

# Things Hard to be Understood

Studies 1 - 10

*Teacher's Manual*

Stephen Nemeth Lectures

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Studies 1 - 10

## *Teacher Manual*

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*Stephen Nemeth Lectures*

# ***CAN A BELIEVER FALL AWAY AND BE LOST?***

## **STUDY 1**

**Scripture Portion: Romans 8:28-29**

**Romans 8:28-29** - *And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.*

*29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.*

There are many truths revealed in the Word of God which are -

**2 Peter 3:16** - *As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.*

There are some things we shall not understand until we get to heaven.

**1 Corinthians 13:12** - *For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.*

In this series of studies, we shall consider some important truths which are quite impossible to understand apart from the illumination of the Holy Spirit.

**1 Corinthians 2:14** - *But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*

Each theme is vital. The first of these is: Can a believer fall away and be lost?

Notice the words 'a believer' -

**Romans 10:9** - *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.*

One who has been born again -

**John 3:3** - *Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*

One who has been washed in the blood of Christ -

**1 John 1:7** - *But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.*

But, can one who has believed and been saved fall away and be lost?

We believe the emphatic answer from the scriptures in - **NO!**

God wants us to be sure of our salvation and to know we are His - for ever! He does not want us to live in a state of uncertainty, hoping that, in the end, He will accept us.

As Noah and his family went into the ark and were absolutely secure because God shut them in from the outside, so all believers are safe in Christ, hidden with Christ in God.

**Genesis 7:7** - *And Noah went in, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him, into the ark, because of the waters of the flood.*

**Genesis 7:16** - *And they that went in, went in male and female of all flesh, as God had commanded him: and the LORD shut him in.*

Compare -

**Colossians 3:3** - *For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.*

However, many have taught, and do teach, that a believer can fall away and be lost.

*There seem to be four reasons for this view.*

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**#1** - We are weak, we fail, and we wonder if we can endure to the end.

**#2** - We know of some who appeared to be real Christians who apparently have fallen away.

**#3** - Some scriptures seem to teach the possibility of a believer being lost.

**Matthew 24:13** - *But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.*

**John 15:6** - *If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.*

**1 Corinthians 9:27** - *But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.*

**Galatians 5:4** - *Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.*

**Judas Iscariot.**

**Hebrews 6:4-6** - *For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost,  
5 And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come,  
6 If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.*

**Hebrews 10:26-29** - *For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,  
27 But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.  
28 He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses:  
29 Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?*

**#4** - It is said the teaching of the security of Christians is dangerous as it makes for careless living.

### ***How do we answer these four objections?***

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**#1** - *Our salvation does not depend upon our ability to keep it.*

We are kept!

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

Compare -

**Jude 24** - *Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,*

**#2** - *Those Christians who have apparently fallen away - were they ever truly saved? If so, God has many disobedient children. What about the prodigal son? He was a son, but disobedient.*

Read **Luke 15:11-24**.

**#3** - *The scriptures mentioned do not teach that a believer can be lost. These either do not refer to true believers, or they refer to service and rewards and not to salvation.*

**Matthew 24:13** refers to the tribulation period and to the physical salvation of those who endure to the end.

**John 15:6** and **1 Corinthians 9:27** both have to do with service, and not to salvation.

**Galatians 5:4** does not teach that we can fall out of grace!.

Judas was never born again. He was only a professor.

**Hebrews 6:4-6** and **10:26-29** were written to Jews and for Jews. Surely the argument is that if we reject Christ there is no more sacrifice for sin.

**#4 - *The teaching of security does make it easier for the believer to live carelessly. It provides an incentive to the believer to live more wholeheartedly for God.***

**Romans 6:1-2** - *What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?*

*2 God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?*

*There are seven reasons given in the scriptures why the true believer can never fall away and be lost.*

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THE BELIEVER IS ETERNALLY SECURE BECAUSE OF THE ETERNAL PURPOSE OF GOD CONCERNING ALL HIS REDEEMED PEOPLE.

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Believers are His elect people.

**Ephesians 1:4** - *According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:*

Compare -

**Romans 8:29-30** - *For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.*

*30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.*

**Ephesians 2:10** - *For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.*

**2 Timothy 1:9** - *Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,*

**1 Peter 1:2** - *Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.*

These scriptures prove that all believers are eternally secure according to the eternal purpose of God.

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## **2. THE BELIEVER IS ETERNALLY SECURE BECAUSE THE REDEMPTION WORK OF CHRIST IS COMPLETE, SUFFICIENT, FLAWLESS AND ETERNAL.**

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**Romans 4:25 to 5:2** - *Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.*

*5:1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:*

*2 By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.*

Compare -

**1 Corinthians 6:19-20** - *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?*

*20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.*

**Hebrews 1:3** - *Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;*

**Hebrews 7:24-25** - *But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood.*

*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.*

**Hebrews 10:10-14** - *By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.*

*11 And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins:*

*12 But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God;*

*13 From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool.*

*14 For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.*

Our salvation depends wholly on Christ Himself - what He is and what He has done. His work has been accepted by God the Father and we are secure because of this.

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## **3. THE BELIEVER IS ETERNALLY SECURE BECAUSE SALVATION IS**

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ALTOGETHER OF GRACE.

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The work of man has been excluded from each tense of salvation - past, present and future. We are saved from sin's penalty and power altogether by grace. When the Lord comes we shall be saved from sin's presence - also altogether by grace.

**Ephesians 2:8-10** - *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:*

*9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.*

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

**Philippians 2:12-13** - *Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.*

*13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.*

**Titus 3:5** - *Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;*

If our salvation depended upon ourselves, we would have great cause to doubt - but, thank God, *it does not depend upon us!*

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4. THE BELIEVER IS ETERNALLY SECURE BECAUSE OF THE NATURE OF SALVATION.

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**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 5:24** - *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.*

**2 Timothy 4:18** - *And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

**Hebrews 5:9** - *And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;*

**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.*

In these verses, we are told that we have received 'everlasting life', 'eternal salvation', 'eternal redemption', and that -



**John 5:24** - .....*shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.*

We are eternally saved!

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## **5. THE BELIEVER IS ETERNALLY SECURE BECAUSE OF THE MANY SPECIFIC PROMISES AND STATEMENTS THAT GUARANTEE SECURITY.**

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Compare -

**John 5:24** - *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.*

**John 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.*

**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 10:27-29** - *My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:  
28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.  
29 My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.*

Then read -

**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 17:6** - *I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word.*

**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.*

**John 17:12** - *While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled.*

Could this prayer of the Saviour possibly be unanswered?

**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:*

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**6. THE BELIEVER IS ETERNALLY SECURE BECAUSE OF HIS VITAL UNION WITH THE LORD JESUS.**

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We are 'in Him' and He is 'in us' -

**John 1:12-13** - *But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:*

*13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.*

**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.*

**Ephesians 2:6** - *And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:*

**Colossians 1:13** - *Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:*

**Colossians 3:3** - *For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.*

Read **1 Corinthians 12:13-27**.

Can such a wonderful union be effected today and broken tomorrow?

Surely not!

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**7. THE BELIEVER IS ETERNALLY SECURE BECAUSE THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT ON BEHALF OF THE BELIEVER IS ETERNAL.**

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The indwelling and the sealing of the Holy Spirit are eternal as told to us in -

**John 14:16** - *And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;*

**Ephesians 1:13-14** - *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,*

*14 Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased*

*possession, unto the praise of his glory.*

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

We have been 'sealed with the Holy Spirit unto the day of redemption' - unto the end of the journey!

The vital question, therefore, is: Am I truly His? Have I truly believed in the Lord Jesus Christ? Am I trusting utterly and only in Him as my Saviour and Lord?

If so -

**Romans 8:33-39** - *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.*

*34 Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.*

*35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?*

*36 As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.*

*37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.*

*38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,*

*39 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.*

**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:*

# ***OUR STANDING AND OUR STATE***

## **STUDY 2**

**Scripture Portion: Colossians 3:1-17**

Many Christians become discouraged in the early stages of their Christian life and even lack the assurance of their salvation.

Often this is because they don't understand the teaching of this study.

It is most important that every believer should know the difference between his standing and his state; between his position and his condition.

There are at least seven lines of truth expounded in God's Word all of which relate to the believer.

They might be called "*Things that differ*" - and happy is the Christian who can distinguish these things!

*These are the difference between -*

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*(1) law and grace.*

*(2) faith and works.*

*(3) believers and professors.*

*(4) the old nature and the new nature.*

*(5) salvation and rewards.*

*(6) the Judgment Seat of Christ and the Judgment of the Great White Throne.*

*(7) the believer's standing and his state.*

*What do we mean by the believer's standing and his state?*

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*OUR STANDING IS WHAT WE ARE IN CHRIST BEFORE GOD. OUR STATE IS WHAT WE ARE IN EXPERIENCE, IN OUR WORK, IN THE WORLD, BEFORE OTHERS.*

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By nature God sees us all ‘in Adam’ -

**1 Corinthians 15:22** - *For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.*

We are all linked by birth and blood to Adam, the federal head of the human race.

But when we were born again, we were taken out of Adam (the head of the old creation), and placed into Christ (the Head of the new creation).

We were, therefore, given a totally new standing ‘in Christ’.

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

Our *standing*, therefore, is all that we are in God’s reckoning by virtue of our union with our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Our standing in Christ is absolutely perfect; just as He is perfect, so God reckons us as perfect, because we believe in Him and belong to Him.

But, as to our *state*, how far from perfect that is!

See in the following scriptures, side by side, our standing and our state.

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	<i>Standing</i>	<i>State</i>
(1) <b>Romans 1:7</b>	“saints”	“in Rome”
(2) <b>1 Corinthians 1:2</b>	“sanctified in Christ.....saints”	“at Corinth”
(3) <b>Galatians 5:1, 7</b>	verse 1	verse 7
(4) <b>Ephesians 1:1, 3</b>	verse 3	verse 1
(5) <b>Colossians 3:3, 8-9</b>	verse 3	verses 8-9

**Romans 1:7** - *To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

**1 Corinthians 1:2** - *Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:*

**Galatians 5:1** - *Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.*

**Galatians 5:7** - *Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?*

**Ephesians 1:1** - *Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus:*

**Ephesians 1:3** - *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:*

**Colossians 3:3** - *For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.*

**Colossians 3:8-9** - *But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.*

*9 Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds;*

So far as his standing was concerned, the prodigal was a son; but so far as his state was concerned, he was in the far country.

Read **Luke 15:11-24**.

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OUR *STANDING* WILL NEVER CHANGE, IT CANNOT IMPROVE OR DETERIORATE, AND IT CAN NEVER ALTER.

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OUR *STATE* IS CONSTANTLY CHANGING, THOUGH IT SHOULD BE IMPROVING ALL THE TIME.

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This is wonderful!

Once we are born again -

**John 3:3** - *Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*

and baptized into Christ -

**1 Corinthians 12:13** - *For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles,*

nothing can ever alter this.

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

Our *standing* is secure. Our *state* is always changing.

Sometimes we experience victory, sometimes defeat. Sometimes we experience joy, sometimes gloom. Sometimes we experience peace, sometimes anxiety.

Why?

Because we have within us two natures - the old adamic nature and the new divine nature. (This will be the subject of our next study.)

But our standing in Christ is for ever settled. Nothing can ever alter it.

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OUR SALVATION AND OUR ACCEPTANCE BEFORE GOD DEPEND UPON OUR  
STANDING, AND NOT UPON OUR STATE.

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Our salvation does not depend upon what we are in ourselves, but upon what Christ is and what He has done for us.

We are -

saved -

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

accepted -

**Ephesians 1:6** - *To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.*

and justified -

**Romans 5:1** - *Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:*

because we are 'in Christ' -

**Ephesians 2:6-10** - *And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:*

*7 That in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his*

*kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.*

*8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:*

*9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.*

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

and nothing can alter that.

**Romans 8:1** - *There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*

When God shut the door of the ark, Noah and those with him were safe - not because of their state, but because God had placed them there and had shut the door. Thus, we are safe 'in Christ'.

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#### **4. EVERY BELIEVER HAS EXACTLY THE SAME STANDING, THOUGH EACH HAS A DIFFERENT STATE.**

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In God's sight every believer is reckoned as a saint -

**Romans 1:7** - *To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

and as already sanctified -

**Hebrews 10:10** - *By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.*

**Hebrews 10:14** - *For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.*

But often we do not live like saints and do not live sanctified lived. This should humble us and exclude boasting.

The state of Christians differs very much.

Some are growing, some are still babes -

**2 Peter 3:18** - *But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.*



**1 Corinthians 3:1** - *And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.*

Some are spiritual, some are carnal -

**1 Corinthians 3:1** - *And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.*

**1 Corinthians 3:4** - *For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?*

Some are disciplined, some are disobedient -

**Matthew 11:29** - *Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.*

**Galatians 5:7** - *Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?*

Some are surrendered, some are unsundered -

**Romans 6:13** - *Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.*

**2 Timothy 4:10** - *For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia.*

Some are zealous, some are lukewarm -

**Colossians 4:12** - *Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.*

**Revelation 3:15-16** - *I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.*

*16 So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.*

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5. OUR *STANDING* COMES FROM THE FACT THAT WE ARE PARTAKERS OF THE DIVINE NATURE AND HAVE THAT NEW NATURE WITHIN. OUR *STATE* COMES FROM THE FACT THAT WE STILL POSSESS THE OLD NATURE.

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**John 3:6** - *That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.*

**Romans 7:18** - *For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.*

**Galatians 5:17** - *For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.*

**2 Peter 1:4** - *Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.*

Although we receive a new nature when we are born again, we do not lose the old nature. (This we shall see in our next study.)

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6. ALL THE BLESSINGS THAT HAVE BEEN BESTOWED UPON US BY VIRTUE OF OUR STANDING IN CHRIST ARE OURS TO ENJOY NOW IN OUR EXPERIENCE.

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We have been -

**Ephesians 1:3** - *.....blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:*

These blessings are ours to enjoy now.

*As to our standing, we are -*

sons of God -

**John 1:12** - *But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:*

heirs -

**Romans 8:17** - *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.*

justified -

**Romans 5:1** - *Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:*

kings and priests -

**Revelation 1:5-6** - *And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,  
6 And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.*

and temples of the Holy Spirit -

**1 Corinthians 6:19** - *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?*

Now we are to live like sons, enjoy our riches, rejoice in our justification, go about like children of the King, and let the Holy Spirit preside over our bodies.

In other words, we are to -

**Obadiah 17** - *.....possess their possessions.*

- 
7. WHILE OUR STANDING AND OUR STATE WILL NEVER ENTIRELY CORRESPOND WHILE WE ARE IN THE BODY, GOD'S WILL IS THAT THERE SHOULD BE AN INCREASING CORRESPONDENCE DAY BY DAY.
- 

One day, when we see the Lord, our standing and our state will exactly correspond -

**Romans 8:29** - *For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.*

**1 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.*

In the meantime we are to be transformed, day by day, more and more into the likeness of our Lord as indicated in -

**2 Corinthians 3:18** - *But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.*

# ***THE TWO-FOLD NATURE OF EVERY BELIEVER***

## **STUDY 3**

**Scripture Portion: Romans 7:15-25**

In our last study we saw the importance of being able to distinguish between our standing and our state.

Now we shall emphasize the importance of recognizing the twofold nature of the believer.

Many Christians become discouraged because they do not understand this doctrine.

Every Christian experiences the truth and the reality of the dual nature within, but not every Christian understands the doctrine or the explanation of the experience.

The subject may be stated as follows -

***#1 - Every unbeliever has one nature only, the nature inherited from Adam.***

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The Bible describes the unregenerate man as 'the natural man' -

**1 Corinthians 2:14** - *But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*

- man as he is by nature and apart from Christ.

***#2 - When an unbeliever believes and is born again, he received a completely new nature.***

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He received his old nature by his natural birth and through his union with Adam. But, by his second birth, he receives a new nature through his union with the last Adam -

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

Thus, he has two natures within - the old and the new.

***#3 - When we are born again, we receive the new nature, but we do not lose the old nature.***

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It is important to note this. While we are in the body, we shall never lose the old Adamic nature. There will always be two natures within us - the old and the new.

***#4 - These two natures within every believer are the exact opposite of each other.***

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One is wholly bad and the other is wholly good.

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**1. THE OLD NATURE.**

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Every child born by human generation has the old nature which, in the New Testament, is sometimes called 'the old man'. It is also described as 'the flesh'.

**Romans 6:6** - *Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.*

**Romans 7:18** - *For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.*

**Romans 8:8** - *So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.*

**Ephesians 4:22** - *That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;*

**Colossians 3:9** - *Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds;*

The old nature is Adam's nature.

God created Adam with a sinless nature.

Then sin entered and Adam fell and became spiritually dead and in bondage to Satan.

The result?

**Romans 5:12** - *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:*

***a. The old nature, therefore, is an inherited nature.***

We receive our nature from our parents, who received theirs from their parents.....so there is our family tree! Not one of us should be proud of our ancestry.

Compare -

**John 3:6** - *That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.*

**Psalms 51:5a** - *Behold, I was shapen in iniquity,.....*

**c.     *The old nature is a fallen nature.***

God says this.

**Genesis 1:26-27** - *And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. 27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.*

**Genesis 2:16-17** - *And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: 17 But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.*

Read **Genesis 3:12-24** and compare with -

**Ecclesiastes 7:20** - *For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.*

**Isaiah 53:6** - *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.*

**Romans 3:10** - *As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:*

**Romans 3:23** - *For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;*

1.     The old nature is wholly corrupt and evil.

**Genesis 6:5** - *And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.*

**Genesis 6:11-12** - *The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. 12 And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth.*

Compare -

**Isaiah 1:5-6** - *Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint.*

*6 From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment.*

**Jeremiah 17:9** - *The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?*

**Mark 7:21-23** - *For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders,*

*22 Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness:*

*23 All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.*

See how “the old man” is described in -

**Ephesians 4:22** - *That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;*

2. The old nature is weak and frail.

It is marked by infirmity, sorrow, weakness, sickness and death.

**Job 10:20** - *Are not my days few? cease then, and let me alone, that I may take comfort a little,*

**Job 14:1-2** - *Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble.*

*2 He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not.*

**Psalms 90:9-10** - *For all our days are passed away in thy wrath: we spend our years as a tale that is told.*

*10 The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away.*

**Isaiah 40:6-8** - *The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field:*

*7 The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the spirit of the LORD bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass.*

*8 The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever.*

**f. The old nature is unchangeable.**

We can do nothing to improve or change it. It can be educated or dressed up, but it is



still evil and corrupt.

Compare -

**Job 14:4** - *Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one.*

**Jeremiah 13:23** - *Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil.*

7. The old nature is condemned by God.

God has pronounced the death sentence against our inherited evil nature.

**Romans 8:3** - *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:*

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## 1. THE NEW NATURE.

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The moment we believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, we are born again, we receive a new nature.

What is this nature like?

1. The new nature is an entirely new nature.

It is not the old nature improved or patched up.

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

### ***b. The new nature is the divine nature.***

It is the very nature of God Himself.

Compare -

**John 1:12-13** - (notice the last three words) - *But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:  
13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.*

**2 Peter 1:3-4** - *According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:*

*4 Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.*

This new nature within is the very life of the risen Lord Who is upon the throne of God. This life is imparted to us by the Holy Spirit.

3. The new nature is a spiritual nature.

Compare -

**John 3:6** - *That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.*

**1 Corinthians 15:45-50** - *And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.*

*46 Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual.*

*47 The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven.*

*48 As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly.*

*49 And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.*

*50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.*

**d. The new nature is absolutely holy.**

This must be so if it is the divine nature.

5. The new nature cannot sin.

**1 John 5:18** - *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.*

What does this mean?

It means that one who is born again does not habitually sin. It also means that that which is born of God cannot sin.

**1 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.*

Why, then, do Christians sin?

Because of the old nature!

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## 2. THE CO-EXISTENCE OF THE OLD AND THE NEW NATURES.

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6. Both natures co-exist in every believer.

Within every Christian is “the old man” and “the new man”.

The Bible does not teach, nor is it possible for anyone to experience the eradication of the old nature.

The old Adamic nature will be in us until the Lord comes and bestows upon us a body corresponding to our new nature.

**Philippians 3:20-21** - *For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:*

*21 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.*

7. Both natures are in constant opposition.

Compare -

**Romans 7:19-24** - *For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.*

*20 Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.*

*21 I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.*

*22 For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:*

*23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.*

*24 O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*

**Galatians 5:17** - *For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.*

8. Both natures produce an entirely different kind of fruit.

**Galatians 5:19-22** - *Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,*

*20 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,*

*21 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.*

*22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness,*

*faith,*

Notice -

**Galatians 5:19** - .....*the works of the flesh are manifest,.....*

and -

**Galatians 5:22** - .....*the fruit of the Spirit.....*

9. Both natures must be treated differently.

Here is the way of victory over the old nature!

(1) ***The old nature must be starved. The new nature must be fed.***

**Romans 13:14** - *But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.*

Read an evil book and you feed the old nature. Read God's Word and you feed the new nature.

(2) ***The old nature must be 'put off'.***

**Ephesians 4:22-24** - *That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;  
23 And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;  
24 And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.*

**Ephesians 4:22** - .....*put off.....*

**Ephesians 4:24** - ....*put on.....*

**The new nature must be 'put on'.**

**Colossians 3:8-10** - *But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.*

9 *Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds;*  
10 *And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:*

**Colossians 3:8** - .....*put off*.....

**Colossians 3:10** - .....*put on*.....

(3) ***The old nature must be counted as dead; the new as alive.***

Compare -

**Romans 6:11** - *Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

**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.*

When Jesus died, in the purpose and estimate of God, He put to death our old nature. Is our old nature, then, actually dead? No! But we are to reckon it so and treat 'the old man' as dead and buried!

**Romans 7:24-25** - *O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*

25 *I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.*

The writer cries out in despair - "Who shall deliver me? He answers his own question - "I thank God through Jesus Christ!"

Now look and dwell deeply upon -

**Romans 8:12-13** - *Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh.*

13 *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.*

# ***THE UNPARDONABLE SIN***

## **STUDY 4**

**Scripture Portion: Matthew 12:30-42**

God's *Good News* is that there is a full and free forgiveness offered to all though the merits of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

The heart of the gospel is summed up in -

**Acts 13:38** - *Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins:*

In this study, however, we are to think of the one great sin *for which there is no forgiveness*, either in this world or in the world to come.

That there is such a sin is clear.

**Matthew 12:31-32** - *Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.*

*32 And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.*

There are four reasons for including this subject in these studies on ***Things Hard To Be Understood***.

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**#1** - This subject forms a very definite part of biblical revelation. We must proclaim (and study and receive) the whole counsel of God.

**Acts 20:27** - *For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.*

**#2** - There is so much confusion and misunderstanding about this subject. Many dear folk, who certainly have not committed this sin, fear that perhaps they have.

Let us state at this point that -

*anyone who is at all concerned that he may have committed this sin can rest assured that he has not done so, for his very concern is an evidence that the Holy Spirit is still at work in his heart!*

**#3** - The possibility of committing the unpardonable sin shows how false is the teaching

of Universalism and future probation.

Many teach that, if we die without Christ, we shall have a second chance of being saved. But the Bible does not offer any such hope. Our Lord's teaching about the sin for which there is no forgiveness settles this once and for all.

#4 - Many who are in danger of committing this sin must be warned. This sin is a sin against the Holy Spirit.

We are living in the dispensation of the Spirit. There is a very real sense, therefore, in which there is a greater danger of this being committed today even than there was when our Lord Jesus was here in the flesh.

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## 1. WHAT IS THIS UNPARDONABLE SIN?

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Let us answer this question negatively and positively.

It is not lying.

Untruthfulness is very common today, but this is not the unpardonable sin.

It is not swearing and unclean talk.

Thank God, there is forgiveness for this sin!

**c. *It is not drunkenness.***

Many drunkards have been saved. There is a full and free forgiveness for the alcoholic who will come to the Lord in penitence and trust in His redeeming blood for cleansing and forgiveness.

10. It is not any sexual sin.

Some sins are too horrible to be mentioned in this Bible study, but all of them may be forgiven if the guilty one will come to the Saviour.

**e. *It is not theft.***

Matthew and Zacchaeus were both thieves in the sense that they had to be dishonest in order to conduct their tax-gathering successfully, but they were both saved by the Lord Jesus - as multitudes of other thieves and robbers have been forgiven, cleansed and welcomed by Him.

6. It is not blasphemy.

Before his conversion, Paul was a blasphemer.

**1 Timothy 1:13** - *Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.*

But, how wonderfully he was saved!

**g. It is not murder.**

David was guilty of murder.

**2 Samuel 11:15-17** - *And he wrote in the letter, saying, Set ye Uriah in the forefront of the hottest battle, and retire ye from him, that he may be smitten, and die.*

*16 And it came to pass, when Joab observed the city, that he assigned Uriah unto a place where he knew that valiant men were.*

*17 And the men of the city went out, and fought with Joab: and there fell some of the people of the servants of David; and Uriah the Hittite died also.*

**2 Samuel 12:9** - *Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the LORD, to do evil in his sight? thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon.*

But he was forgiven and is now with Christ.

We are not making light of any of these sins, but we are emphasizing that they are not separately or together, the unpardonable sin. Yet it must be said that, if these sins are not forsaken, any one of them may lead to the unpardonable sin.

***Any sin becomes unpardonable if the one who commits it refuses to confess and forsake it.***

**Proverbs 28:13** - *He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.*

All the above-mentioned sins may be forgiven.

What, then, is the sin against the Holy Ghost?

***It is the persistent, wilful rejection of the Holy Spirit's testimony concerning the Lord Jesus Christ.***

**1 Corinthians 12:3** - *.....no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.*

We are living in the dispensation of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit convinces men concerning the person of Christ, the value of His finished work and of their need of Him as Saviour and Lord.



It is, therefore, obvious that to reject the testimony of the Holy Spirit means that we place ourselves beyond the possibility of salvation.

No one can be saved without the operation and activity of the Holy Spirit. No one can come to Christ unless He draws him.

**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.*

So, to reject the Holy Spirit's testimony means to reject Christ, that means, to reject salvation. When one has done that, he has committed the unpardonable sin.

When anyone persists in rejecting the testimony of the Holy Spirit to the person and power of the Lord Jesus, then he commits this sin.

*The unpardonable sin is committed when anyone persistently, consciously and wilfully -*

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**#1 Resists the strivings of the Holy Spirit.**

**Genesis 6:3** - *And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.*

**#2 Refuses to humble himself before the Lord.**

**Exodus 10:3** - *And Moses and Aaron came in unto Pharaoh, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD God of the Hebrews, How long wilt thou refuse to humble thyself before me? let my people go, that they may serve me.*

**#3 Refuses to be drawn to the Saviour.**

**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.*

**#4 Neglects God's great salvation.**

**Hebrews 2:3** - *How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him;*

**#5 Hardens his heart against the voice of the Lord.**

**Hebrews 3:7-8** - *Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice,*

8 *Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness:*

The unpardonable sin is not an isolated act. It is a persistent attitude.

It is not the sin of ignorance. It is a sin against light.

**John 3:19** - *And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.*

It is committed when the Holy Spirit reveals to us the Saviour and our need of Him and, when seeing the Lord Jesus and being conscious of our need of Him, we refuse to trust Him and to make Him Lord and Saviour of our lives.

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## 2. WHY IS THIS SIN UNPARDONABLE?

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There must always be two parties to forgiveness - the forgiver and the forgiven one.

This sin is unforgivable because it rejects forgiveness.

A man was trapped at the top of a burning building. The fire brigade erected a net into which he could jump. They called to him to jump, but he refused.

They told him that the net would hold him, but he replied that he did not wish to be saved.

They shouted, "You fool! Jump!" But he refused and died in the flames.

That is the unpardonable sin. Everyone who is not a Christian is in danger of hell.

Christ is the Rescuer. He had provided the "net" - the gospel, the way of salvation. He appeals to them to trust Him to deliver them.

If they refuse His salvation, then they must die in their sins.

**John 8:21** - *Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come.*

**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.*

They must die unforgiven and unpardoned. They must perish in the flames of His wrath.

Thank God, no one need commit the unpardonable sin. No one need live without Christ or die without Him! Even now the Holy Spirit pleads with every impenitent soul to come to the Lord Jesus Christ and trust Him as Saviour.

**Isaiah 1:18** - *Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.*

**2 Corinthians 6:2** - *(For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.)*

**Hebrews 12:25** - *See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven:*

The Lord's gracious invitation is still sounding forth to all who have ears to hear and hearts to accept.

**Isaiah 55:6** - *Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near:*

**Revelation 22:17** - *And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.*

# ***SUFFERING: MYSTERY OR MINISTRY?***

## **STUDY 5**

**Scripture Portion: 1 Peter 1:1-8**

One of life's mysteries which is hard to be understood is that of suffering. The presence of so much suffering in the world and in the lives of God's children presents great moral and ethical problems.

Even to the Christian there is a strong element of mystery in the question of suffering, though to the enlightened child of God, it is viewed not so much as a mystery as a ministry.

The Christian comes to see that God, Who is over all and guides the lives of His children, has a gracious and wonderful purpose in permitting them to suffer.

In this study our theme will be *the ministry of suffering*. We shall centre our study upon and around -

**1 Peter 1:6-8** - *Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations:*

*7 That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:*

*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:*

Peter has much to say on this subject in his epistles.

In these three verses we have a summary of teaching.

Consider J. B. Phillips' helpful paraphrase of them.

*1 Peter 1:6 At present you are temporarily harassed by all kinds of trials and temptations.*

*7 This is no accident--it happens to prove your faith, which is infinitely more valuable than gold, and gold, as you know, even though it is ultimately perishable, must be purified by fire.*

*8 This proving of your faith is planned to bring you praise and honor and glory in the day when Jesus Christ reveals Himself.*

Let us draw out the teaching from these three verses. Notice -

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IN THE LIFE OF EVERY CHRISTIAN THERE ARE PERIODS AND EXPERIENCES OF SUFFERING AND TRIAL.

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Personal experience confirms this. The Word of God definitely affirms it.

**1 Peter 1:6-7** - *Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations:*

*7 That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:*

There are two words here which should be underlined, “*heaviness*” and “*trial*”.

The child of God shares the sufferings and trials common to mankind. There is no immunity because we are Christians.

**Job 5:7** - *Yet man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward.*

**Job 14:1** - *Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble.*

But the Christian also experiences sufferings and trials because he is a Christian.

**Matthew 10:25** - *It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household?*

**John 15:18-19** - *If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. 19 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 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.*

**Philippians 1:29** - *For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;*

**1 Peter 4:12-13** - *Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:*

*13 But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.*

See what is said in -

**Psalm 34:19** - *Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all.*

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THESE PERIODS OF SUFFERING AND TRIAL ARE INTERMITTENT. THEY COME AND GO.

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Notice the words in -

**1 Peter 1:6** - *.....for a season.....*

Broadly speaking, this refers to our whole lifetime, but, the idea in the word “season” is, as J. B. Phillips suggests - “At present you are *temporarily* harassed.”

What a mercy it is that suffering does not constantly rest upon us in all its weight and heaviness! The expression “for a season” means “for a short period”.

**2 Corinthians 4:17** - *For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;*

Life is made up not only of shadow but of sunshine as well!

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THESE PERIODS AND EXPERIENCES OF SUFFERING AND TRIAL ARE PURPOSEFUL.

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For the child of God there is a ministry in suffering - “this proving of your faith is *planned*”.

Notice the words in -

**1 Peter 1:6** - *.....if need be.....*

Peter does not say, “if by chance.....”, because there is no such thing as chance or accident in the life of the Christian. We are assured of this in -

**Romans 8:28** - *And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.*

This being so, the question is raised: If God has a purpose in allowing suffering in the experience of His children, what is His purpose? Why does He allow us to suffer?

To prove the reality of our faith.

**1 Peter 1:7** - *That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory*

*at the appearing of Jesus Christ:*

or the testing of your faith. God allows us to suffer to see if our faith is genuine.

Compare -

**Genesis 22:1** - (the word “tempt” means “test”) - *And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am.*

**Job 13:15** - *Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him: but I will maintain mine own ways before him.*

To strengthen our faith.

When our faith is tested, it is deepened and strengthened.

Notice the ‘degrees of faith’ in the following -

**Mark 4:40** - *And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?*

**Matthew 16:8** - *Which when Jesus perceived, he said unto them, O ye of little faith, why reason ye among yourselves, because ye have brought no bread?*

**Matthew 15:28** - *Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.*

**Matthew 8:10** - *When Jesus heard it, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.*

**Acts 6:5** - *And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch:*

**Romans 4:19-20** - *And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb:*

*20 He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God;*

To discipline and educate us.

**Hebrews 5:8** - *Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;*

**Hebrews 12:7** - *If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?*

Compare -

**1 Peter 4:17-19** - *For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? 18 And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?*

*19 Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.*

**d. To humble us.**

**Deuteronomy 8:2-3** - *And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no.*

*3 And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live.*

Compare -

**2 Corinthians 12:1-9**

7. To purify us.

**1 Peter 1:7** - *That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:*

Compare -

**1 Peter 4:1-2** - *Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin;*

*2 That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.*

8. To qualify us to help others.

Study -

**2 Corinthians 1:3-7** - *Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort;*



4 *Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.*

5 *For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.*

6 *And whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation.*

7 *And our hope of you is stedfast, knowing, that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation.*

**g. *To prove to us the sufficiency of His grace and to make us long for heaven.***

Compare -

**2 Corinthians 9:8** - *And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work:*

**2 Corinthians 12:9** - *And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.*

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

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**THESE PERIODS OF SUFFERINGS AND TRIALS ARE VARIED.**

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Peter speaks of -

**1 Peter 1:6** - *..... manifold temptations (or testings).*

There is a diversity about them. Suffering may affect us *physically*, in the form of sickness, infirmity or weakness.

It may affect us *emotionally, mentally* or *spiritually*.

It may be in the domestic realm.

Some Christians suffer and are tested by poverty, others by prosperity; some by having to take a lower position, and others by having to assume heavy responsibilities.

But all the manifold testings that God permits in the lives of His children are purposeful and are, therefore, for His glory.

Compare -

**John 9:3** - *Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.*

**John 11:40** - *Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?*

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## **5. THESE PERIODS OF SUFFERING AND TRIAL ARE SOMETIMES VERY SEVERE.**

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**1 Peter 1:7** - *.....though it be tried with fire,.....*

Peter speaks about being 'tried with fire', which suggests the idea of severity. Thank God, no testing will ever be so severe that we cannot bear it!

**1 Corinthians 10:13** - *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.*

Let it be stated here that God calls some of His children to a special ministry of suffering. Just as some are called to the ministry of the Word or to the ministry of prayer, so, undoubtedly, others are called to glorify God in a special ministry of suffering.

**Acts 9:15-16** - *But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel:  
16 For I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.*

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## **6. THESE TRIALS AND SUFFERINGS THAT WE EXPERIENCE ARE ALL RELATED TO THE FUTURE.**

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**1 Peter 1:7** - *.....the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire,*

Peter tells us that our trials are very precious because, if they are patiently borne, they will bring -

**1 Peter 1:7** - *.....praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:*

This is something we are to accept by faith.

**2 Corinthians 4:17** - *For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;*

One day we are going to look back upon all our trials and sufferings and see the reason for them and thank God for them.

**John 13:7** - *Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter.*

Now we can only thank Him for them by faith; then it will be by feeling and by sight!

**James 1:12** - *Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.*

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## **7. THE SECRET OF VICTORY, PATIENCE AND ENDURANCE IN SUFFERING IS IN AN EVER-PRESENT VISION OF THE LORD HIMSELF.**

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Compare -

**1 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:*

**2 Corinthians 4:16-18** - *For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.*

*17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;*

*18 While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.*

Let us not dwell upon the *mystery* of suffering but, by the grace of God, let us rejoice in the *ministry* of suffering.

# ***DOES GOD HEAL TODAY?***

## **STUDY 6**

**Scripture Portion: James 5:10-20**

The Bible has much to say about bodily healing.

In this study we shall look at -

**James 5:13-16** - *Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms.*

*14 Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord:*

*15 And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.*

*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.*

*Notice three important things.*

***#1 - It applies to us today as much as it did to those to whom it was first written.***

It was written to -

**James 1:1** - *.....the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting.*

Some have said that all that James has recorded is only for the Jewish believers.

But read -

**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.*

***#2 - Much wrong teaching has been based upon these verses,***

The scriptures have often been wrested -

**2 Peter 3:16** - *As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.*

Some have taught that it is always God's will to heal and that no Christian need suffer.

***#3 - This brief portion of scripture answers all the questions which we want answered regarding the subject of healing.***

For instance: Does God heal today? Does He always heal? Does healing depend on our faith? Is there any age limit in healing? Should we anoint the sick? Is it wrong to seek medical help when we are ill? .....

What should a child of God do in a time of sickness or infirmity?

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EVERY TIME OF SICKNESS OR AFFLICTION SHOULD, FOR THE CHRISTIAN,  
BE A SPECIAL OCCASION FOR PRAYER.

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**James 5:13** - *Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms.*

Sickness should be an occasion for prayer. Just as when we are happy we sing, so, if we are sick, we should pray.

This does not mean that in every time of sickness we are to ask for healing. It means that we should relate our sickness to the Lord and, by faith, place ourselves in the center of His will.

The greatest blessing that can come to us in sickness is not physical relief but spiritual blessing. Therefore, when sickness comes, our first reaction should be to turn to the Lord.

Matthew Henry rightly says, "One of the designs of affliction is to lead us to the throne of grace."

Sometimes -

**Psalms 23:2** - *He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.*

In a lying down position we can the more easily look up into His face.

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AFTER PRIVATE AND INDIVIDUAL PRAYER, THE PRAYER FELLOWSHIP OF  
OTHERS MAY BE SOUGHT.

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**James 5:14** - *Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let*

*them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord:*

Notice the word “let”. This method is commended, but not commanded.

It is a great thing to be able to send for Christian brethren in order that prayer may be offered for us! Indeed, we may be too ill to pray for ourselves. There is a very great strength in united prayer.

**Matthew 18:19** - *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.*

Compare -

**Acts 12:5** - *Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him.*

But notice, so far, there is no instruction to pray for healing.

Look again at -

**James 5:14** - *Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord:*

We are invited to send for the elders of the church that they may pray over us, anointing us with oil in the name of the Lord - not necessarily praying that He will heal!

What, then, should be the attitude of the elders and of the sick person?

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### **3. THE EYE OF FAITH MUST LOOK TO THE LORD ALONE FOR THE REVELATION OF HIMSELF AND OF HIS WILL.**

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**James 5:14** - *.....let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord:*

Oil is a type of the Holy Spirit.

Every spiritual blessing we receive for the enlightenment of our minds, the strengthening of our bodies, the comforting of our hearts is conveyed to us by the Holy Spirit.

Then why use oil?

Anointing with oil is not necessary for healing, but it is an act by which the pray-ers express their faith in God visibly and show they are trusting Him to perfect His will in the

life of the sick person.

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4. IF IT IS GOD'S WILL TO HEAL IN ANSWER TO PRAYER, A DEFINITE AND SPECIFIC GIFT OF FAITH FOR THE HEALING OF THE BODY WILL BE GIVEN TO THE PRAY-ERS.

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**James 5:15** - *And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.*

When 'the prayer of faith' is offered, the Lord always raises up the sick person. But, 'the prayer of faith' cannot be offered at will, because it is not always God's will to heal.

If it is His will, those who are praying will be enabled by the Holy Spirit to pray 'the prayer of faith'. If it is not His will, it will not be possible to pray this prayer.

Job prayed for deliverance, but see -

**James 5:11** - *Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.*

Paul prayed for the removal of his physical infirmity, but see -

**2 Corinthians 12:7-10** - *And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.*

*8 For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.*

*9 And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.*

*10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.*

Read and compare -

**Philippians 2:25-30** - *Yet I supposed it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, and companion in labour, and fellowsoldier, but your messenger, and he that ministered to my wants.*

*26 For he longed after you all, and was full of heaviness, because that ye had heard that he had been sick.*

*27 For indeed he was sick nigh unto death: but God had mercy on him; and not on him only, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow.*

*28 I sent him therefore the more carefully, that, when ye see him again, ye may rejoice,*



*and that I may be the less sorrowful.*

*29 Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness; and hold such in reputation:*

*30 Because for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death, not regarding his life, to supply your lack of service toward me.*

**1 Timothy 5:23** - *Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities.*

**2 Timothy 4:20** - *Erastus abode at Corinth: but Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick.*

Sometimes it is not God's will to heal in answer to prayer.

By faith, some are killed -

**Acts 12:2** - *And he killed James the brother of John with the sword.*

some are delivered -

**Acts 12:8-11** - *And the angel said unto him, Gird thyself, and bind on thy sandals. And so he did. And he saith unto him, Cast thy garment about thee, and follow me.*

*9 And he went out, and followed him; and wist not that it was true which was done by the angel; but thought he saw a vision.*

*10 When they were past the first and the second ward, they came unto the iron gate that leadeth unto the city; which opened to them of his own accord: and they went out, and passed on through one street; and forthwith the angel departed from him.*

*11 And when Peter was come to himself, he said, Now I know of a surety, that the Lord hath sent his angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews.*

some 'escaped the edge of the sword' -

**Hebrews 11:34** - *.....escaped the edge of the sword,.....*

and others 'were sawn asunder'-

**Hebrews 11:37** - *.....they were sawn asunder,.....*

It is often God's will to heal, but it is not *always* so. When it is His will to grant healing, the gift of faith will be imparted to those who pray.

'The prayer of faith' is a certain kind of prayer. To claim healing does not necessarily bring healing.

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## **5. THE USE OF NATURAL AND REMEDIAL MEANS SHOULD NOT BE RULED OUT WHEN HEALING IS**

## **BEING SOUGHT.**

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Healing can come -

supernaturally, by a direct touch from the Lord.

- b. by natural means, through rest, sleep, food, change of air.
3. God may use remedial means, either medical or surgical.

It is not wrong to call in a doctor. On the contrary, it is wise to do so.

It is not for the patient to decide whether he is to be healed in this way or that, but the choice lies with the Great Physician Who never makes a mistake and is perfecting His will in the lives of His children.

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6. **THOUGH SICKNESS IS NOT NECESSARILY THE RESULT OF SIN, IT MAY BE SO.**

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Thus, in every time of sickness we should search our hearts to see if there is any unconfessed or unrenounced sin that is hindering God's blessing.

**James 5:15-16** - *And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.*

*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.*

are very searching. They indicate not a priestly but a mutual confession.

Sometimes sickness comes as the result of undisciplined living.

**1 Corinthians 11:29-32** - *For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.*

*30 For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.*

*31 For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.*

*32 But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.*

**Proverbs 28:13** - *He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.*

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7. THERE IS NO LIMIT TO WHAT THE LORD CAN AND MAY DO IN ANSWER TO FERVENT, PERSISTENT AND BELIEVING PRAYER.

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**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.*

encourages us to believe this.

God does hear and answer prayer. He does heal the sick when it is His gracious will. His will is best. If it is His will for us to suffer, then to be healed would be to have His second best.

**1 Peter 4:19** - *Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.*

# ***WHAT IS GOD'S FUTURE PROGRAM?***

## **STUDY 7**

**Scripture Portion: Isaiah 35:1-10**

Every thinking Christian must realize that God is working to a program which He has revealed in His Word. However, there are problems and difficulties that arise in connection with the subject of prophecy, though we shall allow no element of speculation to enter into this study.

Several vital, connected and progressive lines of teaching are included in the question:

*What is God's future program?*

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### ***#1 - God is sovereign in the affairs of this world.***

He is almighty, over all and will have the final word.

He is sovereign in the world, in the life and destiny of the nations and in the lives of men and women.

### ***#2 - God is active.***

He is doing something. Some imagine He is not concerned about the affairs of men and the destiny of the world - but this is not true.

### ***#3 - God is not only active, but He is working to a plan and a program.***

These are carefully ordained, prescribed and mapped out order of events. There is nothing haphazard about them.

**Acts 15:18** - *Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.*

### ***#4 - God has revealed His program in the Bible which is His authentic, authoritative Word.***

The Bible is absolutely reliable. It contains history and prophecy. History is fulfilled prophecy. Prophecy is unfulfilled history.

The Bible, therefore, not only assures us that God is working to a program, but it reveals

that program to us.

Compare -

**Amos 3:7** - *Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.*

**Genesis 18:17** - *And the LORD said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do;*

At least two-thirds of the Bible consists of prophecy, most of which awaits fulfillment.

***#5 - All God's prophecies relating to His future program will be literally fulfilled.***

Prophecies relating to the coming of the Messiah, the Jews, the Gentiles and the Church, written hundreds of years before their fulfillment, have been fulfilled to the very letter.

Therefore, it is not too much to believe and to expect that the unfulfilled prophecies will also be literally fulfilled.

***#6 - Only as we study the prophecies in God's Word can we know His future program.***

We often err because we do not know the scriptures.

**Matthew 22:29** - *Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.*

In the Bible, God has given us His plan of future events. If we would understand His future program, we must study these prophecies.

***#7 - All understanding of God's future program will powerfully influence character and conduct.***

Compare -

**Romans 15:4** - *For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.*

**Daniel 10:19** - *And said, O man greatly beloved, fear not: peace be unto thee, be strong, yea, be strong. And when he had spoken unto me, I was strengthened, and said, Let my lord speak; for thou hast strengthened me.*

**Revelation 1:3** - *Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.*

***What is God's future program?***

It is a program relating to the Church, Israel, Satan, the Earth and the Lord Jesus.

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GOD'S FUTURE PROGRAM INCLUDES THE CALLING OUT, THE COMPLETION, THE REMOVAL AND THE GLORIFICATION OF THE CHURCH.

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By the word "Church", we mean all who have been born again of God's Spirit -

**John 3:5** - *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.*

redeemed by the precious blood of Christ -

**1 Peter 1:18-19** - *Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers;*

*19 But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:*

baptized into the body of Christ -

**1 Corinthians 12:13** - *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.*

and are thereby constituted members of the true Church.

What is God doing now in relation to the Church?

The Holy Spirit is calling out from the nations of the world an elect company of people - Jews and Gentiles -

**Acts 15:14** - *Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name.*

When the Lord Jesus comes again, every believer, (those who have died and those who are living), will be raised and raptured into His presence.

**1 Corinthians 15:51-53** - *Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,*

*52 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.*

53 *For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.*

**1 Thessalonians 4:16-17** - *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:*

*17 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.*

Then the Marriage Supper of the Lamb will take place -

**Revelation 19:7-9** - *Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.*

*8 And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.*

*9 And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.*

and the Judgment Seat of Christ when believers will be rewarded for disciplined living and faithful service -

**Romans 14:10** - *But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.*

**1 Corinthians 3:12-15** - *Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;*

*13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.*

*14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.*

*15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.*

**2 Corinthians 5:10** - *For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.*

God's plan is that all who belong to Him will not only be with Him -

**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 lovedst me before the foundation of the world.*

but also be like Him -

**1 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.*

**Ephesians 5:17** - *Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.*

**Philippians 3:20** - *For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:*

**Jude 24** - *Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,*

All this is summed up in -

**Romans 8:30** - *Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.*

for in God's purpose, all whom He has predestinated, called and justified, He has also glorified!

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**GOD'S FUTURE PROGRAM INCLUDES THE REGATHERING, THE RESTORATION AND THE REVIVAL OF ISRAEL.**

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For hundreds of years God's ancient people have been scattered throughout the world, twelve million of whom are today still scattered over the earth. But they are gradually returning to Israel and will ultimately all return to their own land.

Why?

Because God's Word declares that -

**Isaiah 11:11-12** - *And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea.*

*12 And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.*

**Jeremiah 23:3-8** - *And I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all countries whither I have driven them, and will bring them again to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase.*

*4 And I will set up shepherds over them which shall feed them: and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall they be lacking, saith the LORD.*

*5 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth.*



6 *In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.*

7 *Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that they shall no more say, The LORD liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt;*

8 *But, The LORD liveth, which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land.*

**Ezekiel 37:21-25** - *And say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land:*

22 *And I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all: and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all:*

23 *Neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions: but I will save them out of all their dwellingplaces, wherein they have sinned, and will cleanse them: so shall they be my people, and I will be their God.*

24 *And David my servant shall be king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd: they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them.*

25 *And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, even they, and their children, and their children's children for ever: and my servant David shall be their prince for ever.*

**Matthew 24:31** - *And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.*

We read in -

**Genesis 12:1-4** - *Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee:*

2 *And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:*

3 *And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.*

4 *So Abram departed, as the LORD had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran.*

**Genesis 13:13-17** - *But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly.*

14 *And the LORD said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward:*

15 *For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever.*

16 *And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered.*

17 *Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give*

*it unto thee.*

**Genesis 15:1-7** - *After these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward.*

*2 And Abram said, Lord GOD, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus?*

*3 And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir.*

*4 And, behold, the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir.*

*5 And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be.*

*6 And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.*

*7 And he said unto him, I am the LORD that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it.*

**Genesis 17:1-8** - *And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect.*

*2 And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly.*

*3 And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying,*

*4 As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations.*

*5 Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee.*

*6 And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee.*

*7 And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee.*

*8 And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.*

His covenant promise to Abraham concerning the nation of Israel and His Word will be literally fulfilled.

But, He is not only going to regather and restore every Jew to the Promised Land, He is going to revive Israel. When the Lord Jesus comes again, Israel's time of blindness will be over -

**Romans 11:25-27** - *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.*

*26 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:*

27 *For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.*

When they see the Lord Jesus, they will recognize Him as their true Messiah.

**Zechariah 12:10** - *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.*

As an illustration, read **Genesis 45:1-15**.

Yes, God has a wonderful future for Israel!

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GOD'S FUTURE PROGRAM INCLUDES THE BANISHMENT OF SIN, SORROW,  
EVERY EVIL THING, AND OF SATAN HIMSELF.

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When the Lord Jesus died upon the cross, He cried -

**John 19:30** - *.....It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.*

By His death and resurrection, He gained the victory over sin, death, hell and the devil. His victory will ultimately mean that all that has come as the result of sin will be finally, fully and forever banished from the earth.

Is this wishful thinking?

No, thank God!

Many Old Testament prophecies assure us that these things will be. The book of the **Revelation** tells us that the devil himself, the instigator of all evil, will be cast into the lake of fire.

**Revelation 20:10** - *And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.*

**Revelation 20:14-15** - *And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.*

*15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.*

**Revelation 21:8** - *But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.*

Nothing can be right upon the earth while Satan is free. But God's program is to banish Satan and all his wicked works and followers.

**Revelation 21:4** - *And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.*

**Revelation 22:1-5** - *And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.*

*2 In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.*

*3 And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him:*

*4 And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads.*

*5 And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.*

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#### **4. GOD'S FUTURE PROGRAM INCLUDES THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NEW, BEAUTIFIED EARTH "WHEREIN DWELLETH RIGHTEOUS- NESS".**

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Read **Isaiah 35**.

Compare with -

**Isaiah 55:12-13** - *For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.*

*13 Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the LORD for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.*

Is it wishful thinking that a day will come when there is no more curse upon the earth?

No. God has promised that the former things shall pass away and that there will be "a new heaven and a new earth". This old earth is to be burned up.

Compare -

**2 Peter 3:10** - *But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.*

**Isaiah 65:17** - *For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.*

**2 Peter 3:13** - *Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.*

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

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5. GOD'S FUTURE PROGRAM INCLUDES THE EXALTATION OF THE LORD JESUS, WHO WILL "SEE OF THE TRAVAIL OF HIS SOUL AND BE SATISFIED".

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**Isaiah 53:11** - *He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.*

Long ago it was recorded that the time would come when our blessed Lord, Who is now rejected by many, would be recognized and loved as King of kings and Lord of lords.

**1 Timothy 6:15** - *Which in his times he shall show, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords;*

Compare -

**Psalms 66:1-4** - *Make a joyful noise unto God, all ye lands:*

*2 Sing forth the honour of his name: make his praise glorious.*

*3 Say unto God, How terrible art thou in thy works! through the greatness of thy power shall thine enemies submit themselves unto thee.*

*4 All the earth shall worship thee, and shall sing unto thee; they shall sing to thy name. Selah.*

**Psalms 72:8-11** - *He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth.*

*9 They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him; and his enemies shall lick the dust.*

*10 The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts.*

*11 Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him.*

**Philippians 2:9-11** - *Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:*

*10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;*

*11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

**Revelation 5:12-14** - *Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.*

*13 And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.*

*14 And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.*

But the next great event will be the personal return of the Lord Jesus Himself.

**John 14:1-3** - *Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.*

*2 In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.*

*3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.*

**Acts 1:9-11** - *And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.*

*10 And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel;*

*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.*

**1 Thessalonians 4:16-17** - *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:*

*17 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.*

**Revelation 1:7** - *Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.*

Are you ready to meet Him?

As He says to you, "I am coming soon", do you answer, "Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!"?

**Revelation 22:20** - *He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.*

# ***REUNION AND RECOGNITION BEYOND THE VEIL***

## **STUDY 8**

**Scripture Portion: 1 Corinthians 13:1-13**

Of all the questions asked concerning heaven, probably the most frequently asked by God's people is: Shall we recognize each other there?

The Bible says - *Yes!*

What does God reveal in His Word about this?

In the Bible there are seven reasons for believing that we shall know and recognize each other in heaven.

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### **THE WORD OF GOD DEFINITELY IMPLIES IT.**

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**1 Corinthians 13:12** - *For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.*

gives a very strong implication that we shall know one another in heaven.

Paul, comparing the present with the future, reminds us that, in this life, our knowledge is limited, but that, when we enter the fuller life of heaven, those limitations will be removed.

This suggests that in heaven, we shall know each other in a fuller and a better way than we know each other on earth.

Is it conceivable that our capacities for knowledge and recognition of loved ones will diminish in heaven? Surely not!

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### **THE STORY OF THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS CONFIRMS IT.**

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This story, recorded in **Luke 16:19-31**, was related by our Lord. It lifts the veil of the after-life.

Three personalities are mentioned - the rich man, Lazarus and Abraham.

The point to notice is that they all recognized each other!

**Luke 16:23** - *And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.*

If lost souls have the power of recognition, how much more will saved souls be able to recognize each other!

Sometimes it is said that this story is only a parable, therefore the picture is only figurative. Even if that were so, figures represent facts.

Our Lord's parables were not related to mislead but to instruct and enforce heavenly truths upon the minds and hearts of His hearers.

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### **3. THE TRANSFIGURATION SCENE ILLUSTRATES IT.**

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In **Luke 9:28-36**, we read that Jesus took Peter, James and John on to the holy mount where He was transfigured before them. Suddenly, there appeared Moses and Elijah.

The disciples immediately recognized Moses, who had been dead 1500 years, and Elijah, who had been dead 900 years.

There is no suggestion that any introduction was made in order that Peter, James and John might know who these heavenly visitants were!

Here is a very strong suggestion of the way in which, when you and I, redeemed sinners, get to glory, we shall immediately have the power to recognize everyone there without being told who they are.

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### **4 THE NATURE OF HEAVEN REQUIRES IT.**

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Heaven is revealed in the New Testament as a social place, and we are social creatures.

Consider the following.

Heaven is the CHRISTIAN'S HOME.

Can you conceive of a home where those who live there do not know each other?

**2 Corinthians 5:6** - *Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord:*

**b. Heaven is the FATHER'S HOUSE.**

**John 14:2** - *In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.*

Can you imagine the children in the Father's house not being able to recognize and to know each other?

4. Heaven is spoken of as a FAMILY CIRCLE.

**Ephesians 3:15** - *Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,*

What a strange family this would be if the members had no power to recognize and to converse with one another!

**d. Heaven is described as a CITY.**

**Hebrews 11:10** - *For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.*

**Hebrews 12:22** - *But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels,*

Are the citizens in the heavenly city to be strangers one to another?

5. Heaven is a KINGDOM.

The King will be there. We shall see and recognize Him in all His beauty.

**Isaiah 33:17** - *Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty: they shall behold the land that is very far off.*

We shall be like Him.

**1 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.*

Shall we not recognize all the loyal subjects of the King also?

*f. Our NAMES are written in heaven.*

**Luke 10:20** - *Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.*

Names represent personalities so, if our names are in heaven, we are already known there. Shall we not be recognized there also?

7. Heaven is spoken of as a “BETTER COUNTRY”.

**Hebrews 11:16** - *But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.*

So we shall enjoy better knowledge and deeper fellowship with our loved ones in heaven than we do upon earth.

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5. THE APOSTLE PAUL ANTICIPATED IT.

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Several times in his writings, Paul tells us that the joy of heaven will be increased by the presence of his many friends, especially of those whom he had had the great joy and privilege of winning to Christ.

Compare -

**2 Corinthians 1:14** - *As also ye have acknowledged us in part, that we are your rejoicing, even as ye also are ours in the day of the Lord Jesus.*

**1 Thessalonians 2:19** - *For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?*

How could he write these things if he did not firmly believe that there would be a mutual recognition in heaven?

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6. THE BLESSED HOPE OF CHRIST'S RETURN ENSURES IT.

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**1 Thessalonians 4:15-18** - *For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.*

*16 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:*

*17 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.*

*18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.*

Paul wrote this comforting letter to the Thessalonian Christians because some of their loved ones had died. These young Christians were very concerned to know whether they would meet and recognize them again beyond the grave.

Paul wrote to assure them of the exact thing that would happen when the Lord returned. Yes, we shall be together with our loved ones. There would be little comfort in anticipation if it meant that being together we should not know or recognize them!

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## 7. THE RECOGNITION OF CHRIST SETTLES IT.

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The fact that the Lord Jesus rose again from the dead and was then recognized, absolutely guarantees that we shall be recognized and shall recognize each other when we have our new bodies.

Compare -

**1 Corinthians 15:6** - *After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep.*

**1 Corinthians 15:20** - *But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.*

**Philippians 3:21** - *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 are to have a body -

**Philippians 3:21** - *.....like unto his glorious body,.....*

Just as He was recognized in His resurrection body, so shall we be in our. Yes, the redeemed will recognize each other in heaven.

But - the important question is: Are you among the redeemed?

**1 Peter 1:18-19** - *Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers;*

*19 But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:*

Are you on the way to heaven?

**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.*

If not -

**Job 22:21** - *Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace: thereby good shall come unto thee.*

# ***THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY***

## **STUDY 9**

**Scripture Portion: 1 Corinthians 15:35-54**

One of the glorious truths revealed in God's Word is that concerning the resurrection of the body.

The apostle Paul has devoted a whole chapter in his letter to the Corinthians to the unfolding of this glorious theme.

**Read 1 Corinthians 15.**

In our Lord's day the Sadducees said that there was no resurrection from the dead.

**Matthew 22:23** - *The same day came to him the Sadducees, which say that there is no resurrection, and asked him,*

But see what Jesus said about this in -

**Matthew 22:29** - *Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.*

There are many Sadducees today - people who do not believe in the supernatural and who say, as one prominent theologian has said, "The resurrection of the body is an utter impossibility."

With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.

**Matthew 3:9** - *And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.*

**Matthew 19:26** - *But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.*

He made man out of the dust of the earth -

**Genesis 2:7** - *And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.*

raised the dead -

**John 11:43-44** - *And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.*

*44 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.*

made the leper whole -

**Luke 5:12-13** - *And it came to pass, when he was in a certain city, behold a man full of leprosy: who seeing Jesus fell on his face, and besought him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.*

*13 And he put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will: be thou clean. And immediately the leprosy departed from him.*

Can He not give us new and wonderful bodies in which to live in His presence through all eternity? Of course He can - and that is what He has promised!

### *Why do we believe in the resurrection of the body?*

#### ***#1 - Because of the constant testimony of the scriptures.***

Compare -

**Genesis 22:5** - *And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you.*

**Hebrews 11:19** - *Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.*

Then look up and compare -

**Job 19:25-27** - *For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth:*

*26 And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God:*

**Isaiah 26:19** - *Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.*

See also -

**Psalms 16:9** - *Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope.*

**Psalms 17:15** - *As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied,*

*when I awake, with thy likeness.*

**Daniel 12:1-3** - *And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.*

*2 And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.*

*3 And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.*

and read **John 11:21-46**.

## **#2 - Because of the personal testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ.**

This is important for He would not mislead us.

**John 5:28-29** - *Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice,*

*29 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.*

Compare -

**John 6:39-40** - *And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.*

*40 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.*

**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 6:54** - *Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.*

Then read -

**Luke 14:13-14** - *But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind:*

*14 And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.*

**Luke 20:35-36** - *But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the*



*resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage:  
36 Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.*

### **#3 - Because of the teaching of the apostles.**

See what Paul says about the resurrection of the body.

**Acts 24:15** - *And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.*

**1 Thessalonians 4:14-18** - *For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.*

*15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.*

*16 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:*

*17 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.*

*18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.*

**Philippians 3:10-11** - *That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;*

*11 If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.*

Also read **1 Corinthians 15:35-58**.

See also -

**Revelation 20:4-6** - *And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.*

*5 But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.*

*6 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.*

**Revelation 20:13** - *And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.*

### **#4 - Because of the scope of Christ's redemptive work.**

Read **Romans 8:11-23**

Compare with -

**2 Corinthians 5:1-4** - *For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.*

*2 For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven:*

*3 If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked.*

*4 For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.*

### **#5 - Because of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Himself.**

His was a bodily resurrection and we are to have a body like His.

**Luke 24:39** - *Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.*

**1 Corinthians 15:20** - *But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.*

**Philippians 3:20-21** - *For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:*

**1 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.*

### **#6 - Because recognition beyond the veil requires a body!**

Recognition requires some kind of visible form by which we shall be distinguishable!

**#7 - Because the indwelling Holy Spirit is God's guarantee that our bodies will be raised again.**

This is clearly emphasized in -

**Romans 8:11** - *But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.*

**2 Corinthians 5:5** - *Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also*

*hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit.*

The scriptures make it perfectly clear that there will be a literal resurrection of the bodies of all men -

**John 6:39-40** - *And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.*

*40 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.*

**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.*

***But the scriptures preserve an ominous silence about the future body of the unbeliever.***

What will the resurrection body of the believer be like? It will be like His body:

a real body -

**Luke 24:39** - *Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.*

recognizable -

**Luke 24:31** - *And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight.*

**John 20:16** - *Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master.*

and powerful -

**John 20:19** - *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.*

But the question is asked in -

**1 Corinthians 15:35** - *But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?*

Read the answer in **1 Corinthians 15:36-49**.

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**IT WILL BE THE SAME BODY, YET DIFFERENT.**

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This is made clear in -

**1 Corinthians 15:37-38** - *And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain:  
38 But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body.*

If wheat is sown, wheat will grow. If barley is sown, barley will grow, and so on. The new body will be the same body in that it will be absolutely identified with the body which has died.

If John Jones has been sown, it will be John Jones who will be raised. Yet it will be John Jones in a new body - the same, yet different!

Our Lord's body was the same in that it was recognizable and His disciples knew Him. Yet how different was that body! It was no longer weak and subject to human limitations. It was a strong, glorious body subject to new laws.

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## **2. IT WILL BE A GOD-GIVEN BODY SUITED TO OUR NEW ENVIRONMENT.**

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**1 Corinthians 15:38-41** - *But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body.*

*39 All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds.*

*40 There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another.*

*41 There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory.*

Just as God gave a body to Adam -

**Genesis 2:7** - *And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.*

and later to Eve -

**Genesis 2:21-22** - *And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof;*

*22 And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.*

so, at the resurrection, He is going to give a new body to every redeemed sinner, a body which is perfectly suited to the new life we are to live and to the new environment in which we are to live.

Just as the bird has a body fitted for flights in the air, a fish has a body fitted for life in water and an animal has a body fitted for life on land, so the child of God will have a body fitted for life in heaven with the Lord.

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### **3. IT WILL BE AN INCORRUPTIBLE BODY, NOT A CORRUPTIBLE BODY.**

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We are told this in -

**1 Corinthians 15:42** - *So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption:*

What is corruption?

It is the liability to decay, as every human body decays. It loses its bloom and powers. It becomes worn and wasted with disease.

Our new bodies in the resurrection will have no elements of corruption. Disease or death will never be able to touch these bodies, nor will they fail and lose their powers, faculties or senses.

We shall possess eternal, undecaying youth!

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### **4. IT WILL BE A GLORIOUS BODY AND UNMARKED BY DISHONOR.**

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**1 Corinthians 15:43** - *It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power:*

The word 'dishonor' implies sin. Our earthly bodies have been dishonored by sin and sin has brought disease, decay and death.

But - all this will be changed when we receive our new bodies. In them we shall not have the ability or the capacity to sin but only to serve the Lord in holiness through all eternity.

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### **5. IT WILL BE A POWERFUL BODY IN WHICH THERE IS NO WEAKNESS.**

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This is emphasized in -

**1 Corinthians 15:43** - *.....it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power:*

Our present bodies are weak and need constant care, rest, sleep and food.

Even then, with the years, they get weaker still and die.

One day they are going to be raised in power.

In our new bodies we shall never know fatigue or exhaustion.

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6. IT WILL BE A SPIRITUAL BODY, NOT A NATURAL BODY.

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**1 Corinthians 15:44-46** - *It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.*

*45 And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.*

*46 Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual.*

Just as animals have senses of which we human beings have no knowledge, so, in our new bodies, we will have new senses of which we have no knowledge at present.

The future bodies of God's children may have fifty senses instead of five!

Our present soul-bodies have five senses.

But our spirit-bodies will have senses so much grander, larger in scope and mightier in power that we can form no adequate conception of the wonder of the new body that will be ours.

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## **7. IT WILL BE A HEAVENLY BODY, NOT AN EARTHLY BODY.**

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It will be immortal - not mortal.

This is emphasized in -

**1 Corinthians 15:47-50** - *The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven.*

*48 As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly.*

*49 And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.*

*50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.*

**1 Corinthians 15:53-54** - *For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.*

*54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.*

Everything about our present bodies is earthly.

Everything about our new body will be heavenly.

Our present bodies are composed of dust. Our new bodies will have no elements of dust in them. They will be celestial bodies!

# ***WILL CHRISTIANS BE JUDGED?***

## **STUDY 10**

**Scripture Portion: 1 Corinthians 3:1-15**

Will Christians be judged?

*Yes, all Christians will be judged.*

*Every believer is subject to a threefold judgment which covers his past, present and future life.*

### ***#1 - As a SINNER.***

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This judgment is **PAST**.

**John 5:24** - *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.*

### ***#2 - As a SON.***

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This judgment is **PRESENT**.

**1 Corinthians 11:28** - *But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.*

**1 Corinthians 11:31-32** - *For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. 32 But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.*

### ***#3 - As a STEWARD.***

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This judgment is **FUTURE**.

**Romans 14:10** - *But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.*

The moment anyone believes in the Lord Jesus Christ, God saves him.

**Acts 16:30-31** - *And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?*



*31 And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.*

**Romans 10:9-10** - *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.*

*10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*

No one deserves to be saved. No one can ever do anything to merit salvation. Salvation is altogether of grace.

**Ephesians 2:8-10** - *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:*

*9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.*

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

**Titus 3:5** - *Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;*

It is bestowed fully and freely, in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, upon all who accept Him.

Because salvation is altogether of grace, when the Lord comes again, every Christian will be translated into His presence to be with Him for ever.

**1 Thessalonians 4:17-18** - *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.*

*18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.*

But there are different *kinds* of Christian -

faithful and unfaithful -

**Matthew 25:21** - *His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.*

spiritual and carnal -

**1 Corinthians 3:1** - *And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.*

diligent and careless -

**Ephesians 5:15-17** - *See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil.*

*17 Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.*

What does it matter, then, as to the *kind* of Christians we are if, when the Lord comes again, we shall *all* be caught up anyway?

It matters very much, for -

we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ -

**Romans 14:10** - *But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.*

**2 Corinthians 5:10** - *For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.*

and there we shall receive a reward -

**1 Corinthians 3:14** - *If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.*

or we shall suffer loss -

**1 Corinthians 3:15** - *If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.*

according to the *kind* of Christians we have been!

Christians, there is a great Examination Day coming. You must live and work in the light of that day if you would receive "a full reward".

**2 John 8** - *Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward.*

It makes a tremendous difference what *kind* of a Christian you are.

No believer will ever be judged for his *sins* for the sins of every believer have already been judged and punished in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ upon the cross.

**Romans 8:1** - *There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*

But every believer will be judged concerning his life and service.

This is the subject of this study.

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WHEN WE APPEAR BEFORE THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST, WE SHALL  
APPEAR AS WE REALLY ARE.

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Down here we are never seen by each other as we really are.

Only God can see our hearts.

**1 Samuel 16:7** - *But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.*

Compare -

**2 Corinthians 5:10** - *For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.*

This latter verse may be literally translated, 'we must all be manifested without disguise', or 'in our true characters'.

In this connection read **Acts 5:1-10**.

Then notice in -

**1 Corinthians 3:13** - *Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.*

that the fire is to try the *kind* of work we have rendered to the Lord - not the appearance of that work.

**1 Corinthians 4:5** - *Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.*

Here we are told that the one thing which counts before God is *reality* and that, at the judgment seat of Christ, He will make manifest our *motives* and reward us accordingly.

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**2. WHEN WE APPEAR BEFORE THE JUDGMENT  
SEAT OF CHRIST WE SHALL HAVE TO GIVE AN  
ACCOUNT OF OURSELVES AND OF OUR  
SERVICES.**

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**Romans 14:12** - *So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.*

There are no exceptions for Paul says, "every one of us....." The account we shall give is of *ourselves* - not of others.

It will then be revealed -

whether we have sought to live for God's glory or for self-pleasing.

**2 Corinthians 5:15** - *And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.*

**b.     *how we have used our time.***

**John 9:4** - *I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.*

**Ephesians 5:16** - *Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.*

8.     how we have used our money, possessions, property.

**Matthew 6:19-21** - *Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:*

*20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:*

*21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.*

9.     whether we have been concerned to seek and to save the lost.

**2 Corinthians 5:11** - *Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences.*

**e.     *whether we have been faithful in prayer.***

**Luke 18:1** - *And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint;*

6.     all the words we have spoken.....

**Matthew 12:36** - *But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.*

**g.     *our attitude towards our brethren.....***

**Romans 12:10** - *Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another;*

**Romans 14:10** - *But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.*

**Galatians 6:1** - *Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.*

**1 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.*

8. our work will have to be accounted for.

**1 Corinthians 3:13** - *Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.*

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### **3 WHEN WE APPEAR BEFORE THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST, EVERYTHING THAT IS WORTHLESS AND EMPTY WILL BE BURNED UP; ONLY THAT WHICH CAN STAND THE TEST OF FIRE WILL REMAIN.**

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**1 Corinthians 3:12-15** - *Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;*

*13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.*

*14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.*

*15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.*

Notice the two kinds of materials.

1. that which abides the testing of fire and which is purified by the fire - gold, silver, precious stones.
- b. that which is easily burned up because it is worthless - wood, hay, stubble.***

The life we live and the way we serve is one of two kinds - either that which will stand the test of fire or that which will not!

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4. WHEN WE APPEAR BEFORE THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST, THE PURPOSE OF THE JUDGE WILL NOT BE TO PUNISH UNFAITHFULNESS BUT TO REWARD FAITHFULNESS.

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When the Grecian Games were over, the successful contestants would assemble before the *Bema*, or the judges' stand. This was an elevated seat upon which the umpire sat to pronounce the results and to make the awards.

You and I will have to stand before the judgment seat of Christ in order that He may give honor, promotion and reward where it had been merited.

Prize days at school are held, not in order to punish and degrade those who have not done well, but in order to reward those who have done well.

How important it is for us to live and labor in the power of the Holy Spirit in order that we may receive a reward!

**1 Corinthians 3:14** - *If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.*

When we stand before the judgment seat of Christ -

1. some will hear the word of divine approval.

**Matthew 25:21-23** - *His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.*

22 *He also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents beside them.*

23 *His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.*

2. some will receive promotion.

**Luke 19:17-19** - *And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities.*

18 *And the second came, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds.*

19 *And he said likewise to him, Be thou also over five cities.*

**Revelation 20:4** - *And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither*

*had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.*

3. all of us may receive crowns.

(1) ***the incorruptible crown*** - *for living a disciplined life.*

**1 Corinthians 9:25** - *And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.*

(2) ***the crown of life*** - *for enduring trials.*

**James 1:12** - *Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.*

(3) ***the crown of rejoicing*** - *for soulwinning service.*

**1 Thessalonians 2:19-20** - *For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?  
20 For ye are our glory and joy.*

(4) ***the crown of glory*** - *for shepherding the flock.*

**1 Peter 5:2-4** - *Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;  
3 Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.  
4 And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.*

(5) *the crown of righteousness - for loving His appearing.*

**2 Timothy 4:8** - *Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.*

Now read -

**2 John 8** - *Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward.*

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5. WHEN WE APPEAR BEFORE THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST, IT WILL BE TOO LATE THEN TO WISH WE HAD BEEN MORE FAITHFUL, MORE ZEALOUS, MORE CAREFUL IN OUR WALK AND WITNESS.

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Now is the time to see to these things!

**1 Corinthians 11:31** - *For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.*

**1 John 2:18** - *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.*