

Do You Believe?

By

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(Emphasis added)

*Jesus asked Martha just before He raised her brother Lazarus from the grave, “Do you **believe** this?” See John chapter 11, especially verse 26. When the people asked Jesus what they needed to do to perform the works of God, Jesus told them to **believe** in the One whom God sent, (i.e., Jesus, see John 6:28-29). Jesus also said that if we **believe**, anything is possible, (see Mark 9:23). The question for this teaching is, do **you** believe?*

*The main thing that will defeat us as Christians is **unbelief**. The devil wants us to doubt God and His Word. This is what he got Eve to do in order to convince her to eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. God told Adam that the day that he ate of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil he would surely die, (see Genesis 2:15-17).*

Genesis 2:15-17 -

¹⁵Then the LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it.

¹⁶And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, “Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; ¹⁷“but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for **in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.**”¹

Since to God a day is as a thousand years, when He told Adam that on the day that he ate of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil he would surely die, this came to pass when Adam died at the age of 930 years, (see II Peter 3:8 and Genesis 5:5).

II Peter 3:8 -

⁸But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that **with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.**²

Genesis 5:5 -

⁵So all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years; and he died.³

*We see here that Adam died within the first ‘day’ of his life. He died before the first thousand years, since he believed the devil and doubted God. **If we doubt God, then we***

¹*The Holy Bible, New King James Version, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.*

²*The Holy Bible, New King James Version, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.*

³*The Holy Bible, New King James Version, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.*

will also perish. That is why we must believe in Jesus Christ and accept Him as our Lord and Savior, because this is the will of God the Father. If we believe in Jesus and live as He did, then we will be saved, (see Romans chapter 10).

Romans Chapter 10 -

Chapter 10

¹Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved. ²For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. ³For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God. ⁴For Christ *is* the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes. ⁵For Moses writes about the righteousness which is of the law, "The man who does those things shall live by them." ⁶But the righteousness of faith speaks in this way, "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?' " (that is, to bring Christ down *from above*) ⁷or, " 'Who will descend into the abyss?' " (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). ⁸But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith which we preach): ⁹**that 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.** ¹⁰**For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.** ¹¹**For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame."** ¹²**For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him.** ¹³**For "whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved."**

¹⁴How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? ¹⁵And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written:

"How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace,
Who bring glad tidings of good things!"

¹⁶But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed our report?" ¹⁷So then faith *comes* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. ¹⁸But I say, have they not heard? Yes indeed:

"Their sound has gone out to all the earth,
And their words to the ends of the world."

¹⁹But I say, did Israel not know? First Moses says:

"I will provoke you to jealousy by *those who are* not a nation,
I will move you to anger by a foolish nation."

²⁰But Isaiah is very bold and says:

"I was found by those who did not seek Me;
I was made manifest to those who did not ask for Me."

²¹But to Israel he says:

"All day long I have stretched out My hands

To a disobedient and contrary people.”⁴

It is not enough to say that we believe and have faith, but we must show by the way that we live that we believe God. If we truly believe God, then we will obey Him. This is how we show our love for God. Faith is simply believing God and taking Him at His Word and doing what He says. God will empower us by the Holy Spirit to do the things He asks, if we will just pray to Him and step out to do them. It is by the way that we live that we show God that we are true Christians. It is NOT enough to say that we are Christians. If we do not walk the walk of Jesus, we will NOT make it into the kingdom of Heaven. This is because if we say we are Christians and do not obey God, then we are unbelievers, hypocrites and liars. Unbelievers and all liars will end up in the lake of fire! See the handout, ‘Faith is Truth’, James 2:14-26 and Revelation 21:7-8.

James 2:14-26 -

¹⁴What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him? ¹⁵If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, ¹⁶and one of you says to them, “Depart in peace, be warmed and filled,” but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit? ¹⁷Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. ¹⁸But someone will say, “You have faith, and I have works.” Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. ¹⁹You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble! ²⁰But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead? ²¹Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? ²²Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect? ²³And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, “Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.” And he was called the friend of God. ²⁴You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only. ²⁵Likewise, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out another way? ²⁶For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.⁵

Revelation 21:7-8 -

⁷“He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son. ⁸“But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”⁶

⁴The Holy Bible, New King James Version, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

⁵The Holy Bible, New King James Version, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

⁶The Holy Bible, New King James Version, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

*The Christian walk WILL involve suffering, even for doing the right thing! **Believing in and obeying Jesus is the ONLY way into the kingdom of Heaven.** If we believe in Jesus and obey God, despite suffering for doing the right things, then He will work powerfully through the Holy Spirit in our lives as well. God will give us everything that He gave Jesus, including both glory and suffering. If we doubt God, then we will not receive anything from God, (see Matthew 7:21-27, John 14:1-24, Romans 8:15-17, James 1:2-8 and I Peter 4:12-19).*

Matthew 7:21-27 -

True Disciples

²¹ “Not all people who sound religious are really godly. They may refer to me as ‘Lord,’ but they still won’t enter the Kingdom of Heaven. The decisive issue is whether they obey my Father in heaven. ²² On judgment day many will tell me, ‘Lord, Lord, we prophesied in your name and cast out demons in your name and performed many miracles in your name.’ ²³ But I will reply, ‘I never knew you. Go away; the things you did were unauthorized.’

Building on a Solid Foundation

²⁴ “Anyone who listens to my teaching and obeys me is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock. ²⁵ Though the rain comes in torrents and the floodwaters rise and the winds beat against that house, it won’t collapse, because it is built on rock. ²⁶ But anyone who hears my teaching and ignores it is foolish, like a person who builds a house on sand. ²⁷ When the rains and floods come and the winds beat against that house, it will fall with a mighty crash.”⁷

John 14:1-24 -

¹“Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. ²“In My Father’s house are many mansions; if *it were* not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. ³“And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, *there* you may be also. ⁴“And where I go you know, and the way you know.” ⁵Thomas said to Him, “Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?” ⁶Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.****

⁷“If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him.” ⁸Philip said to Him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us.” ⁹Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? ¹⁰“Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own *authority*; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. ¹¹“Believe Me that I *am* in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves.

¹²“Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father. ¹³“And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴“If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.

¹⁵“If you love Me, keep My commandments. ¹⁶“And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever— ¹⁷“the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. ¹⁸“I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.

¹⁹“A little while longer and the world will see Me no more, but you will see Me. Because I live, you will live also. ²⁰“At that day you will know that I *am* in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. ²¹“He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him.” ²²Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, “Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?” ²³Jesus answered and said to him, “If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him. ²⁴“He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father’s who sent Me.⁸

Romans 8:15-17 -

¹⁵ So you should not be like cowering, fearful slaves. You should behave instead like God’s very own children, adopted into his family—calling him “Father, dear Father.” ¹⁶ For his Holy Spirit speaks to us deep in our hearts and tells us that we are God’s children. ¹⁷ **And since we are his children, we will share his treasures—for everything God gives to his Son, Christ, is ours, too. But if we are to share his glory, we must also share his suffering.**⁹

James 1:2-8 -

²My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, ³knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. ⁴But let patience have *its* perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. ⁵If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. ⁶But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. ⁷For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; ⁸he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.¹⁰

⁸*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

⁹*Holy Bible, New Living Translation*, (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.) 1996.

¹⁰*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

I Peter 4:12-19 -

¹²Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; ¹³but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy. ¹⁴If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed *are you*, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified. ¹⁵But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or as a busybody in other people's matters. ¹⁶Yet if *anyone suffers* as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter. ¹⁷**For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?**

¹⁸ Now **"If the righteous one is scarcely saved, Where will the ungodly and the sinner appear?"**

¹⁹Therefore let those who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls to Him in doing good, as to a faithful Creator.¹¹

*Again, suffering for Jesus is a good thing for us. It helps us to seek God all the more. Righteous, that is obedient, people of God will have MANY troubles. This is how God tests and 'refines' us. **Suffering leads us into obedience to God.** In the long run God will bring things right for His obedient people. Suffering and persecution for doing the right thing helps us to develop PATIENCE which is the first and most important characteristic of love. This leads us into perfection. Suffering produced patience must be accompanied by kindness as well. **We must learn to patiently endure suffering and be glad about it at the same time!** Earthly riches gained without suffering and becoming obedient to God is a stumbling block for most people. Even if they suffer first and become obedient to God, sometimes wealth makes them stumble. This is something that we must be able to overcome by the power of God. That is one of the ways that God has us tested in order to help us overcome the tendency toward pride, since wealth often leads to pride and pride is the root of every evil. Even Jesus learned obedience through the things that He suffered, (see handouts 'Pride' and 'SUFFERING - the Key to Obedience', James 1:2-5 above, Deuteronomy 8:11-20, Psalm 36:15-22, Isaiah 48:10, Mark 10:23-31, Romans 8:18-30, I Corinthians 13:4-8, I Thessalonians chapter 3, II Timothy chapter 3, Hebrews chapter 2 and 5:5-11).*

Deuteronomy 8:11-20 -

¹¹"Beware that you do not forget the LORD your God by not keeping His commandments, His judgments, and His statutes which I command you today, ¹²"lest—when you have eaten and are full, and have built beautiful houses and dwell in them; ¹³"and when your herds and your flocks multiply, and your silver and your gold are multiplied, and all that you have is multiplied; ¹⁴"when your heart is lifted up, and you

¹¹The Holy Bible, New King James Version, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

forget the LORD your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage; ¹⁵“who led you through that great and terrible wilderness, *in which were fiery serpents and scorpions and thirsty land where there was no water; who brought water for you out of the flinty rock;* ¹⁶“who fed you in the wilderness with manna, which your fathers did not know, that He might humble you and that He might test you, to do you good in the end— ¹⁷“then you say in your heart, ‘My power and the might of my hand have gained me this wealth.’ ¹⁸“And you shall remember the LORD your God, for *it is* He who gives you power to get wealth, that He may establish His covenant which He swore to your fathers, as *it is* this day. ¹⁹“Then it shall be, if you by any means forget the LORD your God, and follow other gods, and serve them and worship them, I testify against you this day that you shall surely perish. ²⁰“As the nations which the LORD destroys before you, so you shall perish, because you would not be obedient to the voice of the LORD your God.¹²

Psalm 36:15-22 -

¹⁵ The eyes of the LORD *are* on the righteous,
And His ears *are open* to their cry.
¹⁶ The face of the LORD *is* against those who do evil,
To cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.
¹⁷ *The righteous* cry out, and the LORD hears,
And delivers them out of all their troubles.
¹⁸ The LORD *is* near to those who have a broken heart,
And saves such as have a contrite spirit.
¹⁹ **Many *are* the afflictions of the righteous,
But the LORD delivers him out of them all.**
²⁰ He guards all his bones;
Not one of them is broken.
²¹ Evil shall slay the wicked,
And those who hate the righteous shall be condemned.
²² The LORD redeems the soul of His servants,
And none of those who trust in Him shall be condemned.¹³

Isaiah 48:10 -

¹⁰ Behold, I have refined you, but not as silver;
I have tested you in the furnace of affliction.¹⁴

Mark 10:23-31 -

¹²*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

¹³*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

¹⁴*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

²³Then Jesus looked around and said to His disciples, **“How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God!”** ²⁴And the disciples were astonished at His words. **But Jesus answered again and said to them, “Children, how hard it is for those who trust in riches to enter the kingdom of God! ²⁵“It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.”** ²⁶And they were greatly astonished, saying among themselves, “Who then can be saved?” ²⁷But Jesus looked at them and said, **“With men *it is* impossible, but not with God; for with God all things are possible.”** ²⁸Then Peter began to say to Him, “See, we have left all and followed You.” ²⁹**So Jesus answered and said, “Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My sake and the gospel’s, ³⁰“who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time—houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions—and in the age to come, eternal life. ³¹“But many *who are* first will be last, and the last first.”**¹⁵

Romans 8:18-30 -

¹⁸**For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy *to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.*** ¹⁹For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. ²⁰For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected *it* in hope; ²¹because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. ²²For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. ²³Not only *that*, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body. ²⁴For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees? ²⁵But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for *it* with perseverance. ²⁶Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. ²⁷Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit *is*, because He makes intercession for the saints according to *the will of God.* ²⁸**And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to *His* purpose.** ²⁹For whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to be* conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. ³⁰Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.¹⁶

I Corinthians 13:4-8 -

¹⁵*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

¹⁶*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

⁴ **Love is patient and kind.** Love is not jealous or boastful or proud ⁵ or rude. Love does not demand its own way. Love is not irritable, and it keeps no record of when it has been wronged. ⁶ It is never glad about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. ⁷ Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance.

⁸ **Love will last forever,** but prophecy and speaking in unknown languages and special knowledge will all disappear.¹⁷

I Thessalonians Chapter 3 -

Chapter 3

¹Therefore, when we could no longer endure it, we thought it good to be left in Athens alone, ²and sent Timothy, our brother and minister of God, and our fellow laborer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you and encourage you concerning your faith, ³that no one should be shaken by these afflictions; for you yourselves know that we are appointed to this. ⁴For, in fact, we told you before when we were with you that we would suffer tribulation, just as it happened, and you know. ⁵For this reason, when I could no longer endure it, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter had tempted you, and our labor might be in vain.

⁶But now that Timothy has come to us from you, and brought us good news of your faith and love, and that you always have good remembrance of us, greatly desiring to see us, as we also *to see* you— ⁷therefore, brethren, in all our affliction and distress we were comforted concerning you by your faith. ⁸For now we live, if you stand fast in the Lord. ⁹For what thanks can we render to God for you, for all the joy with which we rejoice for your sake before our God, ¹⁰night and day praying exceedingly that we may see your face and perfect what is lacking in your faith?

¹¹Now may our God and Father Himself, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way to you. ¹²And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all, just as we *do* to you, ¹³so that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints.¹⁸

II Timothy Chapter 3 -

Chapter 3

¹But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: ²For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, ³unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, ⁴traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, ⁵having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away! ⁶For of this sort are those who creep into households and make captives of gullible women loaded down with sins, led away by various lusts, ⁷always learning and never able

¹⁷*Holy Bible, New Living Translation*, (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.) 1996.

¹⁸*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

to come to the knowledge of the truth. ⁸Now as Jannes and Jambres resisted Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, disapproved concerning the faith; ⁹but they will progress no further, for their folly will be manifest to all, as theirs also was.

¹⁰**But you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, perseverance, ¹¹persecutions, afflictions, which happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra—what persecutions I endured. And out of *them* all the Lord delivered me. ¹²Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. ¹³But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. ¹⁴But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned *them*, ¹⁵and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, ¹⁷that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. ¹⁹**

Hebrews Chapter 2 -

Chapter 2

¹Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away. ²For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, ³how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard *Him*, ⁴God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will?

⁵For He has not put the world to come, of which we speak, in subjection to angels. ⁶But one testified in a certain place, saying:

“What is man that You are mindful of him,
Or the son of man that You take care of him?
⁷ You have made him a little lower than the angels;
You have crowned him with glory and honor,
And set him over the works of Your hands.
⁸ You have put all things in subjection under his feet.”

For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing *that is* not put under him. But now we do not yet see all things put under him. ⁹**But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone.**

¹⁰**For it was fitting for Him, for whom *are* all things and by whom *are* all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. ¹¹For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified *are* all of one, for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren, ¹²saying:**

“I will declare Your name to My brethren;
In the midst of the assembly I will sing praise to You.”

¹⁹*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

¹³And again:

“I will put My trust in Him.”

And again:

“Here am I and the children whom God has given Me.”

¹⁴Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, ¹⁵and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. ¹⁶For indeed He does not give aid to angels, but He does give aid to the seed of Abraham. ¹⁷Therefore, in all things He had to be made like *His* brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things *pertaining* to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. **¹⁸For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted.**²⁰

Hebrews 5:5-11 -

⁵So also Christ did not glorify Himself to become High Priest, *but it* was He who said to Him:

“You are My Son,
Today I have begotten You.”

⁶As *He* also *says* in another *place*:

“You *are* a priest forever
According to the order of Melchizedek”;

⁷who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear, **⁸though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered.** ⁹And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him, ¹⁰called by God as High Priest “according to the order of Melchizedek,” ¹¹of whom we have much to say, and hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing.²¹

*Unfortunately, most Christian leaders do not understand the concept that **we are appointed to suffer for Christ's sake**, (see I Thessalonians 3:3 and II Timothy 3:12 above, Matthew 10:16-26, and John 16:1-4).*

Matthew 10:16-26 -

¹⁶“Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. Therefore be wise as serpents and harmless as doves. ¹⁷“But beware of men, for they will deliver you up to councils and scourge you in their synagogues. ¹⁸“You will be brought before

²⁰*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

²¹*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles. ¹⁹“But when they deliver you up, do not worry about how or what you should speak. For it will be given to you in that hour what you should speak; ²⁰“for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you. ²¹“Now brother will deliver up brother to death, and a father *his* child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death. ²²“And you will be hated by all for My name’s sake. But he who endures to the end will be saved. ²³“When they persecute you in this city, flee to another. For assuredly, I say to you, you will not have gone through the cities of Israel before the Son of Man comes. ²⁴“A disciple is not above *his* teacher, nor a servant above his master. ²⁵“It is enough for a disciple that he be like his teacher, and a servant like his master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more *will they call* those of his household! ²⁶“Therefore do not fear them. For there is nothing covered that will not be revealed, and hidden that will not be known.²²

John 16:1-4 -

¹“These things I have spoken to you, that you should not be made to stumble. ²“They will put you out of the synagogues; yes, the time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he offers God service. ³“And these things they will do to you because they have not known the Father nor Me. ⁴“But these things I have told you, that when the time comes, you may remember that I told you of them. And these things I did not say to you at the beginning, because I was with you.²³

We see that suffering for the name of Jesus is part of our job as Christians. The church leaders of today, as has been the case down through the ages, are busy preaching about prosperity and how to obtain the blessing of God, but they have lost track of the most important reason that God created us...to learn to walk in love, both toward God and our fellow man. People do not want to hear that they will suffer, but this is the truth no matter what they want to hear. Preaching otherwise goes against the Word of God. Anyone who preaches or teaches against the Word of God is going to cause people, especially baby Christians, to stumble in times of tribulation. This will not bode well for these teachers when judgment day comes. The leaders of the church today are busy getting wealthy and fat from donations of people and sales of merchandise. This is exactly what the Pharisees were doing in Jesus day. It was not acceptable to God then and it is not making Him happy now. We must speak the truth and ONLY the truth according to the Word of God, and we must not take advantage of gullible people who are looking for something that God is not offering them, (see II Timothy chapter 3 above). Church leaders are teaching people about prosperity and the blessings of God without teaching them accountability first. Thus Christian leaders are raising up a flock of spoiled sheep some of whom are becoming as fat as the leaders, at the expense of the weaker of the flock. The leaders cannot even deliver the sheep from troubles or get them

²²The Holy Bible, New King James Version, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

²³The Holy Bible, New King James Version, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

healed. God is going to hold these evil leaders and 'fat sheep' accountable, (see Ezekiel chapter 34, Matthew 21:12-13, Mark 9:42 and James 3:1-2).

Ezekiel Chapter 34 -

Chapter 34

¹And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ²“Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy and say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD to the shepherds: “Woe to the shepherds of Israel who feed themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flocks? ³“You eat the fat and clothe yourselves with the wool; you slaughter the fatlings, *but* you do not feed the flock. ⁴“The weak you have not strengthened, nor have you healed those who were sick, nor bound up the broken, nor brought back what was driven away, nor sought what was lost; but with force and cruelty you have ruled them. ⁵“So they were scattered because *there was* no shepherd; and they became food for all the beasts of the field when they were scattered. ⁶“My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and on every high hill; yes, My flock was scattered over the whole face of the earth, and no one was seeking or searching *for them.*”

⁷“Therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the LORD: ⁸“*as* I live,” says the Lord GOD, “surely because My flock became a prey, and My flock became food for every beast of the field, because *there was* no shepherd, nor did My shepherds search for My flock, but the shepherds fed themselves and did not feed My flock”—⁹“therefore, O shepherds, hear the word of the LORD! ¹⁰“Thus says the Lord GOD: “Behold, I *am* against the shepherds, and I will require My flock at their hand; I will cause them to cease feeding the sheep, and the shepherds shall feed themselves no more; for I will deliver My flock from their mouths, that they may no longer be food for them.”

¹¹“For thus says the Lord GOD: “Indeed I Myself will search for My sheep and seek them out. ¹²“As a shepherd seeks out his flock on the day he is among his scattered sheep, so will I seek out My sheep and deliver them from all the places where they were scattered on a cloudy and dark day. ¹³“And I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land; I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, in the valleys and in all the inhabited places of the country. ¹⁴“I will feed them in good pasture, and their fold shall be on the high mountains of Israel. There they shall lie down in a good fold and feed in rich pasture on the mountains of Israel. ¹⁵“I will feed My flock, and I will make them lie down,” says the Lord GOD. ¹⁶“I will seek what was lost and bring back what was driven away, bind up the broken and strengthen what was sick; but I will destroy the fat and the strong, and feed them in judgment.”

¹⁷“And *as for* you, O My flock, thus says the Lord GOD: “Behold, I shall judge between sheep and sheep, between rams and goats. ¹⁸“*Is it* too little for you to have eaten up the good pasture, that you must tread down with your feet the residue of your pasture—and to have drunk of the clear waters, that you must foul the residue with your feet? ¹⁹“And *as for* My flock, they eat what you have trampled with your feet, and they drink what you have fouled with your feet.”

²⁰“Therefore thus says the Lord GOD to them: “Behold, I Myself will judge between the fat and the lean sheep. ²¹“Because you have pushed with side and shoulder, butted all the weak ones with your horns, and scattered them abroad, ²²“therefore I will save My flock, and they shall no longer be a prey; and I will judge between sheep and sheep. ²³“I will establish one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them—My servant David. He shall feed them and be their shepherd. ²⁴“And I, the LORD, will be their God, and My servant David a prince among them; I, the LORD, have spoken. ²⁵“I will make a covenant of peace with them, and cause wild beasts to cease from the land; and they will dwell safely in the wilderness and sleep in the woods. ²⁶“I will make them and the places all around My hill a blessing; and I will cause showers to come down in their season; there shall be showers of blessing. ²⁷“Then the trees of the field shall yield their fruit, and the earth shall yield her increase. They shall be safe in their land; and they shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I have broken the bands of their yoke and delivered them from the hand of those who enslaved them. ²⁸“And they shall no longer be a prey for the nations, nor shall beasts of the land devour them; but they shall dwell safely, and no one shall make *them* afraid. ²⁹“I will raise up for them a garden of renown, and they shall no longer be consumed with hunger in the land, nor bear the shame of the Gentiles anymore. ³⁰“Thus they shall know that I, the LORD their God, *am* with them, and they, the house of Israel, *are* My people,” says the Lord GOD.’ ” ³¹“You are My flock, the flock of My pasture; you *are* men, and I *am* your God,” says the Lord GOD.²⁴

Matthew 21:12-13 -

¹²Then Jesus went into the temple of God and drove out all those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves. ¹³And He said to them, **“It is written, ‘My house shall be called a house of prayer,’ but you have made it a ‘den of thieves.’ ”** ²⁵

Mark 9:42 -

⁴²“**But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to stumble, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were thrown into the sea.**”²⁶

James 3:1-2 -

¹My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment. ²For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he *is* a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body.²⁷

²⁴*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

²⁵*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

²⁶*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

*It is times of trouble when people are not prepared spiritually and in the natural to deal with them that leads people into unbelief. The devil knows this principle and that is why he tries so hard to discourage us with tribulation. **However, if we know that tribulation is meant for us, and is even good for us, then we will not lose our faith and belief in Jesus when the difficult times come. Instead, we will hold onto Jesus even tighter.** This is why we must become rooted and grounded in Christ. If we have deep roots in Christ, Who is the Word of God, then when difficult times come we will not falter. This principle is central to success as a Christian. If we do not understand that we must obey God and walk as Jesus walked in order to prepare for difficult times in our lives, then we will be ill prepared for them when they do come. People who operate in the wisdom of God will understand these things and will do them. **There ARE perilous times just ahead of us and we must get spiritually prepared,** (see the handout, 'The Trouble That Lies Just Ahead', Proverbs 22:3, Matthew 7:24-27 and 13:18-23).*

Proverbs 22:3 -

³ **A prudent person foresees the danger ahead and takes precautions;** the simpleton goes blindly on and suffers the consequences.²⁸

Matthew 7:24-27 -

²⁴“**Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock:** ²⁵“and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. ²⁶“But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: ²⁷“and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall.” ²⁹

Matthew 13:18-23 -

¹⁸“Therefore hear the parable of the sower: ¹⁹“When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand *it*, then the wicked *one* comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside. ²⁰“**But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy;** ²¹“yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. **For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he**

²⁷The Holy Bible, New King James Version, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

²⁸Holy Bible, New Living Translation, (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.) 1996.

²⁹The Holy Bible, New King James Version, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

stumbles. ²²“Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful. ²³“But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands *it*, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.”³⁰

*It is high time that we as Christians to take a stand against the work of the devil within the Christian church world wide. He has been there since the beginning and will be there until we kick him out. The leaders of the church today are too afraid to take a stand against disobedient people because they fear losing their contributions. Just like the Pharisees, the leaders of the church today love their money. They like to look good in the eyes of others, but behind the scenes they are disobedient and do their own thing, not God's thing. **If we do not fear God more than we fear anything else, even the lack of money, then we will never truly receive the blessings of God. If we are not faithful in small things, then God will not trust us with greater things. We cannot love both God and money. God created money to be something for us to overcome. Most people fail in this regard, (see Luke 16:10-15).***

Luke 16:10-15 -

¹⁰“**Unless you are faithful in small matters, you won't be faithful in large ones. If you cheat even a little, you won't be honest with greater responsibilities.** ¹¹ **And if you are untrustworthy about worldly wealth, who will trust you with the true riches of heaven?** ¹² **And if you are not faithful with other people's money, why should you be trusted with money of your own?**

¹³“**No one can serve two masters. For you will hate one and love the other, or be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.”**

¹⁴ **The Pharisees, who dearly loved their money, naturally scoffed at all this.** ¹⁵ Then he said to them, “You like to look good in public, but God knows your evil hearts. What this world honors is an abomination in the sight of God.³¹

If we believe God then we will obey Him. Jesus told us that we will have the authority and the power to trample on serpents and scorpions and over EVERY work of the devil. We are supposed to use this authority and power to further the work that God sent us here to do. If we do this then we will be successful in this life AND the next. God will reward us for everything we give up in this life for the sake of Jesus and the gospel. Most of the time when we disobey God it is out of the fear of losing something, usually money. If we do not do what God has sent us here to do, then we will have disobeyed God and that in and of itself means that we did not BELIEVE God, (see Matthew 19:16-30, Luke 10:17-20 and Numbers 20:7-13).

³⁰The Holy Bible, New King James Version, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

³¹Holy Bible, New Living Translation, (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.) 1996.

Matthew 19:16-30 -

¹⁶Now behold, one came and said to Him, “Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?” ¹⁷So He said to him, “**Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments.**” ¹⁸He said to Him, “Which ones?” Jesus said, “**‘You shall not murder,’ ‘You shall not commit adultery,’ ‘You shall not steal,’ ‘You shall not bear false witness,’** ¹⁹“**Honor your father and your mother,’ and, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’**” ²⁰The young man said to Him, “All these things I have kept from my youth. What do I still lack?” ²¹**Jesus said to him, “If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.”** ²²**But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.** ²³**Then Jesus said to His disciples, “Assuredly, I say to you that it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven.** ²⁴**“And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.”** ²⁵**When His disciples heard it, they were greatly astonished, saying, “Who then can be saved?”** ²⁶**But Jesus looked at them and said to them, “With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.”** ²⁷**Then Peter answered and said to Him, “See, we have left all and followed You. Therefore what shall we have?”** ²⁸**So Jesus said to them, “Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.** ²⁹**“And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My name’s sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life.** ³⁰**“But many who are first will be last, and the last first.”**³²

Luke 10:17-20 -

¹⁷Then the seventy returned with joy, saying, “Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name.” ¹⁸And He said to them, “**I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.** ¹⁹**“Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you.** ²⁰**“Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven.”**³³

Numbers 20:7-13 -

⁷Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ⁸“Take the rod; you and your brother Aaron gather the congregation together. **Speak** to the rock before their eyes, and it will yield its water; thus you shall bring water for them out of the rock, and give drink to the congregation and their animals.” ⁹So Moses took the rod from before the LORD as He

³²*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

³³*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

commanded him. ¹⁰And Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly together before the rock; and he said to them, “Hear now, you rebels! Must we bring water for you out of this rock?” ¹¹Then Moses lifted his hand and struck the rock twice with his rod; and water came out abundantly, and the congregation and their animals drank.

¹²**Then the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, “Because you did not believe Me, to hallow Me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them.”** ¹³This *was* the water of Meribah, because the children of Israel contended with the LORD, and He was hallowed among them.³⁴

The reason that Moses struck the rock when God told him to speak to the rock is that the last time that the people were in this place and complained in the same way about not having water, God told Moses to STRIKE the rock to get the water to come out, (see Exodus 17:1-7).

Exodus 17:1-7 -

¹Then all the congregation of the children of Israel set out on their journey from the Wilderness of Sin, according to the commandment of the LORD, and camped in Rephidim; but *there was* no water for the people to drink. ²Therefore the people contended with Moses, and said, “Give us water, that we may drink.” And Moses said to them, “Why do you contend with me? Why do you tempt the LORD?” ³And the people thirsted there for water, and the people complained against Moses, and said, “Why *is* it you have brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?” ⁴So Moses cried out to the LORD, saying, “What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me!” ⁵And the LORD said to Moses, “Go on before the people, and take with you some of the elders of Israel. Also take in your hand your rod with which you struck the river, and go. ⁶“Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock in Horeb; and you shall **strike** the rock, and water will come out of it, that the people may drink.” And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel. ⁷So he called the name of the place Massah and Meribah, because of the contention of the children of Israel, and because they tempted the LORD, saying, “Is the LORD among us or not?”³⁵

When God does something great in our lives, we must not get too familiar with the process by which He does the great thing because the next time He may change the process, but still give the same result. This is a test for us to see if we will believe and trust God no matter how it looks in the natural. Striking the rock to get water was powerful, but speaking to the rock to get water was MORE powerful. Speaking the WORD of God represents Jesus, Who IS the Word of God. We must be willing to be flexible with God as He brings us higher in the Spirit. If we then do not do the new thing He tells us, even if He gives us a result, we will not be in right standing with God because

³⁴*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

³⁵*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

*we will have been disobedient. God told Moses in Numbers 20:11 above when he disobeyed God that he did not BELIEVE God. **Thus we see that disobedience is rooted in unbelief.** Unbelief leads to hardness of heart, disobedience and rebellion. If we are rebellious then God cannot use us and He will have no part of us. If we reject God's Word, (i.e., Jesus) then He will reject us. God desires obedience and mercy more than sacrifice. However just like the Pharisees in Jesus' day, many modern Christians are disobedient to God and then try to make up for it with sacrifices. **Though He does not require them, God will accept sacrifices, but they must be offered on a foundation of obedience.** If we are stiff necked, rebellious and disobedient then God will NOT accept ANY sacrifice. To God rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft. Again, rebellion is representative of unbelief and hardness of the heart. This will keep us out of the kingdom of God, (see I Samuel 15:22-23, Matthew 9:9-13, John 1:1-5 and Hebrews chapter 3).*

I Samuel 15:22-23 -

²²Then Samuel said:

“Has the LORD *as great* delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices,
As in obeying the voice of the LORD?
Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice,
And to heed than the fat of rams.

²³ **For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft,
And stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry.
Because you have rejected the word of the LORD,
He also has rejected you from *being king.*”³⁶**

Matthew 9:9-13 -

⁹As Jesus passed on from there, He saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, “**Follow Me.**” So he arose and followed Him. ¹⁰Now it happened, as Jesus sat at the table in the house, *that* behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and sat down with Him and His disciples. ¹¹And when the Pharisees saw *it*, they said to His disciples, “Why does your Teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?” ¹²When Jesus heard *that*, He said to them, “**Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick.**” ¹³“**But go and learn what *this* means: ‘I desire mercy and not sacrifice.’ For I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.**”³⁷

John 1:1-5 -

¹**In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.** ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. ⁴In Him was life, and the life was the

³⁶*The Holy Bible, New King James Version, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.*

³⁷*The Holy Bible, New King James Version, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.*

light of men. ⁵And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.³⁸

Hebrews Chapter 3 -

Chapter 3

¹Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus, ²who was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses also *was faithful* in all His house. ³For this One has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as He who built the house has more honor than the house. ⁴For every house is built by someone, but He who built all things *is* God. ⁵And Moses indeed *was* faithful in all His house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which would be spoken *afterward*, ⁶but Christ as a Son over His own house, whose house we are if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end.

⁷Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says:

⁸ **“Today, if you will hear His voice,
Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion,
In the day of trial in the wilderness,
Where your fathers tested Me, tried Me,
And saw My works forty years.
Therefore I was angry with that generation,
And said, ‘They always go astray in *their* heart,
And they have not known My ways.’
So I swore in My wrath,
‘They shall not enter My rest.’ ”**

¹²Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; ¹³but exhort one another daily, while it is called “Today,” lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. ¹⁴For we have become partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end, ¹⁵while it is said:

“Today, if you will hear His voice,
Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion.”

¹⁶For who, having heard, rebelled? Indeed, *was it* not all who came out of Egypt, *led* by Moses? ¹⁷Now with whom was He angry forty years? *Was it* not with those who sinned, whose corpses fell in the wilderness? ¹⁸And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who did not obey?

¹⁹So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.³⁹

In the same way the Israelites did not enter God’s rest because of unbelief and hardness of heart, so anyone who does not believe in Jesus as the Christ and OBEY God in

³⁸*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

³⁹*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

EVERYTHING will not enter into the kingdom of Heaven. These people will end up in the lake of fire, (see Revelation 21:8 above). This may seem harsh, but it is the truth according to the Word of God. The fact that the unbelieving Israelites died in the wilderness and did not enter the Promised Land is a symbolic warning to us. The Promised Land represents God's rest and the kingdom of God and the Israelites represent Christians. God has replaced unbelieving Israelites with believing Gentiles, and so He will replace unbelieving 'Christians' with other people, who will obey Him, (see Hebrews 3:16-19 above, Romans chapter 11 and Hebrews chapter 4).

Romans Chapter 11 -

Chapter 11

¹I say then, has God cast away His people? Certainly not! For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. ²God has not cast away His people whom He foreknew. Or do you not know what the Scripture says of Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel, saying, ³“LORD, they have killed Your prophets and torn down Your altars, and I alone am left, and they seek my life”? ⁴But what does the divine response say to him? “I have reserved for Myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal.” ⁵Even so then, at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace. ⁶And if by grace, then *it is* no longer of works; otherwise grace is no longer grace. But if *it is* of works, it is no longer grace; otherwise work is no longer work. ⁷What then? Israel has not obtained what it seeks; but the elect have obtained it, and the rest were blinded. ⁸Just as it is written:

“God has given them a spirit of stupor,
Eyes that they should not see
And ears that they should not hear,
To this very day.”

⁹And David says:

“Let their table become a snare and a trap,
A stumbling block and a recompense to them.
¹⁰ Let their eyes be darkened, so that they do not see, and bow down
their back always.”

¹¹I say then, have they stumbled that they should fall? Certainly not! But through their fall, to provoke them to jealousy, salvation *has come* to the Gentiles. ¹²Now if their fall *is* riches for the world, and their failure riches for the Gentiles, how much more their fullness! ¹³For I speak to you Gentiles; inasmuch as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry, ¹⁴if by any means I may provoke to jealousy *those who are* my flesh and save some of them. ¹⁵For if their being cast away *is* the reconciling of the world, what *will* their acceptance *be* but life from the dead? ¹⁶**For if the firstfruit is holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root is holy, so are the branches.** ¹⁷**And if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and with them became a partaker of the root and fatness of the olive tree,** ¹⁸**do not boast against the branches. But if you do boast, remember that you do not support the root, but the root supports you.** ¹⁹You will say then, “Branches were broken off that I might be grafted in.” ²⁰**Well said.** Because of unbelief they were

broken off, and you stand by faith. Do not be haughty, but fear. ²¹For if God did not spare the natural branches, He may not spare you either. ²²Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in *His* goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off. ²³And they also, if they do not continue in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. ²⁴For if you were cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these, who *are* natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree? ²⁵For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. ²⁶And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written:

“The Deliverer will come out of Zion,
And He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob;
²⁷ For this *is* My covenant with them,
When I take away their sins.”

²⁸Concerning the gospel *they are* enemies for your sake, but concerning the election *they are* beloved for the sake of the fathers. ²⁹For the gifts and the calling of God *are* irrevocable. ³⁰For as you were once disobedient to God, yet have now obtained mercy through their disobedience, ³¹even so these also have now been disobedient, that through the mercy shown you they also may obtain mercy. ³²For God has committed them all to disobedience, that He might have mercy on all. ³³Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable *are* His judgments and His ways past finding out!

³⁴ “For who has known the mind of the LORD?
Or who has become His counselor?”
³⁵ “Or who has first given to Him
And it shall be repaid to him?”

³⁶For of Him and through Him and to Him *are* all things, to whom *be* glory forever. Amen.⁴⁰

Hebrews Chapter 4 -

Chapter 4

¹Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it. ²For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them; but the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard *it*. ³For we who have believed do enter that rest, as He has said:

“So I swore in My wrath,
‘They shall not enter My rest,’ ”

⁴⁰*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. ⁴For He has spoken in a certain place of the seventh *day* in this way: “And God rested on the seventh day from all His works”; ⁵and again in this *place*: “They shall not enter My rest.” ⁶Since therefore it remains that some *must* enter it, and those to whom it was first preached did not enter because of disobedience, ⁷again He designates a certain day, saying in David, “Today,” after such a long time, as it has been said:

**“Today, if you will hear His voice,
Do not harden your hearts.”**

⁸For if Joshua had given them rest, then He would not afterward have spoken of another day. ⁹There remains therefore a rest for the people of God. ¹⁰For he who has entered His rest has himself also ceased from his works as God *did* from His.

¹¹Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience. ¹²For the word of God *is* living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. ¹³And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things *are* naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we *must give* account.

¹⁴Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast *our* confession. ¹⁵For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all *points* tempted as *we are*, yet without sin. ¹⁶Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.⁴¹

Therefore if we want to enter into the presence of God and live with Him forever in His kingdom, then we must believe in Jesus as the Christ and obey Him. This obedience will lead us into being right with God through Jesus, (i.e., being righteous). If we do not believe God, then we will not obey Him and God will reject us. In most cases if our heart is to try to obey, then we will get grace and mercy from God to give us the opportunity to practice obedience. Even the disciples of Jesus had times of unbelief, (see the handout, ‘OBEDIENCE - The Key to Righteousness’, Mark 16:9-20, John 13:34, Romans 6:15-18 and I John chapter 3).

Mark 16:9-20 -

⁹Now when *He* rose early on the first *day* of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven demons. ¹⁰She went and told those who had been with Him, as they mourned and wept. **¹¹And when they heard that He was alive and had been seen by her, they did not believe.**

¹²After that, He appeared in another form to two of them as they walked and went into the country. **¹³And they went and told *it* to the rest, *but* they did not believe them either.**

¹⁴Later He appeared to the eleven as they sat at the table; and He rebuked their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they did not believe those who had seen Him

⁴¹*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

after He had risen. ¹⁵And He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. ¹⁶“He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. ¹⁷“And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; ¹⁸“they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.”

¹⁹So then, after the Lord had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God. ²⁰And they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with *them* and confirming the word through the accompanying signs. Amen.⁴²

John 13:34 -

³⁴“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. ³⁵“By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”⁴³

Romans 6:15-18 -

¹⁵What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not! ¹⁶Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one’s slaves whom you obey, whether of sin *leading to death*, or of obedience *leading to righteousness*? ¹⁷But God be thanked that *though* you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. ¹⁸And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.⁴⁴

I John Chapter 3 -

Chapter 3

¹Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. ²Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. ³And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

⁴Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness. ⁵And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin. ⁶Whoever abides in Him does not sin. Whoever sins has neither seen Him nor known Him. ⁷**Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as**

⁴²*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

⁴³*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

⁴⁴*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

He is righteous. ⁸He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. ⁹Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God.

¹⁰In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother. ¹¹For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another, ¹²not as Cain *who* was of the wicked one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his works were evil and his brother's righteous. ¹³Do not marvel, my brethren, if the world hates you. ¹⁴We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love *his* brother abides in death. ¹⁵Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.

¹⁶By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down *our* lives for the brethren. ¹⁷But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him? ¹⁸My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth. ¹⁹And by this we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him. ²⁰For if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things. ²¹Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God. ²²And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight. ²³And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave us commandment.

²⁴Now he who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And by this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.⁴⁵

Here we see if we want the power of God to work in our lives, then we must obey God, preach the gospel and be good to other people, especially to Christians. We are supposed to treat other Christians with great love, this is how everyone will know that we are followers of Jesus, (a.k.a., 'The Golden Rule'). This is the very essence of God's Word and the message of the cross, (see Matthew 7:12, 22:34-40 and James 2:1-13).

Matthew 7:12 -

¹²“Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.”⁴⁶

Matthew 22:34-40 -

³⁴But when the Pharisees heard that He had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together. ³⁵Then one of them, a lawyer, asked *Him a question*, testing Him, and saying,

⁴⁵*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

⁴⁶*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

³⁶“Teacher, which *is* the great commandment in the law?” ³⁷Jesus said to him, “ **‘You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’** ³⁸“This is *the* first and great commandment. ³⁹“And *the* second is like it: **‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’** ⁴⁰“On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.”⁴⁷

James 2:1-13 -

¹My brethren, do not hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, *the Lord* of glory, with partiality. ²For if there should come into your assembly a man with gold rings, in fine apparel, and there should also come in a poor man in filthy clothes, ³and you pay attention to the one wearing the fine clothes and say to him, “You sit here in a good place,” and say to the poor man, “You stand there,” or, “Sit here at my footstool,” ⁴have you not shown partiality among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts? ⁵Listen, my beloved brethren: Has God not chosen the poor of this world *to be* rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him? ⁶But you have dishonored the poor man. Do not the rich oppress you and drag you into the courts? ⁷Do they not blaspheme that noble name by which you are called? ⁸**If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself,” you do well;** ⁹**but** if you show partiality, you commit sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors. ¹⁰For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one *point*, he is guilty of all. ¹¹For He who said, “Do not commit adultery,” also said, “Do not murder.” Now if you do not commit adultery, but you do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. ¹²So speak and so do as those who will be judged by the law of liberty. ¹³For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.⁴⁸

Therefore if we truly believe God and want to be perfect in His sight, then we must treat even our enemies with proper respect. This will make us just like God, (see Matthew 5:43-48).

Matthew 5:43-48 -

⁴³“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ ⁴⁴“**But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you,** ⁴⁵“**that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.** ⁴⁶“For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? ⁴⁷“And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more *than others*? Do not even

⁴⁷*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

⁴⁸*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

the tax collectors do so? ⁴⁸“Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.”⁴⁹

Most people cannot even treat those they claim to love with proper respect, let alone their enemies. However if we do not treat those we love and even those who hate us with respect, then we will not be obedient to what Jesus taught. This unbelief in the Word of God will inhibit us from progressing toward perfection. If we believe Jesus and begin to treat others, even our enemies, with the proper attitude of respect, then we will grow in Jesus and move toward perfection in Him. One of the most important things that Jesus taught is that we must forgive others so we can be forgiven, (see the handouts, ‘The power of Forgiveness’ and ‘The Path to Perfection’, Matthew 18:21-35 and Luke 6:27-38).

Matthew 18:21-35 -

²¹Then Peter came to Him and said, “Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?” ²²Jesus said to him, “I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven. ²³“Therefore the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. ²⁴“And when he had begun to settle accounts, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. ²⁵“But as he was not able to pay, his master commanded that he be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and that payment be made. ²⁶“The servant therefore fell down before him, saying, ‘Master, have patience with me, and I will pay you all.’ ²⁷“Then the master of that servant was moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt. ²⁸“But that servant went out and found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii; and he laid hands on him and took *him* by the throat, saying, ‘Pay me what you owe!’ ²⁹“So his fellow servant fell down at his feet and begged him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you all.’ ³⁰“And he would not, but went and threw him into prison till he should pay the debt. ³¹“So when his fellow servants saw what had been done, they were very grieved, and came and told their master all that had been done. ³²“Then his master, after he had called him, said to him, ‘You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you begged me. ³³“Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you?’ ³⁴“And his master was angry, and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him. ³⁵“**So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses.**”⁵⁰

Luke 6:27-38 -

²⁷“But I say to you who hear: **Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you,** ²⁸“**bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you.** ²⁹“To him

⁴⁹*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

⁵⁰*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

who strikes you on the *one* cheek, offer the other also. And from him who takes away your cloak, do not withhold *your* tunic either. ³⁰“Give to everyone who asks of you. And from him who takes away your goods do not ask *them* back. ³¹“**And just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise.** ³²“But if you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. ³³“And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. ³⁴“And if you lend *to those* from whom you hope to receive back, what credit is that to you? For even sinners lend to sinners to receive as much back. ³⁵“But love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil. ³⁶“Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful.

³⁷“Judge not, and you shall not be judged. Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned. **Forgive, and you will be forgiven.** ³⁸“Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you.”⁵¹

If we believe God and obey Him, then we will preach the gospel, heal the sick, deliver the oppressed and possessed of the devil and live powerful lives in and for the name of Jesus. We will have everything we need and then some. Our righteousness, (through obedience) comes as a result of believing God and doing what He says through the name of Jesus and by the power of the Holy Spirit. If we seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness then we will be given enough provision in this life to live well. If we are disobedient, then we will suffer lack. If we love God, then we will obey Him and He will give us anything we ask for within His will. We must not worry about money or anything that it can buy. Again, we cannot serve both God and money. God will provide for all our needs if we will only do things His way. He will not give us things we do not need as that would be wasteful and He will not give us anything that will not do us good in the end. People who are seeking prosperity and the blessing of God without being obedient will never truly have God's blessings. God's blessing brings wealth and adds no trouble to it. However, we must believe when we ask and we must ask in Jesus name, (see John 14:13-14 above, Proverbs 10:22, Matthew 6:24-34 and I John 5:14-15).

Proverbs 10:22 -

²² The blessing of the LORD makes *one* rich,
And He adds no sorrow with it.⁵²

Matthew 6:24-34 -

⁵¹*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

⁵²*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

²⁴“No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

²⁵“Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?”²⁶“Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? ²⁷“Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? ²⁸“So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; ²⁹“and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. ³⁰“Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, *will He* not much more *clothe* you, O you of little faith? ³¹“Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ ³²“For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. ³³“**But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.** ³⁴“Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day *is* its own trouble.⁵³

I John 5:14-15 -

¹⁴Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. ¹⁵And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.⁵⁴

So seen then, if we believe God we will obey Him. We show our love for God by our obedience to Him. He has commanded us that we should love one another and even show love for our enemies. If we believe God then we will do these things by the power of the Holy Spirit. This is the summary of God’s Word. Then God will provide all we need and we will have no sorrow related to material wealth. Most Christians do not do as God asks and by this they show their unbelief and hardened hearts. People who are unbelieving will end up in the lake of fire. For those who do not want to end up in the lake of fire, the question is, ‘Do you believe?’ Amen.

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⁵³*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

⁵⁴*The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.