

1. Naomi (5 pages) Ruth (3 pages)

1:1– there was a famine in the land of Israel. So a man from Bethlehem in Judah, together with his wife Naomi and two sons, went to live for a while in the country of Moab.

This was in the days when the judges ruled Israel had no king, everyone did as they saw fit. (Joshua, Judges, Ruth)

1:3 – Now Elimelek, Naomi’s husband, died, and she was left with her two sons.

You can imagine the tremendous loss Naomi goes thru in this foreign land. She also has the burden of being a widow with two sons.

1:4 - They married Moabite women, one named Orpah and the other Ruth. After they had lived there about ten years,

Why would these Jewish men marry foreigners? They knew better.

Perhaps, Naomi in her grief didn’t have much influence on their lives.

But we know in the Book of Judges, “everyone did as they saw fit.”

We are told though, “Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what does righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness. (2. Cor. 6:14).

Story: woman who married a Moslem. Going to get this man saved thru marriage.

Story: Carter/Mirella at prayer meeting. Be about the Lord’s business. God: Matchmaker.

1:5 - both Mahlon and Kilion also died, and Naomi was left without her two sons and her husband.

Before she had the loss of her husband – now sorrow upon sorrow.

1:6 - Naomi heard that the Lord had come to the aid of the people in Judah by providing food for them. So Naomi, Orpah, and Ruth headed out towards Naomi’s home in Judah.

1:8 – Then Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, “Go back, each of you, to your mother’s home.

The famine had ended back home and Naomi was returning.

1:9 - Then she kissed them goodbye and they wept aloud.

1:10 - and (the two girls) said to her, “We will go back with you to your people.”

1:11-13 - But Naomi said, “Return home, my daughters. Why would you come with me?

Naomi insists her daughters-in-laws to go back to their people.

Possibly in her grief she didn’t see the opportunity to lead them to the Coming Savior.

1:14– At this they wept aloud again. Then Orpah kissed her mother-in-law goodbye, but Ruth clung to her. Ruth was determined.

1:15 - “Look,” said Naomi, “your sister-in-law is going back to her people and her gods. Go back with her.” We never hear of Orpah again.

Jonah 2:8, “Those who cling to worthless idols forfeit the grace that could be theirs”.

1:16-17 - Ruth made a decision to follow God. "Don't urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. May the LORD deal with me, be it ever so severely, if anything but death separates you and me."

We must all make a decision in our life whether to be an Orpah or a Ruth. We all need to decide at some point in our life who we will serve (1 Kings 18:21). Will we serve Jesus or will we serve the powers of sin, the world, the devil, and eventually, death.

1:20 – “Don’t call me Naomi,” she told them. “Call me Mara, because the Almighty has made my life very bitter. Naomi returns home. She admits her bitterness. She was aware of her inward struggle and grief. Now she had to face her hometown.

1:21 - I went away full, but the LORD has brought me back empty. Why call me Naomi? The LORD has afflicted me; the Almighty has brought misfortune upon me.”

Naomi tells how she went away “full” and now she is “empty”.

We must be careful to recognize that sometimes God afflicts people & allows things to happen in people’s lives. He does this in order to get their attention and for a higher purpose in their lives. We think of Job, Jacob, Joseph and many others. Some of you here may be walking in that path. Most of us have or will. It is important how we respond. We respond by calling out to God!!

2:1-2 - Ruth and Naomi return. Ruth sets out to “work”. After her decision she begins to “work”.

2:3 - By God’s providence, Ruth “works” in Boaz’s field and begins to glean the leftover grain.

2:5 - Boaz notices Ruth “working”. People generally notice the “worker” who is out there in their own flesh but “fleshly” work does not please God.

God was going to teach Ruth how to work from the cross. Anything not done in faith is sin!!

2:8-9 - Even though she is working in the flesh, God still blesses her and Ruth finds favor in Boaz’s eyes.

2:11-12 - Boaz has heard how Ruth had left her people and country (salvation) to be with a people she did not know (became a missionary). He also heard how Ruth had helped Naomi.

2:19 – Her mother-in-law asked her, “Where did you glean today? Where did you work? Blessed be the man who took notice of you!” Then Ruth told her

mother-in-law about the one at whose place she had been working. “The name of the man I worked with today is Boaz,” she said.

2:20 – “The LORD bless him!” Naomi said to her daughter-in-law. “He has not stopped showing his kindness to the living and the dead.” She added, “That man is our close relative; he is one of our guardian (kinsman)-redeemers.”

2:21 - Then Ruth the Moabite said, “He even said to me, ‘Stay with my workers until they finish harvesting all my grain.’”

God shows grace to Naomi and Ruth. Naomi notices it.

Naomi begins to open her heart up to God again and starts instructs & discipling her.

Ruth brings home much from gleaning in the fields. “Leaving gleanings for the poor” was from the Old Testament Law. Boaz was a Godly man and showed love to the poor.

Boaz means, Bo (in him) az (strength). Strength is within him.

2:22 – Naomi said to Ruth her daughter-in-law, “It will be good for you, my daughter, to go with the women who work for him, because in someone else’s field you might be harmed.”

Naomi continues discipling Ruth – instructing her in the ways of the Lord.

Whenever you go through a difficult time, God will send someone worse off than you.

This brings you “out” of yourself.

Story: God sent an elderly & an elderly lady into my life when I was going thru a difficult time.

3:1-4 – One day Ruth’s mother-in-law Naomi said to her, “My daughter, I must find a home for you, where you will be well provided for.

You can see healing in Naomi because Naomi is now caring about others.

Notice that Naomi looks for a godly man for Ruth. Now, she is pressing on in the Lord and instructing in the way of God.

3:2 - Naomi recognizes that Boaz is a kinsman and that he can redeem Ruth.

3:3-4 -Naomi instructs Ruth in the Jewish customs. This is discipleship. Ruth is instructed in the ways of the Law.

We all need to be discipled by someone. Godly men should disciple the younger men. Godly women should disciple the younger women.

NOTICE YOUNG MEN – GOD BRINGS BOAZ A BRIDE. (Adam, Isaac, Boaz)

3:7 - Ruth learns the important lesson of Christianity – REST. She rests at the feet of Boaz – we are to rest at the feet of Jesus – the beautiful rest we obtain from trusting in Christ’s shed blood at the cross for our sins. We should step out in faith – trusting God – and walking in God’s Spirit (Hebrews 3:19-4:1)

3:9 - Ruth asks Boaz to spread his garment over her. She recognizes him as a kinsman-redeemer.

We recognize Jesus at the ONE Who can Redeem us from “sin” and “our sinful nature.”

TRUTH: We are to “rest” in Christ. Walk (not run) in His Spirit being controlled by His Spirit continually.

3:16-18 – When Ruth came to her mother-in-law, Naomi asked, “How did it go, my daughter?” Then she told her everything Boaz had done for her and added, “He gave me these six measures of barley, saying, ‘Don’t go back to your mother-in-law empty-handed.’”

Then Naomi said, “Wait, my daughter, until you find out what happens. For the man will not rest until the matter is settled today.”

4:1-13 - Boaz redeems Ruth. Boaz takes Ruth to be his wife. She conceives a son. Ruth is rewarded.

4:14-15 - And they named him Obed. He was the father of Jesse, the father of David.

4:16 – Then Naomi took the child in her arms and cared for him.

Boaz and Ruth had married. GOD IS A MATCHMAKER!!

Ruth had a husband and Naomi was looked after.

Now Ruth has a child. Naomi takes the child in her arms.

Can you imagine this moment after the “loss” of her husband and two children?

We’re reminded of Hannah in 1 Samuel 1.

Hannah’s husband’s other wife had children and provoked Hannah to irritate her. Her husband says, “Don’t I mean more to you than 10 sons?” He wasn’t helping. She was praying in the spirit and the priest accuses her of being drunk.

But God gave Hannah a son and in 1 Samuel 2 she rejoices,

“My spirit rejoices in God my Savior.” Can you think of another woman who said this?

We aren’t sure what went through Naomi’s mind when she took the child in her arms.

I believe personally that God at that point gave Naomi a revelation that the coming Messiah would come through this child’s line – through the line of Judah and David.

We often wonder when a child is born, “What will become of this child?”

Two recorded times people spoke about Jesus at the Temple.

The first was when Joseph and Mary presented Him to the Lord.

Here Simeon takes Jesus in his arms saying, “.....you now dismiss your servant in peace. For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of all people, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.”

Anna “gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.” ANOTHER WIDOW who served God!!

The second time at the Temple is when Jesus was 12,
“Everyone who heard him was amazed at his understanding and his answers.”
“And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.”

4:17 – The women living there said, “Naomi has a son!” And they named him Obed. He was the father of Jesse, the father of David.

I’m sure it would have been a delight for Naomi after coming home earlier “empty” to have the women see that she was again “full”.

4:18-22 - God blessed Ruth. He rewarded her with a husband, child, and graciously put her in the line of David.

In summary,

- No matter what you go through – be honest with your pain - stay faithful to God. Naomi admitted she was bitter. God is gentle and takes time to heal trauma.
- God intervened and showed grace by providing food. God is practical.
- Naomi slowly came out of “herself” and began to minister to Ruth as she opened her “devastated heart” up to God. “You know the heart may be broken but it keeps ticking just the same.”
- Naomi is rewarded by seeing Ruth’s growth in the Lord. What joy to see a new babe grow in Christ. Bored with your Christianity? Hang around new converts on fire.
- Naomi is also rewarded with a “son” and “grandson”. Can you imagine the joy Naomi had when she had that child given to her?
- Naomi called herself “bitter” but God wanted to call her “Blessed”.
- I am reminded of Jacob. Joseph promised to carry him out of Egypt and to be buried with his fathers. The Bible says at the end of Genesis 47 that Israel, “worshiped as he leaned on the top of his staff”. Jacob’s hardships turned to worship.
- Naomi had gone through so much hardship but in the end with child in her arms, what could she do but worship.
- And we too can worship – as we walk with God through difficult times we learn to be honest with our pain, begin to come out of “ourselves”, and see God’s deliverance & blessings in our lives. And God will use us for His glory to help others because we’ll be able to understand and respond in love having experienced God’s grace and love during our struggles.

BOOK OF RUTH: *Decision / Work / Rest / Reward*

Ch.1:16-17 - Decision: Ruth makes a decision to follow Jesus

"Don't urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. May the LORD deal with me, be it ever so severely, if anything but death separates you and me."

We must all make a decision in our life whether to be an Orpah who went back to her people or a Ruth. We all need to decide at some point in our life who we will serve (1 Kings 18:21). Will we serve Jesus or will we serve the powers of sin, the world, the devil, and eventually, death.

God loves us: You see at just the right time when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: while we were still sinners Christ died for us. (Romans 5:6,8)

We are sinners: and need to turn from our sins and ask for God's forgiveness. His forgiveness comes already because we go to the cross of Jesus Christ and believe that His shed blood gives us forgiveness.

All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. (Romans 3:23)

Christ is the way: He shed His blood for us to give forgiveness, healing, & power. His death brought our death to our old man (sinful nature).

"For we know that our old man was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be rendered powerless, that we should no longer be slaves to sin because anyone who has died has been freed from sin." (Romans 6:6)

"In the same way count yourself dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus".

(Rom.6:11) Romans 6:13: yield your members to God

"I have been crucified with Christ and I myself no longer live. And the real life I now have within this body is the result of my trusting in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me." (Gal.2:20)

Receive Him: He came to his own but his own did not receive him. But to all who received him, to those who believed in His name he gave the right to become children of God. Children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision, or the will of man, but born of God. (John 1:11-13)

CH. 2 – WORKING:

And Ruth the Moabite said to Naomi, "Let me go to the fields and pick up the leftover grain behind anyone in whose eyes I find favor." Naomi said to her, "Go ahead, my daughter." (Ruth 2:2).

After salvation most Christians begin to work for the Lord. But in whose power? Is it by faith in Christ's power?

The Christian's N.T. Judgements:

1) Believer as to sin – judged at the cross!! Jesus took our judgement upon Himself.

2) Believer’s judgement as to Works: will take place after the Rapture at the Judgement Seat of Christ.

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each of us may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad. (2 Corinthians 5:10).

We will receive rewards or suffer loss:

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. If anyone builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, their work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each person’s work. If what has been built survives, the builder will receive a reward. If it is burned up, the builder will suffer loss but yet will be saved—even though only as one escaping through the flames. (1 Corinthians 3:11-15)

gold/silver/costly stones: not burned up. Wood/hay/straw: burned up.

“The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent”. (John 6:29)

“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord not for men, since you know you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.” (Col.3:23-24).

“Do not grow weary in doing good for at the right time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.” (Gal.6:9)

“You shall go out with joy and be led for in peace...(Isaiah 52.....)

CH. 3 – REST: So we see that they were not able to enter, because of their unbelief. Therefore, since the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us be careful that none of you be found to have fallen short of it. (Hebrews 3:19-4:1)

Most work is done in the “flesh” or “carnal nature”. But God will take us through very difficult times until we learn to enter HIS rest by faith and work for Him because of our love for Him. And we work for Him in His Resurrection Power through the Power of the Holy Spirit.

⁷ When Boaz had finished eating and drinking and was in good spirits, he went over to lie down at the far end of the grain pile. Ruth approached quietly, uncovered his feet and lay down. ⁸ In the middle of the night something startled the man; he turned—and there was a woman lying at his feet! ⁹ “Who are you?” he asked. “I am your servant Ruth,” she said. “Spread the corner of your garment over me, since you are a kinsman-redeemer of our family.” (Ruth 3:7-9)

Let us rest at the foot of the cross understanding that if we have repented and trusted in Christ’s Works that we have been saved.

Then we rise in the Resurrection Power of Christ to do His works out of a love for Jesus in His Resurrection power.

CH. 4- REWARD:

4:13 - So Boaz took Ruth and she became his wife. When he made love to her, the LORD enabled her to conceive, and she gave birth to a son.

Naomi is rewarded with a son.

The father of the prodigal son said, “all that is mine is yours” (Luke 15)

“And when Christ who is our real life comes back again, you will shine with him and share in all his glories. (Col.3:5)

Here are our crowns that will be rewarded for the N.T. speaks of 5 crowns:

a) **The Crown of Life or Martyr’s Crown**

Blessed *is* the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

(James 1:12)

Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life. **(Rev.2:10)**

b) **The Crown of Glory or Elder’s/Pastor’s Crown**

Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but ^[a]willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; ³nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock; ⁴and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away. **(1 Peter 5:2-4)**

c) **The Crown of Rejoicing or the Soul Winner’s Crown**

For what *is* our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? *Is it* not even you in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming? **(1 Thessalonians 2:19)**

Therefore, my beloved and longed-for brethren, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, beloved. **(Philippians 4:1)**

d) **The Crown of Righteousness / Crown of Those Who Love His Appearing**

Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing. **(2 Timothy 4:8)**

e) **The Crown Incorruptible or the Victor’s Crown**

And everyone who competes *for the prize* is temperate in all things. Now they *do it* to obtain a perishable crown, but we *for* an imperishable *crown*. **(1 Cor. 9:25)**

And what will we do with our crowns – we will lay them at His feet because Romans “For from him, and through him, and to him are all things. To God be the glory.” (Romans 11:36)

“After this the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision; ‘Do not be afraid, I am your shield, YOUR VERY GREAT REWARD.’” (Genesis 15:1)

The rewards God has for us are wonderful. But even more wonderful is GOD IS OUR VERY GREAT REWARD. God is our Reward and is a rewarder!!

Decision – Work – Rest – Rewards

2. FREEDOM PRAYER (6) Prayer (2)

What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?

We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

For if we have been united with him in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. (Romans 6:1-5)

These verses are often used when a person is water baptized. As born again believers we believe in being baptized after we make a personal commitment to Christ Jesus – whether at 5 years old or older. We believe infants should be dedicated to the Lord and that a person needs to make his own personal commitment to Jesus Christ. After being born again, a person should be water baptized in obedience to the Lord. Baptism has nothing to do with salvation – it is an act of obedience to the one we have committed ourselves to serve. (2 Samuel 12:23: I will go to him but he will not return to me)

These verses are certainly suitable for a person's baptism but they have a much greater meaning that we will look at today as we look at how we can lay a firm foundation in Christ.

1 Corinthians 3:11 says, "For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ."

He's THE ROCK, THE WAY, THE TRUTH, THE LIFE, JOY, PEACE, LOVE, SAVIOR, etc. He is our ALL AND IN ALL!!

Matthew 7:24-29: "Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law.

everything that does not come from faith is sin. (Romans 14:23b)

1) THE BLOOD: We approach God through faith in the shed blood of Christ. **without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness. (Hebrews 9:22)**
“Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! (John 1:29)
When he saw Jesus passing by, he said, “Look, the Lamb of God!” (John 1:36)

For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your ancestors, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect. (1Peter 1:18-19)

How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God! (Heb. 9:14)

Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need. (Heb.4:16)

For the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd; ‘he will lead them to springs of living water.’ ‘And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.’” (Revelation 7:17)

We come to our Father God through faith in the shed blood of Jesus Christ for forgiveness of sins. We can now enter into the Father’s presence because the Father sees us through the shed blood of His Son.

“And when I see the blood I will Passover you.” (Exodus 12)

The blood brings forgiveness of sin and power in our life.

2) THE CROSS: The cross of Jesus Christ brings death to our old sinful man. Calvary was the expression both of the wrath of God against sin & the mercy of God toward the guilty sinner. His love is holy and just.

Christ was to die by crucifixion

And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots. (Matthew 27:35)

And the LORD said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live. (Num.21:8)

And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: (John 3:14)

looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. (Heb.12:2)

Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: (Gal. 3:13)

ROMANS 6:

What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? ² By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? ³ Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?

We look back to the cross at Calvary by faith and see ourselves baptized into his death. It has happened. It is historical fact but more importantly the Word of God tells me that Jesus died on the cross.

KNOW (Romans 6:6-7)

“For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin— because anyone who has died has been freed from sin. (Romans 6:6-7)

COUNT (Accept as Fact) (6:11) –

In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. (Romans 6:11)

YIELD (offer ourselves) (6:13): also: Romans 12:1-2

Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness. (Romans 6:13)

Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. ² Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will. (Romans 12:1-2)

We are no longer our own – we have been bought at a price – the precious blood of Jesus. “I am my beloveds and he is mine.”

3) BURIAL: die to self. Leave old man in the grave. Turn our will & lives over to God.

We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. (Romans 6:4)

When He was in the grave – we were in the grave IN HIM!! It has happened. When Lazarus was in the tomb Jesus said, “Take away the stone.”

“But, Lord,” said Martha, the sister of the dead man, “by this time there is a bad odor, for he has been there four days.”

⁴⁰ Then Jesus said, “Did I not tell you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?”

⁴¹ So they took away the stone. Then Jesus looked up and said, “Father, I thank you that you have heard me. ⁴² I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me.”

⁴³ When he had said this, Jesus called in a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!” ⁴⁴ The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen, and a cloth around his face.

Jesus said to them, “Take off the grave clothes and let him go.”

4) RESURRECTION:

You are aware of the Apostle’s Creed I’m sure. This was the first Christian creed that was shared among the believers after Christ’s Ascension:

For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, and then to the Twelve. After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, and last of all he appeared to me also, as to one abnormally born. (1 Corinthians 15:3-8)

JESUS PROPHECIED ABOUT HIMSELF IN Psalm 16

Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest secure,

**because you will not abandon me to the grave,
nor will you let your faithful one see decay.**

You make known to me the path of life;

you will fill me with joy in your presence,

with eternal pleasures at your right hand. (Psalm 16:9-11)

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is what Christianity stands on. If there is no resurrection than we are still in the grave in Christ. But Hallelujah – He is risen!! He is alive!! He conquered death!! We do not need to fear death!! We are a new creation in Christ!! The old has passed – the new has come!!

For if we have been united with him in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. (Romans 6:5)

5) ASCENSION:

Jesus Christ ascended “VISIBLY” AND “BODILY”. Jesus departed visibly for the disciples saw Him depart. He departed in His resurrection body.

His Ascension was prophecied:

And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem, (Luke 9:51)

Then what if you see the Son of Man ascend to where he was before!

(John 6:62)

And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory. (1 Tim.3:16)

6) EXALTATION

Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: (Phil.2:9)

Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. (Romans 8:34)

And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, (Colossians 2:6)

Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, **who is your life**, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. (Colossians 3:1-4)

For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus, (1 Timothy 2:5)

7) HOLY SPIRIT (POURED OUT):

But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. (John 16:7)

When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues (languages) as the Spirit enabled them. (Acts 2:1-4)

The Holy Spirit can rest on us today – anytime. And fill us with Him!!

Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear. (Acts 2:33)

DAILY PRAYER (as needed throughout the day):

**1) The Blood, 2) the Cross, 3) the Burial, 4) the Resurrection,
5) the Ascension, 6) the Exaltation, 7) the Holy Spirit's filling**

Father God, I come to You through faith in the shed blood of Jesus Christ Your Son on the cross of Calvary. I confess my sin(s) of (walking in my sinful nature). Thank You that Your blood Jesus gives me forgiveness for my sins. Come into my heart now and be my Savior and Lord. Thank You Father God that I am Your child. I am forgiven, loved & accepted by God, and that You Jesus will NEVER leave me nor forsake me. (Hebrews 9:14; 22)

Jesus thank You for dying on the cross for me. Jesus You showed Your love for me by dying on the cross. Your death brought death to my old sinful man. I am crucified with You Jesus and my body of sin is now rendered powerless. I am dead and free from sin. (Romans 6:6-7)

Jesus thank You that I was buried in You and that my old man is in the grave. Help me to leave my old sinful man there. (Romans 6:4)

Jesus thank You that I arose in You and that I have Resurrection Life. I am a new creation and have new life in You Jesus – Resurrection Life!! The old has past the new has come. ((Romans 6:5)

Jesus, thank You that I was ascended in You and I am above things of this earth. (John 6:62; 1 Timothy 3:16)

Jesus, thank You that I am now seated in the heavenly realms in You, Christ Jesus. I am in this world but I am NOT of this world any longer. (Philippians 2:9; Colossians 2:6)

Jesus, thank You for pouring out Your Holy Spirit on the church. Jesus I am a member of Your Spiritual Church through faith in Your death and resurrection. Holy Spirit, come fall upon me now. Come fill me Holy Spirit in my spirit, my soul (mind–will–emotions), and through every cell in my body so I can serve You. Fill me Holy Spirit – I want more of You. Thank You Holy Spirit that I am sealed by You for the day of redemption. I am an anointed, blood bought, Spirit-filled, child of God. I am loved & accepted by God Almighty & free! (John 16:7; Acts 2:33)

I worship You Almighty God. I praise You Father God. I bless You Jesus. I love You Holy Spirit. In Jesus Name I pray. Thank You Lord for Who You are, for what You've done for me, and for what You are going to do for me. Lord, teach me to obey You, love You, serve You, and to be continually filled by You. I pray all this in Jesus' Name. Amen.



THE SERENITY PRAYER

God, grant me the Serenity
To accept the things I cannot change...
Courage to change the things I can,
And Wisdom to know the difference.
Living one day at a time,
Enjoying one moment at a time,
Accepting hardship as the pathway to peace.
Taking, as Jesus did, this sinful world as it is,
Not as I would have it.
Trusting that He will make all things right
if I surrender to His will.
That I may be reasonably happy in this life,
And supremely happy with Him forever in the next.
Amen.

THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit possesses divine attributes of God: – He is eternal (Heb.9:14) – omnipresent (Psa.139:7-10) – omnipotent (Luke 1:35; Gen.1:2; Job 26:13) – omniscient (1 Cor.2:10,11; John 14:26; John 16:12-13) – holy for in the words “Holy Spirit” the word “Holy” describes His character and essence (Luke 11:13) – truth (1 John 5:6) – good (Neh.9:20) – communes with us (2 Cor.13:14)

The Holy Spirit: – creates (Job 33:4; Psa.104:30) – justifies (1 Cor.6:11) – seals us for the day of redemption (Eph.1:13) – gives life (John 6:63) – is the author of the new birth (John 3:5-6) – prophecies (2 Peter 1:21) – convicts (John 16:8-11) – speaks (Isa.6:8-10) (Acts 5:3-5)

The Holy Spirit: – can be fellowshiped & communed with, – can cure the broken heart & comfort us, – can guide us & lead us, – can teach us & lead us into all truth, – can empower people’s witnessing and preaching, – gives life, – takes away fears, – is with us wherever we go, – comes alongside us (Greek:Parakletos).

Is Called: A voice, a seal, a dove, rain, dew, oil, wind, fire, water

HOLY SPIRIT NAMES: Holy Spirit (Luke 11:13) • Spirit (John 3:6) • Oil of Gladness (Hebrews 1:9) • Comforter (John 14:26) (John 15:26) • The Eternal Spirit (Heb.9:14) • Spirit of Glory (1 Pet.4:14) • The Spirit of the Lord (Isaiah 11:2) • Spirit of Jehovah (Isaiah 61:1) • Spirit of the living God (2 Cor.3:3) • Spirit of Christ (Romans 8:9) • Spirit of His Son (Gal.4:6) • Spirit of Jesus.(Phil.1:19) (Acts 16:7) • Spirit of Burning (Isaiah 4:4) • Spirit of Holiness (Romans 1:4) Holy Spirit of Promise (Eph.1:13) • Spirit of Truth (John 14:17) (John 15:26) (John 16:13) • Spirit of life (Romans 8:2) • Spirit of wisdom and understanding (Isaiah 11:2) • Spirit of counsel and might (Isaiah 11:2) • Spirit of Knowledge (Isaiah 11:2) • Spirit of grace (Heb.10:29)

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3. SIT - WALK - STAND: Ephesians (6)

Our walk with Christ is very important but we must first look at how we can most effectively walk with God and do His will.

God's is a God of order and His way is the way and means we need to walk with Him.

The book of Ephesians (among others) gives us God's way in which God sheds light on this subject.

We see there are three sections to Ephesians:

1. SIT: our position in Christ (Ephesians Chapter 1-3)
2. WALK: our walk with God (Ephesians Chapter 4:1 – 6:9)
3. STAND: standing firm and trusting God (Ephesians 6:10-24)

1. SIT: our position in Christ (Ephesians Chapter 1-3)

Our main verse here is Ephesians 2:6 which says,

And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus,

It is two parts: Christ in you – the hope of glory! Christ came into our hearts when we were saved – born again – became a child of God by His grace.

God is holy – we are not.

But when we asked for forgiveness of our sins and believed that His shed blood on the cross of Calvary was sufficient for our forgiveness. When we then asked Christ into our hearts – He came in by faith.

The second part is us in Christ. How did we get in Christ Jesus?

For it is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus who has become for us wisdom from God: that is our righteousness, holiness, and redemption. Therefore let him who boasts boast in the Lord. (1 Cor.1:30-31)

What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? ²By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? ³Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. ⁵For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his. (Romans 6:1-5)

So in our Christian walk we start by "sitting". Taking our position in Christ by faith "seated in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus.

The book of Ephesians is laid out in the order we are to walk in our Christian lives. Paul first reminds us WHO WE ARE IN CHRIST and our position in CHRIST JESUS:

I am one of the faithful in Christ Jesus (Eph. 1:1)

I have been blessed in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing (Eph. 1:3)

I was chosen in Him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless (Eph. 1:4)

I have been included in Christ. (Eph. 1:13)

I have been marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, (Eph.1:13)

God raised me up with Christ and seated me with Him in the heavenly realms (Eph. 2:6)

God will show me the incomparable riches of his grace (Eph.2:7)

I am God's workmanship. (Eph.2:10)

I'm created in Christ Jesus to do good works prepared in advance for me (Eph.2:10)

In Christ Jesus I have been brought near through the blood of Christ. (Eph. 2:13)

I have access to God through Jesus (Eph.2:18)

In Christ I am being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives (Eph. 2:22)

I am now an heir with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus. (Eph. 3:6)

I am part of God's eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus (Eph. 3:11)

In Christ I may approach God with freedom and confidence. (Eph. 3:12)

Christ dwells in my heart through faith. I'm being rooted and established in love. (Eph. 3:17)

That is who you are. There are over 200 verses in the New Testament telling us who we are "in Christ" "in Him" "in love". Humbly believe who you are, take your position in Christ seated in the heavenlies, and stop trying to become someone you already are.

2. WALK: our walk with God (Ephesians Chapter 4:1 – 6:9)

Now that we know our identity – who we truly are – then God tells us how to live a life worthy of the calling you have received.

As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. ²Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. (Ephesians 4:1-2)

¹⁷ This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, ²³ and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, ²⁴ and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness. ²⁵ Therefore, putting away lying, “*Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor,*” for we are members of one another. ²⁶ “Be angry, and do not sin”: do not let the sun go down on your wrath, ²⁷ nor give place to the devil. ²⁸ Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with *his* hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need. ²⁹ Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. ³⁰ And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. ³¹ Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. ³² And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you. ⁸ For you were once darkness, but now *you are* light in the Lord. Walk as children of light ⁹ (for the fruit of the Spirit *is* in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), ¹⁰ finding out what is acceptable to the Lord. (Eph.5:8-10)

¹⁷ Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord *is*. ¹⁸ And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹ speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, ²⁰ giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ submitting to one another in the fear of God.

Then Ephesians 5:22-6:9 talks about marriage, family, and the workplace – whether “slaves or workers” or “masters or bosses”.

Have you ever noticed something. When you take your position in Christ that the works become a lot easier. Why? It is Christ giving you the power to do them.

And many times you don’t even realize you are doing them because you are so intertwined with Christ that it becomes SUPERNatural.

So then we are reminded what Ephesians 4:1 says: **As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received.**

So we take our position seated in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus.

Then we live a life worthy of the calling we have received.

And finally,

3. STAND: stand firm and trusting God (Ephesians 6:10-24)

The key verse for STAND is: Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. (Ephesians 6:13)

STAND FIRM

The flight from Egypt: --

I. THEIR DANGER. Foe behind, sea in front, mountains on each side.

II. THEIR DILEMMA. Knew not which way to turn.

With the Egyptians coming at the people of Israel and the Red Sea in front of them the people were scared.

Ex 14:13-15 says, "Moses answered the people, "Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the LORD will bring you today. The Egyptians you see today you will never see again. The LORD will fight for you; you need only to be still." Then the LORD said to Moses, "Why are you crying out to me? Tell the Israelites to move on.

III. THEIR DELIVERER. Man's extremity God's opportunity.

IV. THEIR DUTY. "Go forward." This demanded faith.

V. THEIR DETERMINATION. They obeyed.

Psalm 78:13-14 says, He divided the sea and led them through; he made the water stand firm like a wall. He guided them with the cloud by day and with light from the fire all night.

VI. THEIR DELIGHT. Song of Moses.

**I will sing unto the LORD,
for he has triumphed gloriously,
the horse and rider thrown into the sea.
I will sing unto the LORD,
for he has triumphed gloriously,
the horse and rider thrown into the sea.
The LORD, my God, my strength and song,
has now become my victory.
The LORD, my God, my strength and song,
has now become my victory.
The LORD is God, and I will praise him,
our covenant God, and I will exalt him.
The LORD is God, and I will praise him,
our covenant God, and I will exalt him.**

When three armies were coming after Judah and Jerusalem, Hezekiah said in 2 Chronicles 20:16-17: You will not have to fight this battle.

Take up your positions; stand firm and see the deliverance the LORD

will give you, O Judah and Jerusalem. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged. Go out to face them tomorrow, and the LORD will be with you.'"

Psalm 20:7-8: Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the LORD our God. They are brought to their knees and fall, but we rise up and stand firm.

Psalm 33:11: But the plans of the LORD stand firm forever, the purposes of his heart through all generations.

Psalm 93:5 Your statutes stand firm; holiness adorns your house for endless days, O LORD.

Prov 10:25, When the storm has swept by, the wicked are gone, but the righteous stand firm forever.

Isaiah 7:9, If you do not stand firm in your faith, you will not stand at all."

1 Corinthians 15:58, Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

1 Cor 16:13-14, Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be men of courage; be strong.

2 Cor 1:21-22, 21 Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.

2 Cor 1:24-2:1, Not that we lord it over your faith, but we work with you for your joy, because it is by faith you stand firm.

Galatians 5:1, It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.

Philippians 1:27-28, Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you or only hear about you in my absence, I will know that you stand firm in one spirit, contending as one man for the faith of the gospel without being frightened in any way by those who oppose you. This is a sign to them that they will be destroyed, but that you will be saved-and that by God

Colossians 4:12, Epaphras, who is one of you and a servant of Christ Jesus, sends greetings. He is always wrestling in prayer for you, that you may stand firm in all the will of God, mature and fully assured.

2 Thessalonians 2:15, So then, brothers, stand firm and hold to the teachings we passed on to you, whether by word of mouth or by letter.

Finally, in James 5:8, You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near.

Stand still: -- These words contain God's command to the believer when he is reduced to great straits and brought into extraordinary difficulties. "Stand still." Despair whispers, "Lie down and die; give it all up." But God would have us put on a cheerful courage, and even in our worst times rejoice in His love and faithfulness.

So dear brothers and sisters in Christ.

Sit – take your position in Christ seated in the heavenly realms

Walk – get up and live a life worth of the calling you have in the power of
God's Holy Spirit

Stand – having done all to stand, STAND!!!

Your RED SEA may be your marriage: SIT – WALK – STAND

Your RED SEA may be your health: SIT – WALK – STAND

Your RED SEA may be your walk with Jesus: SIT – WALK – STAND

Your RED SEA may be finding a job: SIT – WALK – STAND

Your RED SEA may be your finances: SIT – WALK – STAND

Your RED SEA may be drugs, alcohol, pornography: SIT – WALK – STAND

Your RED SEA may be loneliness, depression, fear: SIT – WALK – STAND

Peace to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace *be* with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen. (Ephesians 6:23-24)

4. PRAYER (5)

Why Pray? There are many biblical reasons to pray.

The most important one is that we are Commanded:

Seek the LORD while he may be found; call on him while he is near.
(Psalm 55:6)

Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. (Matthew 7:7)

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:6-7)

Prayer is to be offered:

To God. Hear my cry for help, my King and my God, for to you I pray.
(Psalm 5:2)

Through Christ. For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit. (Ephesians 2:18)

Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, (Hebrews 10:19)

Generally, we pray TO the Father, coming to the Father through faith in Christ's shed blood, by the power of the Holy Spirit. We close in the Name of Jesus. But it is fine to talk to any one of the Trinity throughout the day.

God hears: You, LORD, hear the desire of the afflicted;

you encourage them, and you listen to their cry, (Psalm 10:17)

You who answer prayer, to you all people will come. (Psalm 65:2)

God answers: Moses and Aaron were among his priests,

Samuel was among those who called on his name;

they called on the LORD and he answered them. (Psalm 99:6)

Today, we are going to look at a practical means to pray.

Brother Lawrence in his book "Practicing the Presence of God" says, "There is not in this world a kind of life more sweet and delightful than that of a continual conversation with God. Those only can experience it who practice and experience it."

So now let's look at a model to help us with prayer:

Remember “Freedom Prayer”:

blood/cross/burial/resurrection/ascension/seated/filled with the Holy Spirit:

1) We must be filled with the Holy Spirit in order to pray. I like to start out with a simple prayer like this:

Father God, I come to You through faith in the shed blood of Jesus Christ. Sweet Holy Spirit, I now ask You now to come fall upon me. Come and fill me in my spirit, my soul – mind, will, emotions, and throughout every cell in my body. Block out anything that is not of You. In Jesus’ Name I pray.

When I was a new Christian I had trouble praying. I would start to pray and then my mind would wander all over the place. As I continued God showed me that I can’t pray. I can’t do anything without the Power of the Holy Spirit. I have to be in the Spirit in my daily walk with Christ, in witnessing, in reading God’s Word, and everything I do. How much more do I need to be filled with God’s Spirit when I pray.

The Living Bible in Romans 8:26 says, **“And in the same way—by our faith—the Holy Spirit helps us with our daily problems and in our praying. For we don’t even know what we should pray for nor how to pray as we should, but the Holy Spirit prays for us with such feeling that it cannot be expressed in words.**

And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord’s people. (Ephesians 6:18)

2) Next I use a model of prayer from Jehoshaphat in 2 Chronicles 20:5-7, 12

This helps me acknowledge who my God is now, what He has done for me in the past, and what I can believe Him for in the future.

Are you not?

2 Chronicles 20:5-6,

Then Jehoshaphat stood up in the assembly of Judah and Jerusalem at the temple of the LORD in the front of the new courtyard and said:

“LORD, the God of our ancestors, **are you not** the God who is in heaven? You rule over all the kingdoms of the nations. Power and might are in your hand, and no one can withstand you. (2 Chronicles 20:5-6)

Did you not?

Our God, **did you not** drive out the inhabitants of this land before your people Israel and give it forever to the descendants of Abraham your friend? (2 Chronicles 20:7)

Will you not?

Our God, **will you not** judge them? For we have no power to face this vast army that is attacking us. We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you.” (2 Chronicles 20:12)

ARE YOU NOT DID YOU NOT WILL YOU NOT

3) Next I use the acronym of “A – C – T – S”

“A” is for ADORATION: I now enter into a time of Praise and Worship.

“C” is for CONFESSION: I sense God’s Spirit beginning to want to draw closer to me. Because He is HOLY I must confess any pollution or sin I have in my life. Now I am cleansed and in a deeper relationship with God.

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. ⁹ If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰ If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word is not in us.

My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have an advocate with the Father—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. ² He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world. (1 John 1:8-2:2)

¹⁰ **Create in me a pure heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me.**

¹¹ **Cast me not away from your presence O Lord
or take not your Holy Spirit from me.**

¹² **Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation
and renew a right spirit with in me.** (Psalm 51:10-12; 51:3-13)

May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart
be ever pleasing in your sight, O, LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer.
(Psalm 19:14)

**Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so
that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful
and effective. (James 5:16)**

“T” is for THANKSGIVING. Being cleansed and with a heart full of Jesus I become thankful. Thanking God for all He has done for me, my family, etc.

“S” is for SUPPLICATION. Again, Romans 8:26 says, **“And in the same way—by our faith—the Holy Spirit helps us with our daily problems and in our praying. For we don’t even know what we should pray for nor how to pray as we should, but the Holy Spirit prays for us with such feeling that it cannot be expressed in words.”**

I need to pray for individuals, families, pastor, government, Israel, ministries, etc. that God has put on my heart or that His Word commands me to do. (Talk about my prayer list – lay hands on it).

SOME FINAL THOUGHTS:

1) USE BIBLICAL PRAYERS AS MODELS:

Ephesians 3:14-21, Philippians 1:9-11, John 14-17, Psalm 51 (repentance), Nehemiah 9, etc.

⁹For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives ¹⁰so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, ¹¹being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, ¹²and giving joyful thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the kingdom of light. ¹³For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, ¹⁴in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. (Colossians 1:3-14)

¹⁴For this reason I kneel before the Father, ¹⁵from whom every family^[a] in heaven and on earth derives its name. ¹⁶I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, ¹⁷so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, ¹⁸may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, ¹⁹and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

²⁰Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, ²¹to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen. (Ephesians 3:14-21)

2) MEDITATE ON GOD'S WORD:

As you are reading the bible you may come across a verse that God is using to speak to you. Stop and memorize it or write it on a card. Then, as you are in His Spirit, start to meditate on that Word from the Lord. God is speaking to you. Jesus said in John 10:27, "My sheep listen to my voice." You can then pray something like: **"Jesus You are my Shepherd and I am Your sheep. Lord help me listen to Your voice."**

3) WRITE DOWN ANSWERED PRAYERS & GOALS FOR YOUR LIFE. Write answered prayer in a notebook every time God answers prayer. When you are going through a difficult season you can look back and see that He is the God on the Mountain tops and the God in the valleys. **Write down 1, 5, 10 year periods and write your goals for each decade.** When I look back I see that God was faithful and my faith grows for Him to do great things the next 1, 5, and 10 year periods.

4) WAIT ON GOD: absorbing God

Wait for the LORD; be strong and take heart
and wait for the LORD. (Psalm 27:14)

He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak.
Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall;
but those who wait on the LORD will renew their strength.

They will mount up on wings like eagles;
they will run and not grow weary,
they will walk and not be faint. (Isaiah 40:29-31)

Jesus said, “Can you not tarry with me an hour?”

Let’s try it now:

- 1) Freedom Prayer / Be Filled with the Spirit
- 2) Are you not? - Did you not? – Will you not?
- 3) A – C – T – S
(Adoration – Confession – Thanksgiving – Supplication)
- 4) Wait on God

5. Psalm Sunday (5) (Matthew 21:1)

And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage (Bethany), unto the mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples,

No place in Scripture is associated with so many wonderful, pleasing, tearful, and sacred occurrences as that of Olivet. The Mount of Olives, was a north-to-south ridge of hills east of Jerusalem. The Mount of Olives was covered with dense olive groves in Old and New Testament times. It was from this woodland that the people, under Nehemiah's command, gathered their branches of olive, oil trees, myrtle, and palm to make booths or tents when the Feast of Tabernacles was restored after their years of captivity in Babylon.

Let's look at Nehemiah 8:14-15, **And they found written in the law which the Lord had commanded by Moses, that the children of Israel should dwell in booths in the feast of the seventh month: And that they should publish and proclaim in all their cities, and in Jerusalem, saying, Go forth unto the mount, and fetch olive branches, and pine branches, and myrtle branches, and palm branches, and branches of thick trees, to make booths, as it is written.**

What was written was the following from Leviticus 23:37-40, **These are the feasts of the Lord, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, to offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord, a burnt offering, and a meat offering, a sacrifice, and drink offerings, everything upon his day: Beside the sabbaths of the Lord, and beside your gifts, and beside all your vows, and beside all your freewill offerings, which ye give unto the Lord. Also in the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when ye have gathered in the fruit of the land, ye shall keep a feast unto the Lord seven days: on the first day shall be a sabbath, and on the eighth day shall be a sabbath. And ye shall take you on the first day the boughs of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook; and ye shall rejoice before the Lord your God seven days.**

David crossed the shoulder of the Mount of Olives as he fled from Jerusalem during the rebellion by his son Absalom: **And David went up by the ascent of mount Olivet, and wept as he went up, and had his head covered, and he went barefoot: and all the people that was with him covered every**

man his head, and they went up, weeping as they went up. (2 Samuel 15:30)

David walked through the Kidron Valley between Jerusalem and the Mount of Olives, weeping for his son and his kingdom which Absalom was trying to dethrone him from. Jesus walked to Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives, walked down the streets of Jerusalem carrying his cross when His people had betrayed him and said in Luke 23:28-31, **“Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children. For, behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck. Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, cover us. For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?”**

In the New Testament the Mount of Olives played a prominent part in the last week of our Lord's ministry. The 'mount' is so intimately connected with the private and the devotional life of our Saviour, that we read of it and look at it with feelings of deepest interest and affection.

Jesus approached Jerusalem from the east, by way of Bethphage and Bethany, at the Mount of Olives (Matt 21:1; Mark 11:1). As He drew near the descent of the Mount of Olives, Luke 19:37 says, **And when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen;**

The crowd spread their garments on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them before Him. They began to praise God and shout, **"Hosanna to the Son of David!"** (Matt 21:9). When Jesus drew near Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives, He saw the city and in Luke 19:41-44 it reads, **And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.**

Jesus then went into Jerusalem and cleansed the Temple of the moneychangers; He delivered parables to the crowd, and silenced the scribes and Pharisees with His wisdom.

Later, as He sat on the Mount of Olives where Matthew 24:3 says, **And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?**

Here He delivered what is known as "the OLIVET DISCOURSE," a long sermon where He sat with His Disciples telling them of wondrous events yet to come, of the destruction of the Holy City; of the sufferings, the persecution, and the final triumph of his followers (Matt 24). Here he gave them the beautiful parables of the ten virgins and the five talents (Matt 25).

On the Mount, He would retire each evening for meditation, and prayer, and rest, when weary and harassed by the work and trials of the day. Luke 21:37 states: **And in the day time he was teaching in the temple; and at night he went out, and abode in the mount that is called the mount of Olives.**

After Jesus had instituted the LORD'S SUPPER on the night of His betrayal, He and His disciples sang a hymn and went out to the Mount of Olives (Matt 26:30; Mark 14:26), to the Garden of GETHSEMANE (Matt 26:36; Mark 14:32).

In this garden, on the slopes of the Mount of Olives, Jesus came on the night of His betrayal to utter that wonderful prayer, **'O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt'** (Matt 26:39). Jesus was then betrayed by Judas and delivered into the hands of His enemies.

And when the cup that Jesus prayed about – the cup of God's wrath - had willingly be drunk by Jesus – the cup that Jesus had to drink for there was no other way for us to be saved - and when death and the grave had been conquered, He led his disciples out again over Olivet as far to Bethany, and after a parting blessing ascended to heaven. Luke 24:50-51 states, **And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven.**

Here at the Mount of Olives the "men of Galilee" stood as they watched the resurrected Christ ascend into heaven. Christian tradition holds that when Christ returns to earth, His feet will touch first upon the Mount of Olives, the exact point from which He ascended into heaven. Acts 1:11-12 says, **Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven. Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a sabbath day's journey.**

Finally, we see the Mount of Olives mentioned by the prophet Zechariah to the future Day of the Lord: **"In that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which faces Jerusalem on the east. And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two from east to west, making a very large valley; half of the mountain shall move toward the north and half of it toward the south" (Zech 14:4).** This will be the second part of Christ's Second Coming at the Revelation when He returns to judge the nations and set up His millennial kingdom and once again walk around the Mount of Olives.

Today, we revisited the Mount of Olives – where Nehemiah instructed the people to gather their branches of olive, oil trees, myrtle, and palm to make booths or tents when the Feast of Tabernacles was restored after their years of captivity in Babylon.

Where David walked through the Kidron Valley by the Mount of Olives, weeping for his son and his kingdom.

Where we saw the private and devotional life of the Saviour.

Where Jesus approached Jerusalem and the crowd spread their garments on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them before Him.

Where Jesus as He drew near to Jerusalem saw the city and wept over it

Where Jesus went from into Jerusalem and cleansed the Temple of the moneychangers, delivered parables to the crowd, and silenced the scribes and Pharisees with the wisdom of God.

Where later, He sat and delivered "the OLIVET DISCOURSE" to His disciples for us to hear even to this very day – for the Word of the Lord stands forever.

Where Jesus would retire each evening for meditation, prayer, and rest. Where, on the night of His betrayal, after the Last Supper, Jesus and His disciples sang a hymn and went out to the Mount of Olives to the Garden of GETHSEMANE.

Where at Gethsemane, on the slopes of the Mount of Olives, Jesus was “pressed like an olive” and where in Luke 22:44 it says, **And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.**

Where Jesus was betrayed by Judas, delivered to His enemies, and all would abandon Him.

Where after his suffering, death, and resurrection, He led his disciples out again to Olivet as far to Bethany and ascended to heaven as the “men of Galilee” watched.

And finally, where at second part of Christ’s Second Coming at the Revelation He will return to judge the nations and set up His millennial kingdom and once again walk around the Mount of Olives.

Will you be with Him then?

Will you have walked faithfully with Him now?

Will you have been caught up with the saints to meet the Lord in the air or have gone home to be with the Lord?

Will you have received your rewards and have attended the Marriage of the Lamb?

Will you have returned with Him as He sets His feet down again on the Mount of Olives and walk with Him for 1,000 years during His Millennial Kingdom?

And will you spend the Omega ages with the King of Kings Who had humbly entered Jerusalem riding on a donkey by way of the Mount of Olives because He had resolved to go to Jerusalem, to suffer, to die, and be risen for you?

5. "CHRIST'S PASSION" Mid-Week (6)

1. Without question, the suffering of Christ before and during the crucifixion was terrible...

a. The beatings, were excruciatingly painful:

Then they spit in his face and struck him with their fists. Others slapped him (Matthew 26:67)

Matthew 27:26-31 says, Then he released Barabbas to them. But he had Jesus flogged, and handed him over to be crucified. Then the governor's soldiers took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole company of soldiers around him. They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, and then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on his head. They put a staff in his right hand. Then they knelt in front of him and mocked him. "Hail, king of the Jews!" they said. They spit on him, and took the staff and struck him on the head again and again. After they had mocked him, they took off the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him.

b. Jesus was nailed to the cross and He was willing to bear without drugs:

They came to a place called Golgotha (which means "the place of the skull"). There they offered Jesus wine to drink, mixed with gall; but after tasting it, he refused to drink it. When they had crucified him, they divided up his clothes by casting lots. (Matthew 27:33-35)

c. Christ's crucifixion was a shameful way to die, mocked by some, crucified with thieves:

And sitting down, they kept watch over him there. Above his head they placed the written charge against him: THIS IS JESUS, THE KING OF THE JEWS. Two rebels were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left. Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads and saying, "You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! Come down from the cross, if you are the Son of God!" In the same way the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the elders mocked him. "He saved others," they said, "but he can't save himself! He's the king of Israel! Let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him. He trusts in God. Let God rescue him now if he wants him, for he said, 'I am the Son of God.'" In the same way the rebels who were crucified with him also heaped insults on him. (Matthew 27:36-44)

2. While there may be a place for contemplating upon the physical passion Jesus endured...

a. Jesus did not want people to weep for Him, but for themselves:

As the soldiers led him away, they seized Simon from Cyrene, who was on his way in from the country, and put the cross on him and made him carry it behind Jesus. A large number of people followed him, including women who mourned and wailed for him. Jesus turned and said to them, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep for yourselves and for your children. For the time will come when you will say, 'Blessed are the childless women, the wombs that never

bore and the breasts that never nursed!' Then ““they will say to the mountains, “Fall on us!” and to the hills, “Cover us!”” For if people do these things when the tree is green, what will happen when it is dry?” (**Luke 23:26-31**)

b. His concern for others was evident, even on the cross:

Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.” And they divided up his clothes by casting lots. (**Luke 23:34**)

The significance and lessons to be learned from the suffering of Jesus should go far beyond feeling sorry for what He endured. For example, we should never forget that "Christ's Passion" is...

I. THE CONDEMNATION OF SIN

A. JESUS SUFFERED BECAUSE OF SIN...

1. As foretold, Jesus died for our sins:

For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, (1 Corinthians 15:3)

2. Jesus gave Himself for our sins:

who gave himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, (Galatians 1:4)

3. Jesus bore our sins on the cross

“He himself bore our sins” in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; “by his wounds you have been healed.” (1 Peter 2:24)

-- The thought of His passion should remind us of our own sinfulness and the need for redemption:

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word is not in us. (1 John 1:8, 10)

B. Jesus condemned sin in the flesh through His death:

For what the law was powerless to do because it was weakened by the flesh, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in the flesh, (Romans 8:3)

II. THE REVELATION OF LOVE

To motivate us in our efforts to let Jesus' suffering help us deal with the problem of sin, we should also remember that "Christ's Passion" is... The Revelation of Love:

A. JESUS SUFFERED BECAUSE OF LOVE...

1. and we see the love of the Father for a lost world:

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. (John 3:16)

But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. (**Romans 5:8**)

2. and we see the love of the Son:

and walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. (Ephesians 5:2)

-- May our contemplation of His passion never neglect the love that was behind it: **This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. (1 John 4:9-10)**

B. JESUS DEMONSTRATED WHAT TRUE LOVE IS...

1. We now can understand the meaning of true love:

This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. – (1 John 3:16)
Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. **(John 15:13)**

2. Christ's love serves as the pattern for our love through His power:

"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." (John 13:34-35)

My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. **(John 15:12)**

-- May our contemplation of His passion remind us of the high standard of love we are called to show toward one another through His power by faith:

Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. (1 John 4:11)

As we strive to overcome sin and love one another, assisted and motivated by the suffering of Jesus, we should also be mindful that "Christ's Passion" is...

III. THE REDEMPTION OF THE WORLD

A. JESUS SUFFERED FOR ALL...

1. **The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. (2 Peter 3:9)**

2. Therefore He offered Jesus as a propitiation for all

My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have an advocate with the Father—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world. (1 John 2:1-2)

-- May our meditation upon His passion include thinking about the need of others:

B. JESUS IS THE WORLD'S ONLY HOPE...

1. **Jesus is the only way to the Father**

Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. **(John 14:6)**

2. Only in Jesus' name is salvation to be found:

Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved.” (Acts 4:12)

3. If we deny the Son then one does not have the Father:

No one who denies the Son has the Father; whoever acknowledges the Son has the Father also. (1 John 2:23)

4 Abide in Christ's teachings and one has both the Father and the Son:

Anyone who runs ahead and does not continue in the teaching of Christ does not have God; whoever continues in the teaching has both the Father and the Son.

(2 John 9)

May our meditation upon His passion move us to do what we can to proclaim the message of redemption to those lost in sin:

All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: (2 Corinthians 5:18)

IV. THE INSPIRATION OF HIS SACRIFICE

The suffering of Jesus on the cross should prompt us to look both inward and outward, to address both our spiritual needs and those of others. We should also view "Christ's Passion" as...

A. JESUS PROVIDING THE EXAMPLE FOR US...

1. His suffering demonstrated Christ's mind of humility:

And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross! (Philippians 2:8)

2. Christ's suffering demonstrated the example of suffering patiently:

Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps. “He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.” When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. “He himself bore our sins” in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; “by his wounds you have been healed.”

(1 Peter 2:21-24)

May our reflection upon Christ's passion move us to consider what His sacrifice should inspire us to do

B. JESUS' SACRIFICE IS DESIGNED TO INSPIRE US...

1. To walk in love

and walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. (Ephesians 5:2)

2. To walk in humility:

Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, (Philippians 2:3)

3. To suffer patiently when mistreated for doing good:

But how is it to your credit if you receive a beating for doing wrong and endure it? But if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God. **(1 Peter 2:20)**

4. To give of ourselves to others

This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. **(1 John 3:16)**

-- May our reflection upon His passion inspire us to a higher plan of devotion to God and others!

CONCLUSION

1. Perhaps these few thoughts will increase our appreciation of Christ's suffering...

I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. **(Galatians 2:20)**

I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live **by the faith of the Son of God**, who loved me, and gave himself for me. (KJV)

May "Christ's Passion" motivate us to obey & serve the One who died for us...

For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again. – **(2 Corinthians 5:14-15)**

Christ's Seven Statements on the Cross

- 1) Luke 23:34: Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." And they divided up his clothes by casting lots.
- 2) Luke 23:43: Jesus answered him, "I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise."
- 3) John 19:26-27: When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, "Dear woman, here is your son," and to the disciple, "Here is your mother." From that time on, this disciple took her into his home.
- 4) Mark 15:34: About the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?"—which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"
- 5) John 19:28: Later, knowing that all was now completed, and so that the Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, "I am thirsty."
- 6) John 19:30: When he had received the drink, Jesus said, "It is finished." With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.
- 7) Luke 23:46: Jesus called out with a loud voice, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit." When he had said this, he breathed his last.

CHRIST'S PASSION

BETWEEN 6 A.M. & 9 A.M.:

Before Pilate (Mark 15:1) Sent to Herod (Luke 23:6-10) Returned to Pilate (Luke 23:23-24) Sentenced (Luke 23:26) Led to Calvary (Luke 23:26)

BETWEEN 9 A.M & 12 NOON (3rd-6th Hour)

Crucified (Luke 23:33) The soldiers divided up His clothes/caste lots (Mark 15:24) Crucified Him on the "third hour" (Mark 15:25; Luke 23:33) Jesus asked the Father to forgive them (Luke 23:34) People insulted Him (Matthew 27:39-40) Chief priests insulted Him (Mark 15:31) Soldiers mocked Him (Luke 23:36-37) One criminal mocked Him (Luke 23:39) Criminal rebuked him (Luke 23:40,42) Jesus promised the one criminal paradise (23:43) Jesus looked after His mother (John 19:26-27)

BETWEEN 12 NOON & 3 P.M. (6th – 9th Hour)

Darkness for three hours (Mark 15:33) Christ's cry of being forsaken (Matthew 27:46) Christ's cry of thirst (John 19:28) Christ's "It is finished" (John 19:30) Christ commits His spirit (Luke 23:46)

AFTER 3 P.M

The earthquake and curtain torn in two (Matthew 27:51) The tombs break open and many dead seen (Matthew 27:52) Centurion, "Surely he was the Son of God" (Matthew 27:54) The confession of the multitude (Luke 23:48) The thieves' legs broken (John 19:31-32) Jesus' side is pierced (John 19:34) The burial (John 19:38-42) Tomb sealed and guard posted (Matthew 27:66)

6. EASTER (2)

CHRIST'S RESURRECTION: The Witnesses!!

- 1) Early that morning, three women came to the tomb and saw two angels (Matthew 28:1-8) (Mark 16:1-7) (Luke 24:1-8) 2)
- 2) The women separated at the tomb. Mary Magdalene went to tell John and Peter (John 20:1). The other two went to tell the other two disciples (Luke 24:9-11)
- 3) Then Peter and John ran to the grave ahead of Mary and returned without seeing the Lord (John 20:3-10)

CHRIST'S RESURRECTION: The Appearances!!

- 1) Jesus appeared first to Mary Magdalene (Mark 16:9) (John 20:11-18)
But go your way, tell his disciples and Peter (Mark 16:7)
- 2) Then to the women (Matthew 28:9-10)
- 3) Then to Peter (Luke 24:34; 1 Cor.15:5)
- 4) Then in the late afternoon to the 2 disciples on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-35)
- 5) Then in the evening to disciples in the "Upper Room" (John 20:19-24) (Luke 24:36-48)
- 6) A week later, to the same disciples with Thomas present (John 20:24-29)
- 7) Later, He appeared to 7 disciples on the shore of the Sea of Galilee (John 21:1-25)
- 8) Then to the "Eleven" on a mountain in Galilee (Matthew 28:16-20) (Mark 16:14-18)
- 9) Then to the 500 brethren at once (1 Cor.15:6)
- 10) Then to James (1 Cor.15:7)
- 11) Then He ascended to Heaven in the presence of His Disciples from the Mount of Olives (Luke 24:50-53) (Mark 16:19) (Acts 1:9)
- 12) Then He appeared to Steven (Acts 7:52-56)
- 13) Then he appeared to Paul on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:3-6) (1 Cor.15:8)

What a week it has been.

You can imagine someone back in those times talking about it:

Psalm Sunday

- Jesus wept over Jerusalem
- came humbly as the King on a donkey & the people rejoiced

During the Week

- my house shall be a house of prayer
- taught His disciples and the people and He was opposed by the religious!!

Thursday

- Passover Meal
- one would betray Him (Judas)
- one would reject Him (Peter)
- Gethsemane: the start of His blood being shed
- Jesus praying, Satan working, Disciples sleeping (picture of the church)
- taken before the Jewish leaders (His brothers the Jews)

Friday

- brought before Pilate & Herod
- tortured: more blood
- “I find nothing wrong with this man”
- carried the cross through the streets
- was helped. He carried grief, sin, sickness of the Adamic race – more blood
- nailed to a cross: the nails didn't hold Him – His love did
- the Father: what Father would sit back and watch. He could have destroyed the universe but for Jesus' prayer: “Father, forgive them, they know not what they do.”
- “Love covers over a multitude of sins.”
- His suffering and more blood
- His death: (600 years later Islam said He never died.)
- blood & water from His side / No broken bones
- buried in a rich man's grave (Matthew 27:57-66; Matthew 28:1-4)
(the wise men had brought: gold frankincense **myrrh (his death)**)

**THE WEEK: Seventh Day Adventists!! Sunday to Sunday (8days)
blood / death / burial / resurrection / ascension / seated / Holy Spirit**

What is the Easter Message for Resurrection Sunday?

After Christ's Resurrection:

And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you. (Matthew 28:5-7)

COME: God's arms are open. His Word has always been to “Come”

“Come and drink” “Whoever is thirsty let him come” “Come unto me”

SEE: Jesus is risen from the dead

GO: Go into all the world. Go, I will be with you always

TELL: tell the people my story! Tell the people your story!!

COME & SEE - GO & TELL

6. Mount of Olives (5)

Matthew 21:1: And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage (Bethany), unto the mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples, saying to them, “Go to the village ahead of you, and at once you will find a donkey tied there, with her colt by her. Untie them and bring them to me.

No place in Scripture is associated with so many wonderful, pleasing, tearful, and sacred occurrences as that of Olivet. The Mount of Olives, was a north-to-south ridge of hills east of Jerusalem. The Mount of Olives was covered with dense olive groves in Old and New Testament times. It was from this woodland that the people, under Nehemiah's command, gathered their branches of olive, oil trees, myrtle, and palm to make booths or tents when the Feast of Tabernacles was restored after their years of captivity in Babylon.

Let's look at Nehemiah 8:14-15, **And they found written in the law which the Lord had commanded by Moses, that the children of Israel should dwell in booths (tents) in the feast of the seventh month: And that they should publish and proclaim in all their cities, and in Jerusalem, saying, Go forth unto the mount, and fetch olive branches, and pine branches, and myrtle branches, and palm branches, and branches of thick trees, to make booths, as it is written.**

What was written was the following from Leviticus 23:40,
And ye shall take you on the first day the boughs of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook; and ye shall rejoice before the Lord your God seven days.

David crossed the shoulder of the Mount of Olives as he fled from Jerusalem during the rebellion by his son Absalom: (2 Sam.15:30)

And David went up by the ascent of mount Olivet, and wept as he went up, and had his head covered, and he went barefoot: and all the people that was with him covered every man his head, and they went up, weeping as they went up.

David walked through the Kidron Valley between Jerusalem and the Mount of Olives, weeping for his son and his kingdom which Absalom was trying to dethrone him from. Here we get a picture of upcoming Messianic events.

Jesus walked to Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives, walked down the streets of Jerusalem carrying His cross when His people had betrayed him and said in Luke 23:28-31, **“Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children. For, behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck. Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, cover us. For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?”**

In the New Testament the Mount of Olives played a prominent part in the last week of our Lord's ministry. The 'mount' is so intimately connected with the private and the devotional life of our Saviour, that we read of it and look at it with feelings of deepest interest and affection.

Jesus approached Jerusalem from the east, by way of Bethphage and Bethany, at the Mount of Olives (Matt 21:1; Mark 11:1).

When Jesus drew near Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives, He saw the city and in Luke 19:41-44 it reads, **And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.**

As He drew near the descent of the Mount of Olives, Luke 19:37 says, **And when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen; (Matt 21:9).** The crowd spread their garments on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them before Him. They began to praise God and shout, "Hosanna to the Son of David!"

Jesus then went into Jerusalem and cleansed the Temple of the moneychangers; He delivered parables to the crowd, and silenced the scribes and Pharisees with His wisdom.

Later, as He sat on the Mount of Olives where Matthew 24:3 says, **And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world.**

Here He delivered what is known as "the OLIVET DISCOURSE," a long sermon where He sat with His Disciples telling them of wondrous events yet to come, of the destruction of the Holy City; of the sufferings, the persecution, and the final triumph of his followers (Matt 24).

Here he gave them the beautiful parables of the ten virgins and the five talents (Matt 25).

On the Mount, He would retire each evening for meditation, and prayer, and rest, when weary and harassed by the work and trials of the day.

Luke 21:37 states: **And in the day time he was teaching in the temple; and at night he went out, and abode in the mount that is called the mount of Olives.**

After Jesus had instituted the LORD'S SUPPER on the night of His betrayal, He and His disciples sang a hymn and went out to the Mount of Olives (Matt 26:30; Mark 14:26) to the Garden of GETHSEMANE (Matt 26:36; Mark 14:32).

In this garden, on the slopes of the Mount of Olives, Jesus came on the night of His betrayal to utter that wonderful prayer, **'O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt' (Matt 26:39).**

Jesus was then betrayed by Judas and delivered into the hands of His enemies.

And when the cup that Jesus prayed about – the cup of God's wrath - had willingly be drunk by Jesus – the cup that Jesus had to drink for there was no other way for us to be saved.

And after death and the grave had been conquered, He led his disciples out again. Luke 24:50-51 states, **And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven.** Here at the Mount of Olives the "men of Galilee" stood as they watched the resurrected Christ ascend into heaven. Christian tradition holds that when Christ returns to earth, His feet will touch first upon the Mount of Olives, the exact point from which He ascended into heaven. Acts 1:11-12 says, **Which**

also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven. Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a sabbath day's journey.

Finally, we see the Mount of Olives mentioned by the prophet Zechariah to the future Day of the Lord: **"In that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which faces Jerusalem on the east. And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two from east to west, making a very large valley; half of the mountain shall move toward the north and half of it toward the south" (Zech 14:4).**

This will be the second part of Christ's Second Coming when He returns WITH His redeemed at the Revelation. He will judge the nations and set up His millennial kingdom and once again walk around the Mount of Olives.

Today, we revisited the Mount of Olives – where Nehemiah instructed the people to gather their branches of olive, oil trees, myrtle, and palm to make booths or tents when the Feast of Tabernacles was restored after their years of captivity in Babylon.

Where David walked through the Kidron Valley by the Mount of Olives, weeping for his son and his kingdom.

Where we saw the private and devotional life of the Saviour.

Where Jesus as He drew near to Jerusalem saw the city and wept over it

Where Jesus approached Jerusalem and the crowd spread their garments on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them before Him.

Where Jesus went from into Jerusalem and cleansed the Temple of the moneychangers, delivered parables to the crowd, and silenced the scribes and Pharisees with the wisdom of God.

Where later, He sat and delivered "the OLIVET DISCOURSE" to His disciples for us to hear even to this very day – for the Word of the Lord stands forever.

Where Jesus would retire each evening for meditation, prayer, and rest.

Where, on the night of His betrayal, after the Last Supper, Jesus and His disciples sang a hymn and went out to the Mount of Olives to GETHSEMANE.

Where at Gethsemane, on the slopes of the Mount of Olives, Jesus was “pressed like an olive” and where in Luke 22:44 it says, And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

Where Jesus was betrayed by Judas, delivered to His enemies, and all would abandon Him.

Where after his suffering, death, and resurrection, He led his disciples out again to Olivet not far to Bethany and ascended to heaven as the “men of Galilee” watched.

And finally, where at the second part of Christ’s Second Coming at the Revelation He will return and step on the Mount of Olives and walk around it. Then He will judge the nations and set up His millennial kingdom.

Will you walk faithfully with Him now?

Will you have been caught up with the saints to meet the Lord in the air or have gone home to be with the Lord?

Will you have received your rewards and have attended the Marriage of the Lamb?

Will you have returned with Him as He sets His feet down again on the Mount of Olives and walk with Him for 1,000 years during His Millennial Kingdom?

And will you spend the Omega ages with the King of Kings Who had humbly entered Jerusalem riding on a donkey by way of the Mount of Olives?



6. THE RESURRECTION: Don't Weep (6)

Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? (John 20:15)

Christians are to be a joyful people.

Nehemiah 8:10 says, **"The joy of the Lord is your strength."**

Philippians 4:4 says, **"Rejoice, again I say, rejoice."**

The problem with having joy is that we live in a real world. Yet, can "have" the joy of the Lord in Christ. It is not a feeling.....it is a reality of the essence of Jesus we have by faith.

Yet, there are times when we feel much like Mary Magdalene did here. Her Lord and Master had been terribly mistreated and murdered. Now, she has come to the tomb to anoint the body of Jesus, and the body is missing.

She did not realize that Jesus had risen so out of sorrow and frustration, she stood outside the tomb weeping. John 20:11 says, **But Mary (Magdalene) stood without at the sepulchre weeping: and as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre,**

Not everyone who comes to church is ecstatic with joy. In fact some of you probably feel like weeping. And even though some of you may not feel like weeping, your joy is hampered by events that have happened to you and your friends. Life is filled with sorrow.

There is the sorrow caused: by hurt feelings, by being mistreated. by seeing others mistreated, by family difficulties, by strained relationships, by lack of money and/or jobs, and by sickness and death.

These sorrows create a barrier that makes it difficult to be joyful all the time. As Mary stood weeping, she was asked by angels why she was weeping.

John 20:11-13 says, **But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping: and as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre, And seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, & I know not where they have laid him.**

Mary's answer to their inquiry was the reason at the moment she was weeping. However, it was probably the culmination of sorrows over the previous days that also added to her weeping.

John 20:15, Jesus appears to Mary although Mary at first does not realize it. **Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? (John 20:15)**

Notice that Jesus cares when he asks that question.
However, He is also telling Mary that there is no longer a need to weep.

Brothers and sisters, Jesus cares about what is causing you sorrow and He wants you to tell Him when you have sorrows. He cares enough to listen. Heb 4:14-16 says, **Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.**

It is interesting that Jesus turned her weeping into joy with just one word.
He spoke her name.

John 20:16 says, **Jesus said to her, Mary. She turned herself, and said to him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master.**

Jesus told Mary that she should not weep because Jesus her master, was very much alive. The Lord Jesus turned her sorrow into joy.

And today, the Lord Jesus wants your sorrow to be turned to joy.

It does not mean that your problems will go away.

But it does mean that we can rejoice in spite of our circumstances.

So today, if you are a born again Christian, if you have trusted Christ as your personal Savior, and if the Spirit of the Living God lives in you because you've put your faith in the shed blood of Jesus Christ on the Cross and in His resurrection from the dead – I say to you “DON'T WEEP!!

Don't weep! He is risen!

Death is the world's greatest preacher for unless a person is “raptured”, it will be faced by everyone. Yet the power of death is surpassed by the love of Christ – for it was the power of Christ's love that took Him to the cross to conquer death. Death had power over us all. A power to fear and dread. Now, Christ's life has the ultimate power – the power of love, trust, and permanence.

1 Cor 15:54 says, **So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.**

Let's look at some Prophecies about Christ's resurrection that were fulfilled:

Isa 25:8 says, **he will swallow up death forever. The Sovereign Lord will wipe away the tears from all faces; he will remove the disgrace of his people from all the earth. The Lord has spoken.**

Hos 13:14 states, **"I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death. Where, O death, are your plagues? Where, O grave, is your destruction?"**

Ps 16:9-11 says, **Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest secure, because you will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay. You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand.**

The announcements that the angels gave the women who came to the tomb, was that Jesus has risen. The message Jesus gave the two disciples on the way to Emmaus was that He has risen!! The message to the apostles and to Thomas was that He has risen. And Jesus appearing to Mary was declaring that He had risen. And the message that God gives to us is that Jesus has risen! 1 Cor 15:20 states, **But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.**

Why is the resurrection a source of joy? The resurrection proves that God has accepted Christ's sacrifice for if Christ's sacrifice was not sufficient – if Christ had not been sinless – if the “whole offering had not been burned – we would still be in our sin. The resurrection promises life after death.

John 11:25-26, **Jesus said to her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believes in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whoever lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?**

The resurrection shows us that Jesus is alive so He can indeed intercede on our behalf.

Rom 8:34 states, **Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.**

DON'T WEEP! WE ARE REDEEMED!

When you were born, you were born into captivity. You were born into the bondage of sin. You were a sinner by nature. You willfully disobeyed God. **In order for you to be set free from your** bondage, someone had to pay for your sins and set you free. This is what redemption is – the paying of a ransom to free someone. This is what Christ has done for all of those that name Him as Savior.

1 Peter 1:18-19 states, **Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:**

It was not a ransom of silver and gold that was paid for your sin. It was the precious blood of Christ, the sinless Son of God that was shed.

As John the Baptist said so long ago in John 1:29,

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

Rom 5:9 states, Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.

Jesus is very much alive and if we've repented of our sins and received Him into our hearts by faith – we have been redeemed. We've been redeemed. No matter what goes wrong, we are redeemed. Believe it!!

Brothers / sisters, Why are you weeping?? He is risen!! He is risen indeed!!

DON'T WEEP! WE ARE REGENERATED!

To be regenerated is to be born again.

John 3:3 says, **In reply Jesus declared, "I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again."**

If you have truly trusted the Lord Jesus as Savior, you have been literally born into the family of God by the Power of the Holy Spirit. This is regeneration. Why should you not weep because you have been regenerated?

You should not weep because you have new life in Christ NOW!!

2 Cor 5:17-18 tell us, **Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!**

DON'T WEEP! HE IS RESIDING!

If you have been regenerated, the Spirit of Christ dwells in you. He is living His life inside of you and through you. It is the Spirit of Jesus that is present to comfort and help you.

John 14:16-18 says, **And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.**

How should Christ's residence through the Holy Spirit encourage you?
It is the Holy comfort to you when you hurt, hope to you when you feel
hopeless, and tells you that you are a child of God.
Rom 8:16 tell us, **The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we
are the children of God:**

It is the Holy Spirit that empowers us to witness.
Acts 1:8 states, **But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is
come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem,
and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the
earth.**

It is the Holy Spirit that produces fruit.
Gal 5:22-23 says, **But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace,
longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance:
against such there is no law.**

DON'T WEEP! HE WILL RETURN!

John 14:1-3 tells us, **Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God,
believe also in me. 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. And if I
go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto
myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.**

Jesus is coming back for us. He might come and receive you personally by
way of death. Or you may be here when He comes for those who believe in
Him.

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

Brothers and sisters, your life is temporary in this world.
At any moment you could be taken by death.
At any moment you could be taken home with all the other born again
Christians. We have a blessed hope and our lives should show it. (Titus
2:11- 13)

DON'T WEEP! HE REIGNS!

In Rev 1:18 it says, **I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.**

My brothers and sisters, Jesus is God.

My brothers and sisters, Jesus is NOT a created being that had to become a god. Jesus is God Almighty and Jesus reigns!!

Our God, Jesus Christ reigns.

Rev 22:13 states, **I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.**

Acts 2:33, Exalted to the right hand of God he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear.

Jesus is very much alive and He reigns.

No matter what goes wrong, He reigns.

No matter what difficult you face, He reigns.

There is nothing you can face today that is out of the control of God.

Believe it!!

YOUR God reigns – believe it, rest in Him, rejoice, relax.

Brothers and sisters – Why are you weeping??

He is Resurrected.

We are redeemed.

We are regenerated.

He is residing.

He will return.

He reigns.

The Serenity Prayer

God, grant me the Serenity

To accept the things I cannot change...

Courage to change the things I can,

And Wisdom to know the difference.

Living one day at a time,

Enjoying one moment at a time,

Accepting hardship as the pathway to peace.

Taking, as Jesus did, this sinful world as it is,

Not as I would have it.

Trusting that He will make all things right

if I surrender to His will.

That I may be reasonably happy in this life,

And supremely happy with Him forever in the next.

Amen.

7. FEET FINGER HAND (6)

In the Bible, physical words like feet, finger, hand, etc. can refer to the literal human body parts or, figuratively, to the power of God.

Today we are going to talk about God's FEET, FINGER, HAND, ETC.

Our Feet: where have your feet walked? walking now? Where will God lead your feet? Ask yourself "where have my feet been and where are they going?"

In Psalm 73:2 it says, "But as for me, my feet had almost slipped; I had nearly lost my foothold."

But the person who returns to God whole heartedly exclaims the following:

My steps have held to your paths; my feet have not slipped. (Psalm 17:5)

My feet have closely followed his steps; I have kept to his way without turning aside. (Job 23:11)

He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; he set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand. (Psalm 40:2)

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path. (Psalm 119:105)

What did mankind do with Jesus' feet?

* **Great crowds came to him, bringing the lame, the blind, the crippled, the mute and many others, and laid them at his feet; and he healed them.**

* **Then one of the synagogue rulers, named Jairus, came there. Seeing Jesus, he fell at his feet, and pleaded earnestly with him, "my little daughter is dying. Please come and put your hands on her so that she will be healed and live".**

* **Then the woman, (with the condition of bleeding) knowing what had happened to her, came and fell at his feet and trembling with fear, told him the whole truth.**

* **She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said.**

* **He threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him--and he was a Samaritan.**

* **Suddenly Jesus met them. "Greetings," he said. They came to him, clasped his feet and worshiped him.**

And how does our Heavenly Father look after our feet?

During the forty years that I led you through the desert, your clothes did not wear out, nor did the sandals on your feet. (Deut 29:5)

"But the father said to his servants, `Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. (Luke 15:21-23)

How did Jesus wash our feet?

After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

(Jesus) "Do you understand what I have done for you?"

"Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet." He did not come to be served but to serve and give his life as a ransom for many.

- Those feet walked in Eden in the cool of the day
- The feet of Jesus came here as a little baby. Imagine Mary playing
- They walked the dusty, hard roads of Galilee.....
- They were sore, hurting, and tired at times.....
- But they resolutely set out for Jerusalem knowing that they'd be pierced by a Roman spike.....
- Those same feet were the last thing the disciples saw as he ascended to heaven promising to send the Holy Spirit and return..
- The clouds are the dust of His feet.
- Those feet will stand on the Mount of Olives at the Second Coming of Christ and take up His heavenly throne on earth for His 1,000 year reign.

“Finger of God”

In John Chapter 8:1-11, is the story of the teachers of the law and Pharisees bringing the woman caught in adultery to Jesus.

In the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?" They were using this question as a trap, in order to have a basis for accusing Jesus. But Jesus bent down and started to write on the ground **with his finger**. When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, "Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her." **Again** he stooped down and wrote on the ground. (John 8:5-8)

People speculate as to “what” He was writing. But sometimes we can get side tracked. When Jesus bent down to write instead of speculating “what” He wrote we should see “who” was writing. We should be looking at the “finger” - the author of the Bible.

The "finger of God," is synonymous with power, omnipotence, sometimes with the additional meaning of the infallible evidence of Divine authorship visible in all His works, especially in His law.

the magicians said to Pharaoh, “This is the finger of God.” But Pharaoh’s heart was hard and he would not listen, just as the LORD had said. (Ex.8:19)

The pagan, demon-possessed Egyptian Magicians recognized the “finger of God” but Pharaoh hardened his heart.

When the LORD finished speaking to Moses on Mount Sinai, he gave him the two tablets of the covenant law, the tablets of stone inscribed by the finger of God. (Exodus 31:18)

These Pharisees and Teachers of the Law used the Law for their own benefit and not to glorify God. If their hearts had not been hardened they would have recognized the author of the Law. Many did not recognize Him. “He came to His own but His own did not receive Him.” They did not recognize the “time of His coming.”

As they drank the wine, they praised the gods of gold and silver, of bronze, iron, wood and stone. Suddenly the fingers of a human hand appeared and wrote on the plaster of the wall, near the lampstand in the royal palace. The king watched the hand as it wrote. His face (Belshazzar) turned pale and he was so frightened that his legs became weak and his knees were knocking. (Daniel 5:4-6)

King Belshazzar was found “wanting”, his kingdom was split in two, and that night he was killed.

When the writing is on the wall, let’s not be found wanting and die in sin.

When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, (Psalm 8:3) and he also made the stars.

Many look at the stars above and worship the stars.

We can look towards the heavens and see “the work of God’s fingers.”

JESUS: But if I drive out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. (Luke 11:20)

By “the finger of God” Jesus drives out demons – the Kingdom of God has come upon us.

The one who is victorious will, like them, be dressed in white. I will never blot out the name of that person from the book of life, but will acknowledge that name before my Father and his angels. (Revelation 3:5)

Nothing impure will ever enter it (heaven), nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb’s book of life. (Revelation 21:27)

Let’s make sure our names are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life – written with “the Blood of the Lamb” and “the Finger of God”. It is HIS purity & righteousness.

Has Jesus written your name in the book of life? Have you trusted in the shed blood of the cross for forgiveness of sin, trusted in His resurrection for your resurrection life, and received Jesus into your heart as your Savior and Lord?

HAND OF GOD

The "hand of God," is synonymous with power, omnipotence:

Remember that you were slaves in Egypt and that the LORD your **God** brought you out of there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. (Deut.5:15)

He did this so that all the peoples of the earth might know that the hand of the LORD is powerful and so that you might always fear the LORD your God.” (Joshua 4:24)

Jabez cried out to the **God of Israel**, “Oh, that you would bless me and enlarge my territory! Let your hand be with me, and keep me from harm so that I will be free from pain.” And **God** granted his request. (1 Chronicles 4:10)

Also in Judah the hand of God was on the people to give them unity of mind to carry out what the king and his officials had ordered, following the word of the LORD. (2 Chronicles 30:12)

Throughout the book of Ezra we see the hand of God:

this Ezra came up from Babylon. He was a teacher well versed in the Law of Moses, which the LORD, the **God of Israel**, had given. The king had granted him everything he asked, for the hand of the LORD his God was on him. (Ezra 7:6)

The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. (Psalm 19:1)

Like your name, O **God**, your praise reaches to the ends of the earth; your right **hand** is filled with righteousness. (Psalm 48:10)

Seated at the Right Hand: a position of Authority and Power

After the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, he was taken up into heaven and he sat at the right hand of God. (Mark 16:19)

Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear. (Acts 2:33)

Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. (Romans 8:34)

Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. (Colossians 3:1)

The Son is the radiance of **God's** glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. (Hebrews 1:3)

A WARNING: Hebrews is the book of warnings!!

It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. (Hebrews 10:31)

But Jesus says, “My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. I and the Father are one.”

HE SEES US, HE TOUCHES US, HE HEARS US, HE HOLDS US CLOSE TO HIS HEART, HIS ARM IS UNDER MY HEAD – HE LOVES US!!

CLOSE TO HIS HEART:

He tends **his** flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in **his** arms and carries them **close to his heart**; he gently leads those that have young. (Isaiah 40:11)

In the Song of Songs we see The Divine Romance Between God and Man.

Let's see how we the church desires to relate to Jesus:

BELOVED: Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth - for your love is more delightful than wine. Pleasing is the fragrance of your perfumes; your name is like perfume poured out. No wonder the maidens love you! Take me away with you—let us hurry! Let the king bring me into his chambers. (1:2-4)

How handsome you are, my beloved! Oh, how charming! (1:16)

Listen! My beloved! Look! Here he comes, leaping across the mountains, bounding over the hills. My beloved is like a gazelle or a young stag. Look! There he stands behind our wall, gazing through the windows, peering through the lattice. (2:8-9)

My beloved is mine and I am his; he browses among the lilies. (2:16)

All night long on my bed I looked for the one my heart loves; I looked for him but did not find him. I will search for the one my heart loves. So I looked for him but did not find him. Scarcely had I passed them when I found the one my heart loves. I held him and would not let him go (3:1-4) If you seek him you will find him if ...

I slept but my heart was awake. Listen! My beloved is knocking: (5:2)

My beloved thrust his hand through the latch-opening; my heart began to pound for him. I arose to open for my beloved, and my hands dripped with myrrh, my fingers with flowing myrrh, on the handles of the bolt. (5:4-5)

Tell him I am faint with love. (5:8)

My beloved is radiant and ruddy, outstanding among ten thousand. (5:10)

His mouth is sweetness itself; he is altogether lovely. This is my beloved, this is my friend, (5:16)

I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine; he browses among the lilies. (6:3)

I belong to my beloved, and his desire is for me. Come, my beloved, let us go to the countryside, let us spend the night in the villages. Let us go early to the vineyards to see if the vines have budded, if their blossoms have opened, and if the pomegranates are in bloom—there I will give you my love. (6:10-12)

for love is as strong as death, its jealousy unyielding as the grave. It burns like blazing fire, like a mighty flame. Many waters cannot quench love; rivers cannot sweep it away. (8:6-7)

I have become in his eyes like one bringing contentment. (8:10)

Now let's see how our LOVER, Jesus sees us and wants to be with us:

How beautiful you are, my darling! Oh, how beautiful! Your eyes are doves. (1:15)

Arise, my darling, my beautiful one, come with me. (2:10)

Arise, come, my darling; my beautiful one, come with me.” My dove in the clefts of the rock, in the hiding places on the mountainside, show me your face, let me hear your voice; for your voice is sweet, and your face is lovely. (2:13-14)

How beautiful you are, my darling! Oh, how beautiful! (4:1)

You are altogether beautiful, my darling; there is no flaw in you. You have stolen my heart, my sister, my bride; you have stolen my heart with one glance of your eyes, with one jewel of your necklace. How delightful is your love, my sister, my bride! (4:6-8)

Open to me, my sister, my darling, my dove, my flawless one. (5:2)

You are as beautiful as Tirzah, my darling, as lovely as Jerusalem, as majestic as troops with banners. Turn your eyes from me; they overwhelm me. (6:4-5)

but my dove, my perfect one, is unique (6:9)

How beautiful you are and how pleasing, my love, with your delights! (7:6)

The “feet of God” have walked among us.

The “finger of God” has written words of life into our hearts.

The “hand of God” holds us close to His heart and firmly in His hand.

We have seen His glory. We have felt His presence. We have smelt His fragrance.

We have been kissed by Him. We have heard life-giving words from His mouth.

God came down to us – Immanuel: God is with us!!

Way Maker

Way Maker, Miracle Worker, Promise Keeper, Light in the Darkness

My God, that is Who You are. (4x)

That is Who You are. That is Who You are. That is Who You are. That is Who You are.

That is Who You are. That is Who You are. That is Who You are. That is Who You are.

Even when I don't see it You're working

Even when I don't feel it You're working

You never stop, You never stop working

You never stop, You never stop working

8. It's Not That Easy Becoming a Church That Heals (4)

Divorce is on the rise worldwide. Every family has been affected by divorce in some manner and this affects the children and their children.

In many families, children are being spiritually, mentally, emotionally, and physically abused. The pain of this gets passed down for generations.

We also see people addicted to alcohol, drugs, pornography, sex, anger, rage, cigarettes, food, and the list goes on and on.

We must ask ourselves this question though:

am I talking about the world or the church too?

Many people want nothing to do with God's church. They've come from Christian families where the Bible has been hammered down on them, where they've been given expectations nobody could handle, where they've been abused (spiritually, emotionally, mentally, and physically), where their families are either fighting continually or divorced, and where strife, heartache, and dissension are common place. The motivation for their family to know Jesus was right, but the methods and heart not always "Jesus". We have all "sinned" and been "sinned upon."

Even a family that "never talks" just "stuffs down" their hurt inside and it can become a cancer that will either destroy themselves or eventually end up hurting others.

Nobody sets out to hurt their families or loved ones. But many times, people live from their wounds and end up hurting those around them.

More and more, people are realizing that they need healing and are looking for an answer. Don't get me wrong, there are many out there who don't realize they need healing, but there are many out there who are looking for a safe place to deal with the pain and hurt in their lives.

The title of the sermon today is: It's Not That Easy Becoming a Church That Heals. I wish to go through 10 qualities of a Healing Church. Then, we can ask ourselves if we are moving towards becoming a healing church in a world that is hurting and even willing to deal with the many who are hurting at very deep levels?

Let's look now at Ten Qualities of a Healing Church

1. Acceptance (Romans 15:7)

Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.

People need two things: love and acceptance. Being accepted is needed by all.

2. Worship (Colossians 3:16)

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

Admonish means to “counsel” or “warn”.

A heart that has an attitude of worship will be a heart close to Jesus.

3. Transparency (James 5:16)

Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.

It takes courage and wisdom to do this. A person must be in an environment and with a person whom they can trust. Gossip & slander have killed more than one person's relationship with God. It has been said that we should never “talk about” people but “talk to God” about people – especially those we are praying with & for.

4. Uplifting (1 Thess.5:11)

Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.

The world is a difficult place. There are times throughout our lives that we need to be strengthened and encouraged. One of the greatest ministries there is, is the ministry of encouragement.

5. Compassion (1 Peter 3:8)

Finally, all of you, be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble.

This takes Christ's heart and this is an area where Jesus comes through again and again as we submit to Him we find ourselves filled with compassion for others.

6. Forbearance (Ephesians 4:2)

Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.

Bearing with one another means overlooking people's faults. As we start to understand people's deep hurts and their broken hearts, our hearts begin to see their hearts and we see "who they are" and not "what they do".

7. Forgiveness (Ephesians 4:32)

And become useful and helpful and kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

Forgiveness isn't a verbal choice but a heart choice. We are to forgive "from the heart" and then supernaturally our hearts are filled with Christ's love for each other.

We are called to forgive as Christ forgave us, we recognize we can't, but as we forgive from the heart, He gives us grace to forgive & heals the most hurtful areas.

8. Encouragement (Hebrews 10:25)

Not forsaking or neglecting to assemble together as is the habit of some people, but admonishing one another, and all the more faithfully as you see the day approaching. (Hebrews 10:25)

There is nothing better than the Body of Christ when it functions as it is supposed to. To have someone come in love to us and speak "life" - His life to us is so special. One can discern quickly if it is of God or not and so we must make sure our hearts are in tune with His heart for more than one person has been hurt by people who "mean well" but have been spoken to out of "self". I personally, am ultra-sensitive but I'm learning to discern what was God or not and to even see what was the underlying issue.

9. Thoughtfulness (Hebrews 10:24)

And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, (Hebrews 10:24)

Sometimes people are stuck in their sin, in their hurt, in their self-defeating patterns. A child can see the "outer" but to understand the "inner" takes discernment, grace, and a submissive spirit to the Lord. Coming in Christ's love, without an agenda, but a desire to "stir up" and not "put down" those God has laid on our hearts is so important.

10. Love (1 Peter 4:8)

Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. (1 Peter 4:8)

We started these 10 qualities of a healing church with “acceptance”. People need acceptance and love. Here we don’t necessarily finish with love because “God is love”.

This is a test though of where we are at spiritually at times. Are our motives, actions, thoughts, and actions based on love. His pure, undefiled, sacrificial, and everlasting love a love that will never leave us nor forsake us. A love that bears “all things” and a love that “keeps us” and is “living through us”. This is where the rubber meets the road. And in all things, no matter how bad, “love covers over a multitude of sins” for it was His love that has/is/will remove all that is not of Him as we continue to be filled with HIM.

Again, the 10 qualities of a healing church.

- 1. Acceptance (Romans 15:7)**
- 2. Worship (Colossians 3:16)**
- 3. Transparency (James 5:16)**
- 4. Uplifting (1 Thess.5:11)**
- 5. Compassion (1 Peter 3:8)**
- 6. Forbearance (Ephesians 4:2)**
- 7. Forgiveness (Ephesians 4:32)**
- 8. Encouragement (Hebrews 10:25)**
- 9. Thoughtfulness (Hebrews 10:24)**
- 10. Love (1 Peter 4:8)**

These are written to us so we can be a healing church, a church that will understand God’s grace fully so that we can extend it to others. Then we will be more fully able to display Christ to those seeking God, being drawn to God, and for those who come with all kinds of sin problems, hurt, suffering, wrong-thinking, and who will even offend us at times.

But we can’t do any of these!! We can only do these when we walk in Jesus’ Spirit, trusting in Christ’s Power, Love, and Presence!!

It’s not easy – it costs!! And we need to count the cost!!

But it is worth it when we see people get saved and healed because they experienced Christ in this church!!

8. "THE SCARLET THREAD" (5)

The Bible is the book of redemption, of salvation, and of deliverance for mankind. **Redemption refers to 1) deliverance & 2) the price paid for that deliverance (ransom).**

Jesus paid the price on the cross with His shed blood for our sin.

We are redeemed from the penalty of sin, the power of Satan, and evil.

The Bible shows us the redemptive plan of God. This is called "THE SCARLET THREAD."

Let's go through the Bible and see the Scarlet Thread -----
GOD'S REDEMPTION FOR MANKIND!!

1) After the Fall, Adam & Eve covered themselves with fig leaves to hide their nakedness and shame (Gen.3:7). But this was not God's way. God's way was "blood".

- So God killed an innocent animal (Gen.3:21). This first blood sacrifice was offered by God Himself. God first shows us that "fig leaves" (man's way) isn't going to work – it has to be "blood" (God's way).

2) In Gen.3:15, God tells how the "Seed of the Woman" will crush Satan's head.

- It speaks of Jesus at Calvary, His suffering, His "bruised heel", and the bruising of Satan's head.

3) Cain and Abel were born to Adam and Eve. Abel's offering was accepted because it was a blood offering (God creates life) while Cain's offering was the fruit of his own toil (works) (Gen.4:3-4).

- Cain killed his brother Abel and Abel's blood "cries out to me (God) from the ground." It cries out "revenge".

- Christ's sacrifice was acceptable to God. It cries out "forgiveness."

- Man's murder is jealousy, envy, and guilt and totally displeasing to God (Gen.4:10).

4) The godly seed continued through Seth (Gen.4:25). But Seth's line intermarried with Cain's line.

- In Gen.6:1-4, we see wicked spirits marrying the daughters of men. Evil increased greatly and God called Noah to build an ark (Gen.6:5-8).

- Noah preached righteousness for 120 years but only 4 men and 4 women entered the Ark with God.

- The righteous seed would now pass through Noah's son, Shem.

- Note: The Ark is a picture of God's covering us in Christ.

5) Not much later, the wickedness of man was shown again at the Tower of Babel.

- God interrupted by “confusing their speech and scattering them over the face of the earth” (Gen.11:1-9).

6) Later God called Abraham.

In Genesis 22, we see the story of Abraham going to sacrifice Isaac.

- God saw Abraham’s obedience and this typified Christ’s obedience to die on the cross.

- In Gen.22:34, “So Abraham called the place THE LORD WILL PROVIDE. And to this day it is said, “On the mountain of the Lord it will be provided.” Calvary!!

- That day Abraham killed a ram and shed its blood. This typified the shedding of the Lamb’s blood on the Mount of Olives.

7) Throughout the Old Testament, altars were built.

- The Old Testament points ahead by faith to Christ’s crucifixion; Calvary, the altar of the Lamb of God.

8) Isaac gave birth to Jacob. Jacob gave birth to the 12 patriarchs.

- Joseph’s 11 brothers tried to kill him because of jealousy. But God rescued him for a higher calling (Gen.50:20). Joseph was given over to slavery by his brothers. Jesus was given over to death by his Jewish brothers.

9) Moses was born in Goshen, Egypt.

- God protected him from death also (see: Gen.2:1-10) by having him put in a papyrus basket and coating it with “tar & pitch” signifying atonement.

10) God rescued the Israelites from the Egyptians in Exodus Chapter 12 (The Passover).

- The lamb was to be without defect and prepared as a total burnt offering.

- Some of the blood was to be put on the top and sides of the door (Ex.12:7).

- When the Lord saw the blood He “passed over” the Israelites (12:12-13)

11) The story of Israel leaving Egypt and finally entering the Promised Land is the story of salvation.

- They were instructed how to live and what “blood offerings” to give the Lord.

- It typified Christ’s blood offering to come.

- In Lev.17:11 we see, “For the life of a creature is in the blood and I have given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar; it is the blood that makes atonement for one’s life.”

12) After the Israelites crossed the Jordan they began to conquer kingdoms.

- They sent spies to Jericho and Rahab the prostitute protected the spies from death.
- They promised her that if she hung a “scarlet cord” from her window, they would not kill her or the people in the house (Joshua 2:17-20).
- Here again, God saw the blood and passed over them. The “scarlet thread” of redemption again.

13) The “Scarlet Thread of Redemption” continued with prophecies and types of the coming Lamb.

- John the Baptist cried out “Look, the Lamb of God; who takes away the sin of the world.” (John 1:29).
- Jesus prophesied his death and resurrection on 5 different recorded occasions (Matt.12:39-40; 20:17-19; 26:30-32; Luke 18:31-33; John 2:19-22).
- The altar (cross of Calvary) was prepared. The Lamb (Jesus) was prepared. God’s redemptive thread was coming to a close.
- The blood was shed, God’s wrath was appeased, and the sacrifice was perfect.
- The Scarlet Thread of Redemption was now completed.
- The Veil was torn in two from TOP to BOTTOM (signifying God coming from heaven down to earth as well as access to God now opened). IT IS FINISHED.

NOTE on the LAMB:

Abel’s lamb was the first lamb – one lamb for one man.

At the Passover we have one lamb for one family.

On the Day of Atonement we have one lamb for one nation.

At Calvary we have one “LAMB” for one world.

That is why Jesus came to earth. God became man. God not only SPOKE to us but He BECAME “MAN”. Jesus as the SEED came into Mary through the Power of the Holy Spirit and God took on earthly flesh. So He could be the NEW SEED of a dying race. You see everyone in this Adamic race “dies”..... everyone!! Do you know anyone who hasn’t died or isn’t going to die?

The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his **seed**. Scripture does not say “and to **seeds**,” meaning many people, but “and to your **seed**,” meaning one person, who is Christ. (Galatians 3:16)

Why, then, was the law given at all? It was added because of transgressions until the **Seed** to whom the promise referred had come. The law was given through angels and entrusted to a mediator. (Galatians 3:19)

For you have been born again, not of perishable **seed**, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God. (1 Peter 1:23)

No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God's **seed** remains in them; they cannot go on sinning, because they have been born of God. (1 John 3:9)

Jesus willingly shed His blood 7 times for the salvation of mankind. And each time His precious blood flowed, a freedom was returned to us. Leviticus 16:19 says, "He shall sprinkle some of the blood on it with his finger seven times to cleanse it and to consecrate it from the uncleanness of the Israelites."

1. JESUS' SUPREME SWEAT TURNED TO BLOOD

Luke 22:44, "And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground." It was in the Garden of Eden that Adam lost his authority over earth when he sinned and ate fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. It was also in a garden, the Garden of Gethsemane, we find the first shedding of Jesus' blood for us. As Jesus was praying in the garden, knowing full well the agonizing horror that awaits Him at the crucifixion, Jesus' "sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground." This first shedding of blood is the beginning of mankind's redemption (saving) from sin.

2. JESUS' FAULTLESS BACK DRAINED BLOOD AS HE WAS FLOGGED

Matthew 27:26, "Then he released Barabbas to them. But he had Jesus flogged, and handed him over to be crucified." The Roman Governor, Pilate, ordered Jesus flogged with thirty-nine lashes, just one under the Roman's legal limit understood to be forty. Jesus paid for our healing from all disease. **Isaiah 53:5, "But he was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our sins."** He was beaten so we could be whole. He was whipped so we could be healed.

3. JESUS' HOLY BODY BLEED INSIDE WHILE BEING BEATEN & BRUISED

OUTSIDE Jesus bled under His skin for our iniquity (inherited weakness) when He was crushed. His horrendous wounds caused bleeding on the inside. Because of Jesus' bleeding inside His body we can plead for internal healing, for things unseen inside of us, our internal pains and sufferings. **Isaiah 53:5, "But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed."**

4. JESUS ENDURED A BARBED CROWN OF THORNS THAT PIERCED AND

BLOODIED HIS PRECIOUS HEAD **Matthew 27:29, "and then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on his head. They put a staff in his right hand. Then they knelt in front of him and mocked him. "Hail, king of the Jews!" they said.** Forcefully, upon Jesus' already bloodied head, a crown of thorns was pushed into Him, thus causing exceedingly more blood to flow. This blood frees our minds so the enemy has no control over our thoughts. Jesus' precious blood gives us the pathway to proper decision making.

5. SPIKES DRIVEN INTO JESUS' TENDER HANDS CAUSED MORE BLOOD

TO DRIP Jesus shed blood from His hands when those divine hands were nailed to the cross. The blood from Jesus' hands cleanses our hands—that our work may be purified in

His name. This blood also freed our hands to open and receive our inheritance. **Matthew 27:35, “When they had crucified him, they divided up his clothes by casting lots.”**

The Roman’s took what little Jesus had (His clothes) at the very same time Jesus’ hands, dripping with blood, were freeing us to receive all that God promises us.

6. SPIKES DRIVEN INTO JESUS’ FLAWLESS FEET ALSO SHED BLOOD

Jesus shed blood from His feet when they were nailed to the cross. Because Jesus stands above mankind—not below—His blood provides power to claim righteousness over satan on every spot our feet touch the ground. Jesus’ flawless blood, which flowed from His feet, returns back to us dominion on earth, that which we lost through Adam.

Luke 10:19 “I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you.”

7. JESUS, THE SON OF GOD, THE SON OF MAN, WAS SPEARED IN THE

SIDE Jesus shed blood from His side. When He was pierced while still hanging from The Cross both blood & water flowed from this new wound. This release is physical evidence His heart burst. Jesus paid the price to heal broken hearts. **John 19:33-35 “But when they came to Jesus and found that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. Instead, one of the soldiers pierced Jesus’ side with a spear, bringing a sudden flow of blood and water. The man who saw it has given testimony, and his testimony is true. He knows that he tells the truth, and he testifies so that you also may believe.”**

14) Now we have forgiveness through the redemptive price of Christ’s death; justification which gives us a restored position of favor with God; and final redemption of our bodies at Christ’s Second Coming.

- In glory we’ll see the saints who’ve washed their robes and made them white in the precious blood of the Lamb.

Will you be there? Have you put your faith in the shed blood of Jesus for forgiveness of sins? Have you trusted in Christ’s death on the cross for your death to your old life? Have you put your trust in Christ’s resurrection for new life in Christ Jesus? Have you received Christ into your heart to be your Savior and Lord?

9. CHRIST IS “ETERNAL LIFE” (4)

CHRIST IS ETERNAL LIFE To begin, we must know that Jesus Christ is “eternal life”. Eternal life is NOT a place or an existence BUT A LIFE – THE ETERNAL LIFE OF GOD – eternal “past and future”. The Life of God.

Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God. (Psalm 90:2)

Christ’s life is eternal. If I were to draw a line of Christ’s life it would have an arrow on each end meaning his life is eternal past and eternal future.

from everlasting to everlasting you are God. (Psalm 90:2)

CHRIST IS ETERNAL LIFE

The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. (1 John 1:2)

And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. (1 John 5:11)

I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life. (1 John 5:13)

We know also that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true. And we are in him who is true—even in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life. (1 John 5:20)

How could God foretell future events? It is because His life is not determined by time. He is “ABOVE TIME”. What is time? Is not time determined by the sun? Does the earth not travel around the sun in a year? And was not the sun created? Then, was not “time” created? Therefore, our Creator created time.

The Creator is above time. The Creator is always greater than creation. He is “eternal”. He is the “Alpha & Omega”. That is why He could look down upon our world and see past, present, and future. Because He is above time and supersedes time. He is ETERNAL. THE Eternal One. He sees the past, present, and future and yet walks, feels, and exists with us in the present “now”.

Now do Christ’s words start to make more sense?

but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life." (John 4:14) **"I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes**

him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life. (John 5:24)

You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me, (John 5:39)

Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. (John 6:68)

I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. (John 10:28)

The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. (1 John 1:2)

And this is what he promised us—even eternal life. (1 John 2:25)

And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. (1 John 5:11)

I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life. (1 John 5:13)

We know also that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true. And we are in him who is true—even in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life. (1 John 5:20)

(see: John 6:27,40; 12:25,50; 17:2--3; Acts 13:46,48; Romans 2:7; 5:21; 6:22--23; Galatians 6:8; 1 Timothy 1:16; 6:12; Titus 1:2; 3:7; Jude 1:21)

Let's ponder a question. If you are in a body that is eventually going to die, then do you have life?

You see, "life begets life." All life comes from life.. HIS LIFE!!

We are "mortal" but Jesus is "IMMORTAL". We are "dying" but Jesus is "LIFE". We are "finite" but Jesus is "INFINITE".

We are "perishing & corruptible" but He is "PERFECT".

SIN leads to DEATH but Jesus is ETERNAL LIFE. "EVERYONE" needs LIFE!!!

CHRIST IS ETERNAL LIFE So we've seen that man's problem is "spiritual/physical" death. We've also seen that SIN causes death for if we are separated from God (LIFE) then we are experiencing DEATH

THIS IS! 1 John 5:11-13, 20

And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. (1 John 5:11)

What is a testimony?

- A witness under oath gives a testimony in a court case.
- The Testimony was The Stone Tablets inscribed with the Law of Moses.
- The Ark of the Testimony was the ark containing these tablets.
- Testimony is also Evidence/Proof in support of a fact or assertion.
- A public declaration regarding a religious experience.

In the First Letter of John, we have the Holy Spirit giving John the words of his testimony regarding Jesus.

Let's look at 1 John 1:1-4

**That which was from the beginning,
which we have heard,
which we have seen with our eyes,
which we have looked at
and our hands have touched—
this we proclaim concerning the Word of life.**

**The life appeared;
we have seen it
and testify to it,
and we proclaim to you the eternal life,
which was with the Father
and has appeared to us.**

**We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard,
so that you also may have fellowship with us.**

And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ.

We write this to make our joy complete. (1 John 1:1-4)

He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. (1 John 5:12)

I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life. (1 John 5:13)

THIS IS THE TESTIMONY –

And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. (1 John 5:11)

THIS IS THE REQUIREMENT –

He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. (1 John 5:12)

THIS IS THE REASSURANCE -

I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life. (1 John 5:13)

TRUE, REAL, AND ETERNAL LIFE!

THE AVAILABILITY OF ETERNAL LIFE Vs. 11

And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. (1 John 5:11)

THE ATTAINMENT OF ETERNAL LIFE Vs. 12

He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. (1 John 5:12)

THE ASSURANCE OF ETERNAL LIFE Vs. 13

I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life. (1 John 5:13)

ETERNAL LIFE:

THE GIFT OF LIFE - Vs. 11

And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. (1 John 5:11)

THE POSSESSION OF LIFE - Vs. 12

He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. (1 John 5:12)

THE ASSURANCE OF LIFE - Vs. 13

I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life. (1 John 5:13)

CONCLUSION:

We know also that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true. And we are in him who is true-even in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life. (1 John 5:20)

10. ASSURANCE OF SALVATION (6)

We can be assured of our salvation for the Bible clearly teaches “assurance” of Salvation. Today we are going to talk about Assurance of Salvation which is not only important for us as individuals to know we are saved but we must be able to help others “know they are saved”.

1) In order to be free to walk with God and to share your faith, you must be confident that you are saved.

2) It is not right to just “think,” “hope,” or “pretend” that you are saved. You can know you are saved by faith in what God has said in His Holy Word the Bible.

3) You are either “saved” or “not saved”. You either know you are “in Christ” by faith or you will not have assurance of salvation.

You are either going to heaven or going to hell. God does not see us as Protestants or Catholics, church goers, church leaders, teachers, etc. First, He sees us as either “saved” or “not saved”.

4) Many people say, “I don’t feel saved”. Salvation is not a feeling.

It is faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross and his resurrection. You may not feel like you are a father or mother or daughter or son but you are still a father or mother or daughter or son.

5) Salvation is a gift. Eph 2:8-9 says, For it is by grace that you are saved through faith. And this is not of yourselves, but it is the gift of God; Not because of works, lest any man should boast.

Salvation is a gift that we can receive, possess, and be confident of. When someone gives you a gift at Christmas, you don’t wonder if you have it or not. You simply say, “Thank you.” It is the same with salvation. Say, “Thank you” Jesus.

6) Many people believe they have to work to be saved. How much work is enough? If a person would continually have to work to be saved they would never be able to find the rest that Jesus promises in Matthew 11:28- 29. That is why many people don’t know if they are saved or not. Once you begin to look at “your works” you become unsure of your salvation. Then people will even compare their works to Christ’s works and realize how far they fall short. But praise God, we can look at the “finished work” of Christ at the cross.

We do not work “to” the cross but “from” the cross. Salvation is salvation – finished. As Christian we will be judged for our “works” (good or bad) and receive “gain or loss” of “our rewards”. That is why a pastor should always make sure God’s children are moving in their spiritual gifts and serving Jesus – so they don’t lose their salvation? No, so they don’t suffer lose of their rewards.

7) Assurance of salvation is to have the confidence that we are saved. It's to know that if you were to die right now, you would go to heaven and spend eternity with Jesus. Again, we look to the cross.

8) Jesus Christ is eternal life.

1 John 1:2, The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us.

1 John 5:11-12, And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.

1 John 5:20, We know also that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true. And we are in him who is true by being in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.

When we were saved we entered into Christ's eternal life. There is only one life that is going to live for eternity. That is the life of Christ.

In order to experience His life, we have to be "in Christ" by faith. That we are already "in Christ" is what happened on the cross. Jesus took our life into Himself on the cross. "For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God" (Col. 3:3).

Galatians 2:20, I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

This became real in our lives when we received Christ into our hearts and put our faith in His finished work on the cross.

9) It is important not to put our faith in our feelings. Our feelings are part of our soul (mind, will, and emotions). Satan has access to our feelings when we aren't walking by faith in God's Spirit. Our feelings can be up and down. But we are to "walk by faith".

10) We base our assurance on three things.

1st) We base our assurance on the Word of God:

1 John 5:10 says, He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.

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

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

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

Luke 7:48 tell us, And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven.

Rom 10:13 states, For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

2nd) We base our assurance on the witness of the Holy Spirit

The Spirit Himself [thus] testifies together with our own spirit, [assuring us] that we are children of God. (Romans 8:16)

And because you [really] are [His] sons, God has sent the [Holy] Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, Abba (Father)! Father! (Galatians 4:6)

3rd) We base our assurance on the changed life

1 John 3:14 says, We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.

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

11) From now on trust the Word of God for your salvation. The Word of God never changes. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever – the essence of Jesus never changes – He will function in different ways but the essence of Who He is never changes.

Stay spiritually alert, come out of the world, put away all sin (1 John 1:9);

Walk in the Spirit:

So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. (Galatians 5:16)

If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!” (Luke 11:13)

Don’t become “religious” but soft hearted towards Jesus:

The Pharisees were “religious” – even making up ways to be righteous before God. They were legalistic and thought they were “gatekeepers” (protecting God’s law and synagogues).

The Sadducees were today’s liberals. Not believing in miracles and the resurrection of the dead.

And love fellowshiping with the saints.

YOUR SPIRIT : HAS BEEN SAVED!!

made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions —it is by grace you have been saved. (Ephesians 2:5)

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith — and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God — (Eph . 2:8)

Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death. (Romans 8:1-2)

YOUR SOUL: IS BEING SAVED!!

For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. (1 Corinthians 1:18)

For we are to God the aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing. (2 Cor. 2:15)

continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose. (Philippians 2:12b--13)

YOUR BODY: WILL BE SAVED

All men will hate you because of me, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved. (Mark 13:13)

But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body. (Philippians 3:20--21)

FULL SALVATION: We are saved to the uttermost!!

JUSTIFICATION (Titus 2:11-14)

For the grace of God that brings salvation **has appeared** to all men. (Titus 2:11-14)

Christ came in the PAST and we have received His gift of life in our hearts. That is "JUSTIFICATION". Our spirits are saved and "justified" or made right in God's sight.

being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, (Rom.3:24)

Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, (Rom.5:1)

SANCTIFICATION (Titus 2:11-14)

It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-- controlled, upright and godly lives **in this present age**, (Titus 2:11-14)

Since we have Christ we are encouraged to cleanse our lives, be holy, and walk with God "NOW" IN THIS PRESENT AGE. This is sanctification.

We "have been sanctified" and yet God calls us to continue to sanctify ourselves through His Word and Spirit.

To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all who in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours: (1 Cor.1:2)

Therefore, “Come out from them and be separate, says the Lord. Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you.” (2 Cor. 6:17)

GLORIFICATION (Titus 2:11-14)

while we wait for the blessed hope— the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good. (Titus 2:11-14)

We are awaiting Christ’s FUTURE return. Christ is “THE BLESSED HOPE”. No matter what we go through HE is our future hope.

And, our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body. (Phil.3:20-22)

This is “GLORIFICATION” as we will get a glorious body just like His.

Paul said, I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and so, somehow, to again to the resurrection from the dead. Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind (OUR PAST) and straining toward what is ahead (OUR PRESENT), I press on (PRESENT CONTINUOUS) toward the goal (OUR FUTURE) to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 3:10--14)

Past: In our walk God will show us areas we need to take to Christ that He can heal us with and we can receive forgiveness for. This is the process of “Forgetting what is behind” in our past.

Present: we are learning to walk with Christ and we are working out our salvation and allowing God to change us. Here we are “straining toward what is ahead” -- “press on”. The present process of still being in this world as aliens, pilgrims, and strangers.

Future: we will receive the prize God has promised us: our glorified bodies in the uninterrupted presence of God. Here we see “toward the goal” to build God’s Kingdom

Aren't you glad our God doesn't put us on some kind of a work "treadmill" putting a "carrot in front of our nose" so we can "hope" we can get to heaven, or "get it right in this life", or "find some higher form of existence". We HAVE entered into the life of God. We HAVE been saved. We ARE going to heaven. We HAVE His Spirit.

We ARE children of God. If you've bowed your knee to the "Lamb that was slain" and received His gift – the "free gift of God" – the gift that cost the Lamb of God more than we can even imagine.

(1 Cor.2:9): No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind conceived, what God has prepared for those who love him—