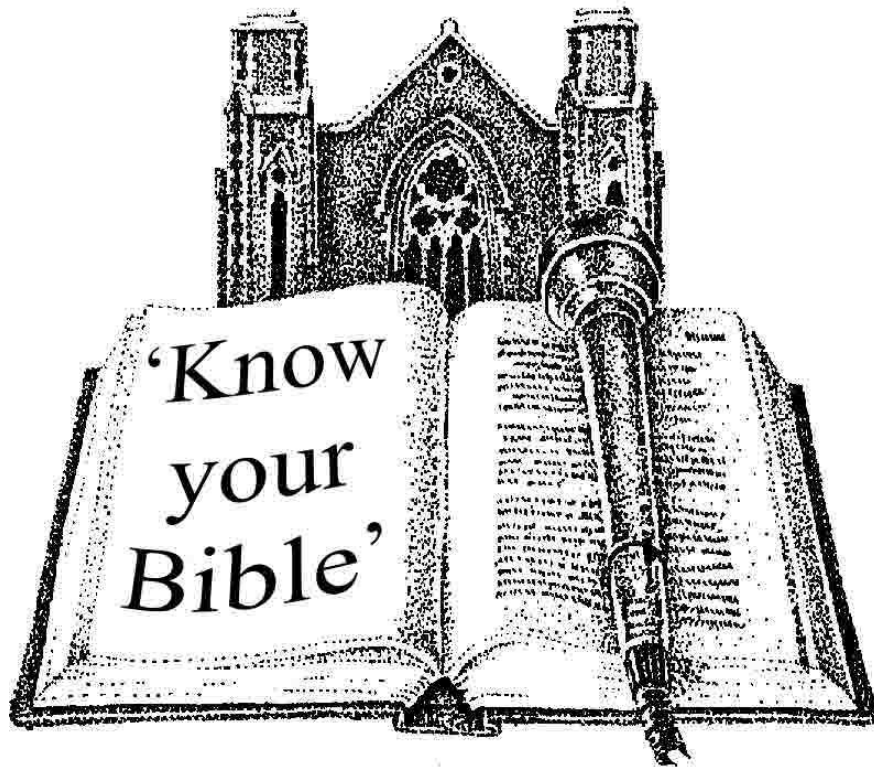


SOME questions answered

Summary of the series.

Study Notes by Stuart Olyott



SOME questions answered

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SOME questions answered

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[Bible Text Quoted in these Notes have been changed from the AV to the NKJV]

Some questions answered.

Questions fall into two groups - what to believe - how to behave.

We will answer questions on belief first.

When a person believes correctly, many of his questions on how to - behave will clear themselves up.

1. How do you KNOW that there is a God?

Not by reason

Man cannot find God by himself.

But there is plenty of evidence which might persuade him that there is PROBABLY a God:-

The Universe

- there must have been an origin.
- there is order and pattern.

Ourselves

- we have 'God-thirst', some sense of God.
- we have personal qualities like love and tenderness, loyalty and devotion - which demand an explanation.
- we have conscience, and a sense of 'ought' - which must be accounted for.
- we lay great value on preserving human life, and consider it has a purpose why?
- We all believe deep-down that the right will be rewarded, and the wicked will not escape - but who is there to guarantee this?
- we all have experiences which cannot be explained unless there is a supernatural BEING outside ourselves.

History

- the origin and preservation of the Christian Church defy explanation, if there is no God.
- Millions of people have built their lives on the fact that God exists, and we cannot easily ignore what they say.
- When nothing else could bring about a change, the fear of God has miraculously transformed people and nations.

All these things speak of 'his eternal power and Godhead'. Romans 1:29

At best - they persuade a man that there is PROBABLY a God.

At worst- they leave him unconvinced.

This is because sin has entered the world. God's handwriting in His creation is rather dim and hard to see. Genesis 3:17.

Man is also spiritually blind. He cannot read what God has plainly written. Besides, he doesn't want to. 1 Corinthians 2:14. Romans 1:28.

But by revelation

God has unveiled Himself, and made Himself known:-

- in His Word, the Scriptures 2 Timothy 3:16, Hebrews 1:1-3
- in His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ John 1:18, Hebrews 1:1-3

This is how, in experience, a person comes to KNOW that there is a God:-

- God's revelation is preached to him. 1 Corinthians 1:20-21.
- Using the words of the preacher, God speaks to the person's heart - and calls him in a powerful way. This is called 'effectual calling'. 1 Corinthians 1:22-26.
- This call makes the person into a new creature. Instead of being deaf, blind, and dead - he hears, sees, and lives! John.3:3-8. 2 Corinthians 5:17.
- The first sign of this Change within is that the person repents and BELIEVES. Ephesians 2:5, 8-10.
- The existence of God is not doubted by him again. Instead, that person experiences:-
 - peace with God. Romans 5:1
 - the 'inner witness' of the Holy Spirit. Romans 8:14-17
 - a change in nature. Galatians 5:22-23
 - a consuming love for the Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Peter 2:7
 - a desire to please God. Philippians 3:13:14
 - a certainty about Christ's coming, and a longing for heaven. 1 John 3:1-3

Remember!

- only God Himself can bring people to KNOW that He is. Matthew 11:25-27
- what is clear to a Christian is person foolish to an unconverted. 1 Corinthians 2:14-16
- a person who diligently seeks God, will find Him. Luke 11:9-13

Some questions answered.

2. What is God like?

Man cannot find God.
God finds men.

God not only reveals that He IS He also tells us what He is LIKE:-

- He does not tell everything - a creature cannot have a perfect and complete knowledge of God.
- But He does tell us enough - so that we can adore, love and serve Him as we should.

A. God in Himself.

1. God is self-existent

- He is independent of all things, and all things only exist through Him. John 5:26. Romans 11:33-34. Daniel 4:35.
- He is El-Shaddai - the All-sufficient. Genesis 17:1.

2. God is immutable

- There is no change in Him. James 1:17. Malachi 3:6
- No change in His purposes, motives, or promises!

3. God is infinite

- He is free from all limitations:
- This is because He is perfect Job 11:7-9
- He is eternal. Psalm 90:2.
- He is Spirit - immaterial
 - invisible
 - Filling heaven and earth (transcendent) Acts 7:48-9
 - in all places (immanent). Acts 17:27-28

4. God is One

- He is one, and He is alone. Deuteronomy 6:4
- He is not composed of many things added together.

B. God's Character.

God is a person - but what sort of Person is He?

1. The knowledge of God

- God knows –
 - Himself
 - all things
 - possible or actual. Hebrews 4:13.
 - at once; past, present, or future
 - as they really are.
- He is perfect in knowledge. Job 37:16. Psalm 147:5
- God uses
 - His knowledge so that all things work out for
 - His own glory. This is His wisdom. Romans 11:33-36.

2. The truth of God.

- He cannot be deceived. Psalm 139:12
- He cannot lie, but is faithful. Titus 1:2, 1 Corinthians 1:9.

3. The goodness of God.

- He is good in providence. Psalm 145. Acts 14:17
- He is good in grace. John 3:16. Acts 20:28
- The Bible is full of His mercy, longsuffering and love.

4. The holiness of God.

- This is His glory. Exodus 15:11
- This is why He cannot look on sin. Habakkuk 1:13
- God's holiness shows itself also in His righteousness. Psalm 145:17
It is also seen in His justice, which rewards and punishes. Romans 2:6-9.

5. The sovereignty of God.

- He does whatsoever He pleases!! Psalm 115:3. Revelation 4:8.

C. God in Three Persons.

- **God is One, yet God is-Three:** Matthew 28:19. 1 John 5:7
 - the Father is God 2 Corinthians 13:14.
 - the Son is God
 - the Holy Spirit is God

These Three are One true God:-

- eternal; the same in substance
- equal in power and glory
- the same names, attributes, works and worship are ascribed to each.

But the Father is not the Son; the Son is not the Holy Spirit; and the Holy Spirit is not the Father:-

- the Father begets the Son, from all eternity. John 1:14, 18.
- the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son from all eternity. John 15:26.

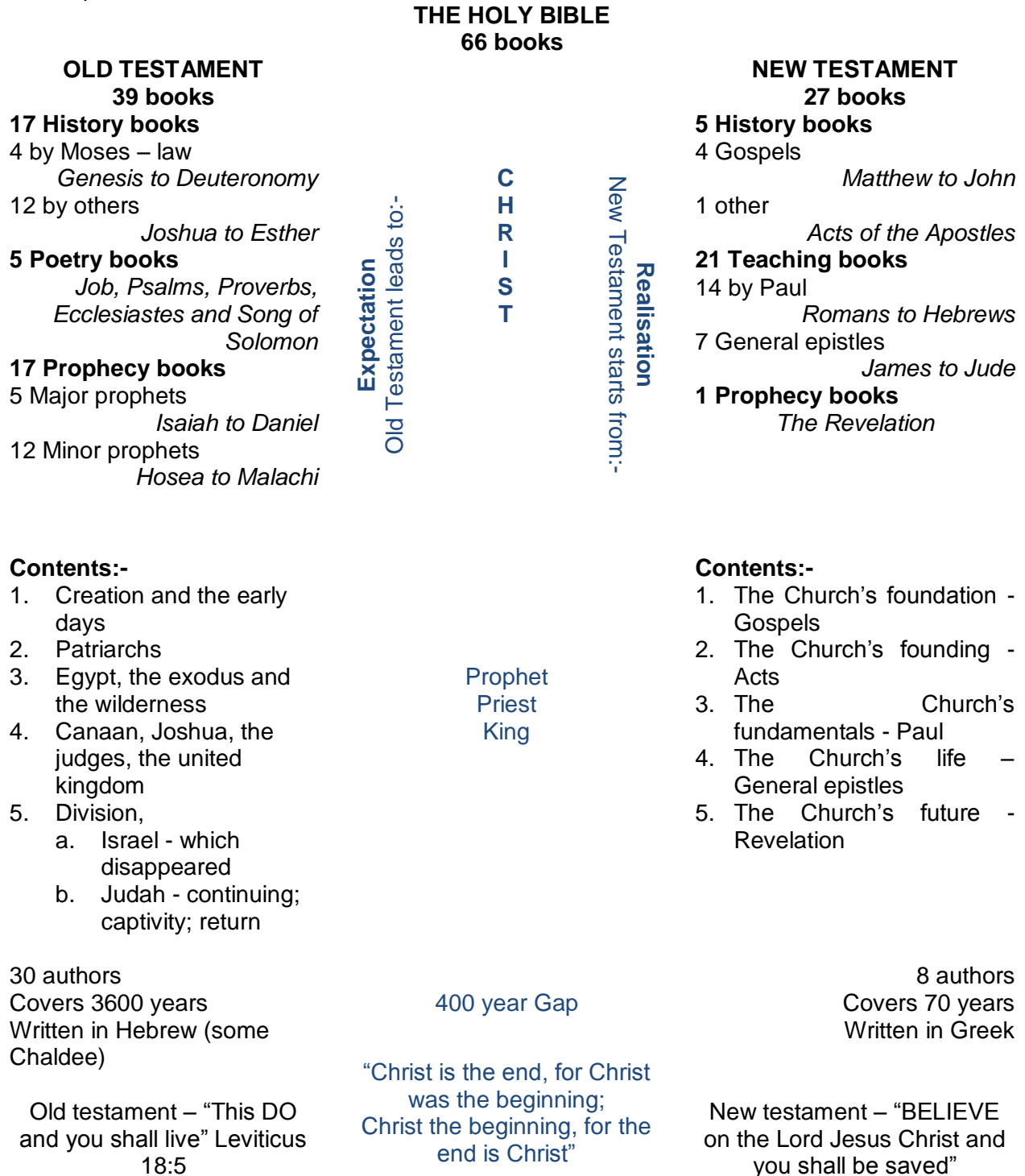
See Deuteronomy 29:29

**"This is life eternal, that they may know You the only true God;
and Jesus Christ whom You have sent". John 17:3**

Some questions answered.

3. What is the Bible?

a. The plan of the Bible.



b. The inspiration of the Bible.

- The Old Testament Scriptures have been breathed by the Spirit of God. He is their prime author.
 - 2 Peter 1:21. 2 Timothy 3:16.
- In the same way, the New Testament apostles were promised the Holy Spirit.
 - John 14:26, 15:26-27, 16:13.
- Writers of both Testaments were aware of the Holy Spirit's inspiration.
 - Deuteronomy 4:5. Jeremiah 1:1-2. 1 Corinthians 4:1. 2 Peter 3:15.
- And so the Bible speaks with-authority.
 - 1 Thessalonians 1:5.
- And is worthy of our closest attention.
 - 2 Peter 1:19.

c. The uses of the Bible.

- God's word is truth (John 17:17), and teaches us all that we are to believe concerning Him; and what duty He requires from us. 2 Timothy 3:16-17.
- No-one can be saved without its message. 2 Timothy 3:15.
- By means of its instructions a man may become perfectly equipped for God's service. 2 Timothy 3:16-17. Acts 20:32.

The Old and the New Testaments

Old

Contains:- darkness
bondage
the letter
the temporary
ceremonies

God above us
Introduction of sin
Paradise lost
Prophecies; types; shadows
Beginnings
Christ as Messiah
Deals principally with law, so ends with a curse.

New

Contains:- light
liberty
the spirit
the eternal
principles

God IN us.
Remedy for sin
Paradise regained
Fulfilments; antitypes; substance
Endings
Christ as Lord and Saviour
Deals principally with: grace, so ends with a blessings.

The Bible

"This book contains the mind of God, the state of man, the way of salvation, the doom of sinners and the happiness of believers. Its doctrines are holy, its precepts are binding, its histories are true, and its decisions are immutable. Read it to be wise, believe it to be saved, and practice it to be holy. It contains light to direct you, food to support you, and comfort to cheer you. It is the traveller's map, the pilot's compass, the soldier's sword, and the Christian's charter. Here paradise is restored, Heaven opened, and the gates of hell disclosed. Christ is its grand subject, our good its design, and the glory of God its end. Read it slowly, frequently, prayerfully. It is a mine of wealth, a paradise of glory, and a river of pleasure. It will reward the-greatest labour and condemn all who trifle with its sacred contents. It is the Book of books - God's book - the revelation of God to man".

- Selected.

Some questions answered.

4. Which version of the Bible should I use?

[Please Note that since this sermon was preached in October 1971 the “New King James Version of the Bible” has also been translated from the Received Text, so we would recommend now that we should be using the “NKJV” since it is much more up to date and understandable in its use of the English Language, while it is still has been translated from the Received Text]

Should I use a modern version - if so, which one? Or should I stick to the Authorised Version?

- We cannot decide this question just by talking about which version is the easiest to read, which has the best English, or which one is 'in' at the moment...etc...etc...
- We must ask which version of the Bible is nearest to the Bible of the apostles – AND THEN USE THAT

1. Where the modern versions came from.

The A.V. was used by almost everyone up to 1881.

During the last century some very old manuscripts were discovered.

The most important were:-

- The Vatican Codexi (B)
- The Sinaitic Codex (Aleph)
- The Alexandrian Codex (A)

They were said to be as old as the 4.th century.

This made them much older than any manuscripts so far discovered. Being SO OLD it was assumed that they were MORE RELIABLE than the manuscripts used in translating the A.V.

Although 995 out of every 1000 manuscripts available did not agree with these new manuscripts, Westcott and Hort said that we should trust them because they were so OLD. They said that the vast majority of manuscripts could not be trusted, because they were copies of copies.

The Christian public mostly accepted Westcott Hart's theory.

The Revised Version of 1881, and ALL the modern versions are based on their theory – that OLD manuscripts are MORE ACCURATE.

BUT even IF these manuscripts are so old; (and there are good reasons for doubting it):-

- this does NOT mean that they ARE more accurate. Much later manuscripts may be separated from the originals by less copies! Age proves nothing.
- it should be remembered that these manuscripts disagree BETWEEN THEMSELVES more than they disagree with the traditional text. They don't Sound very accurate!
- many whole families of manuscripts support the traditional text. Families are more likely to be right than a single manuscript here and there.
- the nearly-discovered manuscripts were well preserved because they were NOT TRUSTSED and thus SELDOM USED. Trusted books wear out first!!
- these manuscripts came from the east. Eastern texts cannot be trusted - for they were altered by the Arians, Sabellians, Origen and Eusebius, to suit their view on the Trinity and the Deity of Christ. (Look at the new versions based on then!)

To support this small number of newly-discovered, doubtful manuscripts; and to degrade the vast majority - is to be guilty of gross ignorance, blind prejudice, or wilful blasphemy.

The modern versions are based on these heretical manuscripts.

A Christ-loving believer can only give the modern versions a vote of NO CONFIDENCE

2. Where the Authorised Version came from.

- The New Testament was first gathered together in Asia Minor.
- The Greek churches of Asia Minor used, copied and distributed the scriptures, and preserved them in persecution.
- These churches did not give in to Arianism and the other heresies, and their Bibles remained unchanged.
- Unlike the east, Constantinople did not give into the Saracens until 1453. Until then it remained a Christian Greek kingdom, where the Bible was read, copied and re-copied and distributed in a form unchanged from the days of the Apostles.
- When Constantinople fell, Greek scholars fled to Europe, taking their unspoilt copies of the Scriptures with them. The Greek New Testament was printed from these Byzantine manuscripts.
- The Greek New Testament was now available all over Europe. From this Received Text (as it became called) all the early English versions were translated - Tyndale, Coverdale, Matthews, The Great Bible, The Geneva Bible, The Bishops' Bible and the Authorised Version.
- The Authorised Version, translated by godly and scholarly men, is translated from a text identical to that which the apostles themselves wrote 11

Remember:-

- Of the 4,500 manuscripts still in our possession, the OVERWHELMING majority agree with the Received Text -the basis of the Authorised Version.
- The very early translations of the Scriptures are identical with the Received Text. (e.g. Peshitto Syriac, early 2nd century).
- Nearly all the quotations of the Scriptures made by very early Christian leaders agree with the Received Text -not with Westcott and Hort!
- That God has so miraculously preserved the pure text of the Scriptures should not surprise us. He would hardly inspire it word-by-word, and then let it perish!
- Every reformation and revival in history has been associated with the Received Text:

3. See how the modern versions rob God of His glory

Look at Matthew 6:13, Mark 16:9-20, John 8:1-11, Acts 8:36-37, 20:28, Romans 9:5, 14:10, 1 Corinthians 15:47, 1 Timothy 3:16, 2 Timothy 3:16. 1 John 5:7. Revelation 1:11

4. Conclusion

- When you pick up a Bible translated from the documents that Westcott and Hort favoured - you have in your hand the same Bible as the Arians and other enemies of the truth used.
- When you pick up a Bible translated from the Received Text, you have in your hand the same Bible as the apostles used!

The A.V. is translated from the Received Text.

- this does not mean that the translation is perfect.
- this does not mean that it is easy to read. It is not, Much of its language is now out of date -though not as much as some people say.

But because it is the only English version available which is translated from the Received Text
WE MUST USE IT!!

Some questions answered.

5. Why do you believe the Bible?

1. Because of the Book that it is

There is no book like it.

- Its prophecies come true
- It is 66 books, yet it speaks as one book
 - It has power to transform lives, and nations
 - It has been miraculously preserved
 - It has withstood all attacks
 - It has been wonderfully proved right - again and again
 - It teaches truths beyond our human understanding.

The Bible is we plainly see,
Then it must have a pedigree.
It either is a Book divine,
Or men to make it must combine
Suppose the latter, then they must
Either be wicked men, or just.
Take either side and you will see
A proof of its divinity

If wicked men composed this book
Surely their senses they forsook,
For they the righteous man defend
And curse the bad from end to end.
If righteous, then they change their name,
For they the authorship disclaim,
And often say "Thus says the Lord"
And testify it is His Word.
If it be not they tell a lie,
And all their righteousness destroy.

Could Moses and could Malachi
Unite together in a lie?
Could Job and Daniel with the rest,
Spread o'er the world from east to west,
Unite together and confer,
When oceans rolled between them, sir?
Not only seas, but ages too,
Numbers of years and not a few

Only a fool would not believe such a book!
This is just what happens. 1 Corinthians 2:14.

2. Because the infallible Lord Jesus Christ believed it

He set His seal on the fact that it is God's Word

"The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord".

- He framed His whole life and teaching in the light of the Scriptures - accepting them without reserve.
- Despite the fact that human authors penned the words, He made it clear that GOD is the true author.
- He saw the Scriptures as entirely factual, accurate and truthful.
- The Scriptures of His day were a known collection. He accepted these books and no others as Scripture. He agreed with the way in which one book was refused, and another accepted.
- He gave to the apostles authority to pen the New Testament - which therefore carries the same authority as the Old.

A person whose view of the Bible differs from Christ's is not a disciple of His.

3. Because of the inner witness of the Holy Spirit

- Christians see things which other people can't. 1 Corinthians 2:10
- They recognize God's Word when they hear it. John 10:4-5, 1 Thessalonians 2:13.
- They thus believe the Bible's claims in 2 Peter 1:21, and 2 Timothy 3:16.
- They therefore really love the Bible Psalm 119:97-104.

Yes - the Bible is the WORD OF GOD!

Therefore :-

- Become a careful student of the Scriptures.
Give your life to understanding exactly what God has said.
- Submit your whole life in loving obedience to the Scriptures
- your own life; family life; church life...

Some Questions answered.

6. How did life on this planet begin? (part 1)

NOT BY EVOLUTION.

- We do not believe in Pope Science. We believe in Jurisprudence - ordinary men and women are able to separate truth from error accurately, by looking at the actual EVIDENCE.

What evolutionists believe

1. Living things change from generation to generation, producing descendants with new characteristics,
2. Starting from a simple form of life, this process has produced all the groups and kinds of things now living - as well as others that lived long ago, which have now died out.
3. These different living things are therefore related to each other.

If evolution is right:-

- the Bible is wrong.

It is as plain as that - as the man-in-the-street clearly sees.

- though there are some clever dicks who have tried to maize out that we can believe both.
- man is the result of an accident in blind nature. He is here for no purpose
 - needs no laws; can live as he pleases; is answerable to nobody.

Evolution is the mother of atheism and materialism.

However, evolution is far from proved.

In fact it is a tattered THEORY, which is extremely unconvincing.

Some reasons for not believing evolution:-

1. The 2nd law of thermodynamics. The universe is gradually running down. This clashes with the evolutionist's idea that the simple has led to the complex; disorder has led to order; life has arisen from non-living matter.
2. The DNA molecule. Did it just come into being by chance? It makes sure that organisms reproduce 'after their kind' (see Genesis chapter 1): It allows for variety around a basic pattern. But nothing essentially NEW emerges:
3. If evolution HAD taken place we would expect a gradual development: among the fossils. But there isn't. There are no 'in-between' creatures. If evolution is correct, there should be millions:
4. Living fossils, like the coelocanth, prove no evolution in 30 million years.
5. There is no way for complex organs (like the eye and the reproductive organs) to arise little-by-little over millions of years. Natural selection would eliminate them, not encourage them.

6. Evolutionists have used a lot of deceit and fraud to try and make out a case for human evolution - a case which rests on a very few fossils. Not a single fossil of a sub-human ancestor has ever been found.
7. Evolutionists talk in terms of millions of years, but NO method of dating can say that any fossil is more than 10,000 years old! Speculation must not be confused with certainty!
8. Man, only a recent arrival on this planet, is not just an organic, physical body. He is also a genius and a fool; a creature of purpose and conscience. Evolution offers no explanation of this.
9. From Glen Rose, Texas, human footprints and dinosaur footprints in the same cretaceous formations show that they were on the earth, AT THE SAME TIME. (Not separated by 70 million years).
10. In Antelope Springs, Utah, fossilised trilobites were crushed by shod human footprints at the time that the rock was still soft and [muddy]. This shows that civilised humans were on the earth in the Cambrian period!!

These last two discoveries alone cause the theory of evolution to fall to the ground!!

Where, then, can we find the answer?

In the Bible - that revelation given by God; shown to be true by countless evidences; vindicated by Christ; believed and loved by 'born-again' people.

The Bible testifies to CREATION.

Next week we shall examine exactly what it says.

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- "Evolution or Creation" by Professor H. Enoch. .This short paperback, published by the' Evangelical press, should be read by all Christians who are sincerely interested in pursuing this subject further.
- Science students, who want more detailed information, should contact the Creation Research Society, 4090 Geddes Road,

Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA. Membership, however, is only open to those with a post-graduate degree in science.

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Some questions answered.

7. How did life on this planet begin? (part 2)

BY CREATION

This is the teaching of the infallible Word of God.

Genesis chapters 1 and 2.

- are part of the Law. The Lord Jesus Christ said that not one small letter shall pass away from it.
- are straightforward history - not picture language. (Genesis 2:4).
- are regarded by the rest of the Scriptures as being literally and historically true. (Exodus 20:8-11, Psalm 102:25, 136:6).
- are entirely consistent with the character of God as revealed in the rest of the Scriptures. He is the God of miracles. Faith is required to believe they happened. So it is with the Creation. (Hebrews 11:3).

Creation in six days.

- We must see what the Scriptures actually say, not what we may want them to say!
 - Nowhere in the Old Testament does the word 'day' used with a number mean anything longer than 24 hours. (This makes the '1000 years' argument no use).
 - In Exodus 20:9-11 you must take the days of the week and the days of creation to be the same.-
 - The last 3 days were almost certainly ordinary days, so the first 3 must have been. "There was evening and there was morning" conveys the same impression.
 - "Unquestionably the days are to be regarded as literal days of 24 hours" (von Rad). The Hebrew is clear.
-

Day :-

1. The materials were created; and light - the most basic and all-pervasive form of energy. (1-5).
2. The waters were divided into two great reservoirs - one above, and the other below the firmament. (6-8).
3. Land was divided from sea. By a word of power God implanted the principle of life-in the earth, and land plants of all types appeared. (9-13).
4. The forming of light-bearers; the sun, moon and stars - to divide day and night; to be for signs and seasons; to light the earth. (14-19).
5. The creation of organic life in the water and in the sky. (20-23).
6. Organic life on the earth. The creation of man in the image of God, and his commissioning. (24-31. This is amplified in ch 2).
7. God rested.

The Age of the Earth.

- Science works on the principle of 'uniformitarianism' - that is, events have always taken place at the same speed as they do now. In this way they calculate that the Earth is 4,000 million years old.

Scripture teaches:-

- that the Earth was made complete. As soon as it was made it had an apparent age. It LOOKS much older than it is.
- that it is quite wrong to study Creation in terms of present processes - the processes used by God in creation were completely different from the processes NOW operating in the universe. (Genesis 2:1-3).
- that God's ways are not ours. He is a God of miracles. Many miracles mean that things LOOK much older than they really are -(Aaron's rod; feeding of 5000; cursed fig-tree).
- that there was a cataclysmic and universal Flood.
This could well make the Earth look much older than it is.

Working backwards through Scripture history, and the genealogies, we must conclude that the Earth cannot be older than 12,000 years.

Conclusion.

- How great is our God!!
- How wondrous is His revelation! He has revealed Himself, and told us things that we could never discover. made for Him,
- How fearful we should be! We ere His creatures; made for Him and one day to stand before Him. Him might be
- How glad we should be! He has sent His Son into to the world – not to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved.

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Some questions answered.

8. What has gone wrong with the world?

The world has gone wrong because God's last and finest creation has gone wrong.

1. God created Adam.

A solemn, divine counsel took place first -	Genesis 1:26.
It was an immediate act -	Genesis 1:27, 2:7.
Unlike other creatures, he was made after a divine type -	Genesis 1:26-27
He was a body and soul from the very beginning -	Genesis 2:7
He was at once placed in an exalted position -	Genesis 1:28.

2. God created Adam in His own image and likeness.

He was righteous. - Ecclesiastes 7:29.	Genesis 1:31	A moral creature.
He was a soul, able to commune with God –	Genesis 2:7.	A spiritual creature.
He did not need to die -	Genesis 2:17	An immortal creature.
He was placed over the creation -	Genesis 1:26	A ruling creature.

'Image' does not mean bodily likeness - God is a Spirit.
Man is basically spiritual - he is more than a body.
This is true of no other creature.

3. God entered into a covenant with Adam.

He gave to him many privileges:- (Genesis 2 and 3).

- He put him in paradise, to labour, and to eat of its fruits.
- The creatures were placed under his dominion.
- Marriage was given to him for a help.
- The Sabbath was instituted.
- Man enjoyed living communion with God.

He also demanded some things from him:-

- personal, perfect and perpetual obedience.
- the tree of life was held out to him as a pledge.
- but he was forbidden to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, on pain of death.

4. Adam broke the covenant.

(Genesis 3)

The tempter sowed seeds of doubt, unbelief and pride in Eve's mind.
She then led Adam to break God's clear commandment.

Man became depraved; lost communion with God; aware of moral pollution; guilty and ashamed; spiritually dead; doomed to return to dust; and expelled from paradise.

And so sin entered the world.

It is lawlessness; hate of God; guilt; wickedness of heart:

5. Adam's sin has had permanent effects on the whole human race.

- All men are now sinners, not by bias or imitation - but by nature: Psalm 51:5. Ephesians 2:3. Romans 5:12-14.
- You see, the covenant was made with Adam as a public person. He stood as a representative not only for himself, but all his descendants. All of us sinned in him, and fell with him - for we are descended from him. Acts 17:26. Romans 5:12-20.
- We are conceived and born in sin. By nature we are opposed to all spiritual good; and our hearts are wicked, and inclined to evil. This is called Original Sin. It is because we Are like this that we DO actual acts of sin. Romans 3:10-26. James 1:14-15.

All men and women are - out of touch with God. Genesis 3:24
- under His anger. Ephesians 2:2-3
- in slavery to the devil. Ephesians 2:2

Because of sin:-

NOW men are blinded to the truth of the Scriptures; enemies of God; believers of lies; unwilling to change their ways; troubled by conscience; lovers of vile things.

The world is cursed; trouble and pain are daily experiences; and death awaits us all.

IN THE FUTURE nothing awaits men and women but separation from God, and everlasting torment of body and soul in the fires of hell for ever. 2 Thessalonians 1:9, Luke 16:24-26
Revelation 20:12-15, 21:8.

"For the wages of sin is death;

• but

THE GIFT OF GOD IS ETERNAL LIFE IN CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD ".
Romans 6:23.

Some questions answered.

9. Why do you believe in the Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ?

A person's eyes are most likely to be opened to the truth of Christ's Deity by looking at His signs.

- These signs were not given to persuade the reluctant.
(Many people saw His signs, but did not believe).
- they were given 'to enlighten the seeking,
(Such people look more deeply into Christ's nature, and see Him to be the Son of God).

It is because these signs so clearly show the Lord Jesus Christ to be the Son of God; that John wrote his Gospel:-

"And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in his name". (John 20:30-31).

John's Gospel tells of 9 signs:-

1. Changing water into wine. 2:1-11.

"Jesus ... manifested His glory; and His disciples believed in Him."(John 2:11).

2. The healing of the nobleman's son. 4:46-54.

"Jesus said unto him, Your son lives: and himself believed, and his whole household." (John 4:53).

3. The paralytic at Bethesda made whole. 5:1-16.

"The Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He....said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God." (John 5:18).

4. The feeding of the five thousand. 6:1-14.

"Jesus said to them, I AM the bread of life: He who comes to Me shall never hunger; and He who believes in Me shall never thirst." (John 6:35).

5. Walking on the sea. 6:15-21.

"And we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God." (John 6:69).

6. The healing of the man blind from birth. 9:1-38.

"Do you believe in the Son of God?You have both seen Him, and it is He who is talking with you". Then he said, "Lord I believe!" And he worshipped Him". (John 9:35, 37, 38).

7. The raising of Lazarus. 11:1-46.

"Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is come into the world." (John 11:27).

8. The resurrection! 20:1-29.

"Thomas answered and said unto Him, My Lord and my God" (John 20:28).

9. The miraculous haul of fishes. 21:1-14.

"Yet none of the disciples dared ask Him, "Who are You?" - knowing that it was the LORD". (John 21:12).

"And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen "(John 21:25).

Some questions answered.

10. Why do you believe in the Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ? (Part2).

The New Birth brings a person to see things that he never saw before. (1 Corinthians 2:14-16).

He now sees clearly that the Scriptures are the word of God. (1 Thessalonians 1:5-6, 2:13).

And the Scriptures clearly teach the Deity of Christ:-

1. The Old Testament taught it.

The writers did not expect a merely human Messiah, but One who was divine - God Himself!

David	Psalm 45:6-8, 110:1
Isaiah	9:6
Jeremiah	23:5-6
Daniel	7:13-14
Micah	5:32
Malachi	3:1

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2. The apostles declared it.

There was no doubt in their minds about Christ's true identity.

Paul	Romans 9:5, 1 Timothy 3:16
John	1 John 2:23, 4:14-15
Peter	2 Peter 1:16-18, 3:18

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3. Jesus claimed it.

This was how he opened His ministry - Luke 4:18-19

This was the purpose of the I AM sayings - see John 6:35, 8:12, 14:6

This was why He called people to Himself.

He used titles like 'Son of Man' and 'Son of God'.

He claimed that people's attitude to Him was the same as their attitude to God. - John 5:23.

John 8:19, 12:44-45, 15:23, Mark 9:37

He said "before Abraham was, I am" - John 8:51-58

He accepted Thomas's worship - John 20:26-29

He claimed to forgive sins - Mark 2:1-12

He claimed to give life - John 4:10-15

He claimed to teach the truth - John 7:17-18

He claimed to judge the world - Matthew 25:31-46, John 5:28 - 29.

4. His character demonstrated it:

He knew what was in man, and His penetrating eye could see the slightest sin.
But He saw no sin in Himself, and lived in unclouded fellowship with God. John 8:29, 46.

His friends lived in close intimacy with Him, but could see no sin at all in Him. 1 Peter.1:19, 2:22. 1 John 1:8-10, 3:5.

His enemies constantly tried to catch Him out, but at the end they had to hire false witnesses, and concentrate on political charges. Pilate, his wife, Herod, the dying thief and the centurion all admitted that He was without fault. So did Judas! Matthew 27:3-4.

He "is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners.;" Hebrews 7:26.

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5. His resurrection proved it.

The tomb was empty. (None of the 'explanations' are very convincing).

The grave clothes were undisturbed. (Resurrection, not resuscitation).

The Lord was seen. (The stories do not have the marks of either inventions, or hallucinations).

The disciples were changed. (Peter; James; all of them!)

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"This man....continues ever. Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them." Hebrews 7:25.

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Some questions answered.

11. Was the Cross really necessary?

- The Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ means more to a believer than anything else in the whole world. Galatians 6:14
- To see that it was necessary, we must clearly understand the following truths:-

We are lawbreakers

- God has declared that "all have sinned", and that "sin is the transgression of the law"
- We only have to examine the Ten Commandments ourselves to see how true this is. (Exodus 20:1-17).

We are condemned - for God is just.

- God has promised that the person who keeps the Law shall live. Galatians 3:12
But none of us have kept it!
- God has declared that all lawbreakers are cursed. Galatians 3:10.
And we have all broken the Law!
 - So we are separated from God. Isaiah 59:2
 - So we are under God's wrath. John 3:36, Ephesians 2:3
 - So we are perishing. Romans 5:12, 6:23, John 3:16.

We cannot get back into God's favour by ourselves.

- left to ourselves, we have no desire to get back to God, anyway. Romans 8:7
- If we did desire to get back to God, and kept the Ten Commandments:-
 - what about the past? "God requires that which is past" Ecclesiastes 3:15
 - and the heart is unchanged. John 3:3
- There is nothing WE can do that can put us right with God
 - the story of the dying thief proves this
 - Ephesians 2:8-9 proves this.
 - the theme of heaven proves this. Revelation 5:9-14.

We have every reason to be in despair - if it were not for the GOSPEL.

The message of the Cross is what gets folk to heaven. 1 Corinthians 1:23-24

Only in the preaching of Christ is the way to get right with God revealed. Romans 1:16-17

The main points of the Gospel message are:-

1. God is love.

- He does not desire the death of a sinner. Ezekiel 18:32, 33:11
- He is not willing that ANY should perish. 2 Peter 3:9
- So before the world began He planned to send Christ to the Cross to be a Saviour of perishing men and women. Acts 2:23-24
- So in God's time He came. Galatians 4:4,
- So His Cross is the proof of God's love to us. John 3:16. 1 John 4:10

2. Christ's Cross satisfies both God's justice and His love.

Jesus had no sins of His own to die for. Hebrews 7:26.

- Yet He died!

His death was for others / for us:-

- He bore the wrath of God that we deserve. 1 John 2:2 4:10
- He took on Himself the penalty which our sins deserve. Galatians 3:10, 13.
- He bore the pains of hell which we should have to bear. Isaiah 53:5-6.

God's justice was satisfied.

Because of what Christ has done, our sins need no longer be held against us.

2 Corinthians 5:17-21

God has shown Himself to be just, and yet He may now justify and receive as righteous those who believe in Jesus. Romans 3:26.

Sinners may now be saved! 1 Timothy 1:15

God's love is satisfied.

3. Therefore...

- Repent
- Believe
- and be reconciled to God through Christ. Mark 1:15. 2 Corinthians 5:18-20.

There is no salvation in any other. Acts 4:12. John 14:6.

No-one who comes to Him is turned away, but whoever calls on Him is saved.

Romans 10:11-13.

Some questions answered

12. What is the Lord Jesus Christ doing now?

The Cross was not the end:

1. Our Lord Jesus Christ rose from the dead.

We have already examined the evidence for this.

But in the end it is a matter of faith. Romans 10:9-10.

The resurrection :-

- proved Christ's claims. Matthew 27:66.
- established Christ's Deity. Romans 1:4.
- shows God accepted what Christ did for sinners. 1 Corinthians 15:17.
- means that Christ can be known today. Philippians 3:10.
- reveals that we will be raised too. 1 Corinthians 15:20.
- guarantees the Judgement. Acts 17:31.
- shows that the last word is with God. Matthew 27:66. Hebrews 2:14.

2. He remained forty days on the earth.

During this time:-

- He showed Himself alive by many infallible proofs, thus dispelling the fears and doubts of His disciples. Acts 1:3, Luke 24:13-49, John 20:11-21:22.
- He showed the apostles His will for the church, assuring them of His power, telling them to make disciples of all nations, and promising to be with them. Acts 1:2, Matthew 28:18-20.
- He taught them more about the kingdom of God, and opened their minds to understand the Scriptures. Acts 1:3. Luke 24:44-48.
- He promised to send the Holy Spirit to comfort and guide them, and to give them power to be His witnesses. Luke 24:49. Acts 1:4-8.

3. He ascended into heaven.

- This was prophesied in the Old Testament, and witnessed by the apostles. Psalm 110:1. Acts 1:9-12.
- This act of power, which marked Jesus out as Lord, saw Him return as a man to the place from which He had come. Ephesians 1:19-22. Philippians 2:9-11. John 6:62. Hebrews 4:14-16.
- He ascended to send forth the Holy Spirit who gives the numerous gifts that the church enjoys. John 7:39, 16:7. Ephesians 4:8-13.
- By His ascension He assures us of our place in heaven and our glorification. Our citizenship is now in heaven. Hebrews 6:20. John 14:2. Philippians 3:20-21.

4. He sits at God's right hand.

- Preparing a place for us. John 14:2.
- Holding a permanent priesthood; interceding for us; representing our cause before the Father. Hebrews 7:24. Romans 8:34. 1 John 2:1. Hebrews 9:24.
- As the Head of the Church He rules and protects us. Ephesians 1:22-23.
- He helps believers in need, and gives them power to do great works. Hebrews 2:18. Hebrews 4:15. John 14:12.
- He rules over all things, and makes sure that God's purposes for the Church will be fulfilled. Hebrews 1:3. Ephesians 1:5-14.
- He waits for the time of His final victory, and His coming in great power and glory. 1 Corinthians 15:24-26. 2 Thessalonians 1:6-10.

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Good news for the lost:-

"He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them". Hebrews 7:25.

Good news for the saved:-

"Nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord". Romans 8:39.

Some questions answered

13 What do we know about Christ's Second Coming?

(part 1)

We only know what God Himself has told us - in His Word.

1. Our Lord Jesus Christ is definitely coming again.

- He Himself promised it. John 14:3.
- The prophets promised. Daniel 7:13. Zechariah 14:5.
- The apostles promised it. Acts 3:19-20.

Paul - 1 Thessalonians 4:16.

James - James 5:8.

Peter - 2 Peter 3:3-4, 10.

John - 1 John 3:1-3.

Jude - Jude 1:14.

- The Lord's Supper promises it. 1 Corinthians 11:26.

And so the early Christians expected Him!

They had a common greeting - "Maranatha - the Lord is coming". 1 Corinthians 16:22.

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2. We do not know WHEN He is coming.

- Only the Father knows that. Mark 13:32.
- He will send Him at the set time. Acts 3:20-21.
- He will come when least expected. Matthew 24:44.
 - like lightning. Matthew 24:27.
 - like a thief in the night. 1 Thessalonians 5:2.
 - like labour pains. 1 Thessalonians 5:3.

And the world will be caught completely unawares.
But Christians need not be.

Matthew 24:38.
1 Thessalonians 5:4-5.

We can see the Day approaching.
"The Lord is at hand".

Hebrews 10:25.
Philippians 4:5.

- If the Lord appears to delay, it is because He is being merciful to those who are still unsaved. 2 Peter 3:9.

3. But we do know HOW He is coming.

- Coming in the same way as He went! Acts 1:9-11.
- Coming from heaven Acts 1:9-11
- Coming visibly (we will see Him) Acts 1:9-11
- Coming personally Acts 1:9-11
- Coming gloriously! - with the glory of His Father. Matthew 16:27.
- Coming with His angels Matthew 16:27
- Coming with power. Matthew 26:64.
- Coming on the clouds Matthew 26:64
- Coming with all His saints. 1 Thessalonians 3:13
- Coming in flaming fire. 2 Thessalonians 1:8

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4. His coming should affect all our living and thinking.

- Unbelievers may scoff at this teaching, but they will be put to shame when the Lord comes. 2 Peter 3:3-10.
- We should be constantly remembering that our Lord is coming, and should be in love with this truth, looking and waiting for Him, and praying for Him to come. 1 Peter 1:13. Revelation 22:20.
- The thought should move us to live in a holy 1 Peter 4:7-11. 2 Peter 3:11-12. 1 John 3:3.
- We should always be ready, remembering that the time is short. Mark 13:32-37, 1 Corinthians 7:29-31.

"Surely I am come quickly." "Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus." Revelation 22:20

Some questions answered.

14. What do we know about Christ's Second Coming? (part 2)

We have already seen that the Scriptures teach that our Lord Jesus Christ is definitely coming again; and although we do not know WHEN He is coming, we do know HOW He is going to come; and this truth should affect all our thinking and living.

1. When Christ returns, the resurrection will take place.

- the Scriptures have told us all along that our salvation will not be complete until Christ returns. Hebrews 9:28. 1 Peter 1:5, 13.
- then our bodies will be raised from the dead. Romans 8:11. 1 Corinthians 15.
- and we will take on the likeness of Christ. Philippians 3:21. 1 John 3:2.

- Christ will gather us all to Himself. 2 Thessalonians 2:1.
- No believer will be left out. 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.
- A glorious harvest! Revelation 14:14-16.

2. When Christ returns, the world will be judged.

- at His return, Christ will call all men to account. Luke 12:40-48.
- Christians will be included in this. 2 Corinthians 5:10.
 - = there is no danger of them being condemned. Romans 8:1
 - = but the quality of their work for Christ will be examined. 1 Corinthians 3:13-14.
- Not only open actions, but secret things, and the thoughts of the heart, will be judged. 1 Corinthians 4:5.
- Those who do not obey the Gospel will suffer terribly. 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9.
- But believers will go to be with Christ forever. John 14:2-3. 1 Thessalonians 4:17.

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3. When Christ returns, all things, as we now know them, will end.

- the present world set-up will be over. 1 Peter 4:7. 2 Peter 3:10.
- the heavens, the elements, the earth and its works will be dissolved. 2 Peter 3:7, 10-12.
- After that, new heavens and a new earth will be revealed. In those will dwell righteousness. 2 Peter 3:13.

Hallelujah!

- what God's Word has spoken will have come to pass. Acts 3:21
- Our Lord Jesus Christ will be vindicated. Philippians 2:5-11.
- Christ will put all things under His feet, and then subject Himself to His Father, that God may be all in all. 1 Corinthians 15:24-28.

"Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot, and blameless." 2 Peter 3:14

Some questions answered.

15. What happens to a Christian when he dies?

- Death is certain.
- Some people live all their life in fear of death. Hebrews 2:15
- Most people, when they die - **lose ALL**.
- But to a Christian, to die is **gain**. Philippians 1:21.
- He has **hope** in his death. Proverbs 14:32.

The body.

- this decomposes. Genesis 3:19. John 11:39. 1 Corinthians 15:50-57.
- the Bible talks about the body as being asleep, showing that death is not to be feared, and is only temporary. 1 Corinthians 15:51. 1 Thessalonians 4:13.
- something better awaits us: 2 Corinthians 5:1-5.

The spirit, or soul.

- this is not affected by the death of the body. Matthew 10:28
- the Christian has already begun enjoying eternal life, so in fact he cannot really die at all: John 5:24. John 11:25-26.

The believer is without his body, but at once enters into the presence of Christ. His spirit is alive. He waits for the resurrection, when his spirit will be joined to his resurrection body.

- Christ's words to the thief prove this. Luke 23:43.
- He is absent from the body, and present with the Lord. 2 Corinthians 5:8.
- He is with Christ, which is far better. Philippians 1:23.
- He is free from sin, and worldly care. Hebrews 12:23.
- He is with all the believers who have gone before. Hebrews 12:23.

A Christian cannot have the same attitude to death as a non-Christian.

- it does not exist-for him. 2 Timothy 1:10.
- its fear has gone. Hebrews 2:14.
- he will never know its taste. John 8:51, Hebrews 11:26
- it cannot come between him and his Saviour. Romans 8:38-39
- it has lost its sting- 1 Corinthians 15:55
- it actually serves him! 1 Corinthians 3:22
- the thought of death is even desirable to him. Philippians 1:21-23, 2 Corinthians 5:8.

Therefore:-

- sorrow not, even as others, which have no hope. 1 Thessalonians 4:13.
- be steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord. 1 Corinthians 15:58.

Some questions answered.

16. How will the dead be raised?

1. The resurrection is a certainty.

The Old Testament taught that there is a resurrection.

- God's words to Moses awakened the hope of resurrection. Exodus 3:6. Matthew 22:32.
- Job lived in the expectancy of it. Job 19:25-27.
- It was definitely promised. Isaiah 26:19. Daniel 12:2.

Our Lord Jesus Christ taught that there is a resurrection.

Matthew 22:29, John 6:39-40, 44.

The apostles taught that there is a resurrection.

- in their public preaching. Acts 4:2
 - in their teaching of believers. 2 Timothy 1:10. Philippians 3:21. 1 Corinthians 15. Hebrews 6:2, 11:35.
- = It will take place when the Lord returns. 1 Thessalonians 4:14.
= In a moment. 1 Corinthians 15:52.
= The just and the unjust. John 5:28-29
= Some to everlasting life, some to everlasting contempt. Daniel 12:2.

2. God has told us a great deal about the resurrection of believers.

- Christ Himself will raise up every single believer. John 6:40.
- We can therefore live our lives filled with the hope of the resurrection. Luke 20:36. 1 Peter 1:3.
- Dead Christians will be raised first. 1 Thessalonians 4:16.
- Living Christians will have their bodies changed too, and will, with the others, meet the Lord in the air. 1 Thessalonians 4:17. Philippians 3:21.
- We shall never be separated from our Lord again. 2 Corinthians 4:14. 1 Thessalonians 4:17.
- 1 Corinthians 15:35-58 tells us the most about how the dead are raised.

3. We shall have bodies like Christ's glorious body!

- His resurrection is the pledge that we shall be raised. 2 Corinthians 4:14. 1 Corinthians 15:20.
- His resurrection is the pattern of ours - we shall have resurrection bodies like His. 1 John 3:2. Philippians 3:21.
 - we shall be recognisable. John 20:28-29.
 - we shall be able to be touched and handled, and still able to eat food. Matthew 28:9. John 20:27. Luke 24:41-43.
 - we shall have new powers. John 20:6-7, 19, 26.

Therefore:-

Be like those who "overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they did not love their lives to the death". Revelation 12:11.

Some questions answered.

17. Is there such a place as Hell?

If there is, we ought to learn about it; to avoid it ourselves, and to rescue others from it as well.

Jesus taught that there is a Hell.

Matthew 5:22, 10:28, 13:40-42, 49-50, 23:33, 25:41

If there is NO Hell

- Jesus is NOT the Infallible Son of God
- the Bible is a deception
- and there is no hope of any sort for anyone.

Followers of the Lord Jesus Christ cannot cover up the unpleasant truth of everlasting punishment

Unsaved people enter damnation as soon as they die.

Luke 16:19-31 makes clear that there is:-

- no annihilation (Vs 22-23)
- no soul-sleep (Vs 24)
- no second-chance (Vs 26)
- no purgatory or limbo (Vs 22-23, 26)

It teaches that: -

- what you are when you die, this is your eternal state (Vs 22-26)
- there is no delay between death and damnation (Vs 22-23)
- Hell is a place (Vs 28)
- where there is no hope (Vs 25-26)
- no respite or interruption (Vs 24-26)
- place of punishment, torment and flames (Vs 23-25, 28)
- where people can remember..... (Vs 25)

Then comes the Judgement.

- The dead will be raised. Daniel 12:2 John 5:28-29.
- People will be brought from death and hell, and those not in the book of life will be cast into the lake of fire. Revelation 20.11-15.

And afterwards, the final state of damnation

- A Place - place names are used to describe it.
Hades / Sheol, Tartarus, Gehenna, furnace of fire, lake of fire...
- A place of physical suffering and fire
Matthew 5:22, 8:12, 13:50, Revelation 14:10-11, 20:13-15.
- Eternal!

God is just to punish eternally

- Sin is an offence against an infinite Person.
- It requires infinite punishment.
- Besides, sin continues in Hell. Revelation 22:11, 15.

A loving God CAN send people to Hell

- His love has been shown by sending Christ. John 3:16.
- He is not willing that any should perish. 2 Peter 3:9.
- He has no pleasure in the death of the wicked. Ezekiel 33:11.
- Men and women go to Hell, not because God wants them to, but because they ought to - because of their sins
- God is Holy - Just and True. Sin must be punished. Romans 6:23. Numbers 32:23. Galatians 6:7.
- Sinners would be unhappy in heaven.
- Heaven would not be the heaven that God has promised, if there were sinners there.

But:-

The Lord Jesus Christ promised - "Most assuredly I say to you, he that hears My word, and believes in Him who sent Me, has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgement; but his passed from death into LIFE ". John 5:24.

Some questions answered.

18. What is Heaven like? (part 1)

1. We are not talking about this creation, but a place entirely different from it.

Heaven is not to be confused with the physical heaven above us.

It is an entirely different realm: dimension; sphere of existence.

- It is the place of the 'real'. For instance the Old Testament rites and ceremonies are only shadows of heavenly things. Hebrews 8:5.
- Unlike this creation, it is a place of holiness. Deuteronomy 26:15. Psalm 20:6.
- It is eternal. Psalm 89:29. Deuteronomy 11:21.

2. We are talking about the dwelling-place of God.

- God is constantly said to be "in heaven". Matthew 5:16, 6:9, 12:50.
- So are His angels. Matthew 18:10. 22:30.
- He is the Lord of Heaven. He reigns there, and all His will is done there. Daniel 4:35, 5:
- His presence, glory and majesty fill the place. Jeremiah 23:24. Hebrews 8:1.
- From there He speaks to men and women. Hebrews 12:25.
- And from there He sends His judgements. Romans 1:18.

3. We are talking about where the Lord Jesus Christ came from and where He now is.

- He came from heaven. John 3:13, 1 Corinthians 15:47.
- He continued to exercise His heavenly powers. John 3:13.
- He returned there. 1 Peter 3:22.
- He is still there - Acts 7:55.
- He is still there interceding for us - Hebrews 9:24.
- He is still there preparing a place for us - John 14:2-3.
- He is still there ruling there - Matthew 25:40, 28:18, 1 Peter 3:22.
- He will return from there. 1 Thessalonians 4:16, Philippians 3:20. Psalm 11:4, Matthew 11:25.

4. We are talking about a place beyond our mortal understanding.

- Paul was caught up into heaven, and witnessed things which cannot, and must not, be put into words. 2 Corinthians 12:1-4.
- The Word of God uses pictures to give us a faint understanding of what it is like:-
 - a barn - Matthew 3:12, 13:30,43.
 - the Father's house - John 14:2.
 - a city, heavenly Jerusalem - Hebrews 11:16, 12:22.
 - a country, better than anything here on earth - Hebrews 11:16.
 - an inheritance of treasure - 1 Peter 1:4.

Therefore:-

"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth.... but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven.....for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also ". Matthew 6:19-21.

Some questions answered.

19. What is Heaven like? (part 2)

We have already seen that Heaven is not something that will be, but something that IS.

It is an entirely different realm; dimension; sphere of existence.

It is the dwelling-place of God.

It is where the Lord Jesus Christ came from; and where He now is.

It is beyond our mortal understanding.

1. Some people are going to Heaven,

- Not those connected with the Devil and his angels. Matthew 25:41.
- Not those who live sinful lives. Galatians 5:19-21. Ephesians 5:5.
- Not those who have not been born again. John 3:3.

- But those whom God has chosen, and redeemed and forgiven through the blood of Christ. Ephesians 1:3-12.
- those who hear the Gospel and believe on God's Son. John 3:16.

Such believers are already:-

- heirs of heaven. Matthew 25:34.
- enrolled in heaven. Luke 10:20.
- citizens of heaven. Philippians 3:20.
- knowingly going to heaven. Hebrews 13:14.

2. We know a little of what they are going to.

- to the unveiled blessing of the Father. Matthew 25:34.
- to all that they ever hoped for. Colossians 1:5.
- to their reward. Hebrews 10:34-35.
- to their treasure. Matthew 6:20.
- to the sight of the Lord!! John 17:24.

The present physical heavens and earth will pass away, and will be renewed.

Righteousness will dwell in them. Matthew 19:28. Acts 3:21. Hebrews 12:27. 2 Peter 3:13.

THEN the new Jerusalem will descend out of heaven from god, and the redeemed will enter on their final joy. Revelation 21 and 22.

The present distinctions of material/spiritual, visible/invisible will be wiped away, and God will be all in all.

Therefore:-

- Do not be obsessed with the things of this passing world. Hebrews 10:34.
- Let your thoughts be fixed constantly on the things of heaven. Colossians 3:2.

"Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach. For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come" Hebrews 13:13-14.

Some questions answered.

20. Who is the Holy Spirit?

Matter is one mode of being.
Material things have – weight; dimension; shape; limits.

Spirit is another mode of being - just as real; in fact more real. Spiritual things have the power of penetration.

The Holy Spirit is a Being dwelling in this other mode of existence.
He is not courage; temperament; enthusiasm; genius

1. HE IS A PERSON.

a. He acts like a person.

He dwells. John 14:17
He teaches. John 14:26
He guides, He hears, He speaks, He shows. John 16:13
He calls, and sends forth. Acts 13:2,4.
He forbids. Acts 16:6-7.
He intercedes. Romans 8:26.

b. He has the qualities of personality.

A will. 1 Corinthians 12:11
Thought. Romans 8:27
Knowledge. 1 Corinthians 2:10-11
Love. Romans 15:30

He can be - lied to. Acts 5:3
 - resisted. Acts 7:51
 - grieved. Ephesians 4:30
 - blasphemed against. Matthew 12:31.

c. He is spoken of as a person.

Jesus spoke of Him as "He", not "It". John 16:7, 8, 13, 14
Jesus called Him the "Comforter". John 15:26, 16:7

There is an unseen Person present - a knowing, feeling Personality! Not a wind or a fire - a Person!

2. HE IS GOD.

- He is one with the Father and the Son. Matthew 28:19. 2 Corinthians 13:14 1 Corinthians 12:4-6. Ephesians 4:4-6.
- He possesses the attributes of God. - Omniscience - 1 Corinthians 2:10-11
- Omnipresence - Psalm 139:7
- Omnipotence - Luke 1:35
- He is equated with God.
Compare:- Exodus 17:2-7 with Hebrews 3:7-9
Isaiah 6:8-10 with Acts 28:25-27
Jeremiah 31:31-34 with Hebrews 10:15-17.
- the unseen Person who is present, is God.
- We do not need to be afraid of Him - for He is the Spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- Nearness to God is not to be measured in feet and inches. We are near to God when we have the right relationship with a Person.

Some questions answered.

21. What does the Holy Spirit do?

The Holy Spirit is a Person.
He is God.

1. What He HAS done.

Created.

- It was He who brought order out of chaos. Genesis 1:2
- Man was made by the Spirit of God. Genesis 2:7.

Written the Scriptures.

- He breathed them, and moved the men who wrote them. 2 Timothy 3:16. 2 Peter 1:21
- Men received their messages from Him. Ezekiel 11:5. Luke 2:26-32.
- He still speaks through the Scriptures. Hebrews 3:7, 10:15.

Energised the ministry of Christ.

- The Lord was conceived by Him; Mary was with child by Him. Luke 1:35; Matthew 1:18, 20.
- He came on Christ at His baptism, and directed His ministry. Mark 1:10-12.
- His whole ministry was accomplished in the Spirit's power. Acts 10:38, Matthew 12:28, John 3:34.
- The Spirit raised the Lord Jesus Christ from the dead. Romans 1:4, 8:11.

What He IS doing.

Gathering the Church

- He is sending out messengers to preach the Gospel, and accompanying their preaching with His power. Acts 13:2-4, 1 Peter 1:12.
- He is bringing about the New Birth. John 3:5-6.
- He is convincing men of sin, and bringing men and women to Christ and the blessings which lie in Him. John 16:8-11, 15:26, 1 Corinthians 12:3, 6:11.
- Those thus brought to Christ are brought into the one body, the Church. Corinthians 12:13.

Working in the Church.

- He binds the members of the Church together into a spiritual unity. Ephesians 4:3-4.
- He raises up spiritual overseers in the local church. Acts 20:28
- He distributes to the members varying gifts. Romans 12:6-8. 1 Corinthians 12

" For by one Spirit we are all baptised into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free; and have all been made to drink into one Spirit ". 1 Corinthians 12:13. NJK

"Now if any one does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His ". Romans 8:9.

Some questions answered.

22. What does the Holy Spirit do? (Part Two).

The Holy Spirit is a Person; He is God.

We have seen how He is gathering the Church; and working in the Church.

Tonight we see what He does for us as individual Christians:-

1. He regenerates us.

- we owe our new birth to Him. John 3:3, 5.
- we were spiritually dead, but He gave us spiritual life. Ephesians 2:1, John 6:63.
- we thought spiritual things to be foolish, but because of Him we can now see them for ourselves. 1 Corinthians 2:9-16

2. He indwells us.

- this indwelling is the distinguishing mark of a Christian. Romans 8:9.
- the Christian's body is the Spirit's temple. 1 Corinthians 3:16, 6:19
- we know the Spirit, who is with us for ever. John 14:16-17.
- He inwardly assures us that we are God's children. Romans 8:14-17.

3. He changes us.

- He changes us increasingly into the Lord's likeness. 2 Corinthians 3:18.
- His fruit is seen in our lives. Galatians 5:22-23.
- He sheds abroad the love of God in our hearts. Romans 5:5.
- He fills us with hope. Romans 15:13.

4. He strengthens us.

- He upholds us in times of difficulty. Philippians 1:19, Acts 9:31
- His power enables us to witness. Acts 1:8
- He keeps the hope of glory alive in us. Ephesians 1:14.

5. He helps us to pray.

- He gives us the motives to make us want to pray. Rom 15:30
- He gives meaning to our groanings before the Father. Romans 8:26
- He can be counted on to help us to pray. Ephesians 6:18.

6. He guides us.

- walking after Him, we are guided away from sin. Galatians 5:16
- He makes it clear what way we should take. Acts 16:6-7
- He guides us to correct solutions to difficult problems. Acts 15:28
- He leads us to the truth. John 15:26, 16:13, 1 John 2:19-20

He, the Spirit of truth, IS come!

Some questions answered.

23. What is the Baptism in the Holy Spirit?

There is a lot of confusion about this term.

Let us see how the New Testament uses it, and then for ever afterwards use it ourselves in the same way.

There are seven clear references to being baptised in the Holy Spirit. (Matthew 3:11, Mark 1:8, Luke 3:16, John 1:33, Acts 1:5 and 11:16, 1 Corinthians 12:13)

With these in mind, and the whole New Testament open, we can answer the following questions:-

1. When does this baptism take place?

At conversion - for the baptism in the Spirit is the act by which God makes us members of Christ's Body.

- 1 Corinthians 12:13 clearly teaches this.

(Some claim that in six verses Christ is said to baptise in the Spirit, but that here it is the Spirit that does the baptising - and therefore we cannot argue from this text.

- This is just not true - the Greek is the same in all seven verses.
- If it was so, IN what would the baptism take place?).

- This is why Jesus is called 'the one whose characteristic it is to baptise in the Spirit' and 'the one whose characteristic it is to take away sin' in John 1:29 and 33.

Baptising in the Spirit is AS MUCH PART OF HIS MINISTRY as taking away sin. (Co-extensive).

- This is why it is called the BAPTISM in the Holy Spirit. Baptism is always something at the BEGINNING, never something subsequent. Christ initiates us into the realm of the Spirit. Regeneration = this baptism.
- This is why Ephesians 4:5 talks of "one baptism" but Hebrews 6:2 mentions "baptisms" - water-baptism is the outward sign of which Spirit-baptism is the inward reality. They are one and the same thing. So when someone has the inward reality, he cannot be refused the outward sign. See Acts 10:47 and 11:16,
- The fact that Pentecost is called being "baptised with the Holy Ghost" (Acts 1:5) need not worry us. The disciples lived between 2 dispensations, and did not become constituted as the Body of Christ IN THE FULL NEW TESTAMENT SENSE until that day.

They received the Promise of the Father after tarrying; but then immediately proceeded to say that from then onwards the Promise was to everyone else the moment they were converted (Acts 2:38-39).

A new dispensation had come!

"The phrase 'baptism of the Holy Spirit' should be limited, strictly speaking, to what happened on the day of Pentecost, and to our being united with the eternal significance of that event at the moment of our own conversion" (George B. Duncan).

- This is why in the whole New Testament Nobody is ever told to seek the Baptism in the Holy Spirit - as it was something that ALL Christians had already experienced (and not just some).
- The experience of the 120 on the Day of Pentecost cannot be a norm for us, for they belong to two dispensations. But Cornelius belongs to our dispensation, and the story about him makes it clear that the baptism in the Spirit is the same as regeneration. Acts 10:44, 11:15-16
- Yes, the Baptism in the Holy Spirit is the act by which God makes us members of Christ's Body. Colossians 2:12 and Galatians 3:27 also bring this out - these texts must refer to a spiritual baptism, not just a physical baptism in water which, of course, can have no spiritual effects.

2. What does this Baptism do for us?

- It makes us members of Christ's Body. 1 Corinthians 12:13.
- By it we put on Christ; are raised with Christ; and walk in newness of life. Galatians 3:27. Colossians 2:12. Romans 6:4.
- It initiates us into the realm of the Spirit. 1 Corinthians 12:13b.
- It creates unity amongst the children of God. 1 Corinthians 12:13.

3. Must this Baptism be accompanied by signs (e.g. tongues)?

- The 3000 converted on the Day of Pentecost received "the promise" (which equals the baptism in the Spirit - see Acts 1:4-5), but we do not read of any outward signs in their case.
- In the New Testament epistles we do not find any teaching that there should be signs accompanying this baptism.
- The only occasions where signs accompanied this baptism are where there were Jews witnessing the events, who needed convincing of the reality of the spiritual work going on.

(Why? 1 Corinthians 1:22 and 14:21).

" 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 ".

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Some questions answered.

24. How can I be filled with the Holy Spirit?

All true believers have been baptised in the Holy Spirit.
But many live on a low level, because they are not filled with the Spirit.

We should not look on the Spirit-filled life as a special de-luxe type of Christianity.

It is God's desire that all Christians should be Spirit-filled.
If we lose the fulness, it is His desire that we should regain it.
The Spirit-filled life should be the norm, not the exception.

1. There is nothing to be afraid of - look at the RESULTS of the Spirit's filling.

Ephesians 5:18-20.

It is not an alcohol-type of drunkenness, involving loss of self-control.
It is not a private, strange, eerie experience.

It is something resulting in wholesome relationships with God, and men.

- "speaking". Spiritual fellowship.
- "singing and making melody". Worship.
- "giving thanks". Gratitude.
- "submitting". Self-submission.

Galatians 5:22-23.

When someone is filled with the Spirit, they will surely be filled with His fruit
- Holiness
- Godly CHARACTER.

Acts 2:4, 4:8, 31; 6:3; 7:55; 9:17; 11:24. 13:9, 52

All these references have one thing in common - those who were filled had their attention fixed on our Lord Jesus Christ, and their conversation was all about HIM.

2. What then is this filling?

It is something commanded; something recorded; but it is something which is never claimed. (So do not be fooled by people making wonderful claims about how they were filled by the Spirit!).

In the New Testament it is spoken of in two distinct ways:-

A sudden possession

The Holy Spirit sometimes arrests a person, suddenly and unexpectedly, to fulfil His purpose. This is a sovereign act. It is entirely out of our control. It is not to be sought.

We are concerned about:-

A continuing condition Ephesians 5:18.

- a present-tense command, meaning that we are to "go on being filled" - it is to be our everyday experience, and the quality of our life.
- a plural command. We are ALL to be filled in this way. It is an obligation for all Christians, not an optional extra.
- a passive command. It means allowing the Spirit to take over the control of our lives. It means giving ourselves up to this Person, for Him to do whatever He wants with us.

3. How can I be Spirit-filled?

Clue 1: John 7:37-39. He who is always coming to Christ, always believing on Him, always drinking of Him - from him the Spirit will always be flowing.
DRINK - AND KEEP ON DRINKING.

Clue 2: Ephesians 5:18. You come under the (awful) control of alcohol by drinking. You come under the control of the Spirit by drinking. It is the only way to become full and stay full.
DRINK - AND KEEP ON DRINKING.

Clue 3: Acts 5:32. The meaning is entirely plain-.
OBEY - AND KEEP ON OBEYING.

Practical action:-

1. Be ALWAYS AVAILING yourself of those means of grace by which you drink of Christ, and drink in the influence of the spiritual world - local church life (Acts 2:42), personal prayer and Bible reading,...

2. Be ALWAYS OBEYING every word of God. Live a life committed to obeying Biblical principles....and be filled with the Spirit!!

Some questions answered.

25. Please tell us the truth about the gifts of the Spirit.

• This question is asked because there are so many who claim that God has restored the miraculous gifts - or charismata - to the Church.

We do not have time to tackle this subject in great detail.
But three important things need saying:-

1. Having miraculous gifts IN NO WAY makes a person a superior Christian.

- In fact it is possible to do miracles in the name of Christ, and not be a Christian at all! Matthew 7:20-23.
- No spiritual gift was missing in the Corinthian church (1 Corinthians 1:7), and yet they were still 'babes in Christ' and 'yet carnal'.(3:1-3).
- In Ephesians 5:18 and onwards, Paul points out that when people are filled with the Spirit, the proof lies in changed character (the moral and ethical realm), not in miraculous manifestations.
- Elders and deacons have to be men of superior spirituality, but in the list of qualities expected of them, no mention is made of it being-necessary for them to possess charismata. 1Timothy 3:2-13, Titus 1:5-9.

The charismata weren't as important to the early Christians as they are to some modern ones!
And no-one seems to have been upset when they disappeared.

2. In fact God has withdrawn the charismata from the Church.

After the New Testament age the charismata disappeared speedily and completely.
It is a fact of history.

- they disappeared so completely that to this day we do not know exactly what they were.
- Some folk claim that they have been restored to the Church, but there is no certainty that what are claimed to be modern-day charismata are anything like those experienced by New Testament Christians.
- The charismata were God's gift for the time of the Church's infancy. They did not last long - and this must be because God did not intend them to last long. (He is Sovereign).

This should not surprise us. Once we understand why the charismata were given, it is exactly what we would expect.

- They were not given to establish the Church, or even to build it up - they were given to prove that the Apostles were messengers from God. (Authentication. This is why all Bible miracles were given).
- The Charismata were not seen, except where an Apostle had ministered - see especially Acts 8:14-17.
- They were the sign to the world that a new era had begun. Romans 15:19, 2 Corinthians 12:12, Hebrews 2:3-4

This is why the Scriptures contain no command for us to seek the charismata.

- We are told to seek God; His kingdom; righteousness; and even the best gifts (pneumatikon) - but never the charismata:
- People who tell us to seek for supernatural manifestations are urging something which God Himself does not urge. This is wicked.

3. Some gifts are gone. Some remain.

- It is the Spirit Himself who chooses what gifts we are to have 1 Corinthians 12:11.
- Every believer is given a gift. 1 Corinthians 12:6-7.
- Believers do not all receive the same gift. 1 Corinthians 12:8-10, 29-30. Romans 12:4-6.
- Some gifts are more important than others. 1 Corinthians 12:28. 14:5, 19.
- As a church, the gift we should want above all others is prophecy. 1 Corinthians 14:1 - but see Revelation 19:10.

What to do:-

- Exercise great caution when miracles are claimed, especially in the light of 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12.
- Seek to find out in what ways God has gifted you, and labour to become useful and edifying members of this local church.
- Do everything possible to encourage holiness, righteousness, and godly living.
- In every way possible, encourage those who appear to have gifts in the public ministry of the Word of God. Ephesians 4:1-16.
- Let nothing stop us from obeying the Great Commission. Matthew 28:18-20.

Some questions answered.

26. How can I be sure that I am a Christian?

It is possible to be sure.

- The Apostle John makes this quite clear. 1 John 5:13.
- This is why we are called to examine ourselves. 2 Corinthians 13:5.
- The New Testament is full of references to being sure. Romans 8:38-39. Philippians 1:6.
1 Thessalonians 1:4, 5:9. 2 Timothy 1:12. 1 John 3:1-3.
- Much of the New Testament wouldn't make sense if we couldn't be sure.
(e.g. teaching on soul winning?, being holy longing for heaven etc.)
- Many early Christians were martyrs - they were sure! 1 Timothy 4:6-8.

Some things that need saying

Some people are sure who have no business to be.

- they do not have a right understanding of what a true Christian is.
- or, they are counterfeit Christians. See Matthew 7:20-23.

Some people who should be sure are not.

- usually believers who have not had much teaching.
- or, believers who have something wrong with their lives (see Psalm 51:11-12).

Some people, of course, are not sure because they are just not true Christians.

How, then, can I be sure??

1. The promises of God

God cannot lie. Titus 1:2,

All His promises are true. 2 Corinthians 1:20. John 17:17. Psalm 19:7

Take John 3:16.

- Do you believe this teaching?
- Have you put your faith in the Son of God?
- Then GOD says that you are no longer perishing, and that eternal life is yours.

Now take John 5:24. Romans 10:9-10. Revelation 3:20,

But even this is not enough.

- Our hearts are so wicked that we can be self-deceived, and have a false assurance.
Titus 1:16.

There is another way of assurance:-

2. The proof of our daily life

Test 1 Believing the right things 1 John 3:22-25

Do you believe Jesus to be:-

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------|
| • the Christ? | 1 John 5:1 |
| • the Son of God? | 1 John 5:4-5 |
| • the One who came in the flesh? | 1 John 4:2 |

Test 2: A changed and godly life. 1 John 2:29, 3:10

Do you :-

- obey God's commands? 1 John 2:3-6, 3:24.
- forsake the spirit of the world? 1 John 2:15-17, 5:5, 19.
- cease from habitual sin? 1 John 3:5-6,9.

Test 3: Love for the brethren. 1 John 3:14.

Do you love other Christians? 1 John 3:10-18, 4:7-8, 11-12, 20-21.

If you pass these tests

- You are most certainly a Christian, however unworthy you feel 1 John 3:19
- You may expect, at length, to experience the inner witness of the Holy Spirit, assuring you that you are a child of God, sealed to the day of redemption. Galatians 4:6. Romans 8:15-16. Ephesians 1:13-14, 4:30. 2 Corinthians 1:21-22.

If you do not pass these tests,

- You are most certainly NOT a true Christian 1 John 1:6. 2:4. 3:6. 4:20
 - You need to call on God to save you, without delay.
-

Once a Christian is sure, his whole life is transformed !

- by joy 1 Peter 1:8, 1 John 1:4
- by the absence of wrong fear before God. 1 John 4:17-19
- by new confidence in approaching God. 1 John 3:19-22, 5:14-15

Some questions answered.

27. But is it really worth being a Christian?

There is a cost to being a Christian - a daily cross to bear.

The Christian life is also full of responsibilities.

The cross is painful, and the responsibilities heavy.

- Is it worth it?
- Do a Christian's privileges outweigh his pains?

1. Disowned by the world - but joined to Christ!

- The Christian is said to be united to Christ in His death, burial, resurrection, glorification, enthronement and reign. Romans 6:4-8, 8:17, Colossians 2:12, 3:1. Revelation 20:4.
- He is intimately united with Christ
 - as a Body is to the Head. 1 Corinthians 12.
 - as a Bride to her Husband. Ephesians 5:25-32.
 - as a Building to its Foundation and Cornerstone. Matthew 16:18, Ephesians 2:20-22.

2. Disowned by the world - but adopted by God !

- Before the world's foundation, God chose us to be His children. Ephesians 1:4-5.
- On receiving Christ, we actually enter the family. John 1:12.
- The Spirit assures of our sonship and privilege. Romans 8:15-17.
- One day we will be publicly declared to be God's children, before an expectant creation, Romans 8:19, 23.

3. Disowned by the world - but gloriously free!

- Because the Son has made us free, we are free indeed! John 8:32, 34, 36.
 - free from the curse of having broken God's Law. Galatians 3:13
 - free from slavery to sin. John 8:34.
 - free to serve God and righteousness. 1 Peter 2:16, Romans 6:17-18.
 - free from the fear of death. Hebrews 2:14-15.

4. Disowned by the world - but part of a fellowship!

- The Chief Shepherd has called into being one flock, to which all true believers belong. John 10:16.
- People of all types become members of one Body, and of one another, by having the same experience of the Spirit. 1 Corinthians 12:12-13. Romans 12:5.
- The members are joined to one another, as are the Father and the Son. John 17:11, 21-22, 1 John 1:3.
- Christians meet together, think, grow and serve together - and this fellowship is unknown to the people of the world. Ephesians 4:15-16, Hebrews 10:25, 1 Peter 3:8, Acts 20:17.

5. Disowned by the world - but not always to be here!

- Even while on earth the believer knows about the resurrection of his body. Job 19:25-27. 1 Thessalonians 4:14.
- Even while on earth the hope of heaven burns in his heart. Romans 5:2, Hebrews 11:13-16, Revelation 21 and 22.
- But the best is still hidden from him 1 Corinthians 13:12, 2:9.

"For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us ". Romans 8:18.

Some questions answered.

28. Can a believer ever be lost?

NO!!

- but some people imagine themselves to be believers, when they are not. They are already lost - but by calling on Christ can become true believers, and NEVER be lost.
- others are not sure whether they are believers or not. They must MAKE SURE! Only true believers can be sure that they will never be lost.

- IT IS TRUE - GENUINE BELIEVERS CAN NEVER BE LOST!!

1. Specific texts clearly say so.

Let us look carefully at :-

- John 3:16, .5:24, 10:27-30,
- Romans 11:29.
- Philippians 1:6.
- 1 Peter 1:3-5.

These are just some examples. There are countless similar texts.

2. The terms which describe salvation make it clear.

Eternal life - John 3:15-16, 17:2-3, 20:31.

- this means life of a different quality, like God's, and therefore without any time limits.

Born again John 3:5-8, 1 Peter 1:23.

- the life of the Spirit (God) is now ours, and we are born again of an incorruptible seed.

The picture of us being Christ's bride, His building, and members of His body all show that salvation must be eternal. We are inextricably united to Him, the Eternal One! Ephesians 1:22-23, 2:19-22, 5:22-32.

We are also pictured as being sons of God, and brothers of Christ. As long as Christ is, so are we in favour with God! Romans 8:14-17, Galatians 4:4-7, Hebrews 2:10-13.

3. It is made clear by the fact that salvation is GOD'S WORK completely.

God chose to save us and make us His children, although there was nothing good in us. Ephesians 1:3-6. Titus 3:4-7.

Christ died as an actual Substitute in the place of those whom God chose, and now intercedes specifically for them. Acts 20:28, Ephesians 5:25, Hebrews 7:25.

The Holy Spirit calls those whom God has chosen, and indwells them. 1 Corinthians 1:26-29, Galatians 4:6.

So, from start to finish, salvation is GOD' S WORK. (Ephesians 2:8-10).

- God is Unchangeable. Of His own will He has done all this for you. If He forsook you now, He would be changeable, and would deny Himself: "He CANNOT deny Himself".
- "I know that, whatever God does, it shall be FOR EVER". Ecclesiastes 3:14.
- And look at Romans 8:28-31

" This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of ALL He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day ". John 6:39.

Some questions answered.

29. What is sanctification?

The word "sanctification" is sometimes used of objects, and sometimes of persons, and means - "set apart for God's use".

When used of persons, it is used in 4 different ways:-

1. Being set apart in election and calling. 2 Thessalonians 2:13. 1 Peter 1:2.
2. Being set apart as a separate people. ("saints") Acts 20:32, 26:18
3. Being set apart by holiness of life. John 17:17. Ephesians 5:26. 2 Corinthians 7:1.
4. Being set apart, ultimately, to be like Christ. 1 Thessalonians 5:23.

But the word is **most often** used in the third way - being set apart as far as the quality of our daily life is concerned. It refers to a Christian becoming more and more godly and holy in his life.

1. God requires sanctification of every Christian.

NOT justification - that is a once-for-all thing, done in a moment. It is something God does for us, entirely apart from us.

NOT regeneration - that is a once-for-all thing, done in a moment. It is what God does in us, giving us spiritual life.

Sanctification is our becoming more and more holy in actual experience, and is a continuous process which God does in us, and which we ourselves do too.

- God has plainly declared that it is His will for us to be sanctified. 1 Thessalonians 4:3, 7.
- The Holy God has called us to Himself. It is His will that we should be holy too. 1 Peter 1:14-17.
- Without such holiness of life, we will not see the Lord! Hebrews 12:14.

2. It is a continuous process.

- The pictures used of the Christian life make it clear that we do not become all that we should be at once. e.g. 1 Corinthians 3:1-4. Hebrews 5:12-6:3.
- The fact that the New Testament writers used so much exhortation shows that the early Christians were not all that they should be, and must do something about it. e.g. Ephesians 5, Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 13
- We are thus told that it must be our constant aim to bring holiness to completeness. 2 Corinthians 7:1. Hebrews 12:12-14.
- It is a progressive work, that will not be over until we are changed into Christ's likeness at His Advent. Philippians 3:12-21. 1 John 3:1-3.

3. It is not automatic - there is something for us to do.

- We are never to regard sin lightly again. Romans 6:1-2.
- Although sin within still causes awful conflict, we are to remember that it is no longer our master. We are not to yield to it, but only to God. Romans 6:11-14. 7:1-25.
- We are to cut out everything sinful and spiritually harmful. Ephesians 4:22-32. 1 Thessalonians 4:3, 7. Matthew 5:29-30.
- We are to give ourselves to copying Christ, and living by His commandments. 1 Corinthians 11:1, Deuteronomy 6:5, 1 John 3:22.

4. In all this, we can count on God's help.

- As we seek to work out our salvation in this way, we can be confident that God Himself is at work within us. Philippians 2:13.
- The Holy Spirit gives us inward strength, helping us to obey God's will and to put sin to death, and gradually changes us into Christ's likeness. Ephesians 3:16. Romans 8:2, 13. 2 Corinthians 3:18.
- God will also bring us through painful experiences which will help us in our quest for holiness. Hebrews 12:10-11.
- But the chief way by which He brings about our sanctification is. through His Word. John 17:17. Psalm 119:9. Ephesians 4:11-16. 2 Timothy 3:16-17.

Therefore:-

"Pursue.....holiness, without which no one will see the Lord ". Hebrews 12:14.

Some questions answered.

30. Which is the TRUE Church of Christ?

1. A company of people

- men and women, boys and girls.
- of all ages and generations.
- from different races, cultures and backgrounds.
- not restricted to any denomination.

God the Father chose them

- this took place before the foundation of the world. Ephesians 1:4, Matthew 25:34.
- the reason for the choice lies in God alone. Ephesians 1:5.
- an eternal covenant was made. Hebrews 13:20. 1 Peter 1:20. Revelation 13:8, 17:8.
- and they were destined to be God's sons. Ephesians 1:5. Romans 8:28-30.

God the Son died for them

- Jesus came to save those whom the Father gave Him. John 6:37,39-40
- It was these - the church - that He purchased with His blood. Acts 20:28.
- Christ died as an actual Substitute for an actual people. Ephesians 5:25.
- He came to redeem the members of the true church from all iniquity. Titus 2:14.

God the Holy Spirit works in them

- He calls them to faith. (ekklesia = church = the called-out ones)
- There are many references to calling in Scripture. 1 Corinthians 1:2, 9, 24, 26. Romans 1:6-7, 2 Timothy 1:9, 1 Peter 2:9 etc..
- To the called God gives faith and the new birth. Acts 11:17, John 3:5-8.
- He does in them the work of sanctification. 1 Thessalonians 4:7-8, Galatians 5:22-25.
- He leads them safely through this life. Romans 8:9, 14.
- And will raise up their mortal bodies at the resurrection. Romans 8:11

- Which is why the Christian life is described as walking 'after' or 'in' the Spirit. Romans 8:1, 4-6. Galatians 3:1-5, 5:25.

2. This company people is highly privileged.

- They are God's own people, a new Israel. 2 Corinthians 6:14-18, 1 Peter 2:9.
- They are God's household. Galatians 6:10. Hebrews 10:21.
- His building, Bride, Body. 1 Corinthians 3:10, 16-17, 12:14-27, Ephesians 5:21-33.
- Christ's flock. Hebrews 13:20, Acts 20:28.
 - God is on their side. Romans 8:28-39.
 - They are blessed with ALL spiritual blessings. Ephesians 1:3.
 - And are bound for glory.' Revelation 20:11 - 22:21.

3. Some conclusions.

- the church belongs to no man or group of men. It is God's church! Acts 20:28, Galatians 1:13, 1 Timothy 3:15.
- only He knows exactly who its members are. 2 Timothy 2:19
- only He can add to it. Acts 2:47
- no human divisions are permissible in the church of God. 1 Corinthians 12:13, Ephesians 2:12-14, Revelation 5:9-10.
- there is only one true church. It already possesses a unity. This needs to be maintained, not created. Ephesians 4:2-3.

Are you a member of Christ's church??

- Only saved people are members, Acts 2:47.
- "If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved" "for who ever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved ". Romans 10:9, 13.

Some questions answered.

31. How important is it to belong to a local church?

We have seen what the true church of Christ is:-

- a company of people. The Father chose them. The Son died for them. The Holy Spirit works in them.
- this company of people is highly privileged. They are Christ's Body, Building and Bride. God is on their side, and they are bound for glory:
- so the church belongs to God, not men. Only God knows exactly who its members are. Only He can add to the true church, and it possesses a unity which He has given it.

1. Look at the New Testament pattern!

- as the Gospel spread, all the members of the true church in any one spot gathered into worshipping groups, or local churches. Acts 13:1, 14:23, 15:41, 20:17, Revelation 1:11
- most of the New Testament letters are written to such local churches, and the apostles took it for granted that believers would join in such fellowships. 1 Corinthians 1:2, 14:23, 2 Corinthians 1:1.
- when Paul was converted, his first act in each new town was to join up with the disciples there. Acts 9:19, 26.
- the Word of God commands us to follow this pattern. Heb We should meet with the Christians where we live. It is a command - not an optional extra!

2. It makes fellowship possible.

- we are expected to have fellowship ('a shared life') with one another. This is impossible if we are not part and parcel of the local company of Christians. Hebrews 3:13, 10:24, Acts 2:42
- we have responsibilities to one another. Most of God's commands in this direction cannot be kept, unless we are closely associating with the local church. See Galatians 6:1-2, 10. Ephesians 4:2-3. Hebrews 13:15-17. 1 Corinthians 16:2. Philippians 2:1-2.etc...

3. It makes Christian growth possible.

Instruction

- a church is to have elders over it, and if it does not it is defective. It is the duty of these elders to rule the church, and also to feed and nurture it, teaching it the Word of God. Some elders are to be supported

by the church's gifts, so that they can more fully give themselves to ministering God's Word.

A believer not part of a local church cuts himself off from all this. (See Acts 14:22-23, 20:28 -35, Ephesians 4:11-16, 1 Timothy 5:17, 3:1-9, Titus 1:5).

Discipline

- Christ does not rule believers in an airy-fairy way, but through the local church officers which He has appointed. 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13, Hebrews 13:7, 17. 1 Timothy 5:17.1 Peter 5:1-5.
- Controversies must be settled, and some members sternly dealt with. This can only be done within the local congregation. Matthew 18:15-20, 1 Corinthians 5.

A believer who is not part of a local church is in open rebellion against the Lordship of Christ.

4. It makes evangelism possible.

For the local church, and ONLY the local church, is God's appointed means of spreading the Gospel.

- to be saved and to be added to the church are one and the same thing. Acts 2:42 - 47. Local believers witnessed. Converts were added to them.
- a local church may affect its own area, and also a much wider sphere. 1 Thessalonians 1:1, 8.
- Missionaries to regions beyond are commissioned by God through the local churches to which they belong. Acts 13:1-3, 14:27-28. 16:1-3.

Therefore:-

- do not despise the local church of Christ. (1 Corinthians 11:22).
- but do everything in your power to build it up. (1 Corinthians 14:12).

Some questions answered.

32. What are the sacraments?

A sacrament is an act with a spiritual meaning - "an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace".

Our Lord Jesus Christ instructed His Church to observe two such acts:-

- one to take place when a person became a member of His Church, a true Christian. To take place once per person. Baptism. Matthew 28:19
- one to be repeated often by members of His Church. The Lord's Supper. 1 Corinthians 11:23-25.

Because our Lord ordained that His Church should observe these sacraments, many Christians call them "ordinances".

BAPTISM.

(1). WHO should be baptised?

Believers - and believers only.

- **Our Lord commanded it.** Matthew 28:19-20. Mark 16:15-16.
 - There is no command to baptise anybody else, not even the infant children of believers.
 - As long as the Gospel is to be preached, the command to baptise believers also remains.
- **The apostles practised it**
 - At Pentecost. Acts 2:41
 - In Samaria. 8:12
 - The Ethiopian eunuch. 8:36-39
 - The Apostle Paul. 9:18
 - Cornelius and those with him. 10:44-48
 - At Philippi 16:14-15, 30-34
 - The Corinthians 18:8
 - Twelve men at Ephesus. 19:5
- **The New Testament expected it.**
 - It is an experience which every Christian is to share. Ephesians 4:5
 - It is taken for granted that all believers will be baptised. 1 Corinthians 1:13, Galatians 3:26-29.

(2). HOW should a believer be baptised?

- In the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Matthew 28:19
- By immersion - a complete dipping in water.
 - this is the normal meaning of the word "baptize" (even today:).
 - Jesus Himself was baptised in this way. Matthew 3:16
 - This is how Jesus did His baptising, by means of His disciples. John 3:22-23; 4:1-2.
 - This was how the New Testament Christians did it. Acts 8:38-39.
 - This was how the early church did it - sprinkling was unknown for 1300 years.

- This mode of immersion is the only way of setting forth death, burial and resurrection;
which is what baptism is all about. Romans 6.

- Scripture does not lay stress on who actually performs the act of baptism. Jesus refrained from it. Paul usually appears to have done the same. John 4:2. Acts 10:48. 1 Corinthians 1:14-17. But as it is a sacrament and ordinance of Christ, one would expect a person of responsibility in the Christian Church to do it normally.

(3). WHAT is the meaning of believers' baptism?

- It is an ordinance of Christ. When a person is baptised, therefore, he declares that Christ ruled him - that Christ is His LORD.
- A believer is baptised "in the name" (Matthew 28:19), and old term used about the transfer of property. By baptism a person declares that his is now the property of the Triune God, who is his LORD.
- Every New Testament baptism takes place when a person repents of his sin and commits himself to fellowship with and obedience to Christ. In short, baptism speaks of THE LORDSHIP OF CHRIST.
- A person being baptised is saying:- (See Romans 6:3-6, Colossians 2:12).
 - = I no longer belong to the world and its ways; I belong to that set of people over whom Christ reigns as LORD.
 - = I am dead to sin (the life that I lived under the lordship of sin is over); I am alive to Christ (I have begun a new life under His control, His LORDSHIP).
 - = I am united to the One who died, was buried, and rose again; and I am confident that He is LORD OF ALL.

Some questions answered.

33. What are the sacraments? (Part 2).

A sacrament is an act with a spiritual meaning, which the Lord Jesus Christ has ordered His Church to observe. (Ordinance).

There are two, and two only.

The first is believers' baptism:-

- to take place at once; and only once - as soon as a person becomes a member of the true Church by repentance and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

The second is the Lord's Supper:-

- to be repeated often in the local church, by believers who together walk with the Lord who saved them.

Our Lord ordained these sacraments, and we are not free to change His pattern. We must observe the sacraments - in the right way,
- and in the right order!!

THE LORD'S SUPPER.

This is also known by many other names:-

- the Lord's table. 1 Corinthians 10:21
- breaking of bread. Acts 2:42, 20:7.
- the eucharist or thanksgiving. 1 Corinthians 10:16. see Matthew 26:27.

1. Our Lord Jesus Christ instituted it.

- He held the Last Supper on the night of His betrayal. 1 Corinthians 11:23
- He longed to share it with His disciples. Luke 22:15
- He declared that they were to continually repeat it. Luke 22:19-20
- He revealed the same thing to the Apostle Paul. 1 Corinthians 11:23
- He showed it was to be observed until He comes. 1 Corinthians 11:26

And so the early church, in response to His command, often broke bread together, and assembled on the first day of the week for that purpose. Acts 2:42, 46, 20:7

2. We should observe the Lord's Supper in the appointed manner.

It is an ordinance for the local church, and should be observed there.

Acts 2:42,46. 20:7. 1 Corinthians 11:18, 22, 33. No where else.

Bread should be taken - See 1 Corinthians 11:23-34.

- thanks should be given for it.
- then it should be broken and distributed.
- and it should be made clear that it represents Christ's body, broken for our redemption - and it is eaten in remembrance of Him.

Wine should be poured:-

- and taken and given in the same manner as the bread.
- it should be made clear that this speaks of the blood of Christ, which has sealed the New Covenant - and that this is done in remembrance of Him.
- Many arguments have arisen over what sort of wine it should be, how many cups are used, etc., etc..
- This is not important, as long as what needs to be symbolised is symbolised. It is a proclamation of the Lord's Death by the appropriate words and symbols. As long as this is done, all else is secondary. 1 Corinthians 11:26.

3. We should be well aware of what we are doing.

Scripture gives strong warnings on this point:-

- people who come to the Table should be in clear fellowship with Christ, and devoted to Him. 1 Corinthians 10:16.
- people should only come to the Table with great care, fully conscious of what this Table speaks, and what it means. 1 Corinthians 11:27-30.

We should be aware that we come:-

- to set forth the Lord's death. 1 Corinthians 11:26
- to call to mind God's saving mercy, just as the Passover meal did, on which the Supper is based. Matthew 26:17-19, 26-29. Exodus 12.

So as we come, we should:-

- concentrate, and think on Christ's sufferings. 1 Corinthians 11:24-25,
- consider how we share in Christ, and the benefits of His sufferings. 1 Corinthians 10:16-17.
- reflect that we share these privileges with our fellow-believers, and that we are as much bound to them as we are to Christ. 1 Corinthians 10:17, 11:17-18, 33-34, Acts 20:7. 1 Corinthians 5:7-8 (!) .11-13.
- remember that our fellowship with Christ and each other will be perfected in the kingdom of God. Mark 14:25, Luke 22:16
- and so be filled with thanksgiving. 1 Corinthians 10:16, 11:24-25

Those who do not come to the Table in the Scriptural way are in fact harmed by doing so, 1 Corinthians 11:28 - 30.

. Those who come Scripturally actually commune with Christ, and spiritually partake of Him - and thus are greatly strengthened and helped. 1 Corinthians 10:16.

Some questions answered.

34. What do you mean by "The Sovereignty of God"?

We mean that God reigns over all.
He controls all things.
He works all things after the counsel of His own will.

That God is Sovereign is plainly taught in His Word:-

1. He is the Universe's only King.

- His titles make this clear. 1 Timothy 6:15-16
- There is nothing over which He does not directly reign. Psalm 103:19
- His word holds the universe together. Hebrew 1:3
- No part of the universe is outside His domain. Daniel 4:35. Job 1:12

2. He controls His creation.

Nature - Genesis 8:22. Psalm 107:33-34, 147:15-18, Jeremiah 31:35.
Creatures - Psalm 147:9, Matthew 10:29. (Jonah 1:17, 2:10, 1 Kings 17:6).

3. Even men are entirely in His hands.

Individuals

- He can even use evil men to fulfil His purpose. Romans 9:22-23
- Even the worst fulfil God's purpose, without their knowledge. Isaiah 10:5, 7.
- He uses His people's enemies to bring about His plans. Judges 3:12, Judges 7:22.

Nations

- He fixes their bounds. Deuteronomy 32:8
- He appoints their leaders. Psalms 75:7. Romans 13:1-2.
- He brings about His purposes by their decisions. Proverbs 21:2.

Events of history

- every turn of history is under His control. Acts 17:26
- This is so, even when no-one can recognise it. Genesis 50:20.
- The greatest example of this is the Cross. Acts 2:23, 4:28

4. No event can take place, unless it His will.

- There is no such thing as 'chance'. Proverbs 16:33
- It is HIM who brings the following things to us:-
 - happiness or tragedy. Isaiah 45:7
 - success. 1 Samuel 11:13
 - riches, honour, greatness, strength 1 Chronicles 29:12
 - all things, whatever. Romans 11:33-36

This truth of God's sovereignty is a great joy to the Christian.
If GOD is for him, who can be against him??

It is also a humbling truth.
He knows he owes his salvation entirely to a sovereign God who had mercy on him.

Romans 8:28-39
Romans 9:15-21

This truth of God's sovereignty should fill the ungodly with fear.

- "There IS a reward for the righteous: surely HE IS God who judges in the earth ".
Psalm 58:11
- "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God ". Hebrews 10:31.

BUT

"If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus,
and believe in your heart that God has raised him
from the dead, you will be saved ". Romans 10:9.

35. If God is Sovereign, Why is there so much suffering in the world?

We know that God is both sovereign and good.
But when we see evil in the world we are tempted to ask

- why does He allow it ?
- why doesn't He stop it ?

Some have tried to answer this by philosophy.
We shall just look at the plain teaching of Scripture.

1. Some things to realise.

- Many ills are man's fault. (Vietnam War: Aberfan Tragedy: thalidomide children suffering)
We must clearly understand that Divine Sovereignty and human responsibility are taught side-by-side in the Bible.
- One does not cancel out the other.
- Both are true. It is a mystery, but it is also fact.
- Once a person firmly grasps both truths, many of his greatest problems clear up at once.
- Some ills are in no way man's fault (earthquakes: tornadoes). At such times God appears to be unrighteous, yet
 - although we cannot see it, God is never unrighteous He can only do what is right. Genesis 18:25. Isaiah 6:3. Psalm 145:17.
 - we certainly do not have any cause to criticise Him. Romans 9:20-21.
 - one day all these mysteries will be cleared up for us. 1 Corinthians 13:12.

2. War.

- Wars are man's fault. They are caused by men forsaking the Lord and turning to gods of their own. Judges 5:8.
- The Old Testament particularly is full of accounts of wars, which God nonetheless has used to further His own purposes - bringing people to repentance; punishing disobedient believers, warning and judging unbelievers. Judges 2:14. Isaiah 10:5.
- One day wars will cease. Isaiah 2:4. Micah 4:1-8.

3. Suffering.

The key to this deep subject is the book of Job.
This stresses how suffering is within the sovereignty of God.
We also know that there would be no suffering if sin had not entered the world

- but suffering is not necessarily caused by a person's own sin. John 9:2-3.
- nor is suffering always the tragedy we think it is :-

- God uses it to discipline His children that He loves. Hebrews 12:5-11
- He sometimes uses it to bring people back to Himself. Psalm 119:67
- He uses it to help us grow in grace. James 1:2-4
- Or to equip us for some particular service 2 Corinthians 1:4
- Or to stir up our love for God. Psalm 73:25-26

It is always for our good. Romans 8:28. Psalm 119:71.

But ungodly men are not helped by it, only it reveals their true character clearly. Revelation 16:8-9.

4. Evil.

- The judgement of the wicked is guaranteed by the Sovereign God. Psalm 92:7-9.
- The wicked appear to prosper, but this condition is only temporary. Psalm 37
- God does not judge them right away, for in His kindness He is giving them continued opportunities to repent. Romans 2:4. 2 Peter 3:8-9.

Knowing these things to be so, the attitude of a Christian in this; wicked and troublesome world should reflect his trust in his God - sovereign and good.

- In awful circumstances he is able to rejoice in the unchanging love of God. Romans 8: 35-39.
- Amidst unabated wickedness he is able to look forward to the coming of the Lord. James 5:8.

Some questions answered.

36. Is there really a Devil? (part 1).

He is constantly mentioned throughout God's Word.

Who he is

- Some of the angels sinned, and fell from their original glory. They are doomed by God, although very active at the present. Jude 1:6. 2 Peter 2:4.
- The Devil is the leader of these, Revelation 8:11, 9:1
- The cause of his fall was his pride, and since then he has sinned continuously, dealing especially in lies. 1 Timothy 3:6, 1 John 3:8, John 8:44.

He is called by a multitude of names, each one telling us something about him:-

Satan (adversary)	Matthew 16:23.
The wicked one	1 John 2:13
The prince of the devils	Matthew 9:34
The prince of the power of the air	Ephesians 2:2
Beelzebub	Matthew 12:24, 27.
The god of this world	2 Corinthians 4:4
The tempter	Matthew 4:3 1 Thessalonians 3:5
The dragon	Revelation 12:3-4
The old serpent	Revelation 12:9

He has immense power, and we would do well to remember this.

- the whole world is in his power, for every unconverted person is under his rule, and, the rule of his agents. Matthew 4:8, John 12:31. Ephesians 2:2-3, 6:12. 1 John 5:19.
- Unconverted men and women are the Devil's children. John 8:44. 1 John 3:10.
- He imprisons and blinds those whom he controls. Acts 26:18, 2 Corinthians 4:4 Luke 11:21-22
- He is so powerful that we are to pray for daily deliverance from him. Matthew 6:13. (see John 17:15).

What he is like.

- He is the declared enemy of everything which is to do with God. Matthew 16:23, Acts 13:10.
- He is entirely wicked. There is no truth in him. John 8:44. 1 John 2:13-14.
- His ways are subtle, deceitful and often disguised. Genesis 3:1. 2
Corinthians 11:3-4, 13-15
- He is filled with pride. Job 1:6. Matthew 4:5-6. 1 Timothy 3:6.
- He is a false accuser. Job 1:6-12, 2:4 Revelation 12:9-11.
- He is cruel, and devoid of compassion. Luke 8:29, 9:37-42.
- He is a murderer. John 8:44, 1 John 3:12.
- And his activity never ceases. 1 Peter 5:8, Revelation 12:10.

What he does

- Sin came into the world by him; he continues to sin himself; and he stirs up sin. Genesis 3, Job 1:7, 2:2. 1 John 3:8.
- False beliefs and anti-Christian movements and feeling are caused by him. 1 Timothy 5:15. 2 Thessalonians 2:9.
- All lies, pretended signs and wonders and deceptions, come from him. John 8:44. 2 Thessalonians 2:9-10. Revelation 3:9, 16:14
- He even sometimes uses Scripture to bring about his wicked plans. Matthew 4:6. 2 Corinthians 11:3-4, 13-15.
- He causes professed believers to betray Jesus. John 13:2.
- He uses even believers as his agents, when they depend on their own reason, and do not rely on God's revelation. Mark 8:33.
- He opposes God's work, and is particularly against the preaching of the Gospel. Matthew 13:19, 39. 1 Thessalonians 2:17-18, 2 Corinthians 4:3-6

Some questions answered.

37. Is there really a Devil? (part 2).

We have seen who the Devil is, and what he is like.
We must also learn:-

What he does.

- Sin came into the world by him; he continues to sin himself, and he stirs up sin. Genesis 3. Job 1:7, 2:2. 1 John 3:8.
- False beliefs and anti-Christian movements and feelings are caused by him. 1 Timothy 5:15. 2 Thessalonians 2:9.
- All lies, pretended signs and wonders, and deceptions, come from him. John 8:44. 2 Thessalonians 2:9-10. Revelation 3:9, 16:14
- He even sometimes uses Scripture to bring about his wicked plans. Matthew 4:6. 2 Corinthians 11:3-4, 13-15.
- He causes professed believers to betray Jesus. John 13:2.
- He uses even believers as his agents, when they depend on their own reason, and do not rely on God's revelation. Mark 8:31-33.
- He opposes God's work, and is particularly against the preaching of the Gospel. Matthew 13:19, 39. 1 Thessalonians 2:17-18. 2 Corinthians 4:3-6.

We must now concentrate on one specific area of his activity:-

The Devil and the Christian.

- He is the enemy of Christians, and is constantly seeking opportunities to bring them down. 2 Corinthians 2:11. Ephesians 6:11. 1 Peter 5:8-9.
- He does not give up at the first attempt, but brings one temptation after another, never resting. Matthew 4:1-10. 1 Peter 5:8-9.
- **His methods are usually these:-**
 - telling about the pleasures of sin, but not the consequences. Genesis 3:4
 - specialising in half-truths. Genesis 3:5
 - appealing to the desires of the body. Genesis 3, Matthew 4:2-3. 1 Corinthians 7:5
 - making selfish suggestions. Luke 4:3.
 - trying to make the Scriptures be misunderstood. Luke 4:9-11.

- sowing doubts. Luke 4:5-7.
- pretending to be a 'godsend'. 2 Corinthians 11:14

BUT:-

Christ has defeated Satan.

- He had no power over Christ, for his power is inferior to Christ's John 14:30. Luke 11:20-22.
- By his life and death, the Lord Jesus Christ defeated the Devil and destroyed his works. Hebrews 2:14, 1 John 3:8.
- It was at the Cross that the victory was won! Colossians 2:15.

Christ has bound Satan.

- His power has been given to him, and can only be used within bounds set by God. Luke 4:6. Job 1:1-12, 2:1-6.
- For instance, He cannot steal those whom the Father has given to the Son. John 17:15.
- Even his activity serves to accomplish God's ultimate purposes. 1 Corinthians 5:5, 2 Corinthians 12:7.

Christ has doomed Satan.

- He will be crushed. Romans 16:20.
- He will be cast into Hell. Revelation 20:10. Matthew 25:41.

THEREFORE:-

- As Christ's people we do not need to fear the Devil. If we resist him, he will flee from us. James 4:7.
- Taking up the armour of God and the weapons He has given us, we cannot be defeated, but can confidently advance against this wicked foe. Ephesians 6:10-20.
- We overcome him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of our testimony. Revelation 12:11.

Some questions answered.

38. What about all the other religions?

- Some people teach that Christianity is the best religion.
- In fact it is the one and only true religion.
- All other religions are false.

1. Other religions contain many things which are true

- After all, man was created with a capacity for God, and even now is in the image of God - although the image is very defaced Gen 1:26, Ephesians 4:24, Colossians 3:10.
- So man is still basically a religious being.
- His original religion was the true one
 - "Ethnic" religions are all corruptions of the original one, and facets of truth remain.
 - Even new religions are influenced by God's general revelation and common grace.
 - So it is that all religions have certain common features:-
 - belief in a supreme being
 - belief in some sort of future existence for man
 - prayer
 - some code of behaviour

So we should not assume that everything is wrong with other religions. Acts 17:28-29.

2. Christianity is unique - it depends on the Bible.

- All religions practically have 'sacred books'.
- Only Christianity has the Bible, which is 'given by inspiration of God'. 2 Timothy 3:16
 - we have seen in previous talks the evidence for believing the Bible to be the Word of God - His written revelation.
 - Only people convinced of the infallibility of Holy Scripture believe in the uniqueness of Christianity.

The book testifies to the Person, who in turn testifies to the book. John 14:6, 17:17.

3. Christianity is unique - in its revelation of God.

Only the Scriptures teach that God is:-

- One. Exodus 20:3, Deuteronomy 5:7, 6:4, Psalm 86:10.
- yet Three. Matthew 28:19. 2 Corinthians 13:14.
- morally perfect. Numbers 23:19, Isaiah 6:3.
- completely just and completely loving. Romans 3:23-26.

4. Christianity is unique - it presents the only Saviour

- Man's basic problem is sin
- The only Saviour for sinners is Jesus Christ. Matthew 1:21. Acts 4:12.
- He is sufficient in Himself. 1 Corinthians 1:30, 1 Peter 3:18
- Outside of Him there is no hope. John 14:6.
- He cannot fail. Hebrews 7:25. Jude 1:24-25.

5. Christianity is unique - in its moral teaching.

God is love, and commands love:-

- which is the fulfilling of the law. Romans 13:10.
- man, made in God's image originally, is Instructed to be like his Maker. Exodus 20. Matthew 5:43-45, 48.

The law must be obeyed, not just in letter, but in spirit Matthew 5:20. Mark 12:28-31

- Other religions command obedience, but the Gospel promises power to obey. Romans 5:5 Luke 11:13.
- Other religions command obedience to be saved, but the Gospel teaches that obedience is the RESULT of being saved
- Other religions command obedience from fear, but the Gospel teaches that love is our motive. 1 John 4:10.19.

So **GOD HAS SPOKEN.**

There is only one system of truth in the world - His Word.

- this makes the fulfilling of the Great Commission very urgent indeed - for those without the Gospel do not know the truth, and are therefore certainly unsaved. 1 Timothy 2:1-5.