



FOUNDATIONS
OF THE
CHRISTIAN
FAITH

By Thomas Taylor

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of the
Christian Faith**

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Chapter 1 - Why Do We Study Doctrine?

Purpose: The purpose of this chapter is to see the importance of God's Word in the life of the believer. We need more than the initial meal - the message to become born again. We must feed on God's Word continually. The more God's Word is established in the heart and mind of the believer, the more we grow into spiritual maturity. With spiritual maturity, we develop the Fruit of the Spirit that God so eagerly desires to develop in His children. God's aim is to grow us into the image of Christ Jesus so that we are built up in love.

Foundational Verses: *Ephesians 4:14-16 NASB As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of people, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, that is, Christ, from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.*

What is Bible Doctrine and Why Study It?

Doctrine is another word for teaching. Bible doctrine is all that the Bible teaches on a particular subject. We are instructed in the Bible to study God's Word:

2 Timothy 2:15 KJV Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

The purpose of studying Bible doctrine is to instruct or inform us about the doctrines of the Bible. This allows us to rightly interpret, believe, live, and proclaim God's Word. With the proper interpretation of God's Word, the Bible, we are able to avoid false teachings and deceit.

The Bible is God's Word and Therefore Perfect

2 Timothy 3:16-17 KJV All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

Not some scripture. Not most scripture. But “all” scripture comes from God. Since the Bible comes from God, it is perfect and without error. God gave us His Holy Word through men who wrote of olden times as the Holy Spirit of God breathed upon them. Though men are fallible, the work of God's Spirit through them produced the written Word, the Bible, which is infallible.

The Bible is to be considered a whole message. We cannot reject some parts while at the same time accepting others. The Bible is a whole truth.

Both the Old Testament and New Testament tell the main Message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The Old Testament is the New Testament concealed. The New Testament is

the Old Testament revealed.

What Bible Translation Should I Use?

God's Word is perfect but that is not to say all translations of the Bible are perfect. Many translations are very corrupt with man's insertion of ideas. The best Bibles to read are those that are word-for-word translations. This author recommends the King James Version and the New American Standard because of their word-for-word translation process. Those are the primary versions quoted from in this book.

Context

We must take great care in reading the Bible so as to never take verses out of context. When we read or study the Bible, we must read not only a verse to understand it but also the surrounding verses. We must keep the verse in the context of its surrounding passage or we will be prone to error. We must keep the surrounding passage in the context of the chapter in which it is found. We must keep the chapter in the context of the book in which it is found. We must keep the book in the context of the testament in which it is found. We must keep the testament in the context of the whole Bible.

The proper study of a Bible doctrine is to study everywhere in the Bible that particular doctrine is mentioned. A Bible doctrine requires at least two scriptures saying the same thing to be considered a Bible doctrine but three or more scriptures are better (Matt. 18:16; 2 Co. 13:1). Start by studying a Bible doctrine when mentioned by the same author of that book of

the Bible. Then expand your study to include what other authors had to say about that doctrine. This will help keep the doctrine within context to develop the proper interpretation of the Bible doctrine.

The Importance of Conforming Your Entire Life to the Bible

Some say all you need to do is accept Jesus as your savior and that's it. That's all you need, they say; so there is no need to conform your life to God's Word since you are on your way to Heaven. But that is entirely wrong. The Bible says clearly, "*But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not just bearers who deceive themselves. (James 1:22)*"

Jesus must not only be your savior but also your Lord. That happens as you conform your entire life to God's Holy Word - the Bible. We must not only read the Bible but we must let It consume our life.

1 Timothy 4:16 KJV Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.

Why is the Bible so important to our daily lives? Well, there are several reasons but here are a few important ones:

We are to teach others to obey God's Word.

Matthew 28:19-20 KJV Go ye therefore, and teach

all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

We must be ready at all times to give an answer to others about our Faith.

1 Peter 3:15 KJV But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear.

The days are evil and false doctrine abounds. Consider *1 Timothy 4:1-2 KJV Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron. And 2 John 1:7 KJV 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.*

Living out God's Word affects our eternity.

2 Peter 1:10-11 NASB Therefore, brothers and sisters, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choice of you; for as long as

you practice these things, you will never stumble; for in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you.

Conclusion: God's Word is a gift from Heaven. It allows us to know God and His Son Jesus Christ. It allows us to know the Truth. God's Word is meant to consume every part of our whole lives. That happens as you read and study the Bible yourself on a regular basis. It is to be believed by faith. It is to be lived with the help of God's Holy Spirit in us. Make sure you have a good Bible and read it always.

Chapter 2 - What Is Salvation?

Purpose: This chapter's purpose is to ensure you are saved, also known as being born again. There is nothing more important. This is what determines your relationship with God for eternity. If you are born again, this chapter will give assurance of your salvation.

Foundational Verses: *John 3:7, 16, 17 KJV Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again... 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. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.*

What is Born Again?

Jesus Himself said you *must* be born again. It is not optional - it is something every man or woman must have. It is available to all for God sent His Son to die for the whole world.

The term “born again” is somewhat strange. Jesus calls our salvation “born again.” The original language of Greek for “born again” actually is “born from above.” This means we must be born from Heaven. We do not enter into our mother’s womb again but we must be born of God.

The born again experience is not physical but spiritual. When you become born again you do not get a new body or

mind. You get a new spirit that is born from Heaven.

Why Must We Be Born Again / Saved?

Jesus in John chapter 3 says you cannot enter or even see the Kingdom of God unless you are born again. Then why does mankind need to be born again? It is because of the most serious problem all humanity faces. It spiritually kills us all. It is called sin.

Romans 3:23 KJV For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.

Notice “all” have sinned. Therefore, all men have died spiritually. Why does this matter?

Romans 6:23 KJV For the wages of sin is death...

Sin has a consequence that Romans 6:23 calls a wage. That consequence is eternal death -eternal separation from God. There is nothing more dreadful to the human experience than to be separated from God the Father. We were all created to be with Him but when we choose to sin, we are rejecting God.

Just one sin is enough to bring eternal death. Adam’s sin brought death to the entire human race. There is no exception. There is no man that has not sinned.

Romans 5:12 KJV Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.

The Ultimate Consequence of Sin

Revelation 21:8 NASB “But for the cowardly, and unbelieving, and abominable, and murderers, and sexually immoral persons, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”

When we talk about salvation, we must ask the question, “From what are we saved?” As stated, we are saved from being separated from God. But where does that separation lead to?

Men must understand that there is a real place called Hell. It is the place of the spiritually dead -those separated from God. It is a place that Jesus describes as torment (Luke 16:28). Ultimately, all who are not written in the Lamb’s Book of Life will end up in this place described in Revelation 21:8. Even worse is that it will be for eternity.

So we can see why it says in 2 Peter 3:9 that God is “*not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.*” Jesus’ purpose was to come to seek and save the lost (Luke 19:10). God has done all He can do to save us but now the choice is ours to respond to the Gospel. If you are not sure if you died tonight and would go to Heaven, I want you to be sure. What must you do?

Repent

Ezekiel 33:11 KJV Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and

live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?

Sin is the problem. So repentance from sin is a necessity. Repent now from your sin. Repent does not mean to just feel bad about it but it means you completely change your mind about it and turn from it in your heart. Sin must be forsaken. Where once you were captive by sin, choose now to be captive by complete obedience to God. This is where Jesus Christ becomes not only your Savior from sin but also the Lord of your life in every area and in every way.

Isaiah 55:7 NASB Let the wicked abandon his way, And the unrighteous person his thoughts; And let him return to the LORD, And He will have compassion on him, And to our God, For He will abundantly pardon.

The Cross and the Blood

When you become born again, there is a legal transaction that takes place. The devil no longer has a legal right to accuse you of sin. Jesus died on the cross shedding His blood for you. He was sacrificed and died in your place. He took the punishment you deserved.

Isaiah 53:6 KJV All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Once you become born again, your sins are gone forever

because Jesus took them upon Himself. There is no greater act any being has ever done than Jesus dying on the cross for you. There is no greater substance than the blood of Jesus that was shed for you. Repenting from sin and accepting what Jesus did for you on the cross secures your eternity in the Kingdom of God.

Not only are your sins removed from you forever but you become righteous in the eyes of God forever. A great exchange takes place. All of Jesus' righteousness becomes yours when all of your sin becomes His.

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

2 Corinthians 5:21 NASB He made Him who knew no sin to be sin in our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

You become a whole new being in Christ Jesus. The old you is dead and passed away forever. The new you is in right-standing with God forever!

Faith

You may say, "What good things must I do to get right with God? You actually *do* nothing. It has nothing to do with your good works or religious works. You do not need to join a church, or get water baptized, or take communion to be saved. There is only one thing that is necessary and that is to

believe. Believe the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Believe the scriptures provided in this chapter. Believe the good news that Jesus died for you, took your sin upon Himself on the cross, and rose again on the third day.

You may think it is too good to be true - it is too easy. God is that good. He made it so that a child can even believe and be saved. He made it simple so that all could come. It is not about what we do for Him that saves us; it is about what Jesus did that saves us. We have no part in our own salvation - we only just believe.

“How Do I Become Born Again?”

Romans 10:8-10 NASB But what does it say? “The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart”—that is, the word of faith which we are preaching, that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.

Pray this prayer from your heart and with your mouth:
Holy God, I believe Jesus died on the cross for my sin. He took my place and received my punishment. I now repent and turn away from sin with all my heart. I accept Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior. I believe He died and rose again the third day for me. I believe your Gospel. Father God, I give you my life. Thank you for forgiving me and receiving me. Amen

If you prayed that prayer, let your pastor know. He will rejoice with you and help guide you spiritually. The angels of Heaven are rejoicing with exceedingly great joy today!

Conclusion: God paid the ultimate price for you to be purchased. His own Son died so that you might live. We could not do anything to make it to Heaven because we were all sinners. So God sent Jesus down to be tortured on the cross and die for you. Salvation is the most important thing you will ever do. But it is only the first step to a life of sanctification - to continually give your life over to God.

Chapter 3 - What Is Holy Spirit Baptism?

Purpose: The purpose of this chapter is to teach the believer, who has already become born-again, that there is an essential experience that every Christian should have which is to be Holy Spirit baptized. The believer will know that the Holy Spirit baptism is different than salvation. It is an endowment of power from Heaven for the spiritual work that all believers are called to carry out. After being baptized with the Holy Spirit, the believer will be able to operate in the Gifts of the Spirit in addition to being able to speak in tongues.

Foundational Verse: ***Acts 1:8 KJV But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.***

Where Does the Bible Talk About Being Baptized with the Holy Spirit?

John the Baptist mentioned it:

John 1:33 KJV And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost .

Notice, ultimately it is Jesus Himself who is baptizing you with the Holy Ghost; it is not something that man gives you.

Jesus mentioned it:

Acts 1:4-5 NASB *Gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, “Which,” He said, “you heard of from Me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”*

Jesus above is speaking to His disciples after the cross who had already believed in Him and were already born-again. It is for someone who has already believed in Jesus.

Peter mentioned it:

Acts 11:15-16 NASB *“And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them just as He did upon us at the beginning. “And I remembered the word of the Lord, how He used to say, ‘John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit .’*

Today, Christians may also use differing phrases for Holy Spirit baptism such as “being filled with the Holy Ghost,” “the baptism of fire,” or “the Holy Ghost falling on them (Acts 10:44).” These all essentially refer to the same experience as described by the Bible verses above.

Who Is the Baptism of the Holy Spirit for?

Acts 2:38-39 KJV *Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is*

unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

This experience is for all who are born-again in Christ Jesus.

What Is the Baptism of the Holy Spirit?

Jesus promised all who were already born-again believers that they could be endued with power from the Holy Spirit. This Holy Spirit baptism would enable them to have power when preaching the Gospel unto the ends of the earth (Acts 1:7,8).

This Holy Spirit baptism is a separate experience from becoming born-again. When one is born again, the Holy Spirit comes within them to abide in them forever (John 14:16,17). All Christians already have the Holy Spirit in them. However, the Bible is very clear there is a separate experience, known as the Holy Spirit baptism.

Acts 19:1 KJV And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples...

Paul ran into some disciples of Jesus Christ in Ephesus. The word disciple means a learner; they were already born-again followers of Jesus Christ (Act 19:2). They became baptized in water (Acts 19:5). Afterward, they received the separate experience of being baptized with the Holy Ghost:

Acts 19:6 KJV And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.

Notice this is a definite experience. The one being baptized with the Holy Ghost will know it has happened. When filled with the Holy Spirit, they spoke with other tongues. Speaking in tongues is not equal to the baptism with the Holy Spirit but it is a gift given to the person who was baptized with the Holy Spirit. However, it is evident from the scriptures presented thus far that being baptized with the Holy Ghost is a separate and subsequent experience to being born-again. You cannot be baptized with the Holy Ghost without first being born-again. But you can be born-again and not be baptized with the Holy Ghost. But all born-again believers should seek to be filled with the Holy Ghost to obey Jesus in Acts 1:4,5.

How Do I Know I've Been Baptized with the Holy Ghost?
The Bible consistently uses speaking in other tongues as the initial evidence that one has been baptized with the Holy Spirit. Consider the following verses:

Acts 2:4 KJV And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues , as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Acts 10:44-47 KJV While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them speak with tongues , and magnify God. Then answered Peter, Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?

Many Christians have sought after speaking in tongues but that is not the goal. What Jesus said is to seek after being baptized with the Holy Ghost and the tongues will be there.

How Can I Be Baptized With The Holy Spirit?

Baptism with the Holy Spirit is received like all things from God. It is received by your faith as a grace/gift of God (Ephesians 2:8-10). You cannot earn it or work for it. There is nothing you can do in the flesh to get it (Galatians 3:2).

If you want to be baptized with the Holy Ghost, Jesus gives you the answer here:

Luke 11:9-13 KJV And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a

stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

You need to ask God the Father and it shall be given unto you. God will not give you something harmful ever, because He is your loving heavenly Father. He will give you what He desires you have which is the baptism with the Holy Spirit. The terms “ask,” “seek,” and “knock” in this passage all refer to continual action. Continue to ask, seek, and knock trusting God will give you this power from Heaven until the manifestation occurs.

Conclusion: God desired that all His children be baptized with the Holy Spirit. This will result in power manifesting for ministry and the ability to pray in other tongues. One should not go into ministry, service for God of any kind, without first receiving the baptism with the Holy Spirit. To receive this amazing experience, seek God by faith and He will not withhold this power from you.

Chapter 4 - Why Do We Baptize In Water and Take Communion?

Purpose: The purpose of this chapter is to see the importance of water baptism and taking communion in the life of the believer. These are things that the Lord Himself told His Church to do and so we should not to be saved, but as an act of obedience. In this chapter, we will also learn why the believer is baptized in water and partakes of communion.

Foundational Verses: *Colossians 2:12 NASB Buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.*

1 Corinthians 11:26 KJV For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.

Did The Lord Instruct Us To Be Water Baptized and Take Communion?

We believers are instructed by Jesus Christ to be water baptized in the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20). We are to go into all the world teaching the Gospel and water baptizing those that believe. This water baptism is representative of the change that took place when someone becomes born again. They are raised from death spiritually to life spiritually. Baptism symbolizes this wonderful experience. And so, water baptism should follow the salvation experience as a public confession of one's faith and an act of obedience to

the Lord.

Communion was given to the Church by Jesus Christ right before He was taken to be crucified (Matthew 26:26-28). It is sometimes called the Lord's Supper because it was the last supper Jesus had with His disciples before His death. It, like water baptism, is an ordinance that the Lord instituted for all born-again believers. (Communion is never in the Bible called the "eucharist" or a "sacrament"; these terms are non-biblical.)

Does Water Baptism or Communion Save Us?

It is abundantly clear from Scripture that we are not saved by works of water baptism, communion, or any other thing done bodily. Salvation is spiritual; it is given by God's grace and received by faith:

Ephesians 2:8 NASB For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not of yourselves, it is the gift of God;

Unfortunately, there are many denominations and groups that teach water baptism and communion are necessary for salvation. This is absolutely false according to the Bible. Though there are examples of people getting saved then being water baptized, that does not mean it was the water baptism that saved them but rather their faith in the Gospel.

Acts 16:30-31 KJV And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be

saved, and thy house.

Notice Paul and Silas said only to “believe on the Lord Jesus Christ” to be saved, not be water baptized to be saved. The salvation experience *was* followed by water baptism but it was believing on Jesus that saved, not water. Water baptism is only a symbol of salvation - never salvation in itself. See also Romans 10:8-11.

Some insist the pattern for salvation is:

Acts 2:38 KJV Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

However, we cannot accept this Scripture while rejecting what is clearly taught in Acts 16:30-31 and Romans 10:8-11. All these scriptures are true. Acts 16 and Romans 10 just clarifies the actual source of our salvation is not works or a bodily action like water baptism or communion. It is the faith alone that saves. When one is saved by their faith alone, they should follow that up with water baptism as an act of obedience.

Why Get Water Baptized and Take Communion?

As discussed above, we are instructed by the Lord Jesus Christ to be water baptized and take communion after we are saved. Jesus Himself did partake of these ordinances (Matthew 3:13-17; 26:26-29). The Apostles themselves practiced and

commanded these ordinances as well:

Acts 10:47-48 KJV Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.

After these believed, it was commanded by Peter that they should be water baptized. This makes it clear that water baptism is not optional even though it does not save. Water baptism is an outward witness to all who witness it that you are a Christian - a born-again believer in Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 11:23-25 KJV For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.

We are to take communion because the Lord Jesus Christ told us to do so in remembrance of Him - meaning what He did for us to save us. Communion represent us taking part in the New Covenant. Notice there are no instructions on how often we should take communion. We should just do so in remembrance of Him and His work on the cross.

How Should We Partake of Communion?

It is also very important to point out, concerning communion, that it is not to be taken lightly. 1 Corinthians 11:27-31 gives a stern warning that you should examine yourself before taking communion. Make sure you are right with God by repenting of all known sins. To live in intentional unrepentant sin and then take communion means you are guilty of the “body and blood of the Lord” and brings judgment from the Lord.

Communion is a very serious matter. But if done with a humble repentant heart, communion is a wonderful time of blessing, in union with the Lord, as you acknowledge what He has done in the New Covenant. You are not literally partaking of the body and blood of Jesus; you are doing so symbolically. But in doing so, you are reaffirming your faith in Christ Jesus’ work on the cross.

How Are We to Be Water Baptized?

The word “baptize” is transliterated from the Greek word “*baptizo*”. This word means “to dip, to overwhelm, to plunge, to submerge.”

This teaches us that baptism is not performed by sprinkling water on someone but rather, like John the Baptist practiced, submerging someone in the water. Every example of baptism in the New Testament involved submerging the entire person in the water. Why? Because it represents our old man being put into a grave and a new man coming out, resurrected. We do not

sprinkle dirt on the dead but we buried them entirely in the dirt. So we also should follow the New Testament example and submerge the baptized person.

Can Children Be Water Baptized or Take Communion?

That depends on the maturity of the child. For example, a baby or very small child does not understand salvation; they simply do not have the maturity to do so. Therefore, they should not be water baptized or take communion because they have not accepted Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior by faith. The child must have the maturity to understand salvation or the ordinances are just meaningless activities that bring no benefit.

The age when understanding happens can vary from child to child. There is no specific age that we can say is the right number. Once they understand salvation as outlined in the scriptures, presented in the second chapter of this book, then they are ready to be water baptized or take communion. If they do not understand salvation, then they should not take part in either ordinance.

Conclusion: We are instructed by precept and example of the Lord Jesus Christ and the apostles to practice water baptism and communion. These are ordinances we are to do *after* we are born-again; they play no part in our salvation. However, they are things we are to obey and do as an outward symbol of our inward faith. These ordinances are for those that understand salvation; they are not for babies or very young children.

Chapter 5 - What Is Sanctification?

Purpose: The purpose of this chapter is to understand sanctification and how we can walk holy. Salvation is not just to save a man's spirit but also to transform a man's life into thinking, talking, and living like Jesus. We are to not only have our sins of the past forgiven but also to be a holy disciple of Jesus Christ forever going forward. This means making a choice to repent from all sin and follow Jesus every moment of every day. This happens by allowing Jesus to be Lord over every aspect of our lives with the help of the Holy Spirit.

Foundational Verses: ***Mark 8:34 KJV And when he had called the people unto him with his disciples also, he said unto them, Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.***

What is Sin?

Sin is often defined as missing the mark. It is illustrated as someone shooting an arrow and missing the target. But better definitions by Thayer's Greek Definitions say sin is "to wander from the path of uprightness", "to do wrong", and to "violate God's Law."¹

We know sins listed in the Ten Commandments as things like do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not bear false witness, and do not covet your neighbor's wife or possessions (Exodus 20:1-17). But that is only the beginning of sins listed in the Old Testament. There are hundreds of other sins listed, such as in Leviticus 20, it is

prohibited to have sexual relations with a step-mother, a step-daughter, a sister, an aunt, or an animal (Leviticus 20:10-21). Homosexuality is a sin called an abomination:

Leviticus 18:22 NASB *You shall not sleep with a male as one sleeps with a female; it is an abomination.*

In the New Testament, Jesus takes the subject of sin even further so that even the things we think can be sins. Jesus said not only committing adultery is a sin but also lusting after a woman is a sin (Matthew 5:28). Paul has a large list of sins in Galatians chapter 5 we must be aware of:

Galatians 5:19-21 NASB *Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: sexual immorality, impurity, indecent behavior, idolatry, witchcraft, hostilities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions, envy, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.*

Sin is what led to our spiritual death and eternal separation from God. We must, as followers of Jesus Christ, turn from all sin. God desires that His children walk holy and sanctified lives every day.

What is Sanctification?

The word sanctification is not one used often in the current culture. Therefore, many people may not know what it means. Other words that are used for sanctification are purification and consecration. God wants His people to live holy and pure. That means we are to be separate from the world and no longer walk in sins.

We have been sanctified by God spiritually when we became born-again. However, that is only the beginning. Next, we are to live sanctified, holy, and clean lives outwardly as a by-product of our walk with God. God does not want His children to return to the sins He redeemed us from on the cross. But understand, you cannot walk clean on your own; you need the help of His Holy Spirit to do it.

How Do I Walk Clean?

Romans 6:19 NASB I am speaking in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented the parts of your body as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness, resulting in further lawlessness, so now present your body's parts as slaves to righteousness, resulting in sanctification.

We all have sinned. How did we sin? We chose to sin and cooperate with the devil's temptations and our sin nature. Notice, this verse says "just as" you walked in sin, we are to do the same for sanctification. We must *choose* to reject any further sins. We must *choose* to present our bodies to God as His slaves

unto righteousness. This is what consecration is about; deciding, “My body is no longer mine to do with as I will but it is God’s” (Romans 12:1). Then daily yield it to God. We are to crucify the lusts of the flesh and not ever again act on them (Romans 8:13). The same is true with our mind and thoughts which are to be transformed by God’s Word and God’s Holy Spirit (Romans 12:2).

You are no longer a slave to the sinful nature, addictions, and lusts of your flesh. You are free for Christ has set you free. So do not go back and be tangled again in sin.

Romans 6:12-14 NASB Therefore sin is not to reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts, and do not go on presenting the parts of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those who are alive from the dead, and your body’s parts as instruments of righteousness for God. For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under the Law but under grace.

We all will fall short and sin in our walk with God at some point. But God says when you do, repent and confess the sin - acknowledging your guilt. Then He will forgive you and cleanse you (1 John 1:9; Psalm 32:5). But after that, as Jesus told the woman caught in adultery, “Go and sin no more” (John 8:11). God’s will is for His children to never be bound in sins again.

1 Thessalonians 4:3-5 NASB For this is the will of

God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, not in lustful passion, like the Gentiles who do not know God.

After seeing all of the many sins listed, you may be overwhelmed thinking, “How can I do that?” Many Christians have become frustrated in their battle against sins and feel tempted to give up because of failures. Christians still feel the lusts of their flesh desiring to do wrong. Christians also are still tempted by the devil regularly. However, having bodily lusts and being tempted is not yet sin. Only when you act on them in your mind, heart, or body do they become sin.

So what do you do to walk clean? As mentioned above, first choose to walk clean. Next, trust the Holy Spirit to help you.

Romans 8:13-14 NASB for if you are living in accord with the flesh, you are going to die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons and daughters of God.

It is the Holy Spirit of God that helps you put to death the carnal lusts of the body or the mind. God’s Holy Spirit is now inside of you. You have all the help you need in the Holy Spirit. Trust that He is helping you. Cooperate with His leading and corrections and you will see the sins and lusts to sin fall off over time. The Holy Spirit will give you empowerment to

overcome sin.

Conclusion: God wants His born-again children to walk like Jesus every day - free from the bondage of sin. You must choose to do so and cooperate with His Holy Spirit to live in victory. You will not get it right on day one. Sanctification is a walk over your whole lifetime. It is not a single step then you've arrived. Sanctification is a lifestyle of trusting God's Spirit to help you. So when you mess up and sin, don't quit; acknowledge your guilt before God, repent, then get up and go on with God.

Chapter 6 - How Am I To Follow Jesus?

Purpose: The purpose of this chapter is to understand what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ. All Christians are called to be a disciple of Jesus. We are to do what He did and what He instructs us to do in His Word. We must make Jesus the Lord in every area of our lives to fulfill what called has called us to do.

Foundational Verses: ***Matthew 28:18-20 NASB And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to follow all that I commanded you; and behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."***

What Is A Disciple?

A disciple is one that is taught or trained by someone else. They are a learner that does what their teacher instructs and demonstrates. The disciple is also one that receives the doctrine of another. Christians are to be disciples of Jesus. Christ Jesus must be both our personal Lord and Master in all things.

Matthew 10:24 KJV The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord.

Luke 6:40 NASB A student is not above the teacher;

but everyone, when he has been fully trained, will be like his teacher.

When we see Jesus in the Bible, we see the model of what our lives are to look like. Once we are born again, we are to carry on the work of the Lord on earth. We are to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus (Mark 16:15), make disciples (Matthew 28:19), and be witnesses of Jesus (Acts 1:8). And when we act more like Him, we will also face persecution like Him. But persecution does not change our mandate.

A disciple of Jesus obeys God in all things. We must be willing to be taught by the Lord and say yes to His directions no matter the cost. We are to not just hear His Word but be doers of that Word. When we obey, we are established upon the Rock that will always withstand the storms of this world.

God loves you and because of this, He will sometimes bring correction into your life. Always be willing to be corrected.

Proverbs 3:11-12 KJV My son, despise not the chastening of the LORD; neither be weary of his correction: For whom the LORD loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth.

Receive the Lord's correction knowing it is making you more like your Master. Let His Holy Spirit guide you in all things and you will walk in joy knowing you are drawing closer to the Father God.

How Am I To See Jesus?

One place to see Jesus more clearly is in His Sermon on the Mount. It is a description of how to follow Him while at the same time describing who He really is. Consider just the beginning verses:

Matthew 5:3-12 KJV Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God. Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

This is Jesus and the model for our lives. When we live this out, we are being like our Master. We are being true disciples. Notice the humility, meekness, and gentleness required to follow Jesus Christ. This is impossible in the flesh but by God's grace, He will empower you to live in the spirit. Read

all of the Sermon on the Mount and study it carefully to learn how to be a disciple of Jesus Christ.

If you could live out the Sermon on the Mount perfectly, you have become like Jesus. It goes contrary to the nature of your flesh. It goes contrary to the nature of this world. It is a life of self-less-ness. It is laying down your will to follow God in all circumstances.

Matthew 5:39 NASB “But I say to you, do not show opposition against an evil person; but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other toward him also.

The Sermon on the Mount is the place we are told to not strike the one that strikes us but to offer up the other cheek as well. You will be tempted to stand up for your rights when people wrong you. But the way of the disciple of Jesus is to let God deal with your enemies and to never retaliate. This is just one of many principles found in the Sermon on the Mount. Learn them all and see Jesus in them all. qqq

Conclusion:

Being a disciple of Jesus is what you are called to do for the rest of your life. This means doing what He did, living like He lived - always living to please His heavenly Father. The way to do this is to read about Him in His Word the Bible. The Word of God is Jesus. So the more you know the Word, the more you know Jesus and can be like Him. Being a disciple is not something you try; it is something you commit to live always. Study the Sermon on the Mount as a good starting place on

how to be like Jesus Christ.

Chapter 7 - How Do I Pray?

Purpose: The purpose of this chapter is to understand the Christian's lifestyle of prayer. We will learn how to pray and the methods of prayer described for the New Testament believer. God wants us to be in a place of prayer often so that we may hear from Him and He may guide us. God answers prayers but if we do not pray, He has nothing to answer. God is constantly guiding us but so few seem to hear Him. This need not be the case.

Foundational Verses: ***Jeremiah 29:12-13 KJV Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.***

What is Prayer?

Some have the idea that prayer requires saying only certain phrases that pastors, ministers, or other perceived religious people say but that is not true. Others think it requires fancy words not used in everyday language. That also is not true.

Prayer is simply you talking to God however you normally talk. It also is hearing from God. Prayer is not a monologue but a dialog. Taking time to hear is just as important as talking. If you were in the presence of a king or president, it would be unwise to dominate and control the conversation; how much more in the presence of God in prayer.

How Do I Pray?

Mark 1:35 KJV And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed.

Luke 5:16 KJV And he withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed.

Jesus was a man of prayer. He is our example of how to pray. He did so early in the morning but as we examine His ministry, He also prayed at all times (Luke 3:21; 4:1,2; 5:16; 6:12; 9:18; 11:1).

He often would withdraw Himself to go pray. So too should we set aside time to pray alone. The morning, before everyone else wakes up and the activities of the day begin, is a great time to pray. But there is nothing in the Bible that says you must pray in the morning. However, setting aside time to pray every day is essential to have a strong walk in the Lord.

We should pray individually (Matthew 6:5-7) as Jesus did. However, there are times you may want to join with others in prayer for agreement, such as is mentioned here:

Matthew 18:19-20 KJV Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

Another prayer is corporate prayer with many other believers. This is what the early church did often to get direction from God, submit petitions, and to praise Him (Acts 2:42;4:24-31; 13:1-3). Praise and thanksgiving have been said by some early preachers to be the highest type of prayers.

What Are Some New Testament Types of Prayers?

There are many types of prayers found throughout scriptures but we will focus on the New Testament prayers since we are in the time of the New Testament.

- Praise and thanksgiving - offering up praise and thanks to God for who He is, what He has done, what He is doing, and what He is going to do (Matthew 11:25; Hebrews 2:12; 1 Timothy 2:1; Philippians 4:6)
- Persevering prayer - the prayer that keeps seeking until you get an answer (Luke 11:5-13)
- Intercessory prayer - to pray on behalf of others in need (1 Timothy 2:1)
- Praying in the Spirit - praying in other tongues out of your spirit as the Holy Spirit gives you the utterance (Acts 2:4; 1 Corinthians 14:14)
- Prayer of petition - asking God for a need (1 Timothy 2:1,2)

Which prayer is the right prayer? The one that is right for the moment you are in. Be led by the Holy Spirit in prayer for how to pray and what to pray.

What Are Some New Testament Examples of Prayer?

These are some amazing prayers to study and pray over yourself. Take some time to look these up for they will be a blessing to you:

- Jesus' instruction to His disciples on how to pray, Matthew 6:9-15: "Our Father which art in Heaven..."
- Jesus' high priestly prayer for His disciples, John 17:1-26
- Paul's prayers for the churches of Ephesus and Colossae, Ephesians 1:15-23, 3:14-21, and Colossians 1:9-14
- The early Church prayer for boldness, Acts 4:24-30

Conclusion: Prayer is an essential part of the Christian life. Without prayer, it would be like a sailboat without a sail. You will go nowhere in your spiritual growth. God wants His children to hear His voice but we must seek to hear in prayer. God wants to answer our petitions but we must pray in faith according to His Word. When we seek Him and ask for help in time of need, He will faithfully show up and meet us. But some of the greatest times of prayer you will experience will be when you just give Him praise and thanksgiving. Let your

prayer life grow and flourish through the instructions given in His Word about prayer and you will know God more every day.

Bibliography

1. *Thayer's Greek Definitions*. J. H. Thayer. [1896.] As found in the [e-Sword Bible study software program](#) . *This resource is in the public domain.*

