



Gospel Truths

instruction about salvation

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Introduction

Importance

There is no greater subject to which you can turn your attention than the subject of your relationship to God. You may learn a thousand skills and an encyclopedia's worth of information on a variety of topics, but it will all be in vain on the day of judgment if you do not know God through Christ. Likewise, the knowledge of the Gospel and those things that pertain to the salvation of the soul are the most important truths that you can impart to others, especially the next generation.

This resource is intended to instruct the heart in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Though certainly not an in depth treatment, it will address those subjects that contribute to a proper understanding of salvation. The goal of this resource is not mere knowledge, for knowledge puffs up (I Corinthians 8:1). Rather, the goal is to lead hearts to faith in Christ, equip believers to share the Gospel, and encourage believers in the glories of salvation.

Format

The format used in this resource is one of *question and answer*. Some may recognize this format by another name, "catechism". A catechism is simply a summary of Christian truths (usually in a question and answer format) used for instruction. The Greek word from which we get our English word "catechize" is used in Luke 1:4 where it is translated "instructed". Theophilus (v. 3)

was a convert that had been “catechized” or instructed in the truths of the Christian faith.

The method of instructing by means of questions with corresponding answers is an old one and has been used at various times throughout church history to train Christians in Biblical truths. Of course, a catechism is only useful if it is rooted in the Scriptures.

This resource contains seventy-five questions and answers that are intended to instruct in the truths of the Gospel. The format includes a main question, the corresponding answer, verses of Scripture to examine, and a paragraph that provides further explanation.

To help avoid the tendency toward rote memory or mere knowledge of these truths the end of each section contains a question or two that have no given answer. These are meant to lead the reader or the one being instructed to consider how the truths learned apply personally. Many of these questions probe the heart so as to expose faith or unbelief.

Uses

This resource is meant to be versatile. The following are some suggested uses.

- *For personal instruction in the Gospel.* One who is not a Christian may use this resource to better understand the salvation that is offered in Christ.
- *For sharing the Gospel.* This resource could be used by a Christian to help others understand the Gospel.

- *For instructing children in the Gospel.* This is a particularly important use of this resource. Parents can use the questions and answers provided as a part of family devotions or perhaps bedtime instruction. The questions and answers can be simply read to the child or the child could be encouraged to memorize the answers, thus reinforcing the truths upon the mind. Even children who have already believed on Christ will benefit from this resource as it will prepare them to better communicate the Gospel to others.
- *Personal meditation on the Gospel.* Christians may use this resource as a means of reminding themselves of the Gospel they have already believed. Meditating on the truths of the Gospel can encourage holy living and loving worship.

The writer of Hebrews referred to the Gospel message spoken by the Lord, confirmed by His Apostles, and authenticated by miracles as a “great salvation” (Hebrews 2:3-4). Truly our salvation is great! May the Lord bless as you give your mind and heart to considering this great salvation and as you instruct others in its glorious truths.

And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. - I John 5:11

1. Who is God?

God is the supreme spirit Being Who created, sustains, and rules all things.



Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 6:1-5; Revelation 4



God is the highest and greatest Being that exists. He is the all-powerful, all-knowing creator of all things. Everything continues to exist and function by His power and wisdom. God is the supreme King who sits enthroned over all. He is worthy of all praise, honor, and glory.

2. What is God like?

God is spiritual, infinite, self-existing, and eternal.



Exodus 3:14; John 4:24; 1 Timothy 1:17



God is a spirit. He does not have a body and cannot be seen by man unless He shows Himself in some form. God is infinite (without limits). He is everywhere at the same time. He is not “spread out” over space but is fully present in every place. God does not depend on anyone or anything for His existence. He is the great “I AM”. He is eternal, without beginning or ending.

3. What else is God like?

God is holy, righteous, good, and true.



Exodus 34:5-7; Psalm 89:14-16; Revelation 4:8



The word “holy” means “separate”. God is completely

separate from all the creation. He is also completely separate from sin. God is righteous and just. He only does that which is right. This results in blessing for the righteous and judgment on the wicked. God is good. He is loving, merciful, longsuffering, and kind. God is true. He is absolutely reliable and trustworthy.

4. Is there more than one God?

No. There is only one God.



Isaiah 45: 5-6, 20-22



There is only one supreme being. Evil men imagine there are many gods. They turn wood and stone into idols and worship them. In doing this, they have turned away from the one true God.

5. In how many persons does this one God exist?

God exists in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.



*Matthew 28:19; Romans 1:7; John 1:1, 14;
Acts 5:3-4*



This question deals with the doctrine of the Trinity. While the word “trinity” is not found in the Scriptures, the concept is. As the revelation of God unfolds in the Bible we learn that the God of the Old Testament is a Father Who sends His Son (Who is God) and His Spirit (Who is God) for our salvation. The one true God is thus three distinct Persons. The Father is not the Son, the Son is not the Spirit, the Spirit is not the Father.

6. Are there then three Gods?

No. Though God is three persons, He is one being.



Isaiah 44:6, 8



While the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are three separate and distinct persons They share the same essence. Essence is what something or someone is. God is one essence/being. While we may not understand such a three-in-one being, we must receive and believe this as revealed to us by God Himself in His Word.



If there is only one supreme God, what does he deserve from you?

7. What has God given to make you wise unto salvation?

God has given the Bible to make me wise unto salvation.



II Timothy 3:15



The Bible (also called the Scriptures) is a collection of 66 books. It is divided into two main parts. The first part has 39 books and is called the Old Testament. The second part has 27 books and is called the New Testament. These 66 books unite together to form one great and holy book. It is by this book that we learn about God, man, sin, judgment, and the salvation that is in Christ.

8. What is the Bible?

The Bible is God's Word.



II Timothy 3:16



The Bible is not an ordinary book. Its contents are not the result of human philosophy or speculation. It is a revelation from God. The Bible actually claims to be from God. It is said to be “given by inspiration of God”. This literally means “breathed out by God.” Just as we breath out as we speak words, so the Scriptures are the result of God’s “talking”. This is true not just of certain parts of the Bible but of all Scripture. Therefore, the Bible is the very Word of God.

9. How did God give us the Bible?

God gave us the Bible through holy men as they were moved to write His words by the Holy Spirit.



II Peter 1:20-21



Though it is God's Word, the Bible was given through human writers. These men were not the source of the Bible but were moved by the Holy Spirit to write what God wanted to communicate. God used the personalities, writing styles, and life situations of these holy men in writing His truth. However, through the influence of His Spirit they wrote what He wanted to be written.

10. Is the Bible true?

Yes. Because the Bible is God's Word, it is absolutely true and trustworthy.



Psalm 19:7-9; 119:151; John 17:17



Since God is true and the Bible is God's Word, the Bible is true. This is the case for all that is recorded, whether information about history, science, or spiritual matters. It must be remembered that God makes use of human language and thus uses parables, estimations, symbols, and figures of speech. He also accurately records the lies and false words spoken by sinful men. However, these do not affect the truthfulness of Scripture. Since it is true, Scripture is trustworthy. You can depend on it to guide you into a true knowledge of God.

11. What is the Bible like?

The Bible is like a lamp that gives me light.



Psalm 43:3; 119:105; II Peter 1:19



In the Bible darkness is a picture of ignorance and light is a picture of knowledge. God's Word is a source of light (knowledge, understanding, wisdom) for you. By its truth you can know God, make right decisions, and be encouraged through difficulties. God's Word can shine the light on your sin and expose your need of salvation. It can also give you knowledge of Christ, Who alone can save you.



Do you believe that the Bible is God's Word and that you can trust its instruction?

12. Did God create you?

Yes. God created me and all things.



Genesis 1; Revelation 4:11



God made all things in six literal days. He made light, day and night, the sky, land, sea, grass, and trees. He made the sun, moon, and stars. He made the birds of the sky, the fish of the sea, and the animals on the land. On the sixth day, God made man in His own image and gave him dominion over the earth.

13. Why did God create you and all things?

God created me and all things for Himself.



Romans 11:33-36; Colossians 1:16



The whole world exists for God's pleasure and glory. While we enjoy the flowers, mountains, oceans, and stars, they were ultimately made for God and His purposes. You were made for God, not for yourself. Your meaning and purpose in life are related to Him.

14. How can you please God?

I can please God by loving Him with all my heart and by loving others as myself.



Matthew 22:35-40



As the supreme being who created and rules the world, God is worthy to be loved with all of your heart, soul, mind, and strength. Love for God involves affectionate

and faithful commitment to Him. God also expects you to love those who are created in His image. You are to be kind, caring, merciful, and helpful to others. You are to do them good and serve their needs.

15. Do you naturally love God and others?

No. I do not naturally love God or others like I should.



Romans 3:10-18; 23



As human beings, we are inherently selfish. We love ourselves more than we love God and others. We do not worship, obey, and serve God with all our heart, but rather turn away from Him after other things. We do not selflessly treat others as we would want to be treated, but rather we hurt them with our words and actions.

16. Why do you not love God and others like you should?

I do not love God and others like I should because I am born with a sinful heart.



Psalms 51:5; Jeremiah 17:9; Matthew 15:18-19



You do not sin against God and others because of your surroundings or because you learn it from evil influences. You sin because you are a sinner. You were born into this world with a heart that is corrupt and incapable of loving God and others perfectly.

17. What do you mean by a sinful heart?

I mean that my heart naturally leads me to sin in my thoughts, words, and actions.



Job 15:14-16; Ephesians 2:1-3



According to the Bible, you are dead in trespasses and sins, completely cut off from God's life and righteous ways. Your way of living is naturally according to the ways of this world which is under the influence of Satan. Every person naturally fulfills the desires of his body and mind and is by nature a child of wrath.

18. What is sin?

Sin is anything about me that transgresses or does not conform to God's law.



I John 3:4



God's law has been made known both in the Scriptures and in our conscience. His law is a reflection of His righteous and holy nature. You sin when you live without reverence to God and His commands. You sin when you are not what God wants you to be, when you do what He does not want you to do, and when you do not do what He wants you to do.

19. How did you receive your sinful heart?

I received my sinful heart from Adam who sinned along with Eve in the Garden of Eden.



Genesis 3:1-8; Psalm 51:5; Romans 5:12



Our sinful hearts can be traced through our parents and grandparents all the way back to Adam and Eve, the first man and woman. Though created without sin, Adam and Eve disobeyed God's command regarding the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Though both sinned, it was through Adam's sin that the entire human race became corrupted.

20. Can you overcome your sinful heart?

No. I am a slave of my sinful heart.



Romans 3:9; 6:17



Sin is pictured as a cruel slave master and a terrible dictator. We are said to be "under" sin. It has an authority and power from which we cannot break free.

21. Do all people sin?

Yes. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God.



Romans 3:9-12, 23; 5:12



The spiritual disease of sin has infected the entire human race. Though some may appear to be better than others, all have sinned. Since the whole human race was in Adam when he sinned, there is a real sense in which we all sinned with him. In addition to this, all men personally sin in thought, word, and deed.



Do you have a sinful heart? In what ways has sin manifested its power in your life?

22. What has God given to help you see your sin?

God has given the Law to help me see my sin.



Romans 3:20; 7:7-9



Though God gave His Law to the nation of Israel in the Old Testament, the Ten Commandments express the moral righteousness God requires. With the exception of the command to keep the Sabbath, all of these commands are expressed again in the New Testament. God's Law is good and holy but because of your sinful heart you cannot keep it perfectly. God uses the Law to expose just how sinful we are.

23. What are the first five commandments of God's Law?

Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.

Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image.

Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain.

Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.

Honor thy father and thy mother.



Exodus 20:3-12



The first five of the Ten Commandments deal with love for God. They forbid having any other gods and worshipping idols. They forbid using God's holy name in a light or flippant way. They also call for Israel to observe the Sabbath and to honor father and mother (since God gives them authority to teach His ways). If

we are honest, we will admit that we have not perfectly loved, worshiped, and honored God, nor have we honored His representatives (our parents) as we should.

24. What are the last five commandments of God's Law?

Thou shalt not kill.
Thou shalt not commit adultery.
Thou shalt not steal.
Thou shalt not bear false witness.
Thou shalt not covet.



Exodus 20:13-17; Matthew 5:21-30; Romans 13:10



The last five of the Ten Commandments deal with love for other people. Love does not treat others badly. If we love others we will not kill them or take their possessions. We will not take the person to whom they are married for ourselves or lie about them. We will not strongly desire to have what they have. The command not to covet is especially important because it shows that God is not just interested in outward actions but also in our heart. Jesus confirms this when He condemns both anger (the heart of the murderer) and lust (the heart of the adulterer). We do not perfectly love others in the way God's Law requires.

**? Have you always kept the Ten Commandments?
Do you think you could keep them perfectly?**

25. What is the result of your sin?

The result of my sin is that I am a guilty and condemned, enemy of God.



Romans 2:15; 3:19; 8:7



Even though we are not Israelites under the Old Testament Law, the moral righteousness God requires is written on our hearts. When we violate God's ways we often feel guilty. More importantly, we are guilty before God. God is everywhere present and has perfect knowledge of everything you think, say, or do. Since you have broken His laws and have violated His ways, you are accountable to Him. Our sins are offensive to our holy God and He views us as rebellious criminals. Since our lives are opposed to Him we are His enemies.

26. What must God do to you because of your sin?

God must punish me because of my sin.



Acts 17:31; Romans 2:5-6; Hebrews 9:27



God is absolutely just, therefore all sin must be punished. While He does not always punish sin immediately or to the fullest extent in this life, all sinners will receive their due punishment eventually. This ultimate judgment day will come at the end of the world.

27. How will God punish you for your sin?

God will punish me by casting me into the Lake of Fire.



Revelation 20:11-15



The Lake of Fire is the place of God's final judgment for sinners. At the end of the world, death and Hell (the temporary place of punishment) will deliver up all sinners to stand before God's throne where they will be judged according to their works. The Lake of Fire will be a place of eternal darkness, pain, and suffering. The awfulness of this judgment should help us see just how terrible our many sins against God really are.



Do you believe that you truly deserve God's eternal judgment for your sins?

28. Is there any hope for you in God's Law?

No. God's Law cannot save me, it can only condemn me.



Romans 3:20; Galatians 3:10-12



The Law of God is like a mirror. It does very well at showing us how defiled we are. However, mirrors are not designed to make us clean! The Law can only tell you what God expects and condemn you when you fail. It has no power to save you.

29. Is there any hope for you in your family heritage?

No. Even if my parents are Christians, I am still under God's judgment for my sins.



John 1:12-13; 3:1-8



Being born into a Christian family does not make one a Christian. Salvation is not about physical birth but rather spiritual birth. Those who are born of a human blood line and of the flesh must personally experience a new birth from God's Spirit.

30. Is there any hope for you in religious rituals?

No. Religious rituals are external but my need is internal, in my heart.



Psalms 51:16-17; Romans 2:28-29



Outward religious rituals such as Jewish circumcision, sacrifices, baptism, or communion have no effect on a corrupt and sinful heart. Such outward rituals cannot atone for sin, give new life, or save you from God's judgment. The nation of Israel often kept up their external religion while their hearts were far from the Lord. Attempting to be righteous through religious rituals is like dressing up a dead man in nice clothes.

31. Where is hope to be found then?

Hope is to be found in the Gospel.



Romans 1:16-17



God has not left mankind without hope. In His mercy He has provided hope for salvation in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This Gospel is your only hope.

32. What is the Gospel?

The Gospel is the good news that we can be saved because Jesus Christ died for our sins according to the Scripture, was buried, and rose again on the third day according to the Scripture.



1 Corinthians 15:1-4



The word “gospel” means “good news”. This good news is about a Person, Jesus Christ, Who is able to save sinners. It is a message about important historical events (Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection) and their purpose (for sin). It is the good news that an effective sacrifice has been made for our sins and that God is offering pardon and eternal life to all who deserve His wrath.

33. From where did this good news come?

This good news came from God Who is great in His love and mercy toward sinners.



John 3:16; Ephesians 2:1-8; Titus 1:2



The Gospel did not originate with man. Both God’s plan to redeem sinners and His promise of eternal life existed before the world began. The Gospel does not come to us because of any goodness in us or because we are deserving, but because of God’s great love.



Do you believe that God has provided hope for your salvation in the Gospel?

34. Who is Jesus Christ?

Jesus Christ is God's Son.



Mark 1:1; John 14:6-11



Jesus was not a mere religious teacher or prophet. He was God's Son. The Scriptures are clear that Jesus is God's only begotten Son which points to His uniqueness. Though men may become sons of God through salvation, Jesus has always been God's Son. As God's Son, Jesus perfectly represents God to man.

35. Is Jesus God?

Yes. As God's Son, Jesus is one in essence with the Father and Holy Spirit.



John 1:1, 14; 17:5; Philippians 2:5-6



Before coming to earth, Christ was in Heaven with the Father and sharing in His glory. He was in the form of God and equal with God. He is called the Word and it is by Him that the world was created. While He is a distinct person from the Father and Spirit, He has the same divine essence.

36. How did God's Son come to earth?

God's Son came to earth by being born of the virgin Mary.



Isaiah 7:14; Luke 1:26-35



Jesus was conceived supernaturally in Mary's womb by

the Holy Spirit of God. His miraculous birth was prophesied in the Old Testament. In this way the Word (Who was with God and was God) was made flesh and dwelled among us. This is called the Incarnation.

37. So was Jesus a man?

Yes. Jesus was both fully God and fully man.



Luke 2:52; Romans 5:15; I Timothy 2:5



In the Incarnation the Son of God became a man (without setting aside deity). He was born, learned to walk, grew in wisdom, stature, and in favor with God and man. He hungered, was thirsty, felt pain, and grew tired. The humanity of Jesus qualified Him to die in our place as one of us. Since sin and death came into the world by a man (Adam), righteousness and life must be restored by a man (Jesus).

38. Was Jesus born with a sinful heart?

No. Jesus was born pure and holy.



Luke 1:35; I John 3:5



Jesus did not inherit a sinful heart from Adam. He was never “in Adam” but through the virgin birth entered the human race from the outside. He was holy and without that natural enslavement to sin that we have.

39. Did Jesus ever sin?

No. Jesus never sinned. He always did that which was pleasing to God.



John 8:29; II Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 4:15



Early in His ministry Jesus was tempted by the Devil in the wilderness. During this time of intense temptation Jesus did not sin. Unlike Adam and Eve, He perfectly obeyed God. The Jews accused Him of being a blasphemer and indicated to Pontus Pilate that He was a threat to Caesar. However, Jesus was innocent of these accusations. Even as He was being mocked and mistreated during the crucifixion, He did not sin. As a perfectly righteous man Jesus was the perfect substitute for sinners.



Do you believe Jesus is God and man, that He was born of a virgin, and lived a sinless life?

40. What do you mean that Jesus died for our sins?

I mean that in His death on the cross, Jesus suffered the punishment for our sins and satisfied God's just wrath against us.



Isaiah 53:5-6, 10; I Peter 2:24, 3:18; I John 4:10



Jesus' death was like the Old Testament lamb sacrifices. As the Lamb of God He took our sins on Himself and died under the judgment of God in our place. Jesus is our propitiation. Propitiation is the satisfaction of God's wrath. God's justice was served on Jesus so that we could escape judgment and be reconciled to Him.

41. Was it necessary for Jesus to shed His blood?

Yes. It was necessary for Jesus to shed His blood because without the shedding of blood there is no remission..



Hebrews 9:22; 1 Peter 1:18-19; Revelation 1:5



The life of the flesh is in the blood. Just as God required the blood of bulls and goats in the Old Testament, God required the blood of His Son in order that sins may be forgiven. The blood sacrifices of the Old Testament only brought a temporary covering for sin but were incapable of permanently removing it. Through Jesus' blood there can be a complete remission (forgiveness) and cleansing of sins.

42. Why did Jesus die for our sins.

Jesus died for our sins to reconcile us to God.



II Corinthians 5:18-21; Colossians 1:20-22



Our sins make us God's enemies. Since the Garden of Eden we have been in a state of rebellion. Through Christ's death on the cross God was reconciling the world back unto Himself. Having dealt with our sin, our relationship with God can be restored as one of peace. This restored relationship is manifested in our being made the holy people of God who love, worship, obey, and serve Him in this world.

43. How do you know that Jesus died?

I know that Jesus died because He was buried.



Matthew 27:57-60; I Corinthians 15:4



That Jesus was buried is an indication that those who handled His body (from the Romans who were responsible for His crucifixion to Joseph of Arimethea and Nicodemus who buried Him) believed Him to be dead. Jesus did not pass out only to revive later. He truly experienced death for us.

44. Did Jesus remain dead?

No. Jesus arose from the dead on the third day.



Matthew 28:1-7; Acts 2:22-31



Jesus arose from the dead just as the Scriptures foretold. As the promised King who would sit on David's throne and rule both Israel and the world, it was impossible that death should hold Him. The resurrection vindicated Jesus as the righteous Son of God He claimed to be. Without the resurrection we would still be in our sins and without hope of salvation.

45. How do you know Jesus arose from the dead?

I know that Jesus arose from the dead because He was seen by His Apostles and many other witnesses.



Acts 10:39-41; I Corinthians 15:3-8



In addition to leaving behind an empty tomb, Jesus showed Himself to His chosen Apostles on several occasions. Jesus did not show Himself to them in dreams, visions, or momentary appearances. Instead, He showed Himself in ways that left no doubt He was really alive from the dead. He talked with them, ate with them, and taught them. He even encouraged Thomas to touch the nail prints in His hands. Jesus also appeared to a large number at one time (over 500). It is through these official and eyewitness testimonies that we can know that Jesus arose from the dead.

46. Where is Jesus now?

Jesus is now sitting at the right hand of God in Heaven where He ascended as Savior and Lord.



Acts 1:9-11; Hebrew 4:14-16



In the presence of His disciples Jesus was taken up into the clouds with the promise that He will come again the same way. In Heaven Jesus has been given a place of honor above any other human being (or angel). He is seated at the right hand of God. It is there that He serves as our High Priest Who intercedes for us and helps us. He will remain by the right hand of God until His enemies are made His footstool and the Kingdom of God comes to earth.



Do you believe Jesus died for your sins, was buried, rose from the dead, and ascended as Lord?

47. What did Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection make possible?

Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection made my salvation possible.



Romans 5:8-10; 1 Corinthians 15:1-2



The death, burial, and resurrection of Christ made it possible for God to save those who come to Him by Jesus. What Christ has done for us stands as the only means of salvation available to mankind.

48. What does salvation involve?

Salvation involves forgiveness, justification, and regeneration.



Romans 5:18; Ephesians 1:7; Titus 3:5



While there are many glories of salvation, these three comprise the essence of the salvation God offers.

49. What is forgiveness?

Forgiveness is God releasing me from the guilt and judgment of all my sins.



Acts 26:18; Ephesians 1:7



Our forgiveness essentially involves God releasing us from being accountable to Him for our sins. It is like the cancelling of a great debt. At the moment of salvation every sin committed is pardoned and every future sin is cleansed through the blood of Jesus. When we

view forgiveness as the result of a payment which delivers us from judgment we call it redemption.

50. What is justification?

Justification is God declaring me righteous.



Romans 3:21-24; 4:5



Justification is a judicial act. It is the opposite of condemnation. Instead of condemning us for our sins, the supreme Judge declares us righteous. Justification does not involve infusing us with righteousness (as in sanctification) but relates to the way God views us in connection to His justice. God declares us righteous even though in ourselves we are still sinful. This justification is not an ongoing process but the immediate blessing of all who believe.

51. How can God be just if He declares a sinner righteous?

God can be just because the sinner's sins are forgiven and the righteousness of God is imputed to him in Christ.



Romans 3:24-26; 4:1-8; Philippians 3:8-9



God does not act unjustly when He declares sinners righteous. His declaration is based on forgiveness and imputation. To impute is to account or reckon. Negatively, God does not impute or account our sins against us because they have been forgiven. Positively, He accounts us as having the very righteousness of God in Christ.

52. What is regeneration?

Regeneration is God giving me new and everlasting life.



John 3:3-8, 16, 36; Ephesians 2:5; Titus 3:5



Jesus promised everlasting life. In regeneration, we participate in Christ's resurrected life and are made alive unto God by His Spirit. This new life is one that is bent toward God and righteousness rather than toward sin. Though our bodies may die, we will go on living and receive new, glorified bodies in the rapture or resurrection. Regeneration is sometimes referred to as the new birth or being born again.

53. Is regeneration the same as adoption?

No. In regeneration I receive new life. In adoption I am made an heir of an inheritance.



Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:4-7



Both regeneration and adoption have to do with being in the family of God. Regeneration involves receiving new life. Adoption emphasizes the truth that God has made us His heirs even though we were not originally a part of His family. We have assurance that we are heirs because He puts His Spirit in our hearts. God's adopted sons will inherit the glories awaiting them in Heaven and in the coming Kingdom of God.

? Do you believe it is possible for you to be forgiven, justified, and regenerated?

54. Is this salvation freely given?

Yes. It is the gift of God.



Romans 4:4-5; 5:17; 6:23; Ephesians 2:8



Salvation is the merciful and gracious gift of God to sinners. To understand salvation in any other terms would radically change the very nature of the Gospel. God does not owe us salvation. Nor is there anything we can do to demand, will, or earn salvation. We deserve God's judgment in the Lake of Fire. Thus, salvation is a gracious gift.

55. How do you receive this gift of salvation?

I receive this gift of salvation by faith.



John 3:36; Acts 16:30-31; Romans 3:22-26



A gift offered must be received in order for it to be a gift possessed. The gift of salvation is received by faith. It is by faith that we come to possess all the glories of salvation. By faith we are forgiven, justified, and regenerated. For this reason, sinners are commanded to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

56. What does faith involve?

Faith involves knowing the Gospel, believing the Gospel, and trusting Christ to save me.



Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 1:12-13



True saving faith involves knowledge, belief, and trust. The Gospel is a message about certain truths which must be known (like the truth that Christ died for our sins, was buried, and rose again). Not only must we know the facts of the Gospel in our head, we must also believe them to be true. The final element of faith involves trust. Faith looks to Christ for salvation, trusting that He can and will save us as He promised.

57. What accompanies true saving faith?

Repentance accompanies true saving faith.



Luke 24:46-47; Acts 17:30; 20:21



Faith and repentance go hand in hand. They are two sides of the same coin (conversion). Sometimes the Bible mentions one without the other and sometimes it mentions both together. It is impossible to truly turn to Christ in faith for salvation without repentance. On the other hand, true repentance will lead to faith in Christ.

58. What is repentance?

Repentance is changing my mind about my sin and turning from sin to God.



Acts 26:20; Hebrews 6:1



In the Bible repentance unites two important concepts, a change of thinking and a turning. Repentance happens when we come to realize how terrible our sins are and how they bring us under God's judgment. It hap-

pens when we turn from sin in our heart (with a desire not to live contrary to His ways any longer) and turn to Him for salvation. Repentance leads to outward fruit (there are fruits “meet for repentance”) but repentance itself is a matter of the mind and heart.

59. How can you come to Christ in faith if your heart is sinful?

I can come to Christ in faith as God draws me by His Spirit through the Gospel.



John 6:44-45; Acts 16:14; 26:17-18



It is impossible for those who are spiritually dead and enslaved to sin to come to Christ in faith apart from God’s gracious drawing. This drawing occurs as God instructs our heart through the Gospel. The Spirit not only instructs us but works on our heart to lead us to see our need and desire salvation. In this way He enables us to come to Christ in faith. Our part is to listen and learn as God does this work so that we will be enabled to come. This grace must not be resisted!

60. How is saving faith expressed?

Saving faith is expressed by calling on the name of the Lord.



Luke 18:13-14; Romans 10:13



Salvation is received through repentant faith which occurs in the heart. However, prayer has always been an expression of faith. Sinners may express their faith

by calling on the Lord to save them from their sins through His work on the cross and by His resurrection. Such prayers are not a “one size fits all” (consider the prayer of the thief on the cross) and must come from the heart rather than from a mere recitation of “a sinner’s prayer”.

61. How else is saving faith expressed?

Saving faith is also expressed by confessing Jesus as Lord.



Romans 10:9; I Corinthians 12:3



Confessing Jesus as Lord involves verbally acknowledging that Jesus is the Lord. This involves the Spirit given conviction that though He suffered humiliation, Jesus has been exalted by God to be the ruler of all. Of course, Christ’s lordship is not merely that of an exalted human being. It also involves His deity. Jesus Christ is the God-man who is Lord of lords and King of kings.

? **Have you repented, believed, and prayed for salvation? Are you willing to confess Jesus as Lord?**

62. Who applies salvation to you?

The Holy Spirit applies salvation to me.



John 3:5-8; I Corinthians 6:11



The Holy Spirit is the One who applies salvation to the sinner. It is by the Spirit that sinners are born again, washed, sanctified, and justified.

63. Who is the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is God, one in essence with the Father and Son.



Genesis 1:2; Matthew 28:19; I Corinthians 3:16



The Holy Spirit is not a divine force or energy. He is a person Who has intelligence, exercises His will, and can be grieved. In the Scripture, the Spirit has characteristics of God, was present and active in creation, and is the One Who dwells in the church which is called the temple of God. He is included with the Father and Son in the baptismal formula as having the same name (singular) with them. The Spirit does His part to apply what the Father planned and the Son secured.

64. How does the Holy Spirit apply salvation to you?

The Holy Spirit applies salvation to me by uniting me to Christ in Whom I receive all the spiritual blessings of salvation.



*Romans 6:3-5; I Corinthians 12:13;
Ephesians 1:12-13*



All of the benefits of salvation are located in Christ. It is in Christ that you have forgiveness, adoption, justification, and regeneration. It is the Holy Spirit who

unites us to Christ so that we can have all the benefits of salvation. This uniting us to Christ is referred to as baptizing. It is not a water baptism but a spiritual baptism that occurs at the moment of salvation.

? **Are you in Christ by the Spirit through faith?
Do you have all the benefits that are in Christ?**

65. What should you do once you are saved?

Once I am saved, I should be baptized.



Matthew 28:19; Acts 10:48



In the Scriptures, those who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation submit themselves to baptism. Faith in Christ and baptism are often very closely connected in the Bible.

66. What is baptism?

Baptism is a symbolic act in which I am immersed in water.



Matthew 28:19; Acts 8:36-37



Baptism is a symbol. It is an act which serves as a picture of a spiritual reality. The word “baptize” literally means “immerse”. Immersion into water is the only proper mode of baptism. Neither pouring nor sprinkling connect with this basic meaning of the word.

Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch went down into the water (which would be unnecessary if he was being sprinkled or having water poured on him). Baptism is done to you, usually by a pastor. The pastor places you under the water (by helping you lean back into the water) and brings you back up again.

67. What is the purpose of baptism?

The purpose of baptism is to profess my faith by illustrating my salvation from sin and thus indicating my intention to walk in newness of life.



Matthew 28:19; Romans 6:3-4



Baptism is the believer's public profession of faith. In this symbolic act a believer illustrates the complete break that has been made with the old sinful life and thus indicates a commitment to live in the new life of righteousness. In baptism the believer is identified with the one true God as he is baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost (Spirit).

68. What does going under the water show?

Going under the water shows that I have died in Christ to my old sinful ways.



Romans 6:3



When you trust Christ for salvation you are spiritually baptized (immersed) into Jesus Christ by the Spirit. In this connection with Christ you die to your old sinful

life. Death is a very strong picture of complete separation. Going down into the water is like being buried, a symbolic proof that the old sinful you has died.

69. What does going up out of the water show?

Going up out of the water shows that I have been raised in Christ to walk in newness of life.



Romans 6:4



Just as you are connected to Christ's death in salvation, you are also connected to His resurrection life. In Christ you receive new life and become alive unto God and His righteousness. Coming up out of the water is like a resurrection. It is a picture of the new person you are and indicates your commitment to walk in that new life of righteousness.

70. Why should you be baptized?

I should be baptized because it is commanded.



Matthew 28:19; Acts 10:48



Jesus commands sinners to repent and be baptized. He also commands His church to baptize those who believe the Gospel. An unbaptized believer is practically unheard of in the New Testament (the only instance being that of the thief on the cross who could not be baptized). For you to neglect or refuse baptism is to be disobedient to Christ. This gives the church reason to question the reality of your claim to be saved.

71. Does baptism save you?

No. Baptism does not save me. I am saved by faith.



Acts 16:30-31; Ephesians 2:8



Water cannot wash away your sinful heart. To make baptism necessary for salvation is to add a ritual to faith and thus to corrupt the Gospel of grace. You are justified the same way Abraham was, not by baptism but by faith. Though baptism does not save, it is very closely associated with salvation. For this reason you will find some verses that seem to indicate that it is necessary for salvation. Such verses, however, must be interpreted in the light of the consistent and clear witness of the Scriptures that salvation is by faith.

72. Is baptism for unbelievers?

No. Baptism is only for those who have personally repented and believed the Gospel.



Acts 2:41; 8:12, 36-38; 18:8



Both the examples in Acts and the symbolic nature of baptism indicate baptism is for those who have exercised faith in Christ. The consistent testimony of the book of Acts is that sinners believed and then were baptized. Since baptism is symbolic of salvation, it should only be given to those who are saved. We reject the idea of infant baptism since infants have neither exercised faith in Christ nor have they received His salvation.

73. What should you do once you have been baptized?

Once I have been baptized I should meet with Christ's people and obey Christ's commands.



Acts 2:41-42; Hebrews 10:25



When you receive the Gospel and are baptized you should join yourself to other Christians. You should gather with Christians for fellowship, worship, and edification in what we call the church. You should pay attention to what you are taught and learn all that Christ commands. You should diligently obey Christ's commands and live submissively under His lordship.



Have you been baptized? If so, are you walking in newness of life?

74. Unto what have you been saved?

I have been saved unto love and good works.



Matthew 5:14-16; Ephesians 2:10; I John 3:23



God expects His people to be known for love and good works. Love and good works reflect God and His glory to others because He is loving and does good. The selfish and sinful life is to increasingly give way to a selfless and others centered one. In this way we shine as lights and bring glory to our Heavenly Father.

75. How should you respond to God's love for you in Christ?

I should respond to God's love for me in Christ by loving, worshiping, serving, and obeying Him with all my heart all my life.



II Corinthians 5:14-15; Colossians 3:17; I John 4:19



While our love, worship, service, and obedience do not earn or merit salvation, they are the appropriate response to our salvation. As you consider the great salvation you have been freely given let God's love motivate you to love and serve Him above all else. Give yourself to His purposes in this world. Be willing to forsake all, sell all, give all, suffer all, and even die for the One who has given you all things in Christ!



Are you growing in your love for God and your love for others?



For instruction on Christian living please see the companion booklet "Growing Truths".

