans 5:20 and 21.

The sinner's first work in John's Gospel of Grace is John 6:29 and in John 6:40:

"Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." "And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day."

The sinner must first be God's workmanship, saved without works and then be God's workman, remembering the truth of Titus 2:14:

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

Any attempt to add religion or anything of merit to the finished work of God to make salvation more effective or efficacious will prove futile.

Note Galatians 2:20 and Galatians 5:1:

"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."

"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."

The redeemed sinner belongs to the Lord, with his time, his gifts, his substance and his life. And note what Christ declares in John 12:26: "If any man serve Me Him will My Father honor."

CHRIST'S HOUR IN JOHN'S GOSPEL

John 2:4. "Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine HOUR is not yet come."

John 5:25. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The HOUR is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live."

John 5:28. "Marvel not at this: for the HOUR is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice."

John 7:30. "Then they sought to take him: but no man laid hands on him, because his HOUR was not yet come."

John 8:20. "These words spake Jesus in the treasury, as he taught in the temple and no man laid hands on him; for his HOUR was not yet come."

John 12:23. "And Jesus answered them, saying, The HOUR is come, that the Son of man should be glorified."

John 12:27. "Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this HOUR: but for this cause came I unto this HOUR."

John 13:1. "Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his HOUR was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end."

John 16:32. "Behold, the HOUR cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me."

John 17:1. "These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father the HOUR is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee."

Here we learn that Christ's hour meant the time of His death on the cross. Note again John 12:27:

"... Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour."

Christ's death was neither premature nor accidental. His death did not take place either one hour before or one hour after the time God had set. Christ was not a martyr. He was God's foreordained sin-bearer. I Peter 1:18 to 20. Christ was not the helpless victim of circumstances in the hour of His death.

Note Acts 4:26 to 28:

"The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done."

Let us note again Christ's words to Mary in John 2:4:

"... Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come."

Mary had to be saved by Christ's blood.

THE FATHER IN JOHN'S GOSPEL

After we have studied the Son's work in the Gospel of John, we can better understand Christ's words in:

John 15:23: "He that hateth Me hateth My Father also."

John 5:23: "That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father Which hath sent Him."

John 12:26: "If any man serve Me, let Him follow Me; and where I am there shall also My servant be: if any man serve Me him will My Father honour."

From these plain statements, how foolish for any one to claim to love and serve God the Father while they refuse to love and serve Christ as One with the Father. Note Christ's words in John 10:30: "I AND MY FATHER ARE ONE."

And in John 17:21: “That they all may be one: as Thou Father art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me.”

In I John 2:23 we read:

“Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: (but) he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also.”

In II John 9, we read:

“Whosoever transgresseth and bideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.”

And let us even remember II John 7 to 11, in which the Holy Spirit plainly teaches that any one who gives support to any so-called Christian preacher who denies the eternal deity of Jesus Christ is a partaker of his evil deeds. And an evil deed it is. Christ must always be the center of the Christian’s worship and the object of his faith. “For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus.” I Timothy 2:5.

I AND MY FATHER

It is interesting to note that in John’s Gospel the Lord Jesus Christ thirty times calls God, “My Father.” All through the Book the obedient Son is doing the Father’s will. God is called “Father” 114 times in John. The word “Father” is found a greater number of times in John’s Gospel than in Matthew, Mark, Luke, Acts, and all of Paul’s Epistles combined.

Note Christ’s words in John 6:45: “It is written in the Prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto Me.”

John 6:27: “Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for Him hath God the Father sealed.” And John 14:6: “Jesus saith unto Him, I am the Way, the Truth and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father but by Me.”

Then finally we note these words in John 13:1: “Now before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour was come that He should depart out of the world unto the Father, having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end.”

For a short while the Son came back to His apostles after His death and resurrection and He said, “. . . Peace be unto you: as My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you.” John 20:21.

So we leave you with John 5:23:

“That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father Which hath sent Him.”

I John 2:23:

“Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: (but) he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also.”

And John 12:26:

“If any man serve Me let Him follow Me; and where I am there shall also my servant be: if any man serve Me, him will My Father honour.”

CHRIST THE I AM

In Exodus 3:14 God revealed Himself as “I AM THAT I AM.” Now note Christ as the “I AM” in John.

John 6:35. “And Jesus said unto them, I AM the bread of life; he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.”

John 6:41. "The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, I AM the bread which came down from heaven."

John 6:48. "I AM that bread of life."

John 6:51. "I AM the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."

John 4:26. "Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he."

John 7:29. "But I know him; for I AM from him, and he hath sent me."

John 8:12. "Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying. I AM the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

John 8:18. "I AM one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me."

John 8:23. "And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I AM from above: ye are of this world; I AM not of this world."

John 8:24. "I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I AM he, ye shall die in your sins."

John 8:28. "Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I AM he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things."

John 8:58. "Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I AM."

John 9:5 "As long as I AM in the world. I AM the light of the world."

John 9:9. "Some said, This is he: others said, He is like him: but he said, I AM he."

John 10:7. "Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you. I AM the door of the sheep."

John 10:9. "I AM the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture."

John 10:11. "I AM the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep."

John 10:14. "I AM the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine."

John 10:36. "Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I AM the Son of God?"

John 11:25. "Jesus said unto her, I AM the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:"

John 13:19. "Now I tell you before it come, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I AM he."

John 14:6. "Jesus saith unto him, I AM the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."

John 16:1. "I AM the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman."

John 15:5. "I AM the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing."

John 18:5. "They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I AM he. And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them."

John 19:21. "Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate, Write not, The King of the Jews; but that he said, I AM King of the Jews."

QUESTIONS-LESSON THIRTY-TWO

1. In John 7:46, what did the Jews say concerning the sayings of the Lord Jesus?
2. Name several verses and the doctrines in which Christ is referred to as, "this Man."
3. How many times in John's Gospel does Christ mention Himself in the first person pronoun?
4. Why were the Jews attempting to stone Christ to death, according to John 10:33 and John 5:18?
5. In John 20:28, what did Thomas call the Lord Jesus Christ?

6. What would you say is the difference between the titles of the Lord Jesus as the Son of man and the Son of God?
7. Again state why John's Gospel was written according to John 20:31. Why was I John written according to I John 5:13?
8. What does Christ call Himself in John 14:6? How many times in John's Gospel is found the word, "life?"
9. Mention the "musts" of John's Gospel? Why must He be lifted up according to John 3:14 and 15? Why must He go through Samaria?
10. Mention several verses in the sixth chapter of John in which Christ calls Himself "Bread". Explain how the manna of Exodus typified Christ, the "Bread from heaven."
11. In what verses in John does Christ mention the Father's love for the Son? Why did the Father love the Son according to John 10:17?
12. What else did Christ say when He told His disciple to put up his sword?
13. Quote several statements that Christ made concerning the Father's work in John's Gospel.
14. In what verse did Christ say, "I have finished the work?" Where was He when He cried, "It is finished" or "Finished?"
15. What is the sinner's first work in John's Gospel? What must the sinner be according to Ephesians 2:10 before God will accept his work?
16. What would you say concerning Christ's hour in John? Quote and explain John 12:27.
17. How many times in John's Gospel does Christ call Himself "I AM?" Quote John 8:24. What is the penalty for not believing that Christ is the I AM?
18. How many times is the word "Father," referring to God, found in John's Gospel? What did Christ say in John 10:30; 14:9; and John 5:23?
19. In what verse did Christ declare that He had glory with the Father before the world was? That the Father loved Him before the world was?
20. Now quote John 13:1. Tell of Christ's love for His disciples.

LESSON NUMBER THIRTY-THREE

A DIVISION BECAUSE OF JESUS

In the days when Christ was here on earth there was a division among the people because of Jesus. There was even a greater division after His death and resurrection in the days of the apostles. There is a still greater division in the world today because of Jesus.

Note the following Scriptures:

"Others said, This is the Christ. But some said, Shall Christ come out of Galilee? So there was a division among the people because of him." John 7:41 and 43. "Therefore said some of the Pharisees, This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the sabbath day. Others said, How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? And there was a division among them." John 9:16. "There was a division therefore again among the Jews for these sayings. And many of them said, He hath a devil, and is mad; why hear ye him? Others said, These are not the words of him that hath a devil. Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?" John 10:19 to 21. "Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division: For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three. The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother in law

against her daughter in law, and the daughter in law against her mother in law.” Luke 12:51 to 53. “He that is not with me is against me, and he that gathereth not with me scattereth.” Luke 11:23.

In the seventh chapter of John, from which chapter we quoted the first Scriptures, note the statement concerning the division because of Jesus:

“AND THERE WAS MUCH MURMURING AMONG THE PEOPLE CONCERNING HIM: FOR SOME SAID, HE IS A GOOD MAN: OTHERS SAID, NAY; BUT HE DECEIVETH THE PEOPLE.” John 7:12.

“Much murmuring”—“Some said”—“Others said.” This is still going on. Who were right, the some who said or the others who said? Some—“Christ is a good man.” Others—“Nay, Christ deceiveth the people.”

Note in Matthew 27:63 that the “others” continued in their attitude toward Christ:

“Saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again.” Matthew 27:63.

To them Christ was a deceiver. To them Christ performed miracles by Beelzebub, the prince of demons—Note Matthew 11:19:

“The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. But wisdom is justified of her children.”

They called Him a blasphemer, because, being a Man, He made Himself God. John 10:33.

Today intelligent Jews join with Christians in declaring that the Lord Jesus Christ was a good Man. How good? Better than all the rest. There was a time when prejudiced and ignorant men declared that Jesus of Nazareth was deluded. They said He was not mentally sound, therefore, He made some false claims. But today, intelligent Jews, Christians, and non-Christian Gentiles are all agreed that Jesus Christ was the most intelligent man that ever lived on earth, as well as the greatest human benefactor that the world has ever known.

What is the verdict then? The “some” who said, “Christ is a good Man,” were right. How about the statement of the “others”: “Nay, He deceiveth the people”? Did Christ deceive the people?

If Christ really deceived the people, did He thereby prove that He was a good Man? In other words; could a man really be both a good man and a deceiver, especially if he continues month after month, and year after year, to deceive the people?

From the beginning of His earthly ministry until His death, and again after His resurrection, Jesus Christ claimed that He was God manifest in the flesh, that He was in the beginning in the God head, that He came down from heaven, that He had glory with the Father before the world was. Christ received worship as God. Christ proved His claim to Deity by His supernatural power, by His miracles.

If Christ declared that He was God from the beginning, that He had glory with the Father, that He came down from heaven, and if He really was not what He claimed, then surely He deceived the people. Such a deceiver could not be called a good man. We must decide by common sense logic that Jesus Christ was both God and good, or He was not God and good. The Modernists who have crept unawares into the Christian church are far more inconsistent than were the Jews who took up stones to kill Christ when He was here on earth. They stoned Him, “because He made Himself equal with God.” John 5:17 to 20. In John 19:7, we learn why they had Christ crucified. Because He claimed equality with God.

These foolish Modernists among church members, join with religious Jews in expressing great admiration for the man of Galilee, and dote much on the ideal Man, Jesus, with His ideal philosophy and His interpretation of God and true religion. They eulogize Him, quote Him, praise Him, and preach Him to Jews and Gentiles. But with all this they ever seek to make Christ, the Holy Spirit, and all the apostles, liars, by saying that Jesus was a very good man, but that He was not born as the Bible declares He was born; that He did not come down from heaven; that He did not have Divine authority to forgive sins. He was not God, the Son. He was not God’s foreordained sin-bearer. His body was not raised from the dead. He is not now the resurrected Jesus at God’s right hand, as the Bible claims. Salvation is not by faith in the shed blood of the Lord

Jesus Christ, but by character, by good behaviour, by imitating Jesus, by trying to live up to the religion of Jesus.

Surely you and I agree that these pretenders, who call themselves Modernists, are only Christianized agnostics. They are far less consistent than were the Jews, who in the first century also denied the eternal Deity of the Son of God, and took a decided stand against Him, declaring that He was worthy of death.

Note this law of the Jews in Leviticus 24:16:

“And he that blasphemeth the name of the Lord, he shall surely be put to death, and all the congregation shall certainly stone him: as well the stranger, as he that is born in the land, when he blasphemeth the name of the Lord, shall be put to death.”

If Jesus Christ was not God, as He claimed time and time again, were not the Jews right when they said to Pilate

“The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God.” John 19:7?

Leviticus 24:16 was the law to which the Jews referred when they spoke the words of John 19:7.

Even the thinking Jews today believe that Jesus Christ was too good to have been a blasphemer. They should accept Him then as God: for God He was.

Remember what Thomas said when he was fully convinced “And Thomas answered and said unto Him, My Lord and my God.” John 20:28.

Christ did not say, “Thomas, you are mistaken. I am a very good Man, but I am not Lord and God.” He received the worship. And remember His own words in Luke 4:8:

“And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.”

The pseudo-Christians claim to believe in the historical Jesus. The historical Jesus is the Bible Jesus. So when they decide on the authority of the Bible Record that Jesus was a good man, they must, if intelligent and consistent, acknowledge that by the same Record He was and is God.

“JESUS CHRIST THE SAME YESTERDAY, AND TODAY, AND FOR EVER.” Hebrews 13:8.

“And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.”

Colossians 1:17.

HOUSEHOLD DIVIDED

Note again Luke 12:51:

“Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division.”

Look all about on every side, and see not only nations, cities, and communities divided because of Jesus, but families. If we could only know what is going on in homes where some members of the household are for Christ and some are against Him.

Yes, there has been, and there is a division among the people because of Jesus.

In the eternal ages there will be a division among the people, because of Jesus. Some will spend eternity with the Lord and His redeemed in glory. Some will be in perdition suffering the sorrows of the second death.

Christ declared, “he that is not with Me is against Me.” Luke 11:23.

IS CHRIST DIVIDED?

“Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.” I Corinthians 1:10. “For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife,

and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?" I Corinthians 3:3. "For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it" I Corinthians 11:18. "That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another." I Corinthians 12:25.

Note God's will; that there should be no "schism"; no "division."

What a pity! Christ's Church so divided that the apostles asked "is Christ divided?" Since that day divisions and subdivisions have increased, until today there are more than 300 branches of the Christian Church. The Lord said, "that there be no schism (division) in the Body."

Note Ephesians 4:3 to 7:

"Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ"

Note again Romans 12:4 and 5:

"For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another."

Note again Christ's prayer in John 17:21 and 11:

"That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." "And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are."

ONE NEW MAN

When we believers reach heaven perfect unity will prevail, and there we shall learn that God's purpose in this age is expressed in Ephesians 2:15:

"Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace."

One in Christ. In one Body of which Christ is the Head. Again note Galatians 3:28

"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus."

Note I Corinthians 12:12 and 13:

"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 made to drink into one Spirit" As the unbeliever looks on and beholds the division, sectarianism, and lack of unity among Christians, he is asking, "Is Christ divided?"

THE OMNISCIENT CHRIST I KNOW MY SHEEP

"I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine." "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." John 10:14 and 10:27.

We read these words in II Timothy 2:19:

"Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity."

The Lord knoweth them that are His. The good Shepherd knows His sheep. He said

“I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.” “As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep.” John 10:11 and 15. “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.” John 10:27 and 28.

The Lord Jesus knows who is saved and who is unsaved. But God wants the believer to know that he is saved “These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; THAT YE MAY KNOW THAT YE HAVE ETERNAL LIFE, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.” I John 5:13.

We read something more about Christ the Shepherd in Hebrews 13:20 and 21:

“Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.”

and in I Peter 5:4:

“And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.” So we learn that Jesus Christ is the good Shepherd, the great Shepherd and the chief Shepherd.

JESUS KNEW ALL

“But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all. And needed not that any should testify of man; for he knew what was in man.” John 2:24 and 25.

To know all is to be omniscient. Let us read Peter’s words to the Lord Jesus, “And he (Peter) said unto Him, Lord Thou knowest all things.” John 21:17. The woman at the well said to the Lord Jesus,

“ I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things.” John 4:25.

Note Christ’s reply,

“ I that speak unto thee am he.” John 4:26.

That sinful woman learned that day that Christ needed not that any should testify of woman; for He knew what was in woman.

Christ saw Nathanael under the fig tree. But because it was not with physical eye-sight, Nathanael cried, “Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God.” Christ assured Nathanael that He would see greater things. John 1:46 to 51.

In John 13:1, Jesus knew that His hour was come that He should depart out of the world.

“Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.”

JESUS KNEW FROM THE BEGINNING

“But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him.” John 6:64. “For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean.” John 13:11.

THE CHIEF SHEPHERD AND SIMON PETER

“This is now the third time that Jesus shewed himself to his disciples, after that he was risen from the dead. So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee, He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. He saith to him

again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.” John 21:14 to 17.

Here the chief Shepherd was instructing one of His undershepherds to feed and tend His lambs and to feed His sheep. The Lord’s pastors are expected to feed the Lord’s sheep and lambs. Those who are faithful in this will receive a crown of glory when the chief Shepherd shall appear.

Then the shepherd has another duty; he is to keep the wolves out of the flock.

“Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.” Acts 20:28 and 29.

The Lord Jesus pictures Himself as the good Shepherd in Luke 15:4:

“What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?”

Then remember the words of the Shepherd-King in Luke 12:32:

“Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.”

Simon Peter became a faithful shepherd. He was faithful unto death. John 21:18 and 19:

“Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me.”

WHAT CHRIST KNEW ABOUT THE WOMAN AT THE WELL

In John 4:5 to 26 is recorded a most interesting story of a sinful woman of Sychar of Samaria. Before the story, we read in John 4:4:

“And he must needs go through Samaria.”

Now we see why He must needs go through Samaria. The Saviour was wearied with His journey and He sat at noontime on Jacob’s well.

“There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink.” John 4:7.

The woman was surprised that Jesus should have asked her for a drink “for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.” John 4:9:

“Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, ‘How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.’” Then the Lord Jesus talked to that poor sinful woman about water that would satisfy her soul. He called it “living water.” John 4:10.

“‘But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.’ The woman saith unto him, ‘Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw.’” John 4:14 and 15.

Here we think of I Timothy 1:15:

“This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.”

Note also Luke 19:10:

“For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.”

The Lord Jesus Christ came to be the Shepherd seeking lost sheep. He came into the world to save sinners.

Almost any person will say, "I am a sinner," because all of us are sinners. But only the Lord Himself can convince the individual that he is not only a sinner, but a lost sinner. The sinner will not be much concerned about salvation until he realizes that he is lost. The Lord went right to that woman's conscience after He had her interest and attention.

He will now get right at her sin.

"Jesus saith unto her, 'Go, call thy husband, and come hither.' The woman answered and said, 'I have no husband.' Jesus said unto her, 'Thou hast well said, I have no husband: For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly.' The woman saith unto him, 'Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet.'" John 4:16 to 19. Another moment or two and she learned that she was in the presence of the Messiah, the Christ.

Note what she did:

"The woman then left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men, 'Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?' Then they went out of the city, and came unto him." John 4:28 to 30.

Note also John 4:39:

"And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him for the saying of the woman, which testified, 'He told me all that ever I did.'"

She knew that the Messiah could tell all things. Now the Messiah had read her sinful heart.

But here we have the confirmation of John 3:17:

"For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved."

and II Corinthians 5:19:

"To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation."

NEITHER DO I CONDEMN THEE ANOTHER SINNING WOMAN

In John 8:1 to 11 we have another interesting story of Jesus and a sinful woman:

"Jesus went unto the mount of Olives. And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him; and he sat down, and taught them. And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst, They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou? This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground as though he heard them not. So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground. And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers, hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more."

Here we have in action the truth of John 1:17:

"For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."

and John 3:17 and 18:

“For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.”

What did the law say? “Stone her to death.” Christ was without sin. He could have thrown the stone that would have meant the woman’s death. The law was the ministration of condemnation and death. II Corinthians 3:7 and 9. Under the law she deserved death. For every one under the law the law meant bondage.

“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. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.” Romans 3:19 and 20.

Jesus Christ came to set the captive free. Christ did not come to throw stones at sinners. He came to judge hypocrites and unclouthe the self-righteous. But undoubtedly we have noted in the Four Gospels that Christ never said an unkind word to any sinner who was willing to confess and receive pardon.

To another sinful woman, who was very penitent and sought Christ and His pardoning grace, He said, “Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little. And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven.” Luke 7:47 and 48.

That woman learned the truth of Romans 5:20, that “where sin abounded grace did much more abound.”

Christ never once winked at sin, or condoned sin, or minimized sin in any way. When His enemies wanted to condemn Him, they said,

“And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.” Luke 15:2.

In reply to this charge, the Lord told one of the greatest stories in all the Bible, the Parable of the Prodigal Son. We shall deal with this in our next book, but read Luke 15:20:

“And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.”

Now the words of Christ to the prodigal daughter:

“She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.” John 8:11.

Carefully note the words, “Go, and sin no more.”

We say that God saves us first from the penalty of sin and then from the practice of sin.

“God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin live any longer therein?” “What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.” Romans 6:2 and 15. “My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.” I John 2:1. “Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in him and in you: because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth. He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now.” I John 2:8 and 9.

We read in Romans 8:1 to 4, that in Christ Jesus the believer is without condemnation by the law of the Spirit of life. And in Christ Jesus and by the same law he is enabled to walk in the Spirit and fulfill the righteousness of the law.

ANOTHER COMFORTER

There is perhaps more said in the Gospel of John concerning the Holy Spirit than in all the thirty-nine Books of the Old Testament Scriptures.

Before we look into the fourteenth and sixteenth chapters of John to study something of the ministry of the Holy Spirit,

let us note John 7:38 and 39:

“He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)”

“The Holy Spirit was not yet, because that Jesus was not yet glorified.”

Now note John 16:7:

“Nevertheless I tell you the truth; 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.”

Again Acts 1:5:

“For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.”

Here we have the information that while Christ was on earth, the Holy Spirit did not begin the work He was to do, as outlined in John 14 and 16. The Lord’s disciples had not yet been baptized in the Holy Spirit when Christ was with them in His resurrection body. Most assuredly the disciples of the Lord Jesus entered into a new experience on the day of Pentecost. About four years before that time some of them had heard John the Baptist say

“I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.” Matthew 3:11.

We learn in John 17:25 that the world knows not the Father. We learn in John 1:10 that the world knows not the Son. And we learn in John 14:17 that the world knows not the Holy Spirit. We quote John 14:16 and 17:

“And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.”

In Galatians 3:14 and Ephesians 1:13, we learn that the believing sinner receives the Holy Spirit by believing the gospel, by receiving Christ, by going by faith to the cross of Calvary. As eternal life is the free gift of God, so is the Holy Spirit.

Note Galatians 3:2 and 3:

“This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?”

We read this statement in Romans 5:5:

“And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.”

Again in II Corinthians 1:21 and 22:

“Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.”

Here we learn that the Holy Spirit is God’s gift. The believer does not have to labor for, or agonize for the Holy Spirit any more than he has to work for salvation, which God declared “not of works,” “it is the gift of God.” Ephesians 2:8 and 9.

We also learn that the believer is anointed. The word “Christ” means “anointed.” The moment the believing sinner receives Christ, he is an anointed one with Christ.

And note in I John 2:27:

“But the anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you.”

If the Holy Spirit is not in the individual’s heart, he is not saved, he is not a Christian. Strictly speaking it is doubtful if it is Scriptural to ask for a fresh or new anointing.

It is altogether unscriptural to teach that in this reign of grace the believer receives the Holy Spirit with him when saved and in him when he is sanctified by a second definite Divine work.

Let us not try to have an experience similar to that of the apostles, who had to wait for the Holy Spirit more than three years after they were saved. The three thousand who were saved on the day of Pentecost did not have to wait one day. The Samaritans in Acts 8:5 to 16 had to wait several days. Sinners saved by the gospel of the grace of God today do not have to wait three minutes. The very moment the believing sinner accepts Christ he is sealed by the Holy Spirit unto the day of redemption (Ephesians 1:14 and Ephesians 4:30). He is blessed at the same time with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies (Ephesians 1:3). How foolish for a believer to be looking for a second blessing when he has been blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ.

The Comforter was to come from the Father to abide in and with the disciples of Christ for ever.

“But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.” John 14:26. “But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning.” John 15:26 and 27.

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, was on earth to bear witness of the Father. The Holy Spirit was to come to bear witness of the Son to testify of Him. He was to teach the disciples all things and to bring to their remembrance the things Christ had spoken to them in John’s Gospel and the others. But undoubtedly the deep things, recorded in John, were less understood by the apostles than His utterances in the Synoptics.

Note again John 16:12 to 14:

“I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. 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.”

Here we can learn the important work of the Holy Spirit and how helpless would have been the disciples of Christ without Him. Let us note something more of the ministry of the Holy Spirit in Acts and the Epistles.

“And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.” Acts 5:32. “As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.” Acts 13:2. “Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me.” Acts 20:23. “And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.” Romans 8:23. “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.” Romans 8:14 to 17. “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.” I Corinthians 12:13. “What! know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.” I Corinthians 6:19 and 20.

THE TWO PARACLETES THE SON OF GOD AND ANOTHER COMFORTER

In chapters 13 to 16, in John’s Gospel, we have the record of the ministry of the two Paracletes in behalf of the saints of God. Let us note the words of Christ in John 14:16 and 17:

“And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.”

“Another Comforter.” The Greek word translated “Comforter” is “Paracletos (Paraclete)”. Jesus Christ the Righteous is in God’s presence to appear for saints. Hebrews 9:24.

Now note Hebrews 7:24 and 25:

“But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.”

Christ is in God’s presence in heaven representing the believers. He is the believer’s Priest, Intercessor and Advocate. Christ ever lives to make intercession for saints.

Now note Romans 8:26 and 27:

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

Here we note the wonderful intercessory work of the other Paraclete. Each Paraclete has a very definite ministry for the child of God.

Note Ephesians 1:13 and 14:

“In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.”

The indwelling Holy Spirit is the believer’s guarantee of his inheritance, the earnest, until the redemption of the purchased possession.

CHRIST WASHING HIS DISCIPLES FEET

Now let us note the word of the believer’s Advocate in John 13:1 to 11:

“Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end. And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon’s son, to betray him; Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God; He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself. After that he poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples’ feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded. Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet? Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter. Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me. Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet, only, but also my hands and my head. Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all. For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean.”

“He loved them unto the end.” With this let us read Philipians 1:6

“Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.”

We call your special attention to two statements of Christ in connection with the washing of His disciples’ feet:

“Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter.” John 13:7. “Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all.” John 13:10.

“Thou knowest not now.” “Thou shalt know hereafter.” Two different Greek words translated “know.” The second one means to understand, that is, after Christ’s resurrection from the dead His disciples would understand the real meaning of the washing of their feet. This cleansing spoke of Christ’s work as the believer’s Advocate. “If we sin we have an Advocate with the Father.” I John 2:1.

“He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit.” Again we have two different Greek words translated “wash.” The first has the meaning of a washing all over; the other a subsequent cleansing. First the believer comes to Christ on the cross, the propitiation for the sins of the whole world. There the believer is cleansed all over and there he becomes the child of God. His relationship is established by the once-for-all work of Christ. At God’s right hand Christ continually intercedes for the redeemed and maintains their fellowship.

Let us remember His words in Luke 17:3 and 4:

“Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. And if he trespass against thee seven time in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him.”

and Matthew 18:21 and 22:

“Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven.”

Certainly Christ would not expect one of His disciples to do more forgiving than He Himself would do.

Let us remember that John’s First Epistle was addressed to believers and that I John 1:9 is for God’s children

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” I John 1:9.

CHRIST INTERCEDING

Now carefully read and study the seventeenth chapter of John, for it is one of the greatest chapters in all the Bible. There we have Christ as Priest, interceding.

Note John 17:9:

“I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.”

Now note Hebrews 9:24:

“For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.”

Christ, in heaven, appears, not for the world of unbelievers but for those who have been washed by His precious blood.

Note John 17:15 to 18 and 20 and 24:

“I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.” “Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word.” “Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.”

If these petitions of the Son of God speak of the present intercessory work of the Lord Jesus Christ in heaven, we can understand the why of the uttermost salvation in Hebrews 7:25, and we can understand Hebrews 6:19 and 20.

“Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.” Hebrews 7:25. “Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the vail; Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made a high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.” Hebrews 6:19 and 20.

CHRIST AS PRIEST IN JOHN 17

John 17:11: “And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to Thee. Holy Father, keep through Thine own name those which Thou hast given Me, that they may be one, as We are.”

John 17:14: “I have given them Thy Word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.”

John 17:15: “I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil.”

Christ said, “I pray not for the world.” John 17:9.

The believer is in the world but not of the world.

In John’s First Epistle are found these words: “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.” “And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.” I John 2:15.

Christ’s desire for His disciples was that they would touch the world but that the world would not touch them.

Note again John 16:33:

“These things I have spoken unto you, that in Me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.”

We read in Hebrews 11:38 concerning God’s men of faith: “Of Whom the world was not worthy.”

CAIAPHAS’ PROPHECY

“Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation should perish not. And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.” John 11:50 to 52.

It was expedient that Christ should die for His own Nation Israel and also that the children of God should be gathered together.

Note the words of Christ in John 10:16:

“And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.”

Also note Christ’s words in John 12:31 to 33:

“Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die.”

Also note Christ’s words in John 3:14:

“And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up.”

Christ must be lifted up. He came to be the rejected King and the Corn of Wheat. “For this cause came I unto this hour.” John 12:27. As Moses lifted up the brazen serpent in the wilderness (Numbers 21:6) that the Israelites who were dying with the bite of the serpents might look, believe and live, so the Lord Jesus Christ was lifted up and nailed to Calvary’s cross, that Jews and Gentile descendants of the first woman and man beguiled by the serpent in Eden might be saved from sin.

“I, if I be lifted up”—“Signifying what death He should die.”

ISRAEL’S BLINDNESS AND UNBELIEF THE GENTILES OBTAINED MERCY

We learned in John 1:11 and 12, that Christ’s own rejected Him, but as many as received Him and believed on Him were born of God.

We learn a most important truth in Romans 11:30:

“For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief.”

Note again Romans 11:15:

“For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?”

Here we learn that the unbelief and casting away of Israel brought mercy and reconciliation to the Gentiles. After this Divine truth is stated,

note the words of the Holy Spirit in Romans 11:33 and 34:

“O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?”

What shall we Gentiles say?

“Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in.” Romans 11:19.

Before we quote again from John 12,

let us note Romans 11:7 and 8:

“What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded (According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day.”

Now note John 12:37 to 40:

“But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him: That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.”

And here we might say again the words of Romans 11:33 and 34:

“O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?” Therefore Israel could not believe.

Here we think again of Acts 2:22 and 23:

“Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.”

When Israel, with wicked hands, slew Jesus of Nazareth, when the rulers crucified the Lord of glory (I Corinthians 2:6 to 8) when Israel's rulers killed the Prince of Life (Acts 3:14 and 15) the Son of God was delivered according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God.

If Christ was God's spotless Lamb foreordained before the foundation of the world (I Peter 1:18 to 21), and if His death was in fulfillment of Scriptures (Acts 13:29) then we say that Christ's death was not only inevitable but Christ had to die at the time that He died and in the manner that He died by the hands of His own Nation.

But even so, God did not minimize or excuse the guilt of the men who had Christ put to death.

Note Acts 7:51 and 52:

“Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers.”

and I Thessalonians 2:14, 15, and 16:

“. . . of the Jews: Who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men: Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins always”

By carefully reading Acts 3:12 to 26, we learn that God was willing to forgive Israel for their terrible crime if they would repent. To those murderers the message was, “I know that through ignorance ye did it” (Acts 3:17). But when they refused to repent the crime was charged against them.

But note what they did when they killed Christ

“For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.” Acts 4:28.

THE KING AND THE CORN OF WHEAT

“On the next day much people that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, Took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet Him, and cried, Hosanna, BLESSED IS THE KING OF ISRAEL THAT COMETH IN THE NAME OF THE LORD. And Jesus, when He had found a young ass, sat thereon; as it is written, FEAR NOT, DAUGHTER OF SION: BEHOLD, THY KING COMETH, SITTING ON AN ASS'S COLT.” John 12:12 to 15.

“And there were certain Greeks among them that came up to worship at the feast: The same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, ‘Sir, we would see Jesus.’ Philip cometh and telleth Andrew: and again Andrew and Philip tell Jesus. And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, That the Son of man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.” John 12:20 to 24.

In the twelfth chapter of John, the Lord Jesus presented Himself to Israel. “Blessed is the King of Israel.” He did not present Himself to the Greeks but sent word to them that like the corn of wheat must abide alone or die, so He must die and be buried to bring forth much fruit.

About twenty years later, note what happened:

“And it came to pass in Iconium, that they went both together into the synagogue of the Jews, and so spake, that a great multitude both of the Jews and also of the Greeks believed.” Acts 14:1.

The few Greeks were not permitted to see the King of Israel, but the multitude of Greeks were saved by believing that the corn of wheat had died and risen again.

WILL DRAW ALL MEN

When Christ said, "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me," He most assuredly was not saying that all men would be saved. The doctrine of universal salvation or reconciliation is repudiated by many Scriptures such as John 3:36:

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."

God's will in this matter is expressed in I Timothy 2:4 to 6:

"Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all to be testified in due time."

When Christ was on earth, He uttered these words,

"And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." John 5:40.

And remember His words of warning in John 8:24:

"If ye believe not that I am, ye shall die in your sins."

QUESTIONS—LESSON THIRTY-THREE

Lesson Number Thirty-Four

1. When there was a division among the people because of Jesus, according to John 7:12, what division was expressed?
2. According to Luke 12:51 to 53, what division was to be found in households?
3. If Christ was a good Man, did He deceive the people when He said, "I came down from heaven?" Why did the Jews want Christ put to death, according to John 19:7 and Leviticus 24:16?
4. How did Thomas address the Lord Jesus Christ in John 20:28? What does that prove?
5. State some of the things the Holy Spirit mentioned in Paul's Epistles to the Corinthians about divisions among members of the Body of Christ.
6. Why did the Holy Spirit ask the question in I Corinthians 1:13, "Is Christ divided?" What was the prayer of Christ in John 17:11 and 21? What instructions are given concerning the unity of the Spirit in Ephesians 4:4 to 7?
7. What is God's purpose for this age expressed in Ephesians 2:15 and in Galatians 3:28?
8. Mention several statements in John 10 concerning Christ and His sheep. What verse in II Timothy assures us that God knows who is saved? What verse suggests that God wants the believer to know that He is saved?
9. In what verses do we learn that Jesus Christ is the Good Shepherd, the Great Shepherd and the Chief Shepherd?
10. Relate the instructions that Christ, the Great Shepherd raised from the dead, gave to Peter, Peter's response, and what Peter wrote in I Peter 5:1 to 5.
11. Who did Christ meet at the well in Sychar of Samaria? Tell something of the conversation between the two.
12. What did the woman do after Christ told her her sin and she perceived that He was a prophet, the Messiah? What was the fruit of her testimony?
13. Relate the conversation between the sinful woman, her accusers and the Lord Jesus Christ in John 8:1 to 11. What great truth are we taught there?
14. When Christ said to the woman "Neither do I condemn thee," what else did He say? How does this correspond with Romans 6:2 and 15 and I John 1:8 and 9, and 2:1?
15. Note in John 7:39 and John 16:7, we are told that the Holy Spirit was not yet given because Christ was not yet glorified. What did Christ say in Acts 1:5? How was that fulfilled?

16. How does a believing sinner receive the Holy Spirit today? Does every Christian have the Holy Spirit within? Explain Romans 8:23 and Ephesians 4:30.
17. What Scriptures tell us of the intercessory work of the two Paracletes? What is Christ doing as an Advocate in heaven? Explain I John 2:1 and 2; Hebrews 9:24 and Hebrews 7:25.
18. What prophecy did Caiaphas make? What were the meaning of Christ's words in John 12:31 and 32: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me?"
19. Explain the difference between the King of Israel and the Corn of Wheat in John 12. Explain the salvation of the Greeks in Acts 14:1.
20. How did God use the blindness and unbelief of Israel to His glory? Compare John 12:37 and Acts 2:22 and 23; Acts 4:36 to 38 and Romans 11:30 to 33. Explain.

LESSON NUMBER THIRTY-FOUR

FROM GETHSEMANE TO CALVARY

We have learned that more than eighty percent of the facts stated in John's Gospel concerning the life and ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ are not found in Matthew, Mark and Luke.

In all Four Gospels we find the record of the feeding of the five thousand, the so-called triumphant entry, the betrayal of Christ by Judas, Christ in Gethsemane, Peter's denial of Christ, Christ before the high priest, Christ before Pilate, Christ's crucifixion, the burial of Christ's body by Joseph and the resurrection ministry of Christ.

In the matter of Christ's betrayal, trial, death, His sayings on the cross, and His resurrection ministry, John gives some facts not mentioned in the other Records, and he omits many facts stated in the other Records.

According to John's Record, Christ went to Gethsemane following His wonderful prayer, in the seventeenth chapter. That prayer is recorded only in John's Gospel. Gethsemane was over the brook Cedron. Christ and His disciples had often resorted thither. John 18:1 and 2.

A mob from the chief priests and Pharisees came into the garden with lanterns, torches and weapons. Try to visualize this night scene: an angry mob after the greatest Benefactor the human race has ever known. That mob was led by one of the disciples of the Son of God.

Note John 18:4:

"Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye?"

Here we learn again that Jesus Christ knew all things and that His rejection and murder came as no surprise; but it did bring Him much grief.

We note in John 18:6, that when Christ said, "I AM", they went backward and fell on the ground. We have learned that Christ called Himself "I AM" more than twenty times in John's Record. Undoubtedly here He, in some way, momentarily manifested His Deity. But immediately He yielded to them. John 18:10 and 11.

Note in this connection what Christ said to Pilate in John 18:36:

"Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence."

Again in John 19:10 and 11:

“Then saith Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee? Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.”

Here again we remember the sayings of Romans 15:3:

“For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.”

This was in fulfillment of the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah.

Note Isaiah 53:7:

“He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth.”

BEHOLD THE LAMB—THE MAN—YOUR KING

John 1:29—John 19:5—John 18:37

“The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!” “Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe, And Pilate saith unto them, Behold the man!” “And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King!” John 1:29; 19:5; and 19:14.

Pilate asked of Jesus, “Art Thou a King then?” John 18:37.

Note Christ’s answer:

“ . . . Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.” John 18:37.

Christ became the Man to be God’s Lamb and God’s King; Israel’s King.

Note the Father’s will concerning His Son, who is also Head of the Church, Which is His Body

“And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things He might have the preeminence.” Colossians 1:18.

We have observed that in John’s Gospel very little is mentioned concerning the physical, literal aspect of Christ’s kingdom on earth, concerning David’s throne which Christ was born to occupy.

Note these words in Luke 1:32 and 33:

“He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.”

We do not read the words of John the Baptist in John’s Record, “the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” In the first chapter John the Baptist says, “Behold, the Lamb of God Which beareth away the sin of the world.”

We have learned that the King is rejected in the very first chapter of John, “He came unto His own and His own received Him not.” “Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.”

Let us note John 6:15:

“When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone.”

Here Christ refused to be made King. He had to be the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world. He will return to earth to be a King, the King of Kings.

The mob led Christ, bound, from Gethsemane to Annas, the father-in-law of Caiaphas. John 18:12 and 13. He was treated as a felon. Remember His words in John 15:25: “they hated Me without a cause.”

Then note John 18:24:

“Now Annas had sent him bound unto Caiaphas the high priest.”

Early in the morning they led Christ before Pilate.

Note John 18:29 to 31:

“Pilate then went out unto them, and said, What accusation bring ye against this man? They answered and said unto him, If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee. Then said Pilate unto them, Take ye him, and judge him according to your law. The Jews therefore said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death.”

and 19:7:

“The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God.”

Note Pilate’s verdict in John 18:38, “I find no fault in Him.”

Note again John 19:4 and 6:

“Pilate therefore went forth again, and saith unto them, Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in him.” “When the chief priests therefore and officers saw him, they cried out, saying, Crucify him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Take ye him, and crucify him: for I find no fault in him.”

WE HAVE A LAW

Note John 19:7:

“The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God.”

They referred to the law as recorded in Leviticus 24:16:

“And he that blasphemeth the name of the Lord, he shall surely be put to death, and all the congregation shall certainly stone him: as well the stranger, as he that is born in the land, when he blasphemeth the name of the Lord, shall be put to death.”

The Jews said, “it is not lawful for us to put any man to death.” Pilate acknowledged that Jesus Christ had broken no law of the Roman government. The trial of Christ was illegal in every way. The witnesses were false witnesses who had been paid to swear to a lie. Christ’s execution by the decree of Pilate was contrary to justice.

Note the Jews’ final appeal to Pilate the politician:

“And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him: but the Jews cried out saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar’s friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar. But they cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar.” John 19:12 and 15.

We however note these words of Christ and the Holy Spirit in favor of Pilate, “He that delivereth Me unto thee hath the greater sin.” John 19:11. “His Son Jesus, Whom ye delivered up, and denied Him in the presence of Pilate when he was determined to let Him go.” Acts 3:13.

We read all of the foregoing in the light of Acts 2:23:

“Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.”

We have also referred to Acts 4:27 and 28:

“For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.”

The death of Christ was inevitable. He said, “For this cause came I unto this hour.” John 12:27. But this did not excuse the sin of Israel:

“Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which showed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers.” Acts 7:52.

It was God's determinate counsel and foreknowledge, but by Israel's wicked hands.

Therefore note again Christ's words in Matthew 22:7:

"But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth: and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city."

Note these plain words of Christ in John 8:37, 40 and 44:

"I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you."

"But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham." "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do: he was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it."

IT IS FINISHED

"And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS. This title then read many of the Jews; for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city: and it was written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin. Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate, Write not, The King of the Jews; but that he said, I am King of the Jews. Pilate answered, What I have written I have written." John 19:19 to 22. "When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home." John 19:26 and 27.

"After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst. Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar: and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop, and put it to his mouth. When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, IT IS FINISHED: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost. And again another Scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced." John 19:28 to 30 and 37.

Let us again carefully note John 6:28 and 29:

"Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent."

Again John 8:24:

"I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins."

Here we note that man's first work in the gospel of grace is to believe on God's Son.

In Luke 10:28 we read Christ's words to the man who was under the law, reducing the law to the two great love commandments. To him Christ said, "This do and thou shalt live." But he could not do what he was given to do; so he could not live by doing.

In John 8:24, "if ye believe not, ye shall die in your sins." "Do and live." Impossible. "Believe not and die." "Believe and live." Possible. "The free gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Something of Christ's finished work is told in Hebrews 10:12: "But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God."

and Hebrews 9:12:

"Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us."

Then in Hebrews 12:2 Christ is called "the Author and Finisher of our faith." We often speak of the finished work of Christ on the cross. There He cried "finished." But there was more to be done. "He abolished death and brought life and incorruptibility to light through the gospel." II Timothy 1:10.

Then note Hebrews 7:25:

“Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.”

This word “uttermost” is from the Greek “pan-teleo.” The word Christ spoke on the cross, “finished” is from the Greek “teleo,” “the end” or “the finish.” “Pan” means “whole” or “all.” “Panteleo” has the thought of “all the way to the end.”

Note Philippians 1:6:

“Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.”

The word “perform” is from the Greek “epi-teleo.” “Epi” has the meaning of “thoroughly” or “fully.”

TO FINISH HIS WORK

Let us note Christ’s words in John 4:34:

“Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.”

“But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me.” John 5:36. “But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.” John 5:17. “I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.” John 17:4.

The Father gave the Son some very definite work to do.

That Son said:

“And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him: John 8:29.

What did that Son say in John 18:11?

“Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?”

Note Christ’s words in Matthew 20:28:

“Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.”

“FOR THIS CAUSE CAME I UNTO THIS HOUR.”

He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. Hebrews 9:26. He was made for the suffering of death, to taste death for every man. Hebrews 2:9. He was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Philippians 2:8. Note this deep mystery in Hebrews 5:8 and 9:

“Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him.”

So we read again Acts 13:29 and 30:

“And when they had fulfilled all that was written of him, they took him down from the tree, and laid him in a sepulchre. But God raised him from the dead.”

The word “fulfilled” here is from the same Greek word which Christ cried on the cross, “telex.”

When all prophecy was finished, concerning the sufferings of Christ, they took Him down from the tree and put Him in the sepulchre. “But God raised Him from the dead.” This is the story of John, chapters 19 to 21.

Note John 19:28, 36 and 37:

“After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst.” “For these things were done, that the Scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken. And again another Scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced.”

With the nineteenth chapter of John read carefully the twenty-second Psalm. Remember that crucifixion was never used by any one at the time the Psalms were written and yet we read in Psalms 22:14 to 16:

“I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels. My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death. For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet “

Note also in Psalms 22:1 and 18:

“My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?” “They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.”

All the way from the manger to the open sepulchre, Jesus was born and lived and spoke and did everything that He did, that the Scriptures might be fulfilled. Many times the Jews tried to stone Him to death. That was the Jews’ method of putting lawbreakers to death.

But note these words in John 18:32:

“That the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which he spoke, signifying what death he should die.”

and John 19:37:

“And again another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced.”

Try to imagine the weeping and rejoicing that will take place when Zechariah 12:10 shall be fulfilled:

“And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.”

Perhaps you have wondered with me why more Jews do not realize and confess the great sin of their forefathers, in repudiating the claims of Christ, in rejecting Him and demanding that He be crucified.

But we remember the words of John 12:39 and 40:

““therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.”

THAT SABBATH—A HIGH DAY

We note in John 19:31 that the devout Jews, who were religious sabbath-keepers, did not want Christ’s body on the cross on that sabbath day which was a high day.

There have been many arguments as to whether or not Christ was crucified on Friday. Christ said that His body was to be in the earth three days and three nights.

Note these words in Matthew 12:39 and 40:

“ . . . The sign of the prophet Jonas: For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale’s belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.”

The argument is, that if Christ died Friday afternoon and was raised before day on the first day of the week, His body was not in the grave three days and three nights, therefore He must have died before Friday. Some claim that the high day sabbath was not Israel’s sabbath. But whether or not He died on the day we now call Friday, He arose on the first day of the week.

Note:

“The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre.” John 20:1. “Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.” John 20:19. “And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst,

and said, Peace be unto you.” John 20:26. “And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.” Acts 20:7.

Then it seems that the day of Pentecost was also the first day of the week.

We learn from these Scriptures that there is a great difference between Israel’s sabbath and the first day of the week. Although it has been by rather general agreement that the first day of the week has been called the Christian sabbath, there is no Scriptural authority for so doing.

Neither can be sure that there is any scriptural authority for calling the first day of the week “the Lord’s day.” This has been done by some Christians who have taught that John was referring to the first day of the week in Revelation 1:10:

“I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet.”

Let us note here several Scriptures:

“Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.” Colossians 2:16 and 17. “One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks.” Romans 14:5 and 6. “Ye observe days, and months, and times and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain.” Galatians 4:10 and 11.

Let us learn from Ephesians 1:3 and 2:6 that members of Christ’s body are a heavenly people, seated with Christ in the heavenlies and blessed with spiritual blessings in the heavenlies. We are not under the law. Sabbath is cessation of work: rest. We rest in Christ, Who is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. We have no religious holy days. We have no ritualism or religious program. We are complete in Christ. He is our life. We are identified with Him in His death, His burial and His resurrection, as new creatures. He arose the first day of the week to become the Head of the New Creation, the One New Man of Ephesians 2:15.

We should be delighted to gather in His name on the first day of the week to remember His resurrection and ours, whether or not we call it the Lord’s day.

THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST

“For as yet they knew not the Scripture, that He must rise again from the dead.” John 20:9.

In this connection we think of Mark 9:9 and 10:

“And as they came down from the mountain, he charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen, till the Son of man were risen from the dead. And they kept that saying with themselves, questioning one with another what the rising from the dead should mean.”

Note also Luke 18:33 and 34:

“And they shall scourge him, and put him to death; and the third day he shall rise again. And they understood none of these things: and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken.”

For centuries Israel has been taught concerning the resurrection of the dead. But the resurrection from the dead or “out from among the dead” was something new. Israel had never been taught that between the first advent and the second advent of the Messiah there would be years and centuries, that Christ would be the first to rise from the dead; and that He would go back to heaven to remain in His glorified body during these centuries; that He would be the Head of the Church which is His Body during God’s reign of grace and then

return and be Israel's King. So far as Israel was concerned, the truth of the Lord's program for His Body during this age was a secret.

Some years after God had ushered in this present age, Christ, in heaven revealed God's spiritual program for this age to the Apostle Paul.

Concerning the resurrection Paul wrote:

"Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." I Corinthians 15:51 and 52.

He wrote in I Corinthians 15:21 and 22:

"For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."

Note verse 23. Christ was the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at His coming.

Note Philippians 3:20 and 21:

"For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: 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."

Concerning the present age Paul wrote:

"For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words." Ephesians 3:1 to 3.

And note also Ephesians 3:9, that God wants His servants to make known the dispensation of the mystery.

TILL I COME

Note John 21:21 to 23:

"Peter seeing him saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me. Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die: yet. Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die; but, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?"

Many saints will be alive when Christ comes. This we learn in I Thessalonians 4:13 to 18. Peter and John died many years ago. And surely we know that saint Peter is not in heaven at the gate. As to the resurrection of Peter, John, Paul and all the saints of God God's truth is: "Afterward they that are Christ's at His coming."

"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." I Thessalonians 4:16 and 17.

HE SHEWED UNTO THEM HIS HANDS AND HIS SIDE

"And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord. Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you; as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained." John 20:20 to 23.

In Acts 1:3, we learn that Christ shewed Himself alive after His death by many infallible proofs. In John Chapters 20 and 21, we have several of the infallible proofs recorded.

The little company of disciples were assembled behind closed doors. It is not difficult to imagine what they were thinking about and talking about. They were thinking about the miracle of miracles, the resurrection of Christ. They were afraid. They feared the Jews. Peter had so feared them before he had denied Christ.

In the midst of their fear they heard the words, "Peace"—"Peace be unto you." It was the first day of the week. The resurrected Jesus stood in their presence to repeat the message He had spoken before His death

"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." John 14:27.

"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." John 16:33.

When the Lord Jesus shewed His disciples the place in His hands where the nails had fastened Him to the cross and the mark where the spear had been in His side, they were glad. There must have been strange sensations in their hearts and minds. In spite of the determined opposition of the Jews, twelve of them were to make their headquarters right in the midst of the Jews in Jerusalem and most of them were to remain there and testify to the Jews that the Jesus Whom they had crucified was both Lord and Christ. We have this testimony some months later, concerning these twelve men now locked in because of their fear of the Jews:

"And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ." Acts 5:42.

This is not the last time that John, on earth, saw the resurrected Christ. It was perhaps more than fifty years later when Christ appeared to John, who was an exile in Patmos. Note what Christ said:

"I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." Revelation 1:18.

GOD'S APOSTLE—CHRIST'S APOSTLES

In Hebrews 3:1 and 2 we read:

"Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus, Who was faithful to him that appointed him . . . "

Christ was God's Apostle to Israel. The word "apostle" is from the Greek word "send." Now Christ was to have some apostles.

"AS MY FATHER HATH SENT ME EVEN SO SEND I YOU"

For some reason the so-called "great commission" of Matthew 28:19 and 20 and Mark 16:14 to 18 is not repeated in John's Gospel. But Christ sent them to carry on His work.

RECEIVE YE THE HOLY SPIRIT

There has been much misunderstanding and speculation because of the seeming discrepancies between John 20:22 and Luke 24:49:

"And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost." John 20:22. "And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." Luke 24:49.

Why were they to tarry at Jerusalem for the Holy Spirit, if Christ had breathed on them and said, “receive ye the Holy Spirit.” Christ had already told them that the Holy Spirit was with them and that He would be in them. John 14:17.

Some have taught that they received the Holy Spirit in them when Christ spoke the words of John 20:22. But later on they received the baptism of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. Some even go so far as to teach that Christians today must receive the Holy Spirit to be saved and subsequently receive the Holy Spirit baptism to be sanctified.

By reading Acts 11:12 to 18, we learn that Cornelius had no such experience; when he heard words whereby he was to be saved he was baptized in the Holy Spirit.

Then we notice God’s order in I Corinthians 6:11 and II Corinthians 2:21 and 22. The Corinthians were sanctified, but many of them did wrong. They had the Holy Spirit in their hearts; but some of them defrauded one another. I Corinthians 6:7 to 10.

Note I Corinthians 6:11: “but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified.” How? By the Spirit of our God. Note “sanctified” is placed before “justified.” Note God’s order again in II Thessalonians 2:13:

“But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.”

Here we are taught in no uncertain language that sanctification precedes salvation.

In Ephesians 4:30 we are taught that the believer may grieve the Holy Spirit, but by the Holy Spirit he is sealed unto the day of redemption. In Ephesians 1:13 the words, “after that ye believed” are translated from one Greek word “pisteusantes,” the participle of the word “believe.” “Believing” ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit. This same Greek “pisteusantes” is incorrectly translated in Acts 19:2—“since ye believed.”

Tarrying-meetings for the Holy Spirit have never been in God’s program since the days of the twelve apostles. We do not tarry or work for God’s free gifts. We take God’s gifts by faith.

Eternal life, salvation, sanctification, redemption, regeneration, peace and the Holy Spirit are all the free gifts of God to believing sinners. Believers do not receive the Holy Spirit on the installment plan.

Note Romans 8:32:

“He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?”

However, we have not reconciled John 20:22 and Luke 24:29. It is suggested by some Bible teachers that Christ did say in John 20:22, “receive ye the Holy Spirit.” But He did not mean immediately. He was saying in different language what He said in Luke 24:29 that they would soon receive the Holy Spirit.

There are others who teach, that not only did the apostles receive the Holy Spirit when Christ spoke the words of John 20:22, but that that was the beginning of the New Testament Church.

It seems, from the careful reading of Acts 1:5, and all of the second chapter of Acts, we may be positive that the Lord’s disciples entered into a new experience in the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost.

WHOSE SOEVER SINS YE REMIT

There has been much discussion as to the meaning of Christ’s words in John 20:23:

“Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.”

There is no doubt that special Divine prerogatives, power and authority were given to the apostles. But as to the forgiveness of sins, we think of the words of Mark 2:7:

“Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only?”

We join in the question, “What man hath power to forgive sins?”

Note these several verses from the ministry of Peter and Paul.

PETER

Acts 10:25 and 26

“And as Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped him. But Peter took him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man.”

Acts 10:43

“To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.”

I Peter 5:5

“Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.”

PAUL

Acts 14:12 to 15

“And they called Barnabas, Jupiter; and Paul, Mercurius, because he was the chief speaker. Then the priest of Jupiter, which was before their city, brought oxen and garlands unto the gates, and would have done sacrifice with the people. Which when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard of, they rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out, And saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein.”

Acts 13:38

“Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins.”

Any child of God can forgive sins just as the apostles did; by preaching forgiveness and cleansing by the blood of Jesus Christ; remembering the words of Paul in I Corinthians 3:7 and 8: “So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God That giveth the increase. He that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour.”

As to the teaching of apostolic succession, such teaching is scripturally controverted by the message of Paul in Galatians 2:6 to 15. Read these verses in your Bible.

Matthias succeeded Judas. Acts 1:20 to 26. That is the only case of apostolic succession in the Bible.

Paul took his own place. He was born out of due time. Read I Corinthians 15:3 to 10.

After the Holy Spirit, in Acts 13:2, separated Paul for his unique apostleship, there is no record of the sayings and doings of the Twelve in the Book of Acts, except as they have dealings with Paul. Paul was the special ambassador, apostle and teacher of the Gentiles and the custodian of the highest truths concerning the Church (Body). But Paul never forgave sins except as he preached Christ.

Note his words in Romans 10:14 and 15:

“How then shall they call on Him in Whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in Him of Whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?”

BLESSED ARE THEY THAT HAVE NOT SEEN AND YET HAVE BELIEVED

Note the words in I Peter 1:8:

“Whom having not seen ye love: in Whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.”

Thomas saw and believed.

Note the Scripture:

“The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.” “Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side; and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.” John 20:25, 27 and 28.

Thomas was convinced. We learn in John 11:16 that Thomas was a man of extraordinary courage. The name “Thomas” is never mentioned after the day of Pentecost. It would be of great interest to know more of his apostleship. He must have been an uncompromising defender of the faith. We may well imagine that after his words, “my Lord and my God,” in his preaching he must have specialized in the eternal Deity of Christ.

We are living today under the reign of grace when we must believe and then see. Some one has said, the world says “show me and I will believe.” God says, “believe Me and I will shew you.”

THE APOSTLES GO FISHING

After Thomas worshipped Christ, he went fishing with Peter and some of the other apostles. John 21:1 to 14. Jesus stood on the shore. That night the apostles had caught nothing. But by Jesus’ Word, what a difference! John 21:6 and 11.

“And He said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore and now they were not able to draw it for the multitudes of fishes.” “Simon Peter went up and drew the net to land full of great fishes, an hundred and fifty and three: and for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken.”

Some one has said that there were about 153 nations on the earth at that time. Christ said, “Come and dine.” What a meal!

Now in closing we quote John 21:15 to 25

“So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep. Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdest thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me. Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following; which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee? Peter seeing him saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me. Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die: yet Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die; but, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things: and we know that his testimony is true. And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen.”

It has been suggested that Christ asked the question of Peter three times because Peter had denied Him three times.

In II Peter 1:13 to 15 we read Peter's words as to how he was to shortly put off his tabernacle in fulfillment of Christ's words in John 21:18. In Acts 12:1 to 10 we learn how Herod tried to kill Peter; but Peter was to die when he was old.

Note the number of books that should be written if all of the wonderful works and words of Christ were recorded.

QUESTIONS—LESSON THIRTY-FOUR

1. What is said in John 18:1 and 2 concerning Christ, His disciples, and the Garden across the brook Cedron?
2. What did the mob carry when they went to Gethsemene, led by Judas?
3. What happened to the mob when Christ said, "I AM"? Then what did Christ say as He permitted them to bind Him and lead Him away?
4. Why did Christ tell Peter to put up his sword? What did Christ say to Pilate concerning His kingdom in John 18:36?
5. To whom did the band of men first lead Christ? Then to whom? What was the first thing Pilate said according to John 18 when Christ appeared before him? What time of day was it?
6. What was Pilate's opinion as to Christ's guilt or sin? Name several propositions which Pilate made to the Jews.
7. What did the Jews say to Pilate in John 19:7 and 19:12?
8. How did Christ compare Pilate's guilt with that of the Jews? Who were gathered together against Christ according to Acts 4:27? What verse in Psalms prophesied this?
9. Quote several Scriptures to prove that Jesus Christ's death was neither premature nor accidental; that His death was inevitable.
10. What verses in Psalms 22 were fulfilled when Christ was on the cross? In what language and where were the words written, "Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews"?
11. What is the meaning of the word of Christ on the cross, "finished"? In what verse in Hebrews 12 is Christ called the Author and Finisher of our faith? In what verse of Hebrews 7 do we learn of the believer's uttermost salvation?
12. Quote Acts 13:29 and 30 and explain same. Why did not Christ permit the Jews to stone Him to death?
13. What is said in John 20:9 concerning the ignorance of Peter and John as to Christ's resurrection? Peter and John ran to the sepulchre. Who beat in the race? Who went into the sepulchre first?
14. What did Paul say about Christ's and the Christians' resurrection of the dead in I Corinthians 15:21 to 23? What is the order of the resurrection in I Thessalonians 4:15 to 18?
15. What did the Lord say to His disciples when He showed them His hands and His side? Why were they behind closed doors?
16. Which two of the twelve apostles were absent when Christ came in their midst and showed them His hands and His feet? What did one of them say? Then what did that one say eight days later when Christ appeared again?
17. Explain John 20:22 "Receive ye the Holy Spirit" And John 20:23, "Whosoever sins ye remit"
18. Who went fishing with Peter after this visit of the resurrected Christ? Who stood on the shore and gave orders to the fishermen? How many fish did they catch? Who said "Come and dine"?

19. What question did Christ ask Peter three times? What three answers did Peter give? What lesson did Christ teach Peter by binding him with the girdle?
20. Quote again the last verses of John 20 and of John 21.

LESSON NUMBER THIRTY-FIVE

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF JOHN

What a privilege and a joy to have fellowship with God the Father and God the Son, and genuine Christian fellowship with God's spiritual saints!

The Apostle John, who wrote this Epistle, was one of the intimate disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ; he saw Him, he heard Him, he had his head upon the Saviour's breast and in this Epistle he declares these facts so that we might have this Divine fellowship.

“THAT WHICH WE HAVE SEEN AND HEARD DECLARE WE UNTO YOU, THAT YE ALSO MAY HAVE FELLOWSHIP WITH US: AND TRULY OUR FELLOWSHIP IS WITH THE FATHER, AND WITH HIS SON JESUS CHRIST.” I John 1:3.

Note two statements in the fourth chapter of Acts concerning John and his fellow-apostles, “. . . And they took knowledge of them that they have been with Jesus.” “And being let go, they went to their own company. . . .” Acts 4:13 and 23.

THE KNOWLEDGE AND JOY OF SALVATION

Note again that God's message in I John is written that believers might have the knowledge and the joy of salvation. We quote I John 5:13; I John 1:4, and I John 2:1:

“THESE THINGS HAVE I WRITTEN UNTO YOU THAT BELIEVE ON THE NAME OF THE SON OF GOD; THAT YE MAY KNOW THAT YE HAVE ETERNAL LIFE, AND THAT YE MAY BELIEVE ON THE NAME OF THE SON OF GOD.” “AND THESE THINGS WRITE WE UNTO YOU THAT YOUR JOY MAY BE FULL.” “MY LITTLE CHILDREN, THESE THINGS WRITE I UNTO YOU, THAT YE SIN NOT. AND IF ANY MAN SIN, WE HAVE AN ADVOCATE WITH THE FATHER, JESUS CHRIST THE RIGHTEOUS.”

The sinners knew that John and Peter had been in close fellowship with Jesus. When the sinners ceased their persecutions for a little while, John and Peter were let go and they went to their own company. Their own company was a company of saints of like precious faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Every saint is identified with an innumerable company of saints but they should also be identified with a local assembly of saints while waiting for God's Son from heaven.

John's Gospel was written that sinners might believe on Jesus Christ and have eternal life. This Epistle of John was written that believers may know that they have eternal life.

John 20:31

“But these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His name.”

I John 5:13

“These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.”

Believing that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, that ye might have life through His name. Believing this that ye might know that ye have eternal life.

Presently we shall see in this Epistle how we may know that we have eternal life and how our joy may be full. But first let us note some general facts.

Concerning John, the human author, we read in Galatians 2:9 that he and Peter and James (the Lord’s brother) were pillars in the Jerusalem Church and they agreed with Paul that they would go with their message to the Jews. However, there is little in this Epistle to mark John as a minister of the circumcision.

Again we learned in John 20:2 and 21:20, that John was known as that disciple whom Jesus loved. In John 13:23, we read “Now there was leaning on Jesus’ bosom one of His disciples whom Jesus loved.”

Now we can better appreciate I John 1:1 to 3:

“That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.”

First John has been called the sequel of the Gospel of John. Perhaps after reading this Epistle we shall want to challenge the statement.

In the closing chapters of John’s Gospel we left Christ in His resurrection ministry. In reading the five chapters of I John we rather marvel that there is no mention of Christ’s resurrection. Of course, it is implied in I John 2:2, “We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous.” It is also taught in I John 2:27 and 4:13, “the anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you.” “Because He hath given us of His Spirit.” We remember John 16:6 to 9, that it was expedient that Christ should go back to heaven before the Holy Spirit would be sent.

However, after comparing John’s Gospel with his First Epistle we find much in common in the two messages and we learn that the Holy Spirit in the Epistle added some wonderful truths not mentioned in the Gospel.

Note this great difference. In the Gospel of John is found the word “Jew” more than 70 times, the word “Israel” 4 times, “sabbath” 11 times, “synagogue” 5 times, “temple” 14 times, “Jerusalem” 13 times, “Moses” 13 times, “Abraham” 11 times. These total more than 140. Not one of these words is found in John’s Epistle.

In the Epistle the Holy Spirit emphasizes the fact that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the World and that Jesus Christ is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world. I John 4:14 and 2:2.

We find the word “world” about 77 times in the Gospel. We find the word “world” 22 times in the Epistle. In both messages the fact that God’s love for the world is given much emphasis.

We read in I John 4:8 “God is love.”

And note 4:9 and 10:

“In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.”

The word “love” is found 56 times in the Gospel and 46 times in the Epistle. Then it is interesting to mark the words “live” and “life” in the two Records. “That we might live through Him.” “But have everlasting life.” This is why the God of love sent the Son of His love. “Life” and “live” are found in the Gospel 60 times; in the Epistle 16 times. “Believe,” in the Gospel, occurs 100 times; in the Epistle, 9 times. And then we find the

word “faith” in I John 5:4: “For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.”

After reading this wonderful Epistle we are impressed with the fact that the Father wants His redeemed children to have a real “know-so” salvation, for the word “know” is found in these five chapters 32 times. The same word is found in the Gospel more than 120 times.

The early Church fathers believed that the Holy Spirit led John to write a definite answer to the gnostics of his day. The gnostics or agnostics do not know but believers do know.

Note I John 2:18 to 23:

“Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us. But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things. I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth. Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: (but) he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also.”

WRITTEN TO SAINTS (Believers)

On account of erroneous teaching among God’s people it is necessary to explain that there is no difference between a believer in the Body of Christ and a saint who is a member of that Body. All such believers are saints. A saint is a sinner saved by grace through faith.

Hebrews 10:10:

“By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.”

Saints are children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

It is interesting to note in I John that the writer uses the expression, “my little children” or “little children” nine times. I John 2:1, 2:12, 2:13, 2:18, 2:28, 3:7, 3:18, 4:4, and 5:21.

Undoubtedly John was a very old man when he wrote this message, “My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not.” Certainly the Holy Spirit would not have led any servant of the Lord to write such a message to an unsaved person.

Neither would He have led Him to write I John 2:15:

“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.”

A sinner loves the things of the world

“They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them.” I John 4:5.

The saint is in the world but he is not of the world. Note also I John 5:4 and 5, and 3:13:

“For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?” I John 5:4 and 5. “Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.” I John 3:13.

Then note I John 5:19:

“AND WE KNOW THAT WE ARE OF GOD, AND THE WHOLE WORLD LIETH IN WICKEDNESS.”

The whole world lieth in the evil one. The Greek literally is, “the whole world lieth in the lap of the devil.” But the saints say, “we know that we are of God.” Jesus Christ is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world. I John 2:2. This is the way in which the believing sinner gets out of the lap of the devil. Note how it is stated in Colossians 1:13 and 14: “Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated

us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.” This Epistle is written that believers may have their joy full. Saints cannot love the world and have their joy full.

“THESE THINGS HAVE I WRITTEN UNTO YOU THAT BELIEVE”

Note some of these things written unto believers:

“If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.” I John 1:8 to 10.

Now compare I John 1:9 with Romans 10:9 and 10:

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” “That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”

Let us remember that God’s Word does not say to the sinner that he will be cleansed from all unrighteousness, if he confesses his sin. Neither does God’s Word say to the sinner, when he sins, that he has an Advocate with the Father. These messages are to saints, to believers, to those who already have received God’s free gift, which is eternal life. Remember the message of I John was written that the believer’s joy may be full. The believer who lives in wilful sin or unconfessed sin cannot have this blessed experience.

The sinner should confess his sins when convicted by the Holy Spirit. But let us remember that, according to John 16:7 to 10, “the Holy Spirit convicts the world of sin,” said Christ, “because they believe not on Me.” The great sin question that must first be settled by the sinner is the “Son question.” “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.” “Confess with thy mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead and thou shalt be saved.”

THE DIVINE RECORD—THE DIVINE WITNESS

“He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son” I John 5:10 and 11.

This brings to our minds the messages of John 3:18 and 19:

“He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loveth darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.”

What is God’s Record? That He hath given eternal life to believers.

We remember John 6:47:

“VERILY, VERILY, I SAY UNTO YOU, HE THAT BELIEVETH ON ME HATH EVERLASTING LIFE.”

And John 10:28:

“AND I GIVE UNTO THEM ETERNAL LIFE; AND THEY SHALL NEVER PERISH, NEITHER SHALL ANY MAN PLUCK THEM OUT OF MY HAND.”

And John 3:36:

“HE THAT BELIEVETH ON THE SON HATH EVERLASTING LIFE: AND HE THAT BELIEVETH NOT THE SON SHALL NOT SEE LIFE; BUT THE WRATH OF GOD ABIDETH ON HIM.”

This life is in the Son.

Now compare John 5:23 and 26, and I John 2:22 and 23

“That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him. For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself.”

“Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father (but) he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also.”

And I John 5:12:

“He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.”

To be without the Son, therefore, means to be without the Father and without life.

We learned in John 1:10 that the world knew not Jesus Christ the Son. Now we read in I John 3:1, that believers are called the sons of God— “Therefore the world knoweth us not because it knew Him not.”

IF WE SAY

Now note again I John 1:8 and 10:

“IF WE SAY THAT WE HAVE NO SIN, WE DECEIVE OURSELVES, AND THE TRUTH IS NOT IN US.” “IF WE SAY THAT WE HAVE NOT SINNED, WE MAKE HIM A LIAR, AND HIS WORD IS NOT IN US.”

No saint desires to be deceived. No saint desires to make God a liar. Therefore no saint should say, “I have not sinned since I became a saint,” or “I never sin now.” He can truthfully say:

“For he that is dead is freed from sin. But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.” Romans 6:7, 17 and 18.

Every saint joins in the question of Romans 6:2, 15 and the answer of Romans 6:22:

“God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.” “But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.”

So many untaught saints have been led into the wrong kind of fear and into unbelief and doubt by the erroneous meaning of Hebrews 10:26:

“FOR IF WE SIN WILFULLY AFTER THAT WE HAVE RECEIVED THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE TRUTH, THERE REMAINETH NO MORE SACRIFICE FOR SINS.”

It does not say, “there remaineth no more forgiveness of sins.”

Hear God’s message to the saints:

“IF WE CONFESS OUR SINS, HE IS FAITHFUL AND JUST TO FORGIVE US OUR SINS, AND TO CLEANSE US FROM ALL UNRIGHTEOUSNESS.” I John 1:9.

THAT YE SIN NOT

And I John 2:1:

“MY LITTLE CHILDREN, THESE THINGS WRITE I UNTO YOU, THAT YE SIN NOT. AND IF ANY MAN SIN, WE HAVE AN ADVOCATE WITH THE FATHER, JESUS CHRIST THE RIGHTEOUS.”

But how about I John 5:16 to 18

“If any man see his brother sin a sin, which is not unto death. he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it. All unrighteousness

is sin: and there is a sin not unto death. We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not.”

How about I John 3:6:

“WHOSOEVER ABIDETH IN HIM SINNETH NOT; WHOSOEVER SINNETH HATH NOT SEEN HIM, NEITHER KNOWN HIM.”

How about I John 3:9?

“WHOSOEVER IS BORN OF GOD DOTH NOT COMMIT SIN; FOR HIS SEED REMAINETH IN HIM: AND HE CANNOT SIN, BECAUSE HE IS BORN OF GOD:”

Surely these Scriptures have brought discouragement and distress to many souls. Others have followed leaders into their manmade believer’s schemes in their determination to reach a state of sinless perfection. Many have persuaded themselves that they have rid themselves entirely of their sinful natures. According to their testimonies they have obeyed II Corinthians 7:1 and have reached the sinless state described in I Thessalonians 5:23. We quote these two verses:

“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.” “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.”

Some of the “holiness” preachers actually teach that only those believers who have reached this state of genuine holiness, sinless perfection, are saved.

It is Scripturally true that no unrighteous man shall enter the kingdom of God. I Corinthians 6:9. But it is also Scripturally true that Christ is the believer’s righteousness. I Corinthians 1:30. It is Scripturally true that without holiness, or sanctification, no man can be saved. It is also Scripturally true that Christ is the believer’s holiness or sanctification. I Corinthians 1:30.

In this connection we quote three very helpful verses: Hebrews 13:12, II Thessalonians 2:13, and I Corinthians 6:11:

“Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate.” “But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:” “And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.”

Here we learn that until God sanctifies the sinner by the Holy Spirit, and the sinner believes the truth concerning Christ’s sanctifying work on the cross, he cannot be saved. In I Corinthians 6:11 note that “sanctified” precedes “justified.” And remember the words of the Holy Spirit concerning those sanctified Corinthians in I Corinthians 6:8 and 6:7. They were not sinless in their walk and conversation

“Nay, ye do wrong, and defraud and that your brethren. Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you . . .”

They were, however, included in the blessed ones of Romans 4:8, “Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.”

Here we see that these sanctified Christians were sinning. Should they have obeyed James 5:16?

“Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.”

The word here translated “faults” is the same Greek word used in Ephesians 2:5, “dead in sins.” In James 5:16 the Holy Spirit was writing to saints to confess their sins to fellow-saints.

We have already quoted I John 1:9:

“IF WE CONFESS OUR SINS, HE IS FAITHFUL AND JUST TO FORGIVE US OUR SINS, AND TO CLEANSE US FROM ALL UNRIGHTEOUSNESS.”

Here saints are to confess their sins to God.

If saints are without sin then the Holy Spirit would not instruct them to confess their sins to God and to fellow-saints. Who is the man of Romans 4:8: "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not imputed sin."?

This blessed man is the one who has been by faith to Calvary to appropriate the redemption work of the Son of God.

Note Ephesians 4:32 and Colossians 2:13:

"AND BE YE KIND ONE TO ANOTHER, TENDERHEARTED, FORGIVING ONE ANOTHER, EVEN AS GOD FOR CHRIST'S SAKE HATH FORGIVEN YOU."

"AND YOU, BEING DEAD IN YOUR SINS AND THE UNCIRCUMCISION OF YOUR FLESH, HATH HE QUICKENED TOGETHER WITH HIM, HAVING FORGIVEN YOU ALL TRESPASSES:"

But we are still confronted with the truth of I John 3:9:

"Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."

The only intelligent method of Bible study is to study one Scripture concerning any doctrine in the light of other Scripture touching the same doctrine. Let us study I John 3:9 in the light of Romans 7:22 and 23 and 7:20 and Romans 6:12 and Galatians 5:16 and 17.

No saint can keep sin from dwelling within, but, by the grace of God, the saint should keep sin from reigning. Compare Romans 7:20 and 6:12. When the Lord Jesus Christ said to the sinful woman, "Neither do I condemn thee," He also said, "go and sin no more." John 8:11.

After Paul said, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord" for deliverance, he added, "So then with the mind I serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin."

Now note again I John 1:8 and 10:

"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us."

We have quoted Hebrews 10:26, but we here quote it again: "FOR IF WE SIN WILFULLY AFTER THAT WE HAVE RECEIVED THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE TRUTH, THERE REMAINETH NO MORE SACRIFICE FOR SINS."

As to the fact stated here, the fact remains, whether or not the word "wilfully" is omitted. "THERE REMAINETH NO MORE SACRIFICE FOR SINS." This fact is stated in this language in the same chapter

"AND THEIR SINS AND INIQUITIES WILL I REMEMBER NO MORE. NOW WHERE REMISSION OF THESE SINS IS, THERE IS NO MORE OFFERING FOR SIN." Hebrews 10:17 and 18.

Whether or not we sin ignorantly or wilfully after that we receive the knowledge of the truth there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin. But thank God; there remaineth FORGIVENESS of sin. I John 1:9. If saints sin, "we have an Advocate with the Father." I John 2:1.

God's way for saints' victory over Satan is told in Ephesians 6:10 to 20. There the whole armour of God is fully described. God's way for the saints' victory over sin and the flesh is told in Romans 6 and many other Scriptures.

We quote Romans 6:11:

"Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin. but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Ephesians 4:22 to 24: "That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; And 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."

and Colossians 3:8 to 10: "But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him."

The "old man" and the "new man." This message is written to sanctified ones and to saints.

The “new man” cannot sin at all. The “old man” can sin plenty. But here is Divine help

“Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.” I Corinthians 10:12 and 13.

But how about the prayer “O God, we have done the things we should not have done, and we have left undone the things we should have done”? Is there any honest saint who would exclude himself from this prayer? We think also of James 4:17:

“Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.”

And James 2:9 and 10:

“But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors. For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.”

What are the two great commandments? “And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself.” Where is the saint who does that? If sin is the transgression of the commandments, the greatest sin is the transgression of the greatest commandment. What saint does not break this commandment either wilfully or ignorantly?

Now note Ephesians 4:30:

“AND GRIEVE NOT THE HOLY SPIRIT OF GOD, WHEREBY YE ARE SEALED UNTO THE DAY OF REDEMPTION.”

Do saints grieve the Holy Spirit? Certainly. What percentage of saints today: are innocent in the matter of grieving the Holy Spirit? The Holy Spirit desires to convict every sinner of sin, “because they believe not on Christ.” He does this when saints give the gospel to the sinner. Every time, therefore, that any saint passes up an opportunity to testify to the sinner, he grieves the Holy Spirit. But every saint is sealed by the Holy Spirit unto the day of redemption. They can truly say, with Paul, “For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Romans 8:38 and 39.

So we see that the “new man” cannot sin, cannot even be tempted with sin.

But how about I John 5:16:

“If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it.”

Who has not asked the meaning of this verse? First of all it does not mean that either a sinner or a saint can commit the unpardonable sin. Neither does it mean that a saint can lose his salvation after he has been saved. If we give either of these meanings then we make the Scriptures contradict themselves. Note God’s Word in Romans 5:20, in Ephesians 2:3 to 5, and in Acts 13:39:

“Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.” Among who also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)” “And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.”

These sinners were dead in sins. Note Ephesians 4:18:

“Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart.”

They had committed every known sin. None of their sins were unpardonable. But all their sins, including their sin of unbelief, were unpardoned until they received God's grace and God's Son, and then note what took place:

"BUT NOW, IN CHRIST JESUS, YE WHO SOMETIMES WERE FAR OFF ARE MADE NIGH BY THE BLOOD OF CHRIST." ". . . FORGIVING ONE ANOTHER, EVEN AS GOD FOR CHRIST'S SAKE HATH FORGIVEN YOU." Ephesians 2:13 and 4:32.

Then they were justified from all things. Now all their sins were pardoned. And note God's purpose in saving them by grace

"Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose . and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." II Timothy 1:9.

Note again Ephesians 2:7:

"That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness toward us, through Christ Jesus."

Perhaps with I John 5:16, we should study another verse which has perplexed many saints:

"FOR IF YE LIVE AFTER THE FLESH, YE SHALL DIE: BUT IF YE THROUGH THE SPIRIT DO MORTIFY THE DEEDS OF THE BODY, YE SHALL LIVE" Romans 8:13.

Some have thought the sin unto death in I John 5:16 is explained in, I Corinthians 5:5:

"To deliver such a man unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the, spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus."

They also referred to the death judgments upon Ananias and Saphira. They claim that these two were saints and were saved. But they sinned unto death. We quote Acts 5:5 and 10

"And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost: and great fear came on all them that heard these things." "Then fell she down" straightway at his feet and yielded up the ghost: and the young men came in, and found her dead, and, carrying her forth, buried her: by her husband."

They also refer to the saints whom God punished with death for taking the Lord's Supper unworthily. I Corinthians 11:30.

By the process of elimination, in the light of other Scriptures, we know that the sin unto death does not mean that either a saint or a sinner can commit an unpardonable sin. And God's Word tells us plainly that so far as eternal death is concerned no saved person can be condemned with the world. I Corinthians 11:32.

WE KNOW

Let us compare John 5:24 and I John 3:14:

"VERILY, VERILY, I SAY UNTO YOU, HE THAT HEARETH MY WORD AND BELIEVETH ON HIM THAT SENT ME, HATH EVERLASTING LIFE, AND SHALL NOT COME INTO CONDEMNATION: BUT IS PASSED FROM DEATH INTO LIFE." John 5:24. "WE KNOW THAT WE, HAVE PASSED FROM DEATH UNTO LIFE, BECAUSE WE LOVE THE' BRETHREN. HE THAT LOVETH NOT HIS BROTHER ABIDETH IN, DEATH." I John 3:14.

When does the sinner pass out of death into life? When he believes God's Word and accepts God's Son as his Saviour. How does he know that he has passed out of death into life? Because he loves the brethren. He does not pass out of death because he loves, but he loves because he has passed out of death into life by believing.

We know we are saved. First. Because we believe God's Record: "AND THIS IS THE RECORD, THAT GOD HATH GIVEN TO US ETERNAL LIFE, AND THIS LIFE IS IN HIS SON." I John 5:11. Second. Because God has given us His Spirit to witness: "AND THEREBY WE KNOW THAT HE ABIDETH IN US, BY THE SPIRIT WHICH HE HATH GIVEN US." I John 3:24. Third. Because we love: "WE KNOW THAT

WE HAVE PASSED FROM DEATH INTO LIFE BECAUSE WE LOVE THE BRETHREN. I John 3:14.....
GOD IS LOVE; AND HE THAT DWELLETH IN LOVE DWELLETH IN GOD, AND GOD IN HIM.” I John
4:16.

Note that the word “love” is found 33 times in I John.

Our joy is full when we love not the world, but love God and our fellow-men. When we walk in the light
as He is in the light. When we live in victory over sin. When we know the Divine truth concerning Christ as the
believer’s Advocate and obey that truth.

QUESTIONS—LESSON THIRTY-FIVE

1. John a minister of the circumcision? How was he known among the other disciples according to John 20:2 and 21:20 and 13:23?
2. Compare the opening verses of John’s Gospel and I John. What lesson is taught in both?
3. Why was this Epistle of John written according to I John 5:13?
4. Is every saved person a saint? A member of the Body of Christ? Hebrews 10:10.
5. Why was I John written according to I John 1:4?
6. Of what sin is the world convicted by the Holy Spirit? What is the great sin question that must first be settled by the sinner?
7. Quote John 6:47, 10:28 and 3:36. Also I John 5:12.
8. What are believers called according to I John 3:1.
9. What teaching concerning sin proves that the believer is a liar?
10. What question and answer is there for saints in Romans 6:2, 10 and 22? Quote Romans 6:11.
11. Does Hebrews 10:26 read “no more sacrifice for sin” or “no more forgiveness for sin”?
12. Who is our Advocate? Name two things that Christ is to the believer in I Corinthians 1:30.
13. Can a saint commit the sin unto death, meaning that he will lose his salvation?
14. Where does sanctification belong according to II Thessalonians 2:13 and I Corinthians 6:11?
15. Should saints today confess their sins to fellow-saints, according James 5:16? To Whom according to I John 1:9?
16. What does James say about “he who keeps the whole law and offends in one point”? Does any one perfectly keep the two great commandments?
17. Can the “new man” sin? When does the sinner pass out of death unto life?
18. How does the believing sinner get out of the lap of the devil according to Colossians 1:13 and 14?
19. What did Paul say after he thanked God for deliverance, according to Romans 7:25?
20. Quote I John 5:11; 3:24 and 14 and 4:16, giving three reasons why we know we are saved.

THE SECOND EPISTLE OF JOHN

“The elder unto the elect lady and her children, whom I love in the truth and not I only, but also all they that have known the truth; For the truth’s sake, which dwelleth in us, and shall be with us for ever. Grace be with you, mercy, and peace, from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love. I rejoiced greatly that I found of Thy children walking in truth, as we have received a commandment from the Father. And now I beseech thee, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning, that we love one another. And this is love, that we walk after His commandments. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it.

FOR MANY DECEIVERS ARE ENTERED INTO THE WORLD, WHO CONFESS NOT THAT JESUS CHRIST IS COME IN THE FLESH. THIS IS A DECEIVER AND AN ANTICHRIST. LOOK TO YOURSELVES, THAT WE LOSE NOT THOSE THINGS WHICH WE HAVE WROUGHT, BUT THAT WE RECEIVE A FULL REWARD. WHOSOEVER TRANSGRESSETH, AND ABIDETH NOT IN THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST, HATH NOT GOD. HE THAT ABIDETH IN THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST, HE HATH BOTH THE FATHER AND THE SON. IF THERE COME ANY UNTO YOU AND BRING NOT THIS DOCTRINE, RECEIVE HIM NOT INTO YOUR HOUSE, NEITHER BID HIM GOD SPEED: FOR HE THAT BIDDETH HIM GOD SPEED IS PARTAKER OF HIS EVIL DEEDS. Having many things to write unto you, I would not write with paper and ink: but I trust to come unto you, and speak face to face, that our joy may be full. The children of thy elect sister greet thee. Amen.”

THE THIRD EPISTLE OF JOHN

“The elder unto the well-beloved Gains, whom I love in the truth. Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth. For I rejoice greatly, when the brethren came and testified of the truth that is in thee, even as thou walkest in the truth. I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth. Beloved, thou dost faithfully whatsoever thou doest to the brethren, and to strangers; Which have borne witness of thy charity before the church: whom if thou bring forward on their journey after a godly sort, thou shalt do well: Because that for his name’s sake, they went forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles. We therefore ought to receive such, that we might be fellowhelpers to the truth. I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not. Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth them out of the church. Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. He that doeth good is of God: but he that doeth evil hath not seen God. Demetrius hath good report of all men, and of the truth itself: yea, and we also bear record; and ye know that our record is true. I had many things to write, but I will not with ink and pen write unto thee: But I trust I shall shortly see thee, and we shall speak face to face. Peace be to thee. Our friends salute thee. Greet the friends by name.”