

Stepping Stones to Salvation Success

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Stepping Stones to Salvation Success

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At this point I need to express a very special thanks to all of the people who have contributed to my series of books, both directly and indirectly: First and foremost, His most wondrous of gifts--my wife Janet and the incredible blessings from the Lord as I continue to write this series of books. Next, all of the help and spiritual growth I received from attending and ministering in the Lord's non-instrumental churches: McPherson Church of Christ, Council Bluffs; Redline Church of Christ, Harlan, Iowa and Harlan Church of Christ. Also the instrumental churches: First Christian Church, Council Bluffs, Iowa; my home congregation--East Side Christian Church, Council Bluffs. And finally: my family, Kathleen Kachulas, and many other wonderful friends and brethren, and my nephew David West who offered his professional web design services. I truly appreciate all of their help and encouragement.

Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord and whose trust is the Lord. For he will be like a tree planted by the water, that extends its roots by a stream and will not fear when the heat comes; but its leaves will be green, and it will not be anxious in a year of drought no cease to yield fruit.

Jeremiah 17:7-8

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Statement of Purpose

In mid-nineteen nineties I set out to research what took place when I first decided to obey the Gospel. The interest reaches back to 1978. This is when I first heard the gospel message from a preacher who served in a Council Bluffs, Iowa, Church of Christ – noninstrumental. My wife Janet had quietly and very effectively led me to attend this church and respond to the Lord’s call. Throughout our dating and engagement she consistently modeled a Christian woman, greatly influencing my interest in the Lord. She never stopped.

The minister taught me the basics of salvation and I chose to answer the Lord’s call. From this moment I became increasingly interested in learning what took place and began a systematic study of salvation. As I accumulated more knowledge and research information the thought occurred to me to share what I have learned. Thus my book began to take shape from a rough outline to a manuscript.

Through many years of writing I included other books and ending up with a series of books in various stages of completion. They speak about salvation, sin, the Lord’s work of salvation, the covenant, and an overview book.

The books include the integration of many different types of theology: theology – information about God, Christology – the work of Jesus, pneumatology – what the Holy Spirit is doing, ecclesiatology – about the Lord’s church, anthropology – mankind’s response and accountability to God, soteriology – the process of salvation, and eschatology – concerning the end of time and eternal life in the body of Christ.

This book is the overview. I have organized the chapters to briefly look at many differing aspects of salvation. It has nine chapters which include basic steps of information leading to a greater insight about God, what takes place when responding to His free offer of salvation in Christ, and spiritual confidence.

The parts of each chapter are like stepping stones, one of many crossing a stream of spiritual water. As the reader progresses from one step to another he will begin to grow in a better understanding concerning his present fellowship with Jesus and knowledge of what lies ahead. Once he reaches the other side he is able to look back across the stream and see the wonders of God’s grace. He is better equipped to recognize his participation and partnership in the Lord’s eternal plan.

I sincerely hope this information becomes as useful to the reader as it is for me the writer. May God richly bless your efforts to understand the blessings of salvation which the Lord so lovingly gave to all humanity. I pray God will give you the confidence and faith to witness the wondrous grace of God to the lost and fellow servant’s in the Lord.

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Section Three: Expectations

A New Covenant

God gave the first covenant to Moses. As time passed He began to reveal the spiritual details of a coming covenant designed to restore His adulterous and divided Israel. The Spirit inspired *Jeremiah* to write: "'Behold, the days are coming,' declares the Lord, 'When I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah'" (31:31). Within this new covenant God "will put My law within them, and on their heart" (31:33b), He "will be their God" (31:33b), He will consider them to "be My people" (31:33b), "and they will all be holy before His presence because He "will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more" (31:34b).

Those who are covenanted with God in the New Covenant "shall all know Me" (31:34a). He will no longer be the God of a nation of people who choose to reject His presence and will. All will be united in their worship. In *Romans* Paul quoted Isaiah speaking about the mystery, its revelation to the world, and how it would be revealed in the New Covenant, "The deliverer will come from Zion, He will remove ungodliness from Jacob. And this is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins" (11:26b-27).

The covenant, put into effect by the death of Jesus Christ is unique in its ability to restore direct fellowship between God and His people. Those included in His covenant are one people who without exception are faithful only to Him. In the New Covenant priests are no longer necessary to mediate between the people and God because of the restored fellowship among the covenanted. His people are sinless and are themselves priests. Peter wrote, "you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood" (*1 Peter* 2:9a). All are serving under Jesus Christ who is the high priest of His body of believers, "For it is fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens" (*Hebrews* 7:26).

The moment Jesus died on the cross the first covenant became obsolete, replaced by the New Covenant. The writer of *Hebrews* revealed, "Now the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the covenant, even Jesus our Lord" (13:20). He spoke about how Jesus finalized the New Covenant with the bloody sacrifice of His innocent life. Earlier he said, "For where a covenant is, there must of necessity be the death of the one who made it. For a covenant is valid only when men are dead, for it is never in force while the one who made it lives" (9:16-17).

Yet even though Jesus is no longer physically alive He is very much alive spiritually. He now lives in heaven as king and high priest over the saints covenanted with Him in the New Covenant which He authored. And with the coming of the new, the old covenant of Moses "He has made obsolete ... ready to disappear" (*Hebrews* 8:13).

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A New Covenant

The writer of *Hebrews* also spoke of Jesus as the “guarantee of a better covenant” (7:22b), “the mediator of a new covenant” (12:24a), and “the mediator of a better covenant” (9:15a). When *Luke* wrote about the last supper he quoted Jesus prophesying, “this cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood” (22:20b). The significance of the Lord’s Supper reveals the importance of His covenant. In order to begin the covenant, its author, the Lord had to die. The eternal future of all mankind rested on the back of one man, Jesus Christ.

The New Covenant is unique in the world. There is no other religion through which personal fellowship from God or with any other god is assured. Those who choose to covenant with God the Father through Jesus Christ are one with Him. For by the “blood of the covenant” all of God’s children are “sanctified,” made holy and live in His presence, and separated from slavery to sin and the world with its death (*Hebrews* 10:29b).

Questions

The new covenant will be with Israel.
Jeremiah 31:31, 33, 34b

- 1) Is the covenant made with the physical nation of Israel or Christians?
- 2) Is the new covenant in effect now or is it something coming later?

Those covenanted with God are His people.

- 1) Do you believe all new covenant Christians are citizens of Israel?

His people will be holy.

- 1) If you are a Christian are you holy?
- 2) Do you feel holy?
- 3) Do you live life holy?

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His people will be sinless.

- 1) Is sinlessness the same as holiness?
- 2) What does sinless mean to you?
- 3) Does being sinless affect your life?

A major blessing of the covenant is the forgiveness of sins.
Romans 11:26-27b; Isaiah 27:9a

- 1) How does the new covenant offer forgiveness of sins?
- 2) Does forgiveness make a big difference in your life?
- 3) How do you feel about agreeing to a spiritual contact with God?

The covenant restores direct fellowship with God.

- 1) How does a new covenant believer have fellowship with God?
- 2) What is fellowship?
- 3) Is fellowship the same thing as a relationship? Find Scriptural references which help define fellowship and relationship.
- 4) How do you fellowship with God?
- 5) How do you fellowship with the body of Christ?

Priests are no longer needed to intercede for God's people.
1 Peter 2:9a

- 1) Why are formal appointed priests no longer needed in the new covenant?

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A New Covenant

2) Are there still priests serving Jesus?

The high priest is Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 7:26

1) The new covenant high priest is Jesus what does this mean to you

2) Does this understanding change how you serve Jesus in any way?

Jesus inaugurated the new covenant with His death.

Hebrews 13:20, 9:16-17

1) Do you believe Jesus created and put the new covenant into effect?

2) Why is the new covenant important to you today?

3) Is the covenant important in everyday life?

4) Is the covenant up close and personal to you?

The old covenant given to Moses is obsolete.

Hebrews 8:13

1) How does the end of the old covenant affect the physical nation of Israel?

2) What purpose do the laws and instructions written by Moses have in my life today?

Jesus is both the guarantee and mediator of the new covenant.

Hebrews 7:22b, 12:24a, 9:15a

1) Do the words guarantee and mediator mean anything to you?

2) Do you feel more assured in your covenant with God the Father because it is through Jesus Christ?

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A New Covenant

- 3) Does God give you the freedom to default on His covenant with you?
- 4) What are you doing to maintain the integrity of your pledge to covenant with Jesus?

The Lord's Supper is a weekly reminder of the necessity of the Lord's death, burial, resurrection and blood which inaugurated His covenant.

Luke 22:20b, 10:29b; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

- 1) Does the supper remind you of your covenant with Jesus?
- 2) What does the covenant mean to you?
- 3) How does your covenant with Jesus affect your interrelationships among believers who are also covenanted with Jesus?
- 4) Do you think fellowship with one another makes a difference in how you covenant with Jesus?
- 5) What is the Lord's body?
- 6) Do you think one another love is connected to how you covenant with God?
- 7) Do you think helping to maintain unity in the Lord's body is important to your covenant with Jesus?

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Section Three: Expectations

The Law of Faith

Believing in God's existence, worshipping Him with all of the heart, following all of the traditions correctly, and piety towards the Lord within the human experience will never ensure anyone's place in heaven. The only thing human effort is able to secure concerning eternal life is false expectations leading to hope in false assumptions. Belief in Jesus Christ and God the Father must be spiritually realized through faith motivated obedience developed from hearing the word of God which is patterned after Abraham's example. Faith is so important because it is the physical expression of a heart filled with "assurance of things hope for, the conviction of things not seen" (*Hebrews 11:1b*). The gospel is able to lead those who truly trust God at His word. The gospel is not dependent upon physical evidence of His work to assure anyone of the integrity of His work.

Only those who have a responsive faith in God through Jesus are considered as righteous by God. Paul stated in his letter to the *Galatians*, only "those who are of faith are blessed with Abraham, the believer" (3:9b). Righteousness is only given to those willing to apply belief and faith motivated obedience to the will of God through Jesus Christ.

Belief and faith motivated obedience is proven to God through one's confession of Jesus as Lord. Confession is realized when it leads the servant to obey the will of his confessed Lord and Master Jesus. The confirmation of belief, faith, confession, and repentance must involve baptism in order to receive the unseen blessings and promises of God through Jesus necessary for salvation. When obedience begins to realize itself through the servant's response to the Lord's will then repentance is proven in his life. Throughout the initial process of redemption the servant of sin agrees to serve Jesus as Lord and Master. This is his confession. Once he becomes a servant of the Lord he will remain so for as long as he maintains his faith and confession in Jesus – his Master.

The servant's entire response to the Lord's gospel call is dependent upon believing what He has said and proving his belief through faith in the integrity of God's word to fulfill His promises. Speaking of a "law of faith" Paul wrote, "For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from works of the Law" (*Romans 3:27b-28*).

Extra Biblical legal or religious requirements and tradition have the same effect upon one's salvation in faith; they are impotent, and hinder faith in God's word, because they are all based upon sight, human effort and wisdom. Anyone can develop a sense of security from established religious expectations of how to serve God, many of the Jewish people did, but it's a false security. Even though faith may be exemplified and noteworthy through good works and piety in the physical realm, it is only realized when expectations and fulfillment are focused upon the unseen spiritual realm. Faith is

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The Law of Faith

fully dependent upon the grace of God and the integrity of His word as the servant practices it within the physical experience.

Without divinely directed faith it is not possible to serve God even if the servant is working for His will with all of his might. The writer of *Hebrews* stated this fact very clearly: “and without faith it is impossible to please Him” (11:6a). Faith is established by works motivated by the servant’s desire to serve God. Faith led by the grace of God is exemplified by its response and will always find its focus in the glorification of God. Faith is only developed through the word of God: “So faith comes from hearing and hearing by the word of Christ” (*Romans* 10:17).

When Paul mentioned the reality of a “law of faith” (*Romans* 3:27b) he revealed the inadequacy of any other law for salvation. The Law of Moses, instinctual moral law, manmade laws, religions, and traditions are completely unable to justify any person. Law in and of itself cannot affect ones legal standing before God, unless the servant is able to obey the law perfectly, never committing a transgression against Him in the first place. No one except Jesus has or ever will choose to accomplish such a demanding spiritual task. Only faith in God’s ability to do what He has promised through Jesus Christ is considered by God as righteousness.

Abraham exemplified this spiritual fact, “Even so Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness. Therefore, be sure that it is those who are of the faith that are sons of Abraham” (*Galatians* 3:6-7). The law of faith is a requirement because without faith righteousness is impossible and without righteousness salvation cannot take place. When a person responds to God’s will he must do so with physical actions motivated by faith, not legal obligation, in the unseen will and promises of God.

Questions

Faith in the faith which Jesus introduced is “assurance of things hoped for”.

- 1) What does assurance mean to you?
- 2) Why is assurance important?
- 3) How do you develop and mature assurance?

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Faith is “conviction of things not seen”
Hebrews 11:1b

- 1) What is conviction?
- 2) How do you consider spiritual realities which you cannot sense?

The integrity of the gospel is not dependent upon any type of physical evidence.

- 1) How does physical evidence connect with faith?
- 2) Why do you think God places so much importance on faith?
- 3) How convicted are you concerning the complete integrity of God’s word?

Paul used Abraham’s faith to illustrate new covenant faith.
Galatians 3:6-9

- 1) How does faith work in an imperfect life?
- 2) How are you able to express faith?
- 3) What happens to your faith when things go wrong?
- 4) What happens to your faith when you make bad decisions?
- 5) What happens when decisions based upon faith in God’s will do not work out as planned?

Paul considered Abraham’s response to God’s as works of belief and faith.
James 2:14-26

- 1) Have you ever considered the link between belief and faith?

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The Law of Faith

- 2) Paul used – having “believed” with the same meaning as expressed faith, what does this mean to you?
- 3) Do you think belief is fulfilled by works in the same way as faith?
- 4) How do you exercise the unity of belief and faith in your life?

The works of faith and belief prove the servant’s confession.

Romans 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 15:10; Galatians 2:18; Philippians 2:12-16; James 1:22-25; 1 Peter 3:8-18

- 1) To confess Jesus is to acknowledge Him as Lord and Master, how does Abraham like faith prove your confession?
- 2) Belief and faith similar to Abraham’s is almost always expressed through everyday and often mundane lifestyle choices. Are you comfortable with how you make lifestyle choices?
- 3) Is proving your faith the same as working for your salvation?
- 4) How are you proving your belief and faith?

The works of faith and belief prove the servant’s repentance.

- 1) Repentance is essentially the process of relearning what the world has taught.
- 2) Are you willing to relearn life?
- 3) Are you willing to separate your new life in Christ from your old life in the world?

There is a distinct difference between belief and faith and the works of law.

Romans 3:27b-28

- 1) What motivates how you to respond to a life circumstance?

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The Law of Faith

- 2) As a Christian do you feel compelled to react a certain way because of a tradition, ritual, or opinion of Scripture?
- 3) Is obeying the gospel a work of law?
- 4) Which is a work of law: belief, faith, confession, repentance, baptism, or walk of life in Christ?
- 5) How does the Law of Moses affect you today?
- 6) Do you think there is any difference between obeying law and obeying obedience and righteousness?

False security is often built upon a foundation of religious ritual, traditions, and inferred or implied commands.

- 1) Where does your faith feel more secure: in how you serve or why you serve God?
- 2) Do you feel more spiritually secure if your faith is tried?
- 3) Do you need to confirm your faith in order to feel faith?
- 4) How important are traditions, rituals, and human interpretations of Scripture to your faith?
- 5) Are you comfortable with your faith?
- 6) Do you ever doubt your faith?

It is impossible to accomplish God's will without faith.
Hebrews 11:6a, Romans 3:27b

- 1) How do you balance the feelings of inadequate faith and comfortable growing faith?

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The Law of Faith

- 2) How does patience and maturing in faith connect?
- 3) What part does faith play in your everyday decisions and choices?
- 4) How does Scripture and faith connect?

The true "sons of Abraham" are those who practice faith as he did.
Galatians 3:6-7

- 1) What is so special about imitating Abraham's faith?
- 2) What do you think motivated Abraham's belief and faith?
- 3) What motivates your belief and faith in Jesus?
- 4) Is it hard for you to think faith when making simple lifestyle choices?
- 5) How does faith connect with panic decisions?
- 6) Is regular bible study important to build faith?
- 7) Can faith be developed through interrelationships with other Christians?
- 8) Where does faith come from?
- 9) How does fellowship with God develop faith?
- 10) How do you express spiritual fellowship with Jesus in a physical environment?

Without practicing Abraham like faith it is impossible to receive righteousness.

- 1) What does righteousness mean to you?
- 2) What is the spiritual state of righteousness?

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The Law of Faith

- 3) Why do you think God simply wants a natural unhindered response to His will, much like a child to his parents?
- 4) Abraham obeyed God even though he often did not understand the bigger picture, can you?
- 5) How do you think faith and the state of righteousness are connected?
- 6) How do you think faith and the works of God's standard of righteousness are connected?

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The Law of the Spirit of God

God's laws demonstrate a notable fact everyone needs to understand regardless of whether they desire to serve Him. God does not change; His will concerning the New Covenant is sure and cannot be changed. The writer of *Hebrews* revealed: "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today, yes and forever. Do not be carried away by varied and strange teachings" (13:8-9a). In order to experience freedom from slavery to sin the servant must appeal to God's mercy through Jesus Christ for redemption. This is the only way to receive freedom from the oppression of sin and Satan. It is a spiritual law. It cannot be changed by any human effort.

Sin debt to God is spiritual; it cannot be paid off through physical effort. Paul revealed in *Romans* what a slave of sin really thinks in his mind, "the mind set on the flesh is hostile to God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so" (8:7b). The law of God has everything to do with His righteousness and the holiness which He gives to those who have demonstrated their faith in His word through Jesus Christ. In order to maintain righteousness the believer must choose to live a holy life. The law points out the black and white nature of fellowship with God and His family of saints in Christ. A slave of sin cannot fellowship with Him because of his unholiness, only a forgiven and holy servant is honored with the blessing of fellowship.

There is an unchangeable requirement to receive God's grace of salvation. An absolute requirement of righteousness is God's gift of the Holy Spirit to a newly created believer in order to receive life, "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death" (*Romans* 8:2). The law may be understood as: only the Spirit gives present life which leads directly to eternal life, but sin results in present death and leads to eternal death.

In his gospel letter *John* quoted Jesus prophesying: "He who believes in Me, as the scripture said, from his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water" (7:38). John then explained the meaning of the prophecy, "but this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive" (7:39a).

The indwelling presence of the Spirit is the fulfillment of the promise of the Lord's prophecy. Paul wrote in his letter to the *Galatians*: "in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith" resulting in assured righteousness (3:14). The servant's righteousness is dependent upon having received the indwelling presence of the Spirit. The Spirit's presence is dependent upon the realization of belief and faith in God's word and having received righteousness through Jesus.

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The Law of the Spirit of God

Fulfilling the “law of the Spirit of life” is an absolute requirement for any servant of sin appealing to God for his freedom. He must be willing to believe in Jesus and then express his belief and faith through obedience just as Abraham did. His confession is fulfilled by his willingness to follow the New Covenant stipulations written by Jesus Christ, agreed upon at the time of his purchase. In order to seal his righteousness, the gift of the Holy Spirit must be given to him. This is the only way that he will receive life as opposed to remaining in the spiritual reality “of sin and death” (*Romans 8:2b*).

Questions

God never changes; His word and law will never change.
Hebrews 13:8-9a

- 1) Is God dependable?
- 2) Is God predictable?
- 3) What happens in your heart if bad things are happening and you cannot feel your experience with God?
- 4) Do you need to experience God in order to know He is working in your life?
- 5) How does the need to experience God in the physical realm reconcile with faith?
- 6) Does God work in lives the same today as He did thousands of years ago?

The very exclusive way to enter into covenant with Jesus Christ will never change.
Acts 4:11-12

- 1) Do you think Jesus really means what He said even though it will cost the eternal life of countless numbers of people?
- 2) Do you think God’s compassion and love will allow for alternate ways to receive salvation?

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The Law of the Spirit of God

- 3) Do you believe God's compassion will allow for such things as deathbed conversion without baptism? What about other alternate ways to receive salvation?
- 4) Do you believe God will allow someone to skip parts of the gospel response and receive salvation? (belief, faith, repentance, confession, baptism, life in faith)
- 5) Do you believe people who never hear the gospel will be saved?
- 6) Do you believe very young unbaptized children are saved?
- 7) How do you feel about people who are mentally incapable of making decisions about the gospel?

The law "of the Spirit of life" reveals the irreversible nature of two distinctly different spiritual realities, life and death.

Romans 8:2

- 1) What is spiritual life?
- 2) What is spiritual death?
- 3) What part in life and death does the Spirit have?
- 4) Why is learning about the work of the Spirit in redemption important?

The law irreversibly separates two opposing groups of people, the holy and the unholy.

- 1) Who is unholy?
- 2) Who is holy?
- 3) Are there partially holy people?
- 4) Why do you think God draws such a distinctive line between the holy and unholy people?

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- 5) Which group are you in?
- 6) Why do you feel this way?
- 7) Do you know for certain which group you are in?
- 8) Are you assuming God will change His gospel out of His love for your eternal fate?

Only the "Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" is able to free prisoners of sin.
John 7:38-39a; Galatians 3:14

- 1) Do you feel free?
- 2) How does the Spirit free prisoners from the dungeon of sin?

A servant cannot be righteous or faithful to Jesus if he has not received the indwelling presence of the Spirit.
Romans 8:9-10; John 14:21, 23-24

- 1) What is the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit?
- 2) Is the internal presence of the Spirit the same as the gifts which He gave to first century Christians?
- 3) Does faith allow you to feel the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit?
- 4) Do you have to have the indwelling presence of the Spirit in order to live?
- 5) How do you know when you have received the indwelling presence of the Spirit?
- 6) Does obedience to the gospel play a part in receiving the Spirit?
- 7) What does receiving the Spirit have to do with God's love?
- 8) What connection does God's love have with the gospel?

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The Commandment

Unlike the first covenant with its hundreds of laws and stipulations, there is one basic commandment in the New Covenant authored by Jesus Christ and put into effect by His death, “And this is His commandment, that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another just as He commanded us” (1 John 3:23). Within its two parts, Jesus tried to communicate the vital importance of belief and faith in His expressed will. Both responses are heart motivated expressions of a servant’s confession—Jesus alone is his Lord God and Master. Only those who are willing to believe in His deity, human life, human death, human burial, His resurrection, and ascension back into heaven will be allowed to covenant with Him.

Along with this His believers must be willing to give Him glory by loving His body of believers--fellow-servants in Christ, without any conditions attached. This assures the oneness of fellowship with God the Father and His family of saints in Jesus. The covenant describes the love of God, how He loves mankind, and how His children are to love Him and His body of believers in return, for the body is Jesus, “And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fill all in all” (Ephesians 1:23). In order to love Jesus the servant must love His body of believers. Brotherly love is Jesus love.

This commandment reveals a basic understanding of who He is, what He is, and what He has accomplished. In order to covenant with God the servant must be willing to maintain his initial commitment to: belief, faith, repentance, confession, baptism, and continued obedience from the moment of redemption to death in Christ. This requirement fulfills *Jeremiah's* prophetic vision of God’s people in the New Covenant, “they shall all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them” (31:34b).

The servant’s continuance of obedience to God the Father through Jesus Christ is only possible if he is willing to commit to his belief, faith, and confession in Jesus until death.

When a slave of sin initially obeys this commandment he will become a participant in the laws of the Spirit and of faith, as a result of his forgiveness he is considered righteous, and is given the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit by the grace of God. The commandment is not only required for the servant’s initial redemption but as counsel throughout the rest of his spiritual life in Christ. The commandment counsels how to develop assurance of initial completion of redemption and continued fellowship according to His will.

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In the next verse *John* wrote: “And the one who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And we know by this that He abides in us, by the Spirit which He has given us” (3:24). The Lord’s will requires knowledge based faith, dependent entirely upon the servant’s active belief in the integrity of His word. Faith results from belief; together they will lead the servant of sin to become a freed believer in Christ. Once purchased the servant becomes a bond-servant to Jesus by his covenant with God the Father through Jesus Christ.

The believer’s knowledge of God in turn leads to His expectations of how a believer is expected to express his love towards Him. The practice of Godly love can only take place by the power and leadership of the Holy Spirit. The servant cannot love according to God’s expectations if he does not have the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. Anyone can mimic this type of spiritual love but only the believer has the Spirit which confirms his love as genuine. The love of a true believer is realized by faith in the grace of God.

In his gospel *John* quoted Jesus stating: “if anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love Him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him” (14:23b). This one statement by Jesus described how the commandment to love functions in the life of His servants. Love is fulfilled through obedient worship and glorification of God the Father through Jesus Christ, which in turn is expressed through love towards the body of Christ. Loving each other in the Lord’s body is the same as loving, worshipping, and glorifying Jesus.

The opposite is true as well and results in unintended personal consequences; the servant who dislikes a fellow servant is demonstrating immature love towards Jesus, for all servants are one with Jesus. The Lord’s servant needs to carefully consider how he or she practices fellowship with fellow servants. A fellow servant is as capable of choosing to persecute another servant in Christ just as severely as a servant of sin may choose. It must be remembered, Jesus takes the care of His servants very seriously.

While on his way to Damascus Paul had a short interview with Jesus about how he chose to treat His body of believers. He told Paul about a very important aspect of fellowship; if someone chooses to mistreat one of His servants he has chosen to mistreat Jesus Christ – God: “‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?’ And he said, ‘Who art thou Lord?’ And He said, ‘I am Jesus whom you are persecuting’” (*Acts 9:4b-5*). This is a universal facet of fellowship – any servant who chooses to harm a servant of the Lord is unintentionally trying to harm the Lord.

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The Commandment

This one commandment to believe “in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another” expresses the seriousness of the Lord’s expectations for His servant’s complete respect for His authority and will which His name represents. *Matthew* quoted Jesus stating: “all authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth” (28:18b). Jesus has absolute authority over life and death. Just as He warned His disciples, He is warning all to respectfully fear the authority of His name, “But I will warn you whom to fear; fear the one who after He has killed has authority to cast into hell; yes, I tell you, fear Him” (*Luke* 12:5). Love is an expression of fear towards God. Love is fulfilled by observing the commandment’s of the Lord. Obedience which results from belief and faith is the servant’s way to express love towards his Lord and Master Jesus Christ and His body of believers.

Questions

In the new Covenant there is one basic, two-part commandment.

1 John 3:23; John 6:28-29

- 1) How do I reconcile a commandment with new covenant grace and faith?
- 2) How do you tend to react to this commandment: serving God in order to prevent apostasy or serving God according to the guidelines of the commandment in order to accomplish His will as best as possible?

The commandment focuses the Lord’s servant upon Him, not works, in order to perfectly obey the commandment.

Ephesians 1:23

- 1) Does the command to believe in Jesus focus upon your response to believe or on serving Jesus?
- 2) Is there a difference in motivation if the focus is upon what you are doing to respond to the gospel verses what Jesus is asking of you?
- 3) If the commandment is the expressed will of Jesus concerning how to receive salvation is the response a work of law or faith?

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- 4) Which part of the gospel response for salvation is a work or by faith: belief, faith, confession, repentance, baptism, life in Christ?
- 5) What does believing in Jesus mean to you?
- 6) Is believing “in the name of His Son Jesus Christ” a work of law since it is a commandment?
- 7) Since believing requires a physical response for proof is belief a work of law?
- 8) How do you express belief in Jesus?
- 9) Is belief connected to faith in any way?

In order to obey His command the Lord’s servant must remain committed to his confession which in turn fulfills prophetic vision.

Romans 10:8-10

- 1) What is a confession?
- 2) Why do you think Paul linked a servant’s confession— Jesus is Lord and Master, to belief?
- 3) Why do you think Paul linked both confession and belief with faith?
- 4) Why do you think Paul linked belief, confession, and faith with the gospel message?
- 5) Do you believe responding to the gospel message is connected to the Lord’s commandment to believe in His name?
- 6) Does this mean responding to the gospel call of God is a law or responding with faith to Master Jesus Christ?
- 7) What is the difference in motivation between faith and law?

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In order to enter into the new covenant a believer must express belief and faith.
Hebrews 9:11-17; 8:10-13; Jeremiah 31:31-34; Luke 22:20; Romans 11:26-27; 2 Corinthians 3:5-6

- 1) What is a covenant? Try to draft the covenant as you see it in your life.
- 2) Do you know of any other covenant people make which includes God? (Hint: man and wife)
- 3) What does believing in Jesus have to do with entering into a covenant with Him?
- 4) Do you feel like a contracted bond-servant of the Lord Jesus your Master?
- 5) Does the fact of being a covenanted bond-servant of the Lord Jesus change how you practice your service to Him?
- 6) As a Christian you have entered into a covenant contract to serve Jesus. Is this an act of faith or law?

In order to enter into covenant with Jesus a believer must receive the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit.
1 John 5:7-11; 2 Corinthians 1:21-22, 6:16b-18; Ephesians 1:13-14, 4:30

- 1) What is your spiritual state of being if you do not have the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit?
- 2) How do you know for certain you have the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit?

The Spirit is the believer's assurance of his covenant with God.
1 John 3:24; 2 Corinthians 1:21-22

- 1) How do you describe assurance?
- 2) How does a believer feel assured?

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The Commandment

- 3) How is assurance with faith experienced in the invisible and unsensed work of God?
- 4) Do you feel doubt if no physical evidence of salvation is available?
- 5) Do you ever feel the desire to do something which tries your faith in order to assure yourself of your faith?
- 6) What does comfortable faith feel like?
- 7) How does contented faith grow?

The Spirit is given to only those who respond with love towards God by practicing His commandment to believe in Jesus.

John 14:21, 23-24, 5:10

- 1) How is God's love different from human expectations of love?
- 2) If God expects a physical expression of love to fulfill His will how does this include faith?
- 3) Jesus said belief, faith, confession, repentance, baptism, and life in faith are all contained in His commandment to love God His Father through Himself. Are you willing to love God this way? Which part can be left out?
- 4) Who determines what is important for salvation in His commandment?

The commandment to believe is essentially a commandment to love Jesus and His body of believers – who are Jesus.

Acts 9:4b-5; Ephesians 4:6; John 15:12-15

- 1) What is one another love?
- 2) How does this commandment to obey the Lord's new covenant faith require fellow believers to love one another?

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The Commandment

- 3) Is one another love connected with practicing love towards Jesus?
- 4) What are the Lord's expectations of interrelationships amongst His body?
- 5) How do you feel about expressing Godly love towards a brother or sister whom you don't particularly care for?
- 6) Do you practice love towards brethren who are weak, practicing sin, or outside of your comfort zone?
- 7) Would you be willing to risk your life for a brother or sister who doesn't like you?
- 8) Is risking your life for a brother or sister the same as risking your life for Jesus?
- 9) Do you think relationships with fellow Christian's determine your relationship with Jesus?
- 10) Are you able to fellowship with God (your participation in a partnership with God) if you do not fellowship with other believers?
- 11) Is assembly with other Christians important to you?

The commandment to "love one another" is essentially a commandment to love Jesus.
1 John 3:23

- 1) Why do you think Jesus needed to command one another love?
- 2) How do you define one another love?
- 3) Is one another love an expression of love towards an invisible God?
- 4) What do you think you need to feel when expressing love towards Jesus?

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The Commandment

In Christ the expression of love fulfills His commandment to “believe” and “love one another” and recognizes His authority.

Matthew 28:18b; Luke 12:5; 1 John 3:23-24

- 1) Is one another love an expression of faith?
- 2) How important is it to express faith through one another love?
- 3) Is one another love a work in order to satisfy the requirements of law or is it something far greater?

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Section Three: Expectations

The Royal Law

The second part of the Lord's two part commandment stated, "and love one another just as He commanded us" (*James* 3:23b). This commandment carries just as much spiritual authority as believing in Jesus. It is inseparably linked with faith. All purchased servants are in the body of Christ. They all work together for a singular cause – giving glory to Jesus which in turn glorifies God the Father. Love of God is expressed through belief and faith in His will--the commandments authored by Jesus, "he who has My commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves Me, and he who loves Me, shall be loved by My Father" (*John* 14:21a).

There are at least two basic ways in which to respond to God in love according to His will:

1) The believer must be willing to faithfully obey His commandments through Jesus Christ.

2) The believer must faithfully express Godly love, which imitates the love of Christ towards His human creation and is especially focused upon fellow-believers. Neither response is able to stand on its own; both must be as one love response to God through Jesus Christ.

In *James*, the author helps to define who God is speaking of when He said, "you shall love your neighbor as yourself" (2:8b). He spoke specifically about fellow believers in Christ being neglected. A bond-servant's "neighbor" is his fellow bond-servant in Christ. The one "royal law" is God's absolute requirement for all of His children to express love towards one another in faith motivated Spirit-led ways. To love according to the will of God is not natural. It is not based upon the feelings of heart even though the heart plays a critical part in its practice. Godly love is a chosen act of obeying the Lord's will.

Paul described the how-to's of inter-body love in the partnership of fellowship in his *first* letter to the *Corinthians*, "Love is patient, love is kind, and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, and does not act unbecoming; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things" (13:4-7). Love is at the heart of fellowship within the body of Christ. Love is not easy because the Spirit is retraining the servant how to live in righteousness according to the righteous standard of God.

God is not trying to say His redeemed children are to ignore the needs of His children lost in sin, but their number one priority is to express love for one another. Love and fellowship must not be separated in the body of Christ.

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The Royal Law

The Lord offers at least four different ways to interrelate with servants of sin who live under Satan's authority in the world:

1) In his letter to *Galatians* Paul tried to encourage his brethren with these words, "so then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all men" (6:10).

2) Paul made a very special effort to relate to those he focused upon for salvation, "To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak; I have become all things to all men, that I may by all means save some" (1 *Corinthians* 9:22). Paul allowed himself to enter into the lives of those needing to hear the gospel, yet he did so while maintaining the integrity of his faith in Jesus. He never compromised his witness, values, or identity.

3) Paul mentioned in his letter to *Titus*, "Remind them to be subject to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good deed, to malign no one, to be uncontentious, gentle, showing every consideration for all men" (3:1-2). The integrity of one's witness depends upon perception. The servants of the world do not understand a servant of Christ. But they do know enough to understand whether or not they have enough apparent evidence to degrade the grace of God and the faithful in Christ. The believer's lifestyle, politics, obedience to contemporary political circumstances, one another fellowship amongst brethren, and kindness to the lost, speak volumes to the unsaved about the vast difference between a servant of sin and a servant of Christ.

4) In his *first* letter *Peter* encouraged his brethren to "Honor all men; love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king" (2:17). In doing so he made a clear distinction between fellowship amongst fellow servants of Christ and interrelationships with servants of sin. The interaction is far different. The brethren are encouraged to "love one another", but to get along and treat nonbelievers and authority with respect especially in regard to teaching the gospel (1 *John* 3:23b).

A servant of the Lord loves his fellow servant differently than a servant of the world. He works with Him to accomplish His work on earth which in turn glorifies Him. Those who choose to serve sin fellowship with the world and its leader Satan. Fellowship between two believers is a spiritual partnership unique to Christ and is motivated by the Lord's definition of love. It is not based upon emotion and is not relative to any physical circumstances. The Lord's love consistently offers self-giving concern for another believer and "showing consideration for all men" (*Titus* 3:2b).

Love is the one attitude all believers must learn throughout their lifetime. Love is not a natural activity, because it's not based upon emotion, or the world's understanding and practice of love, even though it often involves emotion. For example, only by Godly love is the Lord's servant able to love his enemy as counseled by Jesus, "love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you" (*Matthew* 5:44).

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The Royal Law

Upon death, belief and faith end with sight, hope finds its fulfillment, only love endures into eternity, "But now abide in faith, hope, and love, these three; but the greatest of these is love" (*I Corinthians 13:13*). What the believer learns during his lifetime of interactions among his brethren and the people of the world will remain with him in eternity.

Questions

Love is basically the Lord's command to anyone choosing to serve Him.
James 3:23b; John 14:21a

- 1) How can love be an expression of faith if it is a command?
- 2) Do you feel as if loving Jesus is a legal requirement instead of by faith?
- 3) How do you integrate faith into a commandment?

The believer's neighbor is his fellow servant in Christ.
James 2:8b

- 1) Who is your "neighbor"?
- 2) From a spiritual point of view who is living close to you?
- 3) Is a servant of the Lord a spiritual neighbor with a servant of sin and Satan?
- 4) A Christian lives in a different spiritual realm and kingdom than servants of sin. Is a servant of sin and Satan a neighbor of a holy servant of the Lord's?

Godly love is not necessarily based upon emotions.
1 Corinthians 13:4-7

- 1) Even though love involves emotions do you depend upon emotion to determine which Christian you are willing to love?
- 2) How do you determine who to love?

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The Royal Law

3) Must you feel love before you are able to practice one another love?

Interrelationships with people of the world require Godly love but the nature of love is fundamentally different.

Galatians 6:10; 1 Corinthians 9:22; Titus 3:1-2; 1 Peter 2:17; 1 John 3:23b

1) God expects His people to serve Him as His servant in a foreign and often hostile spiritual realm given over to Satan. How do you express Godly love within the world?

2) Is a Christian able to fellowship with a nonbeliever?

3) Is a Christian able to practice one another love with nonbeliever's?

4) Is a Christian able to practice loving interrelationships among nonbeliever's?

Godly love must be learned, it is not natural.

Matthew 5:44; 1 Corinthians 13:13

1) Learning how to express God-like love in fellowship is not easy, are you willing to learn?

2) How do you learn how to love an unlovable brother or sister in Christ?

3) How does freedom to choose whom to practice one another love towards connect with the Lord's commandment to love one another?

4) Are you willing to practice what you learn about one another love?

5) Does your practice of love express how much you are willing to love Jesus?

6) What connection does one another love have with practicing love towards Jesus?

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Section Three: Expectations

His Sacrifice for Sin

Jesus willingly allowed the Jewish leaders to bring Him before Roman authorities for judgment. Paul wrote in *Ephesians*: “Christ also loved you, and gave Himself up for us, an offering and sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma” (5:2b).

As the physical side of the Lord’s ministry drew to a close, dramatic changes began take place in the nation of Israel and its covenant with God. When Jesus allowed the Roman authorities to nail His body to a cross for certain death, His bloody sacrifice set a new age in motion.

He accomplished what the Law could not, “For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled, sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh, how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God” (*Hebrews* 9:13-14). The self-giving sacrifice of Jesus upon His cross is vital for any person appealing “to God for a good conscience” (*1 Peter* 3:21b).

A “good conscience” is a conscience completely cleansed of sin memory, it’s innocent. This is so important because the conscience bears witness of transgressions against any law--the Law of Moses, one’s own instinctual moral law, or any human law. Paul wrote: “For all who have sinned without the Law will also perish without the Law; and all who have sinned under the Law will be judged by the Law ... in that day the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness, and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them” (*Romans* 2:12, 15). Everyone has the basic “knowledge of good and evil” (*Genesis* 2:17a).

The writer of *Hebrews* noted: “For it is fitting that we should have a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens; who does not need daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people, because this He did once for all when He offered up Himself” (7:26-27).

No one forced Jesus to die on a Roman cross. He offered Himself as a sacrificial lamb in order to secure the one and only satisfactory payment for the curse of sin, an innocent and sinless death. Only God could do this because only God in the flesh had the faith and discipline to accomplish such a daunting task. God resurrected Jesus and He returned to heaven as the permanent high priest of His body and temple of believers. Only God is able to do this. As a result of His resurrection Jesus is able to use His sacrifice as a satisfactory redemption payment for whoever chooses to appeal to Him for purchase.

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His Sacrifice for Sin

Thus, by His sacrificial death, all believers in Christ who choose to prove their belief and faith through obedience to His New Covenant will experience sanctification as a result of His sacrifice. When a servant is purchased by Jesus he is separated from the world and sin, he is made holy and becomes the Lord's bond-servant. In *Hebrews* the writer revealed: "'Behold, I have come to do Thy will.' He takes away the first in order to establish the second. By this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (10:9-10).

When Jesus redeems a servant of sin, his sin debt to God is forgiven as a result of the purchase. The resurrected servant is recreated in Christ. The purchase takes place when the servant is "united with Him" in His death, burial, and resurrection (Romans 6:5a). He enters into the water of baptism as a dead servant of sin. He dies with Jesus. He is buried with Jesus. He is resurrected a new creature with Jesus. He experiences his rebirth with Jesus. Even though His body and old self remain the same, he is a new person spiritually. His spirit is recreated, thus his conscience is new as well. He emerges from the water a new spiritual babe, innocent and holy in Christ.

Ezekiel once prophesied, "And I shall give them one heart, and shall put a new spirit within them. And I will take the heart of stone out of their flesh and give them a heart of flesh, that they may walk in My statutes and keep My ordinances, and do them. Then they will be My people, and I shall be their God" (12:19-20). A child of God is sinless because he is a newly created life form. He is spiritually circumcised from his old flesh. Except for his physical body and old self, the servant has returned to the same spiritual condition with which he entered in to the world at birth – innocent and holy with a clear conscience.

The moment a slave of sin is sanctified he is freed from his debt to sin and becomes holy which separates him from anyone enslaved to sin. God sets him apart from the world; he is no longer a slave of sin, he is the Lord's servant: "For He delivered us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins" (*Colossians* 1:13-14). The former servant of sin is able to enter into the presence of God through Jesus because of his righteousness.

As a result of his newfound spiritual cleanliness, he is pure and holy in the sight of God. The former servant of sin is a redeemed servant of God through Jesus Christ, his new owner. Thus, he is separated from Satan's dominion in the physical world. As a servant of Christ he serves righteousness and obedience. He is with Christ in His spiritual kingdom. This is why *Peter* told his brethren in his *first* letter they are "aliens and strangers" while still living in the familiar setting of the world (2:11a).

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His Sacrifice for Sin

A little over seven hundred years before the birth of Jesus, *Isaiah* prophetically spoke of the sacrificial death of God in the flesh: "But the Lord was pleased to crush Him, putting Him to grief; if He would render Himself as a guilt offering ... As a result of the anguish of His soul, He will see it and be satisfied; by His knowledge the Righteous One, My Servant, will justify the many, as He will bear their iniquities. He poured Himself out to death, and was numbered with the transgressors; yet He Himself bore the sin of many, and interceded for the transgressors" (53:10a, 11, 12b).

No other faith or religion in the world promises what Jesus is freely offering to any person--a way to release sin debt with a satisfactory payment, a sinless death. Why would God do such a thing for those who choose to reject Him? The answer is revealed in the character of God, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son" (*John* 3:16a).

Questions

Jesus willingly offered Himself to mankind to save mankind.
Ephesians 5:2b

- 1) Are you willing to learn love according to the Lord's standard?
- 2) Why do you think Jesus decided to love you with His death?
- 3) What did you feel about Jesus when you found out He chose to offer His human life up as a sacrifice in order to give your life?

Jesus accomplished what no other sacrifice, tradition, or law could do--cleanse the conscience.
Hebrews 9:13-14; 1 Peter 3:21b; Romans 2:12, 15; Genesis 2:17

- 1) What is your conscience?
- 2) Why is your conscience so important?
- 3) Do you believe your conscience is so corrupted with sin no force is able to cleanse it back to innocence?

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His Sacrifice for Sin

- 4) As a Christian do you feel as if your conscience is still corrupt?
- 5) Even though you still feel guilt from the past sin and conscience, do you believe you are holy and have an innocent conscience?
- 6) When you feel guilt from past sin, what is causing it to bother you?

The sacrifice which Jesus offered will never take place again.
Hebrews 7:26-27

- 1) Do you think Jesus will need to return in order to offer His human life again?
- 2) Do you think Jesus succeeded or failed in His mission on earth?
- 3) How does His sacrifice personally affect you?
- 4) Does His sacrifice make a difference in how you choose to serve Him?

His sacrifice enabled the New Covenant to begin.
Hebrews 10:9

- 1) Is His covenant important to you?
- 2) How is His covenant and expressing love to God related?
- 3) How does His covenant affect your behavior and service as a servant?
- 4) What does a covenant do?
- 5) Is His covenant an important part of your salvation experience?
- 6) When you share in the Lord's Supper what do you think about?

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Questions

His Sacrifice for Sin

His sacrifice offers a servant of sin sanctification.
Hebrews 10:10; Romans 6:5a

- 1) What is the state of sanctification?
- 2) Do you feel separated from slavery to sin?
- 3) Do you feel separated from Satan's authority?
- 4) Do you feel like a citizen of the Lord's kingdom?
- 5) Do you feel holy?
- 6) Do you feel righteous?
- 7) Do you feel your conscience is innocent?
- 8) Do you feel you are a part of the Lord's body?
- 9) How do you know for certain you can correctly feel unseen spiritual realities?
- 10) How do you know for certain the Lord's promises are fulfilled?
- 11) How is the apparent necessity to feel spiritual realities connected to faith?
- 12) Does Jesus require His servant to physically sense his sanctification?

By the power of His sacrifice Jesus recreates people.
Ezekiel 12:19-20

- 1) From what state of being are you recreated?
- 2) How did God recreate you?
- 3) What part of you did the Spirit recreate?

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His Sacrifice for Sin

- 4) Is recreation the same as being born again?
- 5) Do you feel recreated?
- 6) How do you know for certain you are recreated?

His sacrifice frees people from the dark dungeon of sin.
Colossians 1:13-14; 1 Peter 2:11a

- 1) Even though everyone experiences the newfound desire to repent from evil activities, are you able to feel freedom from the bondage of sin?
- 2) How did bondage to sin feel?
- 3) If you are able to feel sin or freedom from sin, how do you feel a spiritual reality?
- 4) Can you trust your heart to feel correctly?
- 5) Can you trust your mind to think and make spiritual decisions which are independent of God's counsel?
- 6) How do you feel with a spiritual heart what you have last experienced in early childhood--innocence? Are you able to clearly remember how you thought as a child?
- 7) Do you think your old physical heart is able to mislead you spiritually?
- 8) Do you think your feelings are able to mislead you?
- 9) Are all physical indications of spiritual phenomenon from God?
- 10) If you cannot feel freedom from sin, how do you know you are free?

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Section Three: Expectations

Questions

His Sacrifice for Sin

Only His sacrifice is able to justify the guilt of sin.

Isaiah 53:10a, 11, 12b

- 1) Are there any other ways other than Jesus which are able to free you from your bondage to sin?
- 2) Why must you be recreated in order for God to consider you justified of all sin?
- 3) Is there any other way to justify your sin debt to God?

Jesus offered His sacrifice out of love for His mankind.

John 3:16a, 12:23-26

- 1) How much do you think Jesus loves you?
- 2) Are you willing to respond to Him with the same self-giving love?
- 3) What does Jesus mean when He said you must be willing to lose your life in order to love Him?

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Section Three: Expectations

A Ransom for a Slave

With His death Jesus finalized the payment necessary to redeem or buy back a slave of sin bound to his debt of sin and spiritual death, “For even the son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many” (*Mark* 10:45). Jesus came to His creation to fulfill this purpose and the long awaited promise.

He needed to offer His innocent sinless life as a spiritual payment in order to satisfy a sinner’s spiritual debt to God--sin. The Law of Moses, any type of sacrifice, religious ceremony, moral uprightness, personal piety, service for mankind, faith to a religion, or obedience to any law, are incapable of doing this. “The wages of sin is death” and sustains the continuance of death for the debtor (*Romans* 6:23a). “But the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord”, the substitutionary death of an innocent sinless person (*Romans* 6:23b). Jesus came to offer “life” by offering His sinless and innocent body to death. After His resurrection, since He is God, he is able to spiritually unite His death, burial, and resurrection with the dead slave of sin.

By the power of the Spirit a servant of sin is spiritually “united” with the Lord’s death (*Romans* 6:5a). This is how God creates the rebirth of a human being. Sin is so powerful spiritual rebirth is the only way for a servant of sin to receive freedom from its death hold. The debt must be eliminated and the curse of law must be satisfied. In order for this to happen the servant must submit to spiritually die with Jesus, “For he who has died is freed from sin (*Romans* 6:7). Sin and its associated death remain attached to the old body and self but the newly resurrected spirit is just like an innocent baby – free from liability to sin. Paul spoke of this dual reality in *Romans*, “And if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness” (8:10).

Only Jesus is able to fulfill the demands of sin in order to offer the necessary spiritual payment. And He can do this for all time. After Jesus died God the Father resurrected Him three days later. He returned to heaven to sit at the right hand of His Father, and use His innocent death to offer the only ransom payment able to give the servant life.

Paul stated in his *first* letter to *Timothy*: “for there is one God, and one mediator also between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself as a ransom for all” (2:5-6a). Only God is able to use death in this manner. But in order to acquire the satisfactory payment God had to enter into the human experience – completely human, live a sinless life, and allow the bloody sacrificial offering of His body.

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Section Three: Expectations

A Ransom for a Slave

Questions

The Lord entered into His creation in order to “give His life a ransom”.

Mark 10:45; 1 Timothy 2:3-6;

- 1) What does the word ransom mean to you?
- 2) God ransomed the Hebrew people from Egypt, how does this real life event illustrate what is taking place spiritually?
- 3) Do you feel ransomed?
- 4) How do you know you are ransomed?

Sin causes death in this present life and determines eternal existence.

Romans 6:23a; Matthew 8:22, 22:32; Luke 15:32; John 5:21-25; Acts 10:42-43; Ephesians 2:1-5, 5:14; 1 Peter 4:6

- 1) How are you dead when you are alive?
- 2) Is the death spoken of spiritual or physical?
- 3) How do you know you are spiritually dead?
- 4) How do you know you are spiritually alive?
- 5) Are you able to feel either spiritual condition?
- 6) Why does Jesus need to ransom a spiritually dead servant of sin?

The Lord’s gift of life is the only way to escape an otherwise inescapable present spiritual reality and eternal destiny separated from God.

Romans 3:32b

- 1) Do you believe there are other religious paths which accomplish the same thing as the Lord’s ransom?

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Section Three: Expectations

Questions

A Ransom for a Slave

- 2) Do you think the Lord's ransom makes salvation too exclusive and sectarian?
- 3) Do you think there are other ways to go to heaven other than through Jesus?
- 4) What happens to all of the people who disagree with Jesus?
- 5) When you teach the gospel in its entirety and receive rejection who is the person rejecting?

The ransom takes place when a servant of sin is spiritually united by faith with the Lord's death, burial, and resurrection.

Romans 6:5a, 6:7

- 1) Do you think baptism is just as important for salvation as belief, faith, confession, and repentance?
- 2) How is a servant of sin united with the Lord's death, burial, and resurrection?
- 3) How do belief, faith, repentance, confession, baptism, and a life of faith, work together as a united response to the Lord's offer to ransom a servant of sin?

The Lord's ransom effectively separates the servant's old life of death—his flesh, from his new life.

Romans 6:6

- 1) How is the Lord's ransom offered to you?
- 2) How do you accept His offer of ransom?
- 3) Is your response to receive His ransom a work to earn His ransom or a submission to His will?
- 4) Why do you think belief, faith, repentance, confession, and baptism all involve physical responses which are interconnected with each other?

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Section Three: Expectations

Questions

A Ransom for a Slave

- 5) Does your new life in Christ feel separated from your old life in sin?
- 6) What are you doing to remain separate from your old flesh and its desires?
- 7) What are you doing to encourage a brother or sister to grow in Christ?

No slave of sin is excluded from the Lord's offer to free him.

1 Timothy 2:5-6a

- 1) Do you think there are certain predetermined people who will never accept the Lord's offer for redemption?
- 2) Why do you think people reject Jesus?
- 3) Do you feel your life is so badly damaged by sin it is impossible for Jesus to ransom your life?
- 4) Do you ever think about returning to serve sin?

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Section Three: Expectations

Propitiation for Sin

When Jesus offered up His innocent life as a once for all sacrifice, His death satisfied the demands of, “the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us and which was hostile to us” (*Colossians* 2:14a). Every servant of sin who appeals to God for redemption will be purchased by the grace of God because of his belief and faith in the power of the Jesus Christ to fulfill what He has promised. Paul said, “being justified” is “a gift of His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; whom God displayed publicly as propitiation in His blood through faith” (*Romans* 3:24-25a).

In order to satisfy the demands of “the certificate of debt” – the curse of death, Jesus offered His human body. This is what propitiation is all about, the satisfaction of sin debt, one death for another. Jesus is able to spiritually join any servant of sin with His death, burial, and resurrection. This takes place when a servant of sin is “united” with Jesus within the water of baptism.

Spiritual death begins the moment an innocent child chooses to commit his first sin. He loses his blamelessness and holiness as a result of establishing a single debt entry of sin. When a person loses his holiness or righteousness, God is no longer able to allow Him to fellowship in His holy presence. To restore lost fellowship, the servant’s growing debt of sin must be completely erased as if the sin debt never occurred in the first place. There is only one way for this to happen. The old servant must become a newly created servant completely separated from his old body, life, debt, self, conscience, and accountability to law.

The sacrifice Jesus allowed to take place is God’s expression of love towards His fallen people. Regardless of never ending rebellion against His righteousness He still loves the people He created. *John* wrote in his *first* letter: “In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins” (4:10).

By the grace of God anyone is able to respond with belief and faith motivated obedience to His revealed will. The writer of *Hebrews* noted this about God’s love towards His people: “Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in all things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people” (2:17). When the writer mentions “of the people” he means any person in bondage to sin who appeals to Jesus for redemption, throughout “the whole world” (1 *John* 2:2b).

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Section Three: Expectations

Questions

Propitiation for Sin

Every servant of sin is enslaved to sin because of a spiritual “certificate of debt” – his list of sins against God.

Colossians 2:14a; John 8:34; Romans 5:18; James 2:10

- 1) How many sins does it take to create a debt of sin to God?
- 2) Is there such a thing as a list of sins too long for forgiveness?
- 3) How does a person free himself from sin?

A servant’s justification from his guilt is a gift of God’s grace because it required the Lord’s sacrifice and is freely offered to anyone.

Romans 3:24

- 1) What do you think justification means?
- 2) Why do think Jesus had to sacrifice His innocent human body in order to offer a way to free a sinner from his debt of sin to God?

The Lord’s innocent death, His burial, and resurrection satisfy all of the spiritual demands of recreating an innocent new spirit in a servant.

Romans 3:25a

- 1) Jesus offered His life to free you from sin, are you willing to offer yours to Him to serve Him?
- 2) What is the connection between justification and propitiation?
- 3) What is propitiation?

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Section Three: Expectations

Questions

Propitiation for Sin

The Lord's "propitiation for the sins of the people" is an expression of how much God loves His people.

1 John 4:10; 2:2b

- 1) How did Jesus satisfy the spiritual demands of owing a debt of sin to God His Father?
- 2) Why do you think death is so important in the path to life?
- 3) Are you willing to love Jesus according to His will?

In order to satisfy the demand of guilt – an innocent death, Jesus had to enter into His creation fully human.

Hebrews 2:17

- 1) Is the power of sin and its guilt great enough to affect your eternal destiny? Does guilt demand justice?
- 2) Does guilt demand accountability to God?
- 3) Jesus said He lived as human as everyone else, do you believe this?
- 4) Do you think Jesus had extra-human powers from God before His ministry began?
- 5) Why do you think Jesus had to live and die as a human being?
- 6) What do you think the connection is between the Lord's humanity and His work of propitiation for humanity?

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Section Three: Expectations

Redemption

In order for a slave of sin to receive freedom from his captivity to sin; he must be purchased with a spiritual payment. Redemption is the process of buying a slave of sin; Jesus uses the ransom payment of His innocent sinless death to purchase back what originally belonged to Him. *Titus* wrote: “for the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men ... Christ Jesus; who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself a people for His own possession” (2:11, 13b-14).

Redemption is offered by Jesus at the cost of His life. He died while still in a state of innocence and holiness thus meeting the cost requirement of sin debt – an innocent death. Sin debt requires an innocent death to satisfy its curse of death. Jesus had to die in innocence because this is the only way He could unite a servant of sin with His death, burial, and resurrection into life. It is not possible for anyone dead in sin to do this. Life requires innocence and holiness.

All sinners have to die to satisfy the debt. But God offered an alternate death. If Jesus sinned even once He could not have sacrificed His life as an offering because He would have separated His human life from God. Mission failed. The Lord had no other choice in life; He had to maintain His innocence in order to die sinless.

Jesus did not have the same choices offered to mankind. He did not have the choice to sin even though He possessed the same freedom, nature, lust, and experienced the same temptations as a common human being. John wrote in his *Revelation*, “And they sang a new song, ‘Worthy art thou to take the book, and to break its seals; for thou wast slain, and didst purchase for God with thy blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation’” (5:9).

The redemption God provides for every person is through His grace, freedom cannot be acquired from any other source. No one is able to die and resurrect himself from death. Only God the Father is capable of this. He resurrected the Lord’s body from death and gave Him His new spiritual body to complete His resurrection. The human part of Jesus did not do this.

New life is freely offered and given exclusively by Jesus. Paul wrote: “In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses according to the riches of His grace” (*Ephesians* 1:7). In other words, nothing humanly possible will aid or substitute for what God is freely offering to mankind.

Redemption is strictly a God to mankind offer only He is able to fulfill. This is why salvation is a gift of grace even though belief and faith must be demonstrated through obedience. Obedience, which includes baptism, proves the validity of the servant’s confession of the deity of Jesus and commitment to repent.

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Section Three: Expectations

Redemption

Once redemption is received, it must be maintained through a life of committed faith in Christ until physical death. Even though redemption is a free offer from Jesus, the servant of sin must willingly allow Jesus to purchase him into His grace of redemption. This requires his active participation in the process of salvation. The servant must agree to covenant with Jesus. Redemption is a marriage ceremony and covenant signing; the two become one for life. Only spiritual adultery will cause a divorce and forfeit of the Lord's New Covenant blessings.

The servant must agree to the Lord's covenant purchase agreement and serve Him as His slave according to the stipulations of the New Covenant. Only God is able to offer redemption from the spiritual debt of sin, all the slave is able to do is serve His will for the rest of his life. *Matthew* recorded the disciples asking Jesus, "Then who can be saved?" Jesus answered, "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible" (19:25b, 26b).

Salvation cannot be found through any other means, regardless of a person's motivations to do good deeds on the behalf of humanity or piety towards God. Peter bluntly stated to his Jewish brethren – good God fearing men, "And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved" (*Acts* 4:13). Redemption is through Jesus or no one, not the Holy Spirit, not God the Father, or any other religion or faith, "no one comes to the Father, but through Me" (*John* 14:6b).

Questions

Redemption is the spiritual process of reuniting a servant of sin with God.
Titus 2:11-14

- 1) What is Jesus redeeming a sinner with?
- 2) Do you think Jesus is able to purify your spirit?
- 3) What do you think spiritual purity is?
- 4) Is spiritual purity holiness?
- 5) How does spiritual purity set a person apart for Jesus?
- 6) If Jesus redeemed you, does He own you?

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Questions

Redemption

Jesus is the only person who ever chose to completely obey God His Father and remain innocent and sinless, which enabled only Him with the ability to redeem any servant of sin.

Revelation 5:9

- 1) Is Jesus the only person to have never transgressed against a law?
- 2) Is redemption the same as purchasing a servant from sin?
- 3) If Jesus purchased you, does it mean He owns you?
- 4) If Jesus owns you does this mean you are His servant?
- 5) If Jesus is your Lord and Master how are you responding to His will?
- 6) If Jesus owns you, how are you choosing to serve Him?
- 7) Do you feel you are in a different spiritual kingdom?
- 8) Do you feel like a priest?
- 9) Do you feel like a ruler?
- 10) How do you know for sure you are redeemed?

His sacrifice made redemption possible; this is why redemption is by the grace of God. Ephesians 1:7; Matthew 19:25b, 26b; Exodus 12:13, 21-22; 1 Chronicles 17:21; Hebrews 9:11-22

- 1) How does His grace connect with the physical response required by belief and faith?
- 2) What do you think the Exodus from Egypt illustrates about the importance of blood and freedom?

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Questions

Redemption

- 3) Is there anything you could do to earn the freedom Jesus offers?
- 4) What happens to people who live extraordinary lives of religious service who have not responded to the Lord's gospel according to His expressed will?
- 5) Can a person think he is serving Jesus while still serving sin?

Salvation is only possible by redemption and redemption is only possible through Jesus Christ.

Acts 4:13; John 14:6b

- 1) Does this mean only Jesus is able to offer redemption?
- 2) What is the Lord trying to tell people about other faiths?
- 3) How important is the gospel in relation to redemption?

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Section Three: Expectations

The Grace of Redemption

The Lord's offer to freely give redemption to any person is much different from God's grace of benevolent general care for humanity and the rest of His creation, "for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous" (*Matthew* 5:45). His benevolent grace cannot save anyone even though it sustains life and reveals His reality. However, God may use this type of grace to show a servant of sin the way to salvation.

Jesus died on the cross because He loves people. No one ever asked for redemption. If Jesus hadn't introduced an alternative death for sin into the human experience the blessing would be impossible to imagine. The writer of *Hebrews* said: "But we do not see Him who has been made for a little while lower than the angels, namely Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone" (2:9).

Redemptive grace is strictly an act of love on the part of man's creator to His people. Jesus is the very expression of God's love towards His people, "For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men" (*Titus* 2:11). In order to fully understand redemptive grace one needs to study Jesus. Not only is Jesus the manifestation of God's grace He is the realization of the truth of God's grace in His world, "grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ" (*John* 1:17b).

Love is the nature and motivation of redemptive grace. Grace is God's loving favor towards His people regardless of their rebellion in sin towards Him. He desires for all people to enter into heaven.

A slave of sin needs to listen to the gospel message and approach Jesus for his purchase according to His New Covenant. He is incapable of doing anything other than to believe in who Jesus is, and faithfully obey the instructions given by Jesus in order for the grace of redemption to take place. The only physical requirement placed upon a slave of sin is his belief, faith, confession, commitment to repent and obedience. Obedience includes baptism and continued submission to the stipulations found in the covenant Jesus authored, to which the slave agrees. His redemption is something only God is able to accomplish. Paul stated in his letter to the *Romans*, "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus" (3:23-24).

In *Ephesians*, Paul stressed: "by grace you have been saved" (2:8a). His grace demonstrates His never ending love towards His creation. God initiates His process of salvation by providing His grace through Jesus Christ. He expects a response from any servant of sin desiring His grace of redemption. But the response must be motivated by

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The Grace of Redemption

belief in the deity of Jesus and the integrity of His word. He must willingly express a responsive belief and faith in the unseen work of God as promised in His word. However, his response is not a deliberate effort to please Him or some required religious ritual in order to receive divine approval and the grace of salvation.

Grace must be accompanied with belief, faith, confession, repentant obedience, baptism, and a Spirit led life of continued repentance, spiritual growth, and ending life in faith. Grace alone cannot save anyone. Grace alone is the offer of salvation. His offer must be joined with a response. Redemptive grace joins with the servant the moment he is redeemed. Grace is of God and all of His redeemed are partnered with God the Father in the body of Christ, who is God. Redemptive grace is fully realized when the servant receives the grace of salvation.

In *Romans* Paul mentioned how God's grace is a vital part of His overall plan of salvation: "therefore having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into His grace in which we stand" (5:1-2a). Paul described the grace of life as at least a five part blessing:

- 1) A slave of sin is introduced "by faith into His grace". His grace of redemption is a spiritual state of being, entered into according to God's stated will. Belief and faith must be involved because His promises and grace of salvation cannot be perceived in the physical realm. The servant must confess the deity of the Lord Jesus. In order to honor the confession Jesus must be obeyed as Master. Belief and faith can only be realized in life spiritually, even though they must be physically manifested; first by the slave of sin and then by the purchased slave "for obedience" and "of righteousness" (*Romans* 6:16a, 18b).

- 2) Faith is developed only from believing in "the word of Christ" (*Romans* 10:17b). God tells people what the unseen is, how He works, what His promises are, and His expectations according to the New Covenant. Then it's up to them how they are willing to respond. The attitude of faith God looks for is "assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen" (*Hebrews* 11:1b). This is one reason why faith cannot be based upon works of the flesh – physical works are seen.

Even though faith must be expressed through works, the motivation behind faith separates a response of faith from works to earn grace. Faith is based entirely upon ones belief in the word of God concerning His invisible works. For example, the slave of sin expresses belief and faith during his baptism because the redemption taking place and the reception of the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit cannot be perceived by any human sense. If it could then it would not be based upon faith but sight.

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3) A slave of sin is “justified by faith” (*Romans* 5:1a). This takes place as a result of obeying the Lord’s directions concerning how He redeems a servant of sin. The act of redemption and freedom from the slavery of sin is spiritual and cannot be perceived by human sense, therefore the whole process of salvation from the spiritual side is based and dependent upon the belief, faith, and obedience of the one appealing to God for His grace of salvation. This is why belief and faith must be realized through a physical response to His word. The servant’s answer to His free offer demonstrates his acceptance of God’s grace.

The whole spiritual process of salvation other than ones physical response is imperceptible and the only reliable source of information regarding the process is Scripture – by God’s grace. Justification not only describes the forgiveness of sin debt, but also involves the complete absence of any record of debt. The justified servant has a newly recreated and resurrected spirit which is innocent and holy. The new servant spirit is like a newborn baby – no record of sin exists because sin cannot be inherited. This spiritual experience is based and dependent upon belief and faith in the Lord’s word and promises. The whole process is a gift of His grace. It cannot be caused by anything else.

The process of redemption is based entirely upon trusting God’s word and expressing hope in His promises. This is why obedience to the Lord’s New Covenant will, which includes baptism, is not a work to earn God’s favor. It is a work of faith in the unseen grace of God as He fulfills His promises.

Without faith in the promises being fulfilled by the power of God within the water of baptism God’s grace of redemption becomes meaningless and justification will not be given. Confident assured faith ensures the peace of knowing for certain God does what He promises, even though unseen, and will result in an eternity in heaven. The servant’s faith assures him concerning the unseen promises of God’s grace of life. He doesn’t depend upon feeling saved; he is fully assured of his fellowship with God the Father because of his faith in His Word. Faith transcends feelings and physical perceptions of salvation.

4. “We stand” (*Romans* 5:2b) secure and strong in the redemptive grace of God through Jesus Christ. Once a slave of sin is purchased and transferred into His kingdom his eternal security remains protected for as long as he chooses to remain His bond-servant. There is absolutely no satanic force strong enough to separate a servant of God in Christ from his loving embrace in Christ. The only force strong enough is the law of one’s freedom of choice, “if God is for us, who is against us” (*Romans* 8:31b). The “who” refers only to the flesh and the freedom of choice to obey its desire to regain control over the saint’s life, “For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the

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Spirit is life and peace" (*Romans 8:6*). "Peace and life" are blessings of the redemptive grace of God.

Questions

The Lord's grace of redemption is different from His grace of taking care of His people. Matthew 5:45

- 1) Do you believe God took care of you before becoming His child?
- 2) How do you feel about God taking care of evil people just as well or apparently better than someone who is serving Him?
- 3) Do you think God has complete control over the earth even though bad things happen?
- 4) How different do you think His grace of redemption is in contrast to His grace of taking care of His creation?
- 5) Is there any way for a person to sidestep His grace of redemption in order to receive redemption?

The grace of redemption is His offer of salvation. Hebrews 2:9; Titus 2:11

- 1) Why is salvation a blessing of grace?
- 2) If Jesus did not explain and create redemption by His death could salvation have taken place by any other means?
- 3) If God did not mention salvation do you think you would have ever thought of its possibility?
- 4) What is grace?
- 5) Is grace a free gift to mankind?

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Questions

The Grace of Redemption

- 6) Why do you think God is offering redemption to anyone who hates Him?
- 7) Are you able to substitute a very benevolent life for grace in order to receive salvation?

The grace of redemption is only “realized through Jesus Christ”.
John 1:17b; Romans 3:23-24; Ephesians 2:8a

- 1) Do you think Jesus is being overly restrictive?
- 2) Is it unloving for God to restrict how a person must return to Him for redemption?
- 3) How do you feel about Jesus offering salvation to you?

Even though the grace of redemption is a free offer it must be united with a belief and faith response.
Romans 5:1-2a

- 1) If grace is free and cannot be earned how you feel about the need to respond to God with belief and faith which must be realized through works?
- 2) Is God’s grace of salvation conditional?
- 3) What is very important about a servant’s response of belief and faith?
- 4) Why is attitude towards grace so important?
- 5) Why is a sinner’s acceptance of grace so important?
- 6) How is responding with God-like love connected to God’s grace of redemption?
- 7) How does a sinner learn how to approach Jesus on His terms and conditions?

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Questions

The Grace of Redemption

The grace of redemption must be entered into by faith.

Ephesians 2:8-10

- 1) In order to receive God's grace of salvation how must faith be acted out in response to His offer of salvation?
- 2) Why is faith such an important part of a sinner's response to His grace of salvation?

Faith is only developed from hearing and believing "the word of Christ".

Romans 10:17

- 1) Are you able to develop faith by talking to and being with Christians?
- 2) How are faith and belief connected to the heart of an unbeliever?
- 3) How important is communicating the word of God to those enslaved to sin?
- 4) Who is responsible for preaching and sharing the gospel to the lost?

Faith is both assurance and conviction in the integrity of the Lord's word.

Hebrews 11:1

- 1) Why is integrity of God's word so important?
- 2) Is it hard to feel assured of something which you are not able to sense?
- 3) If you could sense God's grace of salvation in any tangible way how would your sense affect faith?
- 4) Are you able to feel redemption?

A servant of sin must receive the grace of redemption as a result of his faith in the invisible work of God.

- 1) What happens to faith if a servant is able to feel or see his redemption?

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Questions

The Grace of Redemption

2) Is sensing spiritual realities such as salvation compatible with faith and belief?

A servant of sin is justified when he is redeemed by Jesus, but there is no physical evidence of the Lord's work – it's all by faith.

Romans 5:1

- 1) Are you able to feel innocent?
- 2) Are you able to feel a clear conscience?
- 3) Are you able to feel a new heart?
- 4) Are you able to feel recreated?

The only physical evidence of the grace of redemption taking place is the servant's response to the Lord's counsel concerning how to receive His grace.

- 1) Why is a servant's response to God's grace of redemption physical evidence of His redemption?
- 2) How does a sinner's response to the gospel witness the redemptive grace of God?

Once a servant of sin enters into the grace of redemption and is freed from his bondage to sin he is assured of his freedom, unless he chooses to return.

Romans 5:2b, 8:31b, 8:6

- 1) How is a servant assured of something he cannot physically sense?
- 2) Do you feel secure in God's grace of redemption?
- 3) How does assurance connect with the integrity of God's word?
- 4) After receiving the God's grace of salvation do you think belief and faith must be acted out in order to confirm His grace?

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Questions

The Grace of Redemption

- 5) How is faith and assurance in God's grace of redemption integrated into normal life?
- 6) What is the difference between choosing to enter into circumstances which require belief and faith in contrast to allowing the Spirit to lead life in His subtle ways?
- 7) Do you think a perception of what belief and faith should be interferes with the Spirit's work?
- 8) Do you think your heart and mind can interfere with the Spirit's work?
- 9) How do you know if your heart and mind are leading you correctly?