

“Survey of the Doctrines of the Bible”



**Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove,
rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.**

2 Timothy 4:2 (KJV)

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Survey of the Doctrines of the Bible

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Introduction to Doctrinal Footnotes

These theological footnotes are divided into three sections **(1) explanation**, **(2) illustration**, and **(3) application**. When you have absorbed all the notes within one topic area, you will have completed a total survey of that doctrine.

1A-Introduction to Doctrine

1-Apostles' Doctrine

Acts 2:42

Explanation: The word doctrine derives from the Latin term for teaching and refers to the content that was taught in the New Testament. The proper teaching of Scripture was called “**the apostles' doctrine**,” meaning that which the apostles taught. This contrasted with erroneous teaching called ‘doctrines of devils (**1 Tim. 4:1**), meaning that teaching whose source is not God but the messengers of Satan, whose desire it is to substitute false religion for Christianity (**2 Cor. 11:13-15**).

Illustration: The apostles' doctrine was true, not because an apostle taught it, but because it was consistent with the Scriptures. The Bereans examined the teaching of Paul in light of the Scripture before accepting it (**Acts 17:11**). Also, the church at Ephesus examined some who called themselves apostles and found them liars (**Rev. 2:2**).

Application: A Christian should attempt to understand and believe true doctrine, while rejecting all that disagrees with the Word of God (**1 John 4:1**).

2-Heresy

Titus 3:10

Explanation: The word heresy literally means “**choosing one's own ideas**,” but now refers to that which is untrue. Even the New Testament church had false or heretical teachers who taught erroneous doctrine. Some epistles were specifically written to combat them (e.g., **Galatians, 2 Thessalonians**). Paul warned the Romans against identifying with those who promoted divisive, heretical teachings (**Rom. 16:17**). He advised Titus to reject heretics if they did not respond after two warnings (**v.10**). John warned that a heretic should not be admitted into a Christian's home (**2 John 10**).

Illustration: Not everyone who makes an incorrect doctrinal statement is a heretic. When Apollos was further instructed concerning the gospel, he grew into a mighty Christian leader (**Acts 18:24-28**). By contrast, Hymeneus and Philetus were heretics when they rejected truth and hurt the faith of some believers (**2 Tim. 2:16-18**).

Application: Christians should as much as possible dissociate themselves from every heretic so as to be unhindered in their Christian lives.

3-Double Verilies

John 21:18

Explanation: Twenty-five times in the Gospel of John, Jesus uses the expression Verily, verily to introduce a concept the hearer might have a difficulty believing. This intensive expression emphasized that what was stated was true just as God is true. In the Old Testament, a person who might be doubted would use such an expression to insist that he was telling the truth (**Num. 5:22**).

Illustration: In the New Testament, Peter confessed he found some of Paul's epistles hard to understand; nevertheless he accepted them with other Scriptures (**2 Peter 3:15-16**).

Application: When a Christian approaches his Bible, he should do so with a commitment to believe the whole Word of God and not just part of it.

4-Faith- Definition

Rom. 1:17

Explanation: Six kinds or expressions of faith occur in Scripture.

- (1) “**Doctrinal faith**” called “the faith,” refers to the content of Christian belief (**Jude 3**).
- (2) “**Saving faith**” is trusting in Christ and in Him alone for salvation (**Acts 16:31**).
- (3) “**Justifying faith**” is the believer’s reliance on the fact that God has declared him righteous (**Gen. 15:6**).
- (4) “**Indwelling faith**” is trusting God’s Word in and through us (**Gal. 2:20**).
- (5) “**Daily faith**” is that day-by-day dependence on God which is part of the sanctification process (**2 Cor. 5:7**).
- (6) “**The gift of faith**” is a special ability of faith, resulting in a vision of what God can do, faith that is the means by which we can achieve that vision, and the power with God to get answers to prayer (**Heb. 11:1-3**).

Illustration: God’s hall of faith (**Heb. 11**) identifies a number of Old Testament saints who experienced God’s blessing as a result of their faith. Although they did not all experience the same kind of victories, all pleased God by faith (**Heb. 11:6**).

Application: The Christian should remember that it is impossible to please God without faith (**Heb. 11:6**).

5-Failure of Faith

Rom. 4:20

Explanation: There are six New Testament expressions that trace the decline of faith in an individual. Before a person is saved, he may have:

- (1) “**vain faith**” or belief in the wrong doctrine (**1 Cor. 15:14-17**); or
- (2) “**dead faith**,” or belief in orthodox doctrine without personal belief in Christ (**James 2:19-20**).

After a person is saved, he can experience the following varieties of faith:

- (1) a kind of unbelief—experienced by believers who fail to accept the whole work of Christ (**Mark 16:11-14**);
- (2) “**little faith**”—a mixture of faith and unbelief (**Mark 7:26**);
- (3) “**weak faith**”—referring to belief expressed a mere legalism (**Rom. 14:1**); or
- (4) “**strong faith**”—faith that is rooted in the promises of God (**Rom. 4:20**).

Illustration: As Christians mature, they should grow in faith. This was the experience of Abraham. Early in his pilgrimage with God, he could not trust God to protect him in Egypt. This was weak faith (**Gen. 12:10-20**). He was later able to trust God, in sacrificing his son Isaac. This was strong faith (**Heb. 11:17-19**).

Application: The Christian life is a continual growing adventure in faith.

6-Witness of the Spirit

Rom. 8:16

Explanation: The witness of the Spirit is the inner assurance of God’s truth. One of the conditions of this inner conviction concerning the things of God is obedience to His known will (**John 7:17**). God uses this ministry of the Holy Spirit to convince us of truth that cannot be understood other than through divine help (**Matt. 16:17**).

Illustration: This witness was obvious in Peter’s confession of Christ (**Matt. 16:16-17**). Even though others had observed Christ and drawn certain erroneous conclusions, Peter

received spiritual insight from God as to who Jesus really was (**Matt. 16:17**). This enlightenment did not mean he had nothing more to learn, because perhaps within minutes of his confession, he was being rebuked by Jesus for his lack of spiritual insight (**Matt. 16:23**).

Application: Christians should be careful always to obey the clearly revealed will of God, so as not to hinder this ministry in their lives.

7-Fundamentalism

Heb. 6:1-2

Explanation: Fundamentalism is a movement growing out of the controversy with religious liberalism at the beginning of this century, when godly Christian leader insisted that certain truths were fundamental to Christianity and could not be compromised. These included divine creation, the verbal inspiration and inerrancy of Scripture, the virgin birth of Christ, His deity, substitutionary atonement, bodily resurrection, and physical return, and the existence of a literal heaven and hell. Though good Christians might disagree in other areas, to deny these essentials is to abandon the Christian faith.

Illustration: History records the sad accounts of some who refused to accept scriptural authority and made shipwrecks of their faith. For example, Diotrefes opposed an epistle from John, and then began harming the ministry of faithful Christians under his influence (**3 John 9-10**).

Application: Christians are wise to build their lives and ministries upon the solid foundation of Christ's teaching (**Matt. 7:24-25**).

8-Tradition

2 Thes. 2:15

Explanation: The word tradition literally means "a giving over by word of mouth or writing." It refers to teachings handed down from one person to another. Tradition is not in and of itself wrong; it is only wrong when opposed to the Word of God. In the early church, good tradition was the principal means of Christian instruction (**Luke 1:2**). Paul used this word to describe his teachings, especially at Corinth and Thessalonica (**2 Thes. 2:15; 2 Thes. 3:6**). False tradition ends up as heresy or apostasy.

Illustration: The religious leaders of Jesus' day erred in placing the traditions of men above the Word of God (**Matt. 15:1-9**). In contrast, Luke sifted through existing records and apparently interviewed witnesses in writing an inspired record to instruct Theophilus in the faith (**Luke 1:1-4**).

Application: Christians need to sit under the preaching and teaching of the Word of God, but when the content conflicts with the Scriptures, the teaching of men should be disregarded for the certain truth of the Bible.

9-Principles of Interpretation

2 Tim. 2:15

Explanation: As we study the Word of God, we should apply both the spiritual and literal principles of interpretation. The spiritual principles include prayer (**Psalms 119:18**), cleansing (**1 John 1:9**), and the illumination by the Holy Spirit (**1 Cor. 2:12-16**). The principle of literally understanding Scripture is to interpret it according to:

- (1) the mind of the author;
- (2) its historical background;
- (3) the context of the passage; and
- (4) the basic rules of grammar.

Illustration: Joshua was promised success if he meditated on the law (Josh. 1:8), and he won that success when he conquered the kings of Canaan. As a disciple of Moses, and as one who had a personal relationship with God, he could interpret the law of God and understand God's will for his life.

Application: If we desire the will of God in our lives, we must regularly and systematically interpret God's Word according to its proper meaning.

1-The Doctrine of the Bible

1-Revelation

Deut. 29:29

Explanation: Revelation is the act by which God gave men knowledge about Himself and His Creation, which man could not otherwise have known. The Scriptures speak of God's self-revelation in a general way in nature (**Psalm 19:1; Rom. 1:18**), but especially in the Scriptures (**Deut. 29:29; Heb. 1:1**). While the Scriptures do not reveal everything, they do reveal all we need to know about God.

Illustration: The relationship between God's revelation in nature and in the Scriptures is best seen in the visit of the Magi. God used the star to show them the King of the Jews had been born, but they were directed to Bethlehem by the revealed Word of God. When they arrived they saw the complete revelation of Jesus Christ (**Matt. 2:1-11**).

Application: While we can appreciate God's Creation and be impressed by what it reveals concerning Him, our most complete record of what God is like is the Bible.

2-Means of Revelation

Heb. 1:1

Explanation: God has revealed Himself through various means, such as visions (**Isaiah 6**), dreams (**Dan. 2**), poetry (**Psalm 139**), biography (especially the Gospels), sermons (**Matt. 5-7**), face-to-face conversations (**Deut. 5:4**), tablets of stone (**Deut. 10:4**), miracles (**John 6**), parables (**Luke 15**), inner compulsion (**Acts 21:10-13**), history (**1 and 2 Chronicles**), angels (**Luke 1:26-38**), historical research (**Luke 1:1-4**), and the person of Christ (**John 1:14**). **His means of self-revelation today is the Bible.**

Illustration: When God wanted Peter to preach the gospel to the Gentiles, He imparted this through a vision (**Acts 10**). Even then, Peter appears to have been somewhat reluctant to obey God completely.

Application: Today we do not depend on dreams and visions to learn about God and His will for our lives, but rather on God's revelation in the Scriptures. God did not impart the gospel to Cornelius in a vision, but commanded a man to go and preach the Word of God to him.

3-Mystery

Eph. 3:3

Explanation: The word mystery in the New Testament identifies truth that was previously hidden from common knowledge, but is now revealed, discernible only by the aid of the Holy Spirit (**Rom. 16:25-26; 1 Cor. 2:7-10**). There are seven aspects of "the mystery" that period known as "the times of the Gentiles." These are:

1. the **mystery of the incarnation** (**1 Cor. 2:7; Col. 2:2,9**);
2. the **mystery of the gospel** (**Eph. 6:19**);
3. the **mystery of Christ and His church** (**Eph. 5:32**);
4. the **mystery of the indwelling of Christ** (**Col.1:27**);
5. the **mystery of both Jews and Gentiles in one body** (**Eph. 3:1-12**);
6. the **mystery of the kingdom of heaven** (**Matt. 13**);
7. the **mystery of the Rapture** (**1 Cor. 15:51**).

Illustration: Because the mystery of the gospel was not revealed clearly until after the church was established, the Devil and his demonic servants were the unwitting servants

of God. Had they understood what they were doing, they would not have crucified the Lord (**1 Cor. 2:8**).

Application: The Christian however, who understands the plan of God for this world, should be eager to do his part.

4-Inspiration

2 Tim. 3:16

Explanation: This refers to the supernatural guidance of the writers of Scripture by the Spirit of God, so that what they wrote was the divine Word of God, transcribed **accurately, reliably,** and **without error** in the original manuscripts (“autographs”). The word inspiration itself pictures God breathing out His Word to men.

Illustration: Not everything written by an apostle or a prophet was necessarily inspired. Paul wrote at least three epistles to the Corinthians, but apparently only two were inspired record (**1 Cor. 5:9**). **Samuel, Nathan,** and **Gad** each wrote accounts of David’s life; only one of these prophets produced an inspired record (**1 Chron. 29:29**). In reference to **1 Chron. 29:29** you will note that these are non-canonical source materials, which the author of Chronicles was, under divine inspiration, led to consult. Many other such Hebrew writings are mentioned by the Old Testament authors (e.g., Josh. 10:13; 2 Sam. 1:18; 1 Kings 11:41; 1 Kings 14:29; 2 Chron. 9:29; 2 Chron. 12:15; 2 Chron. 13:22; 2 Chron. 24:27; 2 Chron. 26:22; 2 Chron. 33:19) and, doubtless, others existed and were circulated as well. However, no claim can be made for the inspiration of all these now **lost books**, inspiration being the Holy Spirit’s particular work in recording God’s revealed truth solely as contained in the canonical Scriptures.

Application: Since the Scriptures are given to help Christians grow in maturity, they should rely upon them for doctrine, reproof, correction, and **instruction** in righteousness (right living).

5-Holy Spirit Inspiration

2 Pet. 1:21

Explanation: The Scriptures were written by holy men of God (about 40 in all) “as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.” While in no way denying the personalities of the human writers or rejecting the distinctiveness of their particular styles, the Holy Spirit controlled the process of bringing things to the writers’ memories (**John 16:13**) and ensuring what they recorded was the very Word of God.

Illustration: **Jeremiah** once became so frustrated that he wanted to quit, but God’s Spirit compelled him to go on (**Jer. 20:9**). Likewise, **Jonah** at first refused to take God’s message to Ninevah, but later obeyed God’s second call (**Jonah 3:1**).

Application: As Christians read the Bible, they can be confident that it is the very Word of God.

6-Authority of the Scriptures

John 10:35

Explanation: The Scriptures (both Old and New Testaments) were recognized by the early church as the final authority on all matters of faith and practice. Jesus spoke of the letters (**Matt. 5:18**) and verb tenses (**Matt. 22:31-32**) as being significant and authoritative. Part of Paul’s argument against the legalism in Galatia was based upon a simple noun that the apostle held as authoritative (**Gal. 3:16**). Jesus said the Scripture could not be broken, that is, treated as though it does not exist (**John 10:35**).

Illustration: A brief reading of Matthew shows how authoritative the Old Testament was to early Christians. That this authority applied also to the New Testament is illustrated by Paul in **1 Timothy 5:18**. There Paul quotes from Old and New Testaments (**Deut. 25:4; Luke 10:7**) in biblical support of his argument.

Application: As we study the Scriptures, we must be careful to be doers of the Word and not hearers only.

7-Inerrancy

John 17:17

Explanation: When applied to Scripture, the term inerrancy means that what God revealed and inspired is accurate, reliable, authoritative, and without error. Since all Scripture is inspired, every Word of God is true. Just as a book often reflects the character of its writer, so the Scripture is without error because God is without fault.

Illustration: Jesus upheld the principle of inerrancy when He preached in Nazareth. He carefully stopped reading in the middle of a verse before announcing the fulfillment of Scripture that day (**Isaiah 61:1-2; Luke 4:18**). The rest of the Isaiah passage will be fulfilled at His second coming.

Application: As we read the Scriptures, we can have total confidence in their reliability and accuracy.

8-Preservation of Scriptures

Jer. 36:27

Explanation: God, who inspired the Scripture, has throughout the years protected His Word from the attacks of evil men so as to preserve its content and existence. While the autographs (the original manuscripts) have long since disappeared, ancient copies and quotations from early Christian leaders demonstrate the preservation of Scripture. If there were no manuscripts, a complete copy of the Scriptures could be reproduced simply from the many quotations found in the writings of the church fathers.

Illustration: God's preservation of Scriptures was demonstrated in the ministry of Jeremiah. When the king destroyed the first scroll of his prophecy, God had it reproduced to ensure its preservation (**Jer. 36:27**).

Application: As we read the Scriptures, the fact that God has preserved them for us over the years should emphasize their importance.

9-Lost Books

2 Chr. 33:19

Explanation: There are at least a dozen books cited in Scripture that are not part of our Bible, including the **Book of Jasher (Josh. 10:13; 2 Sam. 1:18)**; the **Book of the Acts of Solomon (1 King 11:41)**; the **Prophecy of Abijah the Shilonite, the Visions of Iddo the Seer, the Book of Nathan the Prophet (2 Chron. 9:29)**; the **Book of Gad the Seer (1 Chron. 29:29)**; the **Book of Shemaiah the Prophet (2 Chron. 12:15)**; **Acts of Uzziah (2 Chron. 26:22)**; the **Sayings of the Seers (2 Chron. 33:19)**; the **epistles of Paul to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 5:9)** and the **Laodiceans (Col. 4:16)**; the **Book of Enoch (Jude 14)**; an **epistle of John (3 John 9)**; and **probably other accounts of Jesus' life (Luke 1:1-2)**. These are sometimes erroneously referred to as the "lost books of Scripture."

Illustration: There is no indication that any of these non-biblical books were inspired. The doctrine of preservation argues that inspired books providentially survived, implying

that the lost books were not inspired. They may have recorded interesting background to the inspired record of God, but they were not Scripture.

Application: Christians do not need to be concerned about missing portions of their Bible, since Scripture is complete with 66 books.

10-Canonicity

Gal. 6:16

Explanation: The word canon originally meant “reed” (a measuring rule) and came to signify a standard for determining which books were Scripture. The books placed in Scripture:

- (1) were considered inspired
- (2) gave evidence of containing revelation
- (3) gave evidence of apostolicity; and
- (4) were uniquely used by the Holy Spirit.

When the church finally collected the 66 books into a “canon,” it did not make the books become Scripture: the church was only recognizing what God had done. The books were Scripture the moment they were written.

Illustration: Not all Christian literature of the first century is included in the canon, only that which is inspired. The church at Ephesus was one of the first to collect the books of the New Testament, and it carefully examined them before endorsement.

Application: As Christians read the Scriptures, they should walk according to their rule.

11-Illumination

Psalms 119:18

Explanation: Illumination is the ministry of the Holy Spirit by which He causes Christians to understand the truths of God revealed in Scripture. The word conviction, meaning “cause to see,” is primarily used of the Spirit’s work in revealing sin in the unsaved (**John 16:8**). The word understanding is used of the Spirit’s work in revealing other truth in Scripture.

Illustration: The psalmist recognized the need for supernatural aid in understanding the Scriptures and prayed that his eyes would be opened (**Psalms 119:18**). This would also be a good prayer for Christians today as they approach the Scriptures.

Application: Since the Bible was written by holy men of God, inspired by the Holy Spirit, it should also be read by holy men of God and women of God illumined by the Holy Spirit.

II-The Doctrine of God

1-Cosmological Argument for the existence of God Rom. 1:20

Explanation: The argument from cause and effect is one logical argument for the existence of God. As everything that exists must have an adequate cause, so an all-powerful and intelligent God is an adequate cause to explain the universe. The Scripture identifies that “cause” as the creative power of God (**Gen. 1:1; Rom. 1:19-20**).

2-Teleological Argument for the existence of God Psalm 94:9

Explanation: The existence of God is proven by the order and useful arrangement in the universe. The orderly world in which we live clearly demonstrates that a great mind was behind its arrangement. The Scripture identifies God as that great intelligence.

3-Ontological Argument for the existence of God Heb. 3:4

Explanation: The word ontological comes from the root “being” and is a deductive argument that only indicates the probable existence of God. (**Rom. 1:20 and Psalm 94:9 for stronger arguments**). It reasons that the idea of a perfect and infinite Being cannot be derived from a finite and imperfect human being. Therefore, a perfect and infinite Being who exists must have placed the idea in mankind.

4-Anthropological Argument for the existence of God Rom. 2:15

Explanation: The existence of man as a moral and intellectual being is an argument for the existence of a moral and intellectual being called God. This is true because man was created in the image and likeness of God (**Gen. 1:26**), and even after the Fall he has the law of God written in his heart (**Rom. 2:15**).

Illustration: When people follow God, they often follow the God they see in the lives of others. Paul taught the Corinthians to follow him as he followed the Lord (**1 Cor. 11:1**).

Application: So today, Christians ought to be careful to reflect the character of God in their lives and not become a stumbling block to the gospel.

5-Nature of God 1 John 4:8

Explanation: The nature of God is His “essence” or His “substance.” God’s nature includes all that He is that makes Him uniquely God. Any complete definition of God’s nature should include the following seven aspects: Spirit, person, life, self-existence, unchangeableness, infinitude, and unity. (**John 4:24 for a definition of God**). Without these things, God would not be God.

Illustration: Because God is so difficult to comprehend, Jesus became a Man revealing the essence of the Father and proclaiming truth concerning God (**John 1:14,18**). As we read the gospel accounts of the ministry of Christ, it becomes easier for us to understand what God is like.

Application: The first commandment of the law requires that we love and worship God as He truly is, implying we should study the nature of God (**Ex. 20:3; Matt. 22:37-38**).

6-Definition of God

John 4:24

Explanation: John gives three descriptions of God. He is Spirit (**John 4:24**), love (**1 John 4:8**), and light (**1 John** without **1:5**). God is a spiritual being who is invisible and without a body; He is a divine person who reveals Himself in perfect, intellect, emotion, and will; He is the source and personification of all material and spiritual life; He is self-existent; He is eternal in relationship to time; He is unlimited in relationship to the immensity of space; He is immutable in His nature; He is the unity of all existence; and He is consistent in His being---that is, He corresponds in actual fact to His nature and attributes as they are revealed to us.

7-Anthropomorphisms

Gen. 4:14

Explanation: Occasionally the Scriptures use expressions that seem to attribute human, physical features to God (such as fingers, hands, arms, and face). Theologians refer to these as “anthropomorphisms.”

Illustration: Because God is spirit and not a body (**John 4:24**), we know these expressions do not describe Him physically but are used to help man understand truths concerning God.

Application: Paul used a similar type of expression when he urged Christians to “run with patience the race that is set before us” (**Heb.12:1**). He did not mean Christians should devote time to jogging as they would to prayer and Bible study. He used this figure of speech to emphasize the truth of continuing to live the Christian life.

8-Simplicity of God

1 John 1:15

Explanation: *Simplicity* means that God is not complex, compounded, or divisible in His nature. Simplicity does not deny the three distinct persons of the Trinity. The three distinct persons all share in the same “essence” of God. Neither does this mean that it is easy to understand all that is to be known of God because **(1)** sin has a limiting effect upon human understanding, and **(2)** man’s understanding is finite, whereas God is infinite.

Application: Jesus taught that one must approach God as a little child to be converted (**Matt. 18:3**).

9-Immensity of God

1 Kings 8:27

Explanation: Applied to God, immensity means that God cannot be limited by space and is in fact beyond space. Space is the area where physical reality (matter) being (energy) exist, and to that degree is limited. Where space ends, God still persists infinitely beyond all limits.

10-Unity of God

Deut. 6:4

Explanation: The fundamental concept of the **Shema** (the name of this passage, which is the first word in Hebrew: Hear!) is that God is one and not many gods. By definition, there can only be one all-powerful, infinite, limitless God.

Illustration: To speak more than one in the supreme, absolute, perfect, and almighty Being is to say something contradictory. There cannot be two absolutes, for then there would be no absolute.

Application: By revelation, we know that only Yahweh is that one God. Therefore, nothing in your life should come between you and God.

11-Wisdom of God

Prov. 9:1

Explanation: The wisdom of God is used in three senses in the Scriptures.

(1) It refers to the higher perspective by which God understands things that man is incapable of understanding (1 Cor. 1:25).

(2) It can refer to the understanding which a Christian should have in life (Prov. 4:7).

(3) Also, wisdom is seen as a type of Christ, who is our wisdom (1 Cor. 1:30).

Illustration: When David said Abner died as a fool (2 Sam. 3:33), he meant that Abner died because he followed his own intuition, rather than the wisdom of God, which would have saved him. He was killed as he turned aside in the gate of Hebron. Had he entered the city of refuge, as God had instructed, Joab would have been unable to kill him.

Application: A wise Christian will obey the wisdom of God.

12-Love of God

John 3:16

Explanation: Love is both an attribute of God and a description of His being. He alone is the epitome of divine love and the source of all true love. His love is unconditional and consistently seeks the highest good of the one who is loved.

Illustration: God's love was clearly demonstrated at Calvary when Jesus died for all our sins (1 John 3:1).

Application: Because God first loved us, we ought to love others as well (1 John 4:11).

13-Immutability of God

James 1:17

Explanation: Since all changes are either for the better or for the worse, God is unchanging because He is perfect and cannot get better or worse. The Scriptures describe God's nature, will, and character as immutable or unchanging.

Illustration: To be immutable, however, does not mean to be immobile. God also has the qualities of personality and can act, think, create, and make decisions.

Application: God is unchanging, therefore, Christians can depend on His love and power, because God has not changed since biblical times.

14-Holiness of God

Lev. 19:2

Explanation: The Hebrew word translated "*holiness*" comes from a root meaning "to separate or cut off."

The **primary meaning** of holiness implies God's positive quality of self-affirming purity.

The **secondary meaning** implies separation, particularly separation from sin. The holiness of God means he is absolutely pure and absolutely separate from (and above) all His creatures, and also separate from sin and evil.

Illustration: Because God is holy, all sin is offensive to Him. For this reason He had to break fellowship with His own Son when Jesus became our sin-bearer (Matt. 27:46).

Only through the identification of Christ with our sin as our sacrifice can we be reconciled to God.

Application: When the Scriptures mention the holiness of God, they also stress the personal holiness of His people.

15-Truth of God

John 14:6

Explanation: The word truth is used in Scripture in two ways: true as contrasted with false; and genuine as contrasted with unreal. Although both apply to God, when we speak of the truth of God, normally His genuineness is contrasted with false gods of other religions. The Scriptures in this sense declare Him “**the only true God**” (John 17:3).

Illustration: When Elijah confronted the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel, he challenged them to evaluate the genuineness of the Lord and of Baal (1 Kings 18:21). The true God answered by fire.

Application: Because the Lord is God, we are obligated to Him in all He demands.

16-Justice of God

Acts 17:31

Explanation: The justice of God is the active extension of the holiness of God into matters of decision. It implies that God has the authority and ability to establish the standard for all relationships and that He will be consistent in relating to His obedient and disobedient creatures. The justice of God is both legislative and distributive.

Illustration: When Abraham attempted to prevent the destruction of Sodom, he appealed to God’s justice: he knew the Judge of all the earth would do right (Gen.18:25).

Application: So today, everyone can have confidence that God will deal with him justly, but the believer may additionally plead God’s mercy.

17-Goodness of God

Mark 10:18

Explanation: Only God is completely good in His nature and actions. His goodness includes all the positive moral attributes such as grace, patience, and kindness.

Illustration: When the rich young ruler called Jesus “**Good Master,**” Jesus reminded him that only God could be properly referred to as “**good**” (Mark 10:18). The good that exists in the world around us truly reflects or expresses the goodness of God (Gen. 1:10). There is no other source of true “**good.**” When God revealed His name to Moses, he described Himself as being “**abundant in goodness**” (Ex. 34:6).

Application: The goodness of God is illustrated daily in our lives by the many good things that add comfort and enjoyment (James 1:17). Christians should be careful not to take these gifts for granted.

18-Grace of God

Eph. 2:8

Explanation: The grace of God is the expression of His goodness toward the undeserving. Grace means unmerited favor, and can be expressed by the acrostic “**God’s Riches At Christ’s Expense.**” This grace is the basis of our salvation (Eph. 1:7; Eph. 2:8).

Illustration: In salvation, men who deserve hell obtain heaven. This cannot be explained apart from God’s grace. Every conversion in Scripture is an example of God’s grace.

When Paul (Saul) met the Lord on the Damascus Road, Paul was a persecutor of the church. Yet God made him one of the church's chief preachers.

Application: We need to remember that we are saved, given the Holy Spirit, and allowed to serve God----by His grace.

19-Comparative Attributes of God

Psalm 139

Explanation: The comparative attributes of God contrast human abilities with the divine nature. Everyone has some knowledge, but only God has all knowledge (**omniscience**). Everyone has presence, but only God has presence at all times everywhere (**omnipresence**). Everyone has some degree of power but only God has unlimited power (**omnipotence**).

Illustration: Psalm 139 lays a foundation for understanding the comparative attributes. The **omniscience** of God is seen in **verses 1-6**. The **omnipresence** of God is seen in **verses 7-11**. The **omnipotence** of God is seen in **verses 12-16**.

Application: A Christian's response to the comparative attributes of God should be to surrender to **His** leadership because **He is wise**, **He is able to protect us**, and **He knows the true way to life with Himself**.

20-Sovereignty of God

Eph. 1:8

Explanation: "Sovereignty" means God is "the supreme Ruler over all." While we are free moral agents, we are, nevertheless, subject to **His** sovereign will and purposes. Everything is subject to **His** judgment. **He** is ultimately in control, although **He** often works indirectly through others.

Illustration: Even Satan cannot oppose the work of God unless God so permits. Before Satan could attack Job, he first had to obtain the permission of God (**Job 1,2**).

Application: Many Christians find great comfort in knowing that God is in control of their every circumstance.

21-Providence of God

Esther 4:14

Explanation: The word "providence" means "foreseeing" and suggest the idea of providing for the future. In theology the term is used of God's continuous activity whereby **He** makes all events work out according to **His** purposes. Thus the Scriptures teach that God rules over the physical universe (**Psalm 103:19**), animal life (**Job 12:10**), the nations of the earth (**Job 12:23**), and the affairs of individual lives (**1 Sam. 16:1**).

Illustration: While the Book of Esther never records the name of God, the story is one of the fullest biblical illustrations of God's providence, in **His** use of a young woman to protect **His** people.

Application: As we confront situations in life, we should remember these come directly or indirectly from God. We should therefore seek to accomplish **His** will in every circumstance.

22-Freedom of God

Isaiah 40:13

Explanation: God is the only Being in the universe that possesses independence from the Creation. The only limits to God's freedom are in **His** own nature and attributes. **He** is unlimited in **His** existence. Because **His existence** relates to **His** nature rather than **His**

will, God will exist forever. **He** who exists by reason of **His** nature rather than **His** volition must have existed---and must continue to exist--- forever.

Illustration: When God revealed **His** name to Moses at the burning bush, **He** called **Himself “I AM” (Ex. 3:13-15)**. This name emphasizes God’s self-existence, the fact that **He** has always existed and always will.

Application: Neither anyone nor any outside force will affect God’s relationship to us. **He** will deal with us according to **His** nature because **He** is free from outside influence.

23-Will of God

Rom. 12:1

Explanation: God’s will refers to **His** purpose for the life of the believer. It implies **His** guidance or direction in all of life’s decisions. Dedication is an act of surrender or submission to **His** will for our lives whereby we become a “**living sacrifice**.” Daily dependence on God results in our transformation into the image of Christ.

Illustration: When we seek to discern the will of God we must also be committed to doing the will of God as it is revealed in the Word of God (**John 7:17**).

Application: The believer should evaluate every decision on the basis of biblical principles, knowing that obedience brings God’s blessing.

24-Law of God

Psalms 37:31

Explanation: The law of God is the extension of God’s nature and expression of God’s will in His creation. God’s law is expressed in different forms, relating to different areas of His creation. The physical law of God includes the laws of nature which govern the continuous physical existence of this world (**Gen. 8:22; Col. 1:17**). The **moral law**, also called “**the perfect law of liberty**” (**James 1:25**), governs the immaterial issues of life (**2 Timothy 3:17**). The **social law** of God affects interpersonal relationships and can be summarized by “**the royal law**” (**James 2:8**). The **spiritual law** deals with a man’s relationship with God. It is summarized in “**the first and great commandment**” (**Matt. 22:37-38**).

Illustration: The purpose of the law is to reveal the sovereignty of God (**Ex. 20:2**), to place a restraint on the sinner (**Psalms 68:7-8**), to show the greatness and reality of sin (**Rom. 3:19-20**), and to lead the sinner to Christ (**Gal. 3:24**). The purpose of the law did not change with the gospel. When the Judaizers in Galatia sought to teach their erroneous view of the law, they failed to realize that the law has never been able to save anyone.

Application: As Christians, we should be concerned to live decently and orderly.

25-Primary Names of God

Exodus 3:13

Explanation: There are three primary names of God: *Elohim* (God), *Jehovah* or *Yahweh* (usually printed as LORD in the KJV), and *Adonai* (Lord). Each of these names emphasizes a different aspect of the nature of God. The name *Elohim* occurs 31 times in **Genesis 1**, where it emphasizes His strength and creative power. The name *Yahweh* is most often used to express God’s self-existence, particularly in relation to humanity. *Adonai* means “master” and underscores the authority of God.

Illustration: When Moses objected to returning to Egypt, one of his excuses was that he did not know God’s name. By that he meant that he did not understand enough about God’s authority. God solved this problem by revealing Himself as the “**I AM**,” that is, **Yahweh**.

Application: Because God reveals Himself in His names, Christians should understand them to better serve Him.

26-Call of God

Phil. 3:14

Explanation: The call of God is His summons upon the life of His creatures. God's call has a threefold emphasis.

First, He calls all men everywhere to repentance, that is, the call to salvation (**Acts 17:30**).

Second, all Christians are called to complete dedication (**1 Cor. 1:9**).

Third, God calls to a specific sphere of service or ministry, or a "holy calling" (**2 Timothy 1:9**).

Illustration: The Gospels record three "calls" of Christ to His disciples, each illustrating some aspect of the call of God (**John 1:35-51; Luke 5:1-11; Matt. 10:1-5**). At times God calls one to be *a Christian* (**Rom. 1:6**), at times God calls *to sanctification* (**1 Cor. 3:4**), and at other times God call His servants to *special service* (**Acts 13:2**).

Application: When a Christian senses the call of God in some area of his life, he should quickly respond.

27-Trinity

Matt. 28:19

Explanation: Trinity designates one eternal God in unity, yet existing in three eternal persons. The members of the Trinity are equal in nature, distinct in person, and subordinate in duties.

Illustration: As the Son is eternally begotten by the Father, so Jesus is submissive to do the work of the Father, yet equal in nature to Him. The Father is the source of authority; the Son is the channel, and the Holy Spirit the agent whereby authority is exercised.

Application: Because each member of the Trinity is God, *and* a distinct person, each should be so recognized in worship by the Christian (**Gen. 48:15; Num. 6:24-26; Isaiah 6:3**).

28-God the Father

Matt. 6:9

Explanation: The Father is the first person of the Trinity. With only one exception (**John 17:3**), Jesus always spoke of God as the Father. The Scripture identifies the fatherhood of God in five areas:

- (1) He is the Father of Creation (**James 1:17**),
- (2) the Father of Israel (**Jer.31:9**),
- (3) the unique Father of Jesus Christ (**Matt. 3:17**),
- (4) a protective Father emphasizing His defense of the poor and oppressed (**Psalms 68:5**)
- (5) and a redemptive Father when we become the children of God (**John 1:13; Rom. 8:15**).

Illustration: Just as physical fathers provide many benefits, so our heavenly Father also provides a number of spiritual benefits. Christians may have fellowship with (**1 John 1:3**), access to (**Matt. 6:9,32**), guidance by (**Psalms 119:9; 2 Timothy 3:17**), protection by (**John 10:29**), and an inheritance from (**Rom. 8:17**) the Father.

Application: Just because God is the Father of all, because He is the Father of Creation, does not mean that everyone will go to heaven. A person must be born of God (**John 1:13**) to become a son of God (**John 1:12**). Then God becomes a redemptive Father.

III-The Doctrine of Christ

1-Deity of Christ

John 5:18

Explanation: Christ, the second person of the Trinity, is equal to the Father in nature, separate in person, yet submissive in duties; as such, He is God. The arguments for His deity are His applying the titles of deity to Himself, His speaking of God as uniquely His Father, His making claims to deity, His using the Yahwistic “**I Am,**” and His claiming to be equal with God in nature. In deity, Jesus is God, and was unalterably God. Such a claim would have been the highest form of blasphemy had it not been true.

Illustration: Our Lord was not the only one to be recognized as God in New Testament times. When Herod accepted praise from his subjects---that he spoke as a god—he was destroyed by worms sent from God (**Acts 12:23**). In contrast, when Paul and Barnabas were called gods, they denied any deity in themselves, instead preaching the living God to their audience (**Acts 14:11-18**).

Application: Christians should allow Christ to live His divine life in them, so others will see His influence and glorify God (**Matt. 5:16**).

2-Humanity of Christ

Luke 2:52

Explanation: Jesus was not only God; He was also fully Man. As such He was subject to the same kind of limitations that all human beings experience. Like any other child, He inherited the nature of His parents. He possessed not only the divine nature of His Father but also the human nature of His mother. He was in every respect human except that He was without sin. The term *flesh* emphasizes His humanity.

Illustration: The humanity of Christ is evident in the gospel accounts of His natural growth (**Luke 2:52**), His becoming weary (**John 4:6**), and His experiencing sorrow and pain (**Luke 22:44**). Even when tempted by the Devil, Jesus did not use His supernatural powers as God to defeat him, but He responded as a Man dependent upon the Word of God for spiritual survival (**Matt. 4:1-11; Heb.4:15-16**).

Application: Jesus’ victory on that and other occasions reminds Christians that they have a Man in heaven as an understanding and approachable High Priest (**Heb. 7:24-25**).

3-Son of God

Matt. 16:16

Explanation: When the expression *Son of God* is used concerning Christ, it delineates the relationship between the first two members of the Trinity. The Hebrew expression *Son of* implies one with the same nature as the father. In this sense there is no real difference between “**Son of God**” and “**God the Son.**” Both emphasize the deity of Christ and His unique relationship with the Father.

Illustration: When Jesus identified God as His Father, implying that He was “**Son of God,**” the Jews understood this as a claim to deity (**John 5:18**). When Peter identified Jesus as the “**Son of the living God**” (**Matt. 16:16**), it was the result of spiritual insight (**Matt. 16:17**).

Application: As we become increasingly intimate with Christ, we should also become increasingly aware that Jesus is the Son of God.

4-Only Begotten

John 3:16

Explanation: The Greek word *monogenesis* is used by John to convey only the unique relationship between God the Father and Jesus as the Son of Father. It serves to distinguish Christ as the only Son of God, in contrast with the many children of God. The uniqueness of this relationship is further emphasized by the fact that we become the children of God whereas Jesus *always was* Son of God.

Illustration: Though unique in His relationship to God, Jesus is described by Paul as the firstborn among many brethren.

Application: Christians' relationship to God may not be the same as that of Christ to the Father, but Christians can call God their Father. As children of God, we should always seek to be as obedient as the only begotten Son of God.

5-Eternal Generation

Psalms 2:7

Explanation: When was Jesus "begotten"? Answering this question involves understanding the meaning here of the word *day*. As God lives beyond time, He cannot be limited to a 24-hour period. This word means an eternal day. Jesus did not become the Son of God at a point in time; rather He has eternally been in the process of being generated as the Son of God's eternal day. There has never been a time when Christ was not the Son of God.

Illustration: On several occasions during His ministry on earth, the sonship of Christ was particularly emphasized---in the Incarnation (**Luke 1:35**), in the Baptism (**Matt. 3:17**), and in the Resurrection (**Rom. 1:4**). These events did not make Christ the Son of God, but only proved that He already was.

Application: As the Christian thinks of the present ministry of Christ, he recognizes this also as an opportunity to appreciate Christ's unique relationship with the Father (**Heb. 1:1-4**).

6-I Am

John 18:6

Explanation: In the Gospel of John, Jesus says "I AM" seven times while revealing:

- (1) Himself as the Bread of Life (**John 6:35**);
- (2) the Light of the World (**John 8:12**);
- (3) the Door (**John 10:9**);
- (4) the Good Shepherd (**John 10:11**);
- (5) the Resurrection and the Life (**John 11:25**);
- (6) the Way, the Truth, and the Life (**John 14:6**); and
- (7) the Vine (**John 15:5**).

His use of "I Am" without a predicate complement (**John 4:26; 8:24; 18:5-8**) demonstrates His identity with Yahweh in the Old Testament, who was first revealed to Moses as "I AM THAT I AM" (**Ex. 3:14**).

Illustration: Yahweh was the covenant name of God in the Old Testament and was most often used to express God's relationship with His people. Jesus took on human flesh that He might bring humanity into an everlasting relationship with God.

Application: All of our needs in the Christian life, from salvation through glorification, are met in the "I Am".

7-Logos

John 1:1

Explanation: One of the most important titles of Christ is Logos (“Word”). The idea behind this title embodied God’s revelation of Himself to humanity. Scholars debate whether John borrowed this term from the Greeks or the Jews. If the term is Greek, there may be numerous philosophical implications; if Hebrew, it may have referred to wisdom (**Prov. 5-8**) or the Law (**Ex. 20**). Probably Jesus is called “the Word of God” because the phrase occurs over 1,200 times in the Old Testament to refer to the message of God. Jesus is the expression and communication of the Word. He is both the incarnate and the inspired Word.

Illustration: Satan is twice recorded in Scripture as tempting someone. On the first occasion he questioned the integrity of the Word of God (**Gen. 3:1-5**). On the second occasion he questioned the integrity of Christ, the Word of God incarnate (**Matt. 4:3,6**). Those who question the validity of the Scriptures today similarly question the integrity of Christ.

Application: Christians need to study the written Word of God to learn more about the incarnate Word of God.

8-Angel of the Lord

Genesis 16:7

Explanation: In the Old Testament, an angel identified as the “angel of the Lord” (**Genesis 16:7**), the “angel of God” (**Genesis 21:17**), the “angel of his presence” (**Isaiah 63:9**), and the “messenger of the covenant” (**Matt. 3:1**) appeared to individuals. A closer look at the context of His appearances reveals that He is more than another angel. He is God. The expression usually signifies a preincarnate appearance of Christ, and is sometimes called a “Christophany,” meaning the visible and bodily manifestation of God the Son before His incarnation.

Illustration: That He is not merely another angel is evident in those appearances where He is called God. This was recognized by Hagar (**Genesis 16:13**), Abraham (**Genesis 22:14**), Moses (**Ex. 3:14**), Gideon (**Judg 6:22**), and Manoah (**Judg 13:18, 22**). The expression is also used of men, but on such occasions is translated “the Lord’s messenger” (**Hag. 1:13**).

Application: The Angel of the Lord no longer appears to men today, since God has commissioned Christians to be His messengers to the world.

9-Servant of the Lord

Isaiah 52:13

Explanation: Isaiah prophetically uses the title “Servant” to designate Christ, especially concerning His suffering for sin. The suffering is identified as both vicarious (**Isaiah 53:4-9**) and victorious (**53:10-12**). The title “Servant of the Lord” emphasizes Christ’s faithful obedience to the Father during His earthly ministry (**John 5:19**). The Servant passages in Isaiah were some of the key texts used in preaching the gospel in the early days of Christianity (**Acts 8:32-35**).

Illustration: In the New Testament, Christians described themselves as servants of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ. This title conveyed their willingness to depend upon and completely obey God (**James 1:1**).

Application: Christians today should also follow the example of the suffering Servant of the Lord, who obeyed the will of God even when it momentarily seemed unjust (**1 Peter 2:21-23**).

10-Christ in the Tabernacle

Exodus 25:8

Explanation: The predominate “**type**” of Christ in the Old Testament is the tabernacle. The New Testament authority for recognizing its typological significance is **Hebrews 9:1-24**. Because the pattern for the tabernacle was designed by God, this has led some Bible scholars to conclude that even the most minute details of the tabernacle have a typological significance.

Illustration: In describing the incarnation (**John 1:14**), John uses the word for dwelt, which has the idea of pitching a tent or tabernacle. The tabernacle was the sanctuary of God, described as His dwelling place (**Exodus 25:8**). Just as God lived in a tent in the wilderness, so the Son of God lived (and still lives) in a human body as the New Testament “**tent**.”

Application: Today, the physical bodies of Christians serve as the temple (dwelling place) of the Holy Spirit (**1 Cor. 16:19-20**).

11-Christ our Passover

Exodus 12:13

Explanation: The annual feast of the Passover commemorated the birth of the nation Israel and her deliverance from Egypt. Typologically, it pointed forward to the greater deliverance from the bondage of sin to be provided by the Messiah. In the Passover, a lamb without blemish was selected and killed. The blood was then applied to the doorpost (doorjamb) of the home, and the lamb was roasted and eaten with unleavened bread and bitter herbs.

Illustration: When John the Baptist introduced Jesus to the nation, he recognized Christ as the fulfillment of the typical Passover lambs: “**Behold the Lamb of God**” (**John 1:29, 36**).

Application: The Christian not only recognizes the typological fulfillment of the Passover sacrifice by Christ, but also his own responsibility to “**keep the feast**” by living a sincere and truthful life (**1 Cor. 5:6-8**).

12-Christ in the Sacrifices

Lev. 1:2

Explanation: The sacrifice of Christ on Calvary’s is typologically portrayed in the five major sacrifices offered in the Old Testament.

- (1) The **whole burnt offering** emphasizes Christ offering of Himself without spot to God in complete obedience to the will of God.
- (2) The **meal offering** (meat in the archaic sense: food) emphasizes the balance, fragrance, and purity of that life which was offered.
- (3) The **peace offering** emphasizes the reconciliation that was accomplished on the Cross.
- (4) The **sin** and **trespass** offerings emphasize the atoning nature of Christ’s sacrifice, saving men from all sin—past, present, and future.

Application: As we think of the complete sacrifice of Christ for our sin, we are reminded of our responsibility to give ourselves as living sacrifices to God.

13-Atonement

Lev. 16:16

Explanation: Though Theologians tend to use the term “**atonement**” to summarize Christ’s work on the Cross, it occurs only in the Old Testament (**Rom. 5:11** is better translated “**reconciliation**”), and only relates to one part of what was accomplished for us, that is, the cover of our sins. This word probably means “**cover**,” and is first used where Noah is commanded to cover the ark with pitch (**Gen. 6:14**).

Illustration: Just as the ark was a “**type**” of Christ in saving His people from judgment (**Heb. 11:7**), our salvation the “**cover**” within and without emphasized the means whereby is secure---that is, our sins are covered by the blood of Christ. This covering of sin is an expression of God’s love for mankind (**Prov. 10:12**).

Application: When a Christian hears about another’s failings, he should both forgive and forget the event. All believers should follow Christ’s example and seek to build up the fallen one, rather than follow the natural inclination to engage in gossip (**Prov. 17:9**).

14-Day of Atonement

Lev. 16:30

Explanation: More than half of the occurrences of the word atonement in Scripture are found in **Leviticus 16**, which describes the most important day on the Hebrew calendar. Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement). This annual holy day celebrated the covering of national sins by the offering of two goats to God, one killed and the other driven into the wilderness. In the ceremony, the priest entered the Holy of Holies to present the blood of the slain goat to God. When he came out, the nation knew their sins had been covered for another year. Christ fulfilled this “**type**” in that He offered His own blood to God (**Heb. 9:14**).

Illustration: The type of the priest returning from the Holy Place to those whose sins were covered will be fulfilled when Christ returns for those who have been redeemed by His blood.

Application: For the Christian, this is a blessed and purifying hope (**Titus 2:12-13; 1 John 3:3**)

15-Christ in the Feasts of Israel

Lev. 23:2

Explanation: The seven feasts of “**holy convocations**” listed in this chapter find their typological fulfillment in Christ. The first four feasts are already fulfilled, and the latter three will be fulfilled at the coming of Christ:

- (1) *The Passover* speaks of our redemption, which was accomplished on the Cross (**1 Peter 1:18-19**) and is followed by
- (2) *The Feast of Unleavened Bread*, typical of our justification (**2 Cor.5:21**) and sanctification (**1 Cor. 5:7**), also accomplished by Christ on the Cross
- (3) *The Feast of Firstfruits* was fulfilled in the resurrection of Christ (**1 Cor.15:20**).
- (4) *Pentecost* was fulfilled when Christ sent the Holy Spirit to begin the harvest of the church (**Acts 2:1-41**).
- (5) *The Feast of Trumpets* will be fulfilled at the rapture of the church (**1 Cor.15:52; 1 Thes.4:16-17**).
- (6) *The Day of Atonement* will be completed seven years later when Christ returns (**Zech. 12:10; 13:1**).
- (7) *The Feasts of Tabernacles* will find its final fulfillment in Christ’s thousand-year kingdom on earth (**Zech.14:16**).

Application: All of the feasts include a Sabbath, reminding Christians of their rest in Christ (**Matt. 11:28-29**).

16-Anointed Offices of Christ

John 1:41

Explanation: In the Old Testament, men of God who were called for special service were initiated into three offices by an act of anointing. Each of these three offices finds its fulfillment in Christ. The titles *Christ* and *Messiah* literally mean “Anointed One.”

Illustration: As the *Prophet*, like Moses (**Deut. 18:15**), Jesus declared the most complete revelation of the Father (**John 1:18**). As the faithful *Priest* (**1 Sam. 2:35**), He offered the ultimate sacrifice, the sacrifice of Himself (**Heb. 9:14**). As the *King* of Kings, He is not only in ultimate control now (**Psalms 21:1**), but will also reign a thousand years in His own kingdom (**Rev. 20:1-6**).

Application: Because Jesus is our *Prophet*, *Priest*, and *King*, believers should obey what He says as a *Prophet* in the Scriptures, come in prayer to Him as to a *Priest*, and serve Him as their *King*.

17-Kenosis

Phil. 2:7

Explanation: The word *kenosis* is the Greek word for “emptying” and is related to the verb translated here as “made himself of no reputation,” which literally means “He emptied Himself.” Christ emptied Himself by:

- (1) veiling His glory and
- (2) taking on Himself a true but sinless human nature, and
- (3) voluntarily submitting to the will of the Father.

Illustration: At all times, Christ remained God, retaining the nature and attributes of God, but taking a human nature in order to have a ministry among men. On the few occasions when His glory was more fully revealed during His ministry, those who saw it were unable to bear it (**Matt. 17:6; John 18:6**).

Application: The apostle Paul urges that the attitude of humility (which led to the *kenosis*) ought to characterize every Christian (**Phil. 2:5**).

18-Incarnation

John 1:14

Explanation: The term incarnation refers here to the miracle of God the Son becoming human, yet remaining God. John summarizes this miracle with the expression “the Word was made flesh” (**John 1:14**). The term *Word* is a title of deity used by John to describe Jesus (See **7-Logos** and **John 1:1**). The term *flesh* speaks of Christ’s humanity. (See **2-Humanity of Christ, Luke 2:52**).

Illustration: To deny either the deity or humanity of Christ is to deny the very nature of the God-man.

Application: Even in New Testament times there were people with the spirit of antichrist who denied truths concerning the Lord (**1 John 2:18**). The Christian response to such individuals is complete separation (**2 John 7-11**).

19-Virgin Birth

Luke 1:27

Explanation: One of the historic fundamentals of the faith is the virgin birth of Christ. It begins with the supernatural conception of Jesus Christ in the womb of Mary without the seed of a man. The miraculous birth is verified by the statement that she was a virgin when she gave birth to Christ (**Matt. 1:23-25**). By means of the Virgin Birth, Jesus had the human nature of His mother and the sinless, divine nature of His Father.

Illustration: Those who deny the Virgin Birth tend also to deny His deity, so must necessarily question the integrity of the Scriptures.

Application: The miracle of the Virgin Birth involved the yieldedness of Mary. This attitude is reflected in her last recorded words which are a good standard for Christians today. “**Whatever he (Jesus) saith unto you do it**” (**John 2:5**).

20-Impeccability of Christ

Heb. 4:15

Explanation: Two words, *temptability* and *impeccability*, describe Christ in His temptation. The basic idea of *temptability* is “**to be appealed to.**” Christ was in this sense tempted, but He was not tempted with evil nor was He tempted by evil desires (**James 1:13**). As God, He could not be tempted with evil. The word *impeccability* means Christ as God could not have sinned. The comparative attributes of God made it impossible for Him to sin when He was tempted.

Illustration: As you read about Christ’s temptation notice that He did not rely on His attributes but on the Word of God to resist the temptation of Satan (**Matt. 4:1-11**).

Application: In this same way the Christian today can overcome temptation (**Psalms 119:9-11**).

21-Transfiguration of Christ

2 Peter 1:16

Explanation: In **Matthew 17** Jesus was temporarily glorified in the presence of three disciples. This was a foreshadowing of Christ’s coming in power and glory to establish His kingdom. The presence of Moses and Elijah on the mountain represented all those who enter the kingdom by death or translation. The declaration of the Father reinforces Christ’s dominion over His kingdom.

Application: Since Christians live expectantly looking forward to the return of Christ, they ought to give Him first place in their lives today, just as He will have in the kingdom.

22-Purification of Heaven

Heb. 9:12

Explanation: The most holy place in existence is in the presence of God or in heaven. The primary purpose of the blood of Christ was to propitiate (satisfy) the wrath of God and pay the price of redemption. But also, as the earthly high priest used the blood of bulls and goats to cleanse the Holy of Holies, so Christ, the Eternal High Priest, entered heaven to purify it “**by his own blood.**”

Illustration: Although heaven is a perfect place, Satan also had access to it (**Job 1:6**). The purification of heaven probably entailed the casting out of Satan.

Application: Purity ought also to characterize the earthly dwelling place of God, that is, the Christian, whom Christ indwells (**Gal. 2:20**). The Christian is therefore called the temple of God (**1 Cor.6:19**).

23-Descent into Hell

Eph. 4:9

Explanation: Before the death of Christ, both the lost and the saved went to Hades (Heb. **Sheol**) although it was divided into the place of torments and the paradise of God (also called Abraham's bosom, **Luke 16:19-31**).

Illustration: When Jesus hung on the cross, He consoled the penitent thief that he would be in paradise with Christ on that day/ One of the accomplishments of the Resurrection was to lead "captivity captive," that is, to remove Old Testament saints from Abraham's bosom (Hades) and lead them to heaven.

Application: When a Christian dies today he goes immediately into the presence of God (**Phil. 1:23**).

24-Resurrection of Christ

Matt. 28:6

Explanation: The resurrection of Christ included five accomplishments:

- (1) the physical renewing of His life;
- (2) The reunion of His body and His spirit;
- (3) The subjugation of death under Him;
- (4) The attainment of His new position; and
- (5) His receiving of a transfigured body.

Application: Because of the Resurrection, the Christian receives both the eternal life (**John 11:25**) and the spiritual power (**Eph. 1:19-20**). Christ's resurrection also provides for the future resurrection of the believer (**1 Cor. 15:20**) and is the key to victory in the Christian life because of our union with Christ (**Eph. 2:6**).

25-Ascension of Christ

Acts 1:9

Explanation: After His resurrection, Christ ascended physically to heaven to reassume His glory and enthronement. He also began His high priestly ministry in heaven for believers which continues until this day.

Illustration: It is doubtful that the disciples who watched His physical ascension completely understood all that it signified at first.

Application: When the Christian understands the ascension of Christ, he looks forward to His imminent return and appropriates His present ministry as well.

26-Glorification of Christ

John 17:5

Explanation: The celestial glory that Jesus had from the beginning had been temporarily hidden (veiled) during His earthly life. At the ascension of Christ, Jesus was both glorified and transfigured.

Illustration: It is interesting to contrast the post-resurrection appearances of Christ with the post-ascension revelations. In the former, Christ often concealed His glory to the point that He was not recognized, such as by the disciples at Emmaus (**Luke 24:16, 31**), or by Mary Magdalene who thought He was the gardener (**John 20:14**). The post-ascension revelations involve His radiant appearance. The difference between John's meeting with Christ in **John 21** and in **Revelation 1** was that of seeing the Resurrection body (not glorified) and of later seeing the transformed and celestial body (glorified).

Application: Someday Christians will also be glorified together with Christ (**Rom. 8:17**).

27-Advocacy of Christ

1 John 2:1

Explanation: The term advocate denotes a lawyer who represents his client before a court of law. When applied to the present ministry of Christ, it speaks of His work for sinning believers to restore them to fellowship. Christ's work as an advocate is based on the sufficiency of His blood for all sin, past and present.

Illustration: In the Old Testament, when David confessed his sin, he was forgiven and restored to a place of service.

Application: Although the Christian has an Advocate with the Father, his goal in life ought to be overcoming sin (**1 John 5:4**), rather than merely confessing it.

28-Intercession of Christ

Heb. 7:25

Explanation: The intercessory work of Christ for the Christian is similar to preventive medicine. In one sense, intercession identifies Christ's present work of mediation in heaven. The biblical use of the term more specifically describes Christ's intervention on behalf of believers' weaknesses and temptations. Christ is continually and actively interceding in our behalf.

Application: The assurance of the believer should rest in part on this present ministry of Christ's intercession.

IV-The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit

1-Personality of the Holy Spirit

John 16:13

Explanation: The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity----equal with the Father and Son in essence, separate in person, and submissive in duties. Since one major aspect of God's nature is that He is a person, it follows that the Holy Spirit is a person. The Scriptures clarify this by ascribing the attributes of personality to the Holy Spirit, addressing Him as a person, describing the personal actions of the Holy Spirit, and ascribing masculine pronouns to the Holy Spirit (**John 14:17; John 16:13**).

Illustration: Ananias and Sapphira lost their lives in a foolish attempt to deceive the Holy Spirit. This was because He is a divine person who is omniscient, omnipresent, and omnipotent.

Application: Because He is God, the Holy Spirit is worthy of receiving believers' adoration, love, and worship; also, the Christian can engage in fellowship with the Holy Spirit.

2-Deity of the Holy Spirit

Matt. 28:19

Explanation: There is no shortage of biblical evidence for the deity of the Holy Spirit. He is spoken of in Scripture as God. The attributes of God are assigned to Him, He is engaged in the work of God, and He receives honor due only to God. Further, He was recognized as God by the early church both in the baptismal formula (**Matt. 28:19**) and in the apostolic benediction (**2 Cor. 13:14**). Finally, the words of the Holy Spirit are recognized as being the words of God.

Illustration: The apostle Paul recognized the deity of the Holy Spirit in his ministry when he followed the leading of the Holy Spirit (**Acts 16:7**).

Application: One of the biblical characteristics of believers is that they are led by the Spirit of God (**Rom. 8:14**).

3-Procession of the Holy Spirit

John 15:26

Explanation: The action of the word translated "proceedeth" is "in the process"--- "continually proceeds." The eternal procession of the Spirit means that He continually proceeds from beside, not out of, the Father. If the Holy Spirit came out of God, He would be less than God. To be more specific, the Holy Spirit not only proceeds from the Father, but also from the Son. This means the Father and the Son continually send the Holy Spirit. This in no way suggests the Spirit is less in deity than are the Father or Son. Instead it explains the relationship among the three eternal persons of the Trinity.

Illustration: Just as Jesus came to do the will of the Father, so the Holy Spirit is sent to speak not of Himself, but of Christ (**John 16:13**).

Application: In this sense the Holy Spirit is the Promise of the Father who has been given to every Christian (**Acts 1:4; Acts 2:39**).

4-Holy Spirit in Creation

Gen. 1:2-5

Explanation: The first emblem of the Holy Spirit in Scripture is that of the Spirit “moving” or literally “brooding” over the waters, much as a bird broods over her eggs to hatch them.

Illustration: The Scripture assigns to the Holy Spirit the works of creating the world (**Psalm 33:6**), of brooding over the waters (**Gen. 1:2**), of garnishing the heavens (**Job 26:13**); of renewing the earth (**Psalm 104:30**), and of sustaining life (**Psalm 104:29**). The Holy Spirit’s work in Creation results in order (**Isaiah 40:12,14**; **Gen. 1:2**) life (**Job 33:4**); beauty (**Job 26:13**); and renewal (**Psalm 104:30**). The work of the Holy Spirit in Creation is one of the biblical proofs of His deity.

Application: The Scriptures also describe the physical body of the Christian as the temple of the Holy Spirit, and suggest He is in the process of recreating us into Christ’s image (**Phil. 1:6**).

5-Conviction of the Holy Spirit

John 16:8

Explanation: The word conviction embraces a number of biblical expressions in its meaning. Originally it derived from two Latin terms meaning “cause to see.” The New Testament uses the term reproof, conviction, and illumination to communicate the ministry of the Holy Spirit whereby He causes the individual to “see” (**understand**) truth.

Illustration: When the Holy Spirit came at Pentecost, many who had no prior conviction of sin were convicted by the Holy Spirit, which led to their salvation (**Acts 2:36-37**).

Application: Christians today should also depend upon this ministry of the Holy Spirit to help them understand truth and respond accordingly.

6-Restraining Ministry of the Holy Spirit

2 Thess. 2:7

Explanation: The presence of the Holy Spirit in this world to some extent restrains evil. Often this is accomplished through the presence of Christians who are “salt of the earth” (**Matt. 5:13**).

Illustration: At the Rapture, when Christians are removed and the age of the Holy Spirit ceases, this restraining ministry will be “taken out of the way” during the Great Tribulation.

Application: Until that time, God will use the godly examples of Christians to restrain evil in the world.

7-Comforter

John 14:16

Explanation: The Greek word *parakletos* literally means “one called alongside to help,” thus the idea of a comforter. The Holy Spirit is called another comforter because this is also one of Christ’s titles (**1 John 2:1**, translated “advocate”).

Illustration: The Father is also known as The God of All Comfort (**2 Cor. 1:3**). Though those in the early church often endured persecutions, they found their comfort in the Holy Spirit (**Acts 9:31**).

Application: Today, Christians can find comfort in the Holy Spirit when trials come.

8-Indwelling of the Holy Spirit

John 7:39

Explanation: One of God's purposes since the beginning has been to dwell with humanity and enjoy fellowship with us. He does it in this dispensation through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The indwelling of the Holy Spirit:

- (1) occurs automatically when a person is saved;
- (2) is not an "experience," but produces spiritual experiences;
- (3) remains permanently;
- (4) is the basis of all other ministries of the Holy Spirit; and
- (5) is the source of new life in the believer.

Illustration: When Paul met 12 disciples of John who did not know of the Holy Spirit, he knew they needed to be saved. So he preached the gospel to them (**Acts 19:1-5**).

Application: The Holy Spirit's indwelling should motivate the believer to be careful not to harm his body nor indulge his body in sin (**1 Cor. 6:19-20**).

9-Baptism of the Holy Spirit

1 Cor. 12:13

Explanation: The baptism of the Holy Spirit is an act whereby the individual believer becomes united with Christ. Even though the effects of the Holy Spirit are realized at a believer's conversion, which is thus experiential, the baptism of the Holy Spirit is not experiential.

Illustration: The fact that all the Christians at Corinth were baptized in the Spirit shows that the baptism of the Holy Spirit does not itself eradicate the sin nature. Some Christians are confused as to when the baptism occurs. There are four biblical answers to this question:

- (1) The theological answer states the baptism of the Spirit is the effect of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ and that the believer is united with Christ by this baptism (**Gal.2:20**).
- (2) Initially, the baptism of the Holy Spirit occurred on the Day of Pentecost when the new church was baptized in the Spirit (**Acts 2:2**).
- (3) Personally, a Christian is baptized in the Spirit at the moment of conversion (**1 Cor. 12:13**).
- (4) As the believer submits to water baptism, he testifies of the baptism of the Holy Spirit (**Rom. 6:4-6**).

Application: Because all Christians have been baptized by the Holy Spirit into the body of Christ, they should also submit to the biblical ordinance of water baptism and become a part of a local church.

10-Sealing of the Holy Spirit

Eph. 1:3

Explanation: The sealing of the Holy Spirit guarantees the benefits of our salvation, as a person might seal an envelope to guarantee its enclosures. The Holy Spirit is the seal.

Illustration: The Holy Spirit as the seal to the believer is also a "down payment" of His commitment to someday give him all other things God has promised.

Application: Christians should be careful to "grieve not the holy Spirit of God, by whom ye are sealed unto the day redemption" (**Eph. 4:30**).

11-Sign Gifts

Heb. 2:4

Explanation: The miraculous sign gifts of the Holy Spirit were present in the first century to confirm apostolic revelation (**2 Cor. 12:12; Heb. 2:2-4**) and are not expected today. Just as it is necessary to erect a scaffolding to aid construction when a building is being erected, so sign gifts were the spiritual scaffolding used by God to give credibility to His revelation which became the foundation of the church. When the written Word of God was complete, God removed the scaffolding. These gifts were given primarily as signs for the Jews (**1 Cor. 1:22**). Also, as the apostles were primarily communicating an oral tradition, they needed signs to authenticate their message (**2 Thess. 2:15**). When considering a sign gift, one should remember that gifts, such as the gift of apostles, were foundational gifts needed in the first century, and were characterized by certain qualifications that could not be met today (**Acts 1:21-22**). Also Paul specifically indicated that some gifts would cease (**1 Cor. 13:8**), and he referred to miracles seemingly in the past tense, which he would not do if they were still prevalent at the time of writing (**Heb. 2:3**). The sign gifts would include apostles (**Eph. 4:11**), healing (**1 Cor. 12:9**), tongues, miracles, and interpretation of tongues (**1 Cor. 12:10**). Some might add to that list the discernment of spirits (**1 Cor. 12:10**).

12-Serving Gifts

1 Cor. 7:7

Explanation: A spiritual gift is a sovereignly given ability to minister to others in the power of God, with an evident manifestation of the Holy Spirit through the Christians as he serves God. Such gifts are sometimes identified as enabling and task and task gifts. The enabling gifts of the Spirit are given to all Christians and include faith (**Rom. 1:11; 1 Cor. 12:9**), knowledge (**1 Cor. 12:8**), wisdom (**1 Cor. 12:8**), and discernment (**1 Cor. 12:10**). These gifts help the believer to use his specific task gifts. These motivational gifts include prophecy (**Rom. 12:6; 1 Cor. 14:3**), teaching (**Rom. 12:7**), exhortation (**Rom. 12:8**), shepherding (**Eph. 4:11**), showing mercy (**Rom. 12:8**), ministering (**Rom. 12:7**), helping (**1 Cor. 12:28**), giving (**Rom. 12:8**), ruling (**Rom. 12:8**), governing (**1 Cor. 12:28**), evangelism (**Eph. 4:11**), and hospitality (**1 Peter 4:9**). Some would add to this list martyrdom (**1 Cor. 13:3**) and celibacy (**Matt. 19:11-12**). Every Christian has at least one spiritual gift (**1 Cor. 7:7**) and may have more. The apostle Paul apparently had and exercised every spiritual gift.

Application: Christians should use their gifts to serve God in some area of ministry that calls for the gift(s) they possess.

13-Fullness of the Holy Spirit

Eph. 5:18

Explanation: The words be filled here mean “*be continually filled,*” emphasizing that the fullness of the Spirit is a repeated experience for believers. When a person is drunk with an alcoholic beverage, his walk, talk, and sight are controlled by alcohol. God desires that the minds of Christians be controlled by the Holy Spirit so that they will walk in the Spirit, speak on behalf of God, and understand the things of God. Because people are indwelt by the Holy Spirit at salvation, they do not need to get more of the Holy Spirit, but the filling of the Spirit occurs when the Holy Spirit gets more of the believer.

Illustration: As we establish our fellowship with God through confession of sins (**1 John 1:9**) and yield to Him (**Rom. 6:13**), we can be filled with the Spirit if that is our desire (**Matt. 5:6**) and prayer (**Luke 11:13**).

Application: Every Christian should be filled with the Spirit in order that he may have God's power to serve Him (**Acts 1:8**).

14-Anointing of the Holy Spirit

1 John 2:27

Explanation: The law regarding the cleansing of lepers and the consecration of priests required an application of blood and oil to the right ear, thumb, and big toe of the one cleansed or consecrated (**Lev. 8:30**). Typologically, this twofold anointing stressed the need for salvation (blood) and the anointing of the Holy Spirit (oil), that the believer might hear the Word of God (ear), do the work of God (thumb) and walk in the way of God (toe).

Illustration: The disciples, who were saved by the blood, were instructed to tarry in Jerusalem until they were given power from on high (**Luke 24:49**). Only then were they able to do the work of God as recorded in the Acts.

Application: Just as David was anointed with oil, so the believer needs a fresh anointing for each task he undertakes for God. Christians should act on the anointing they have received from the Lord (**1 John 2:27**).

15-Outpouring of the Holy Spirit

Acts 2:17

Explanation: One of the characteristics of the future reign of Christ is the abundant outpouring of the Holy Spirit. On the Day of Pentecost, Peter recognized that the outpouring anticipated an even greater outpouring yet to come (**Acts 2:17**).

Illustrations: The frequent outpourings of the Holy Spirit in this age are the source of the great spiritual revivals and spiritual awakenings. Because of the great blessings received in times of revival, Christians have often used descriptions from the future kingdom age to describe their experiences (**Acts 3:19**).

Application: While the believer looks forward to the coming kingdom of Christ, he may also pray for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit in revival today.

16-Fruit of the Spirit

Gal. 5:22-23

Explanation: In contrast to the works (plural) of the flesh, which any individual is capable of performing, the fruit (singular) of the Holy Spirit can be produced only by God. Christian character thus results from "Christ living in me" (**Gal. 2:20**). For this fruit to develop, all nine aspects of the fruit of the Spirit must mature.

Illustrations: The character of Christ is the fullest manifestation of this fruit in the New Testament. Though Jesus did not recognize the traditions of men, His enemies were unable to prove any charge against Him.

Application: So today, Christians should allow the Holy Spirit to develop character within them, so they might be blameless before others and not hinder the testimony of Christ.

17-Sanctification

Phil. 1:6

Explanation: The word sanctification means “*to be set apart.*” The Holy Spirit is attempting to make the believer holy (set apart) and spiritual (reflecting the character of God). This is being accomplished in three phases.

- (1) First, the believer is forgiven and set apart to God at his conversion (positional sanctification).
- (2) Second, the believer is constantly being set apart from sin when he utilizes the means of grace (e.g., the Word and prayer) in his life (progressive sanctification).
- (3) Third, complete sanctification begins at death, or at the Rapture, and is completed when the believer’s spirit is reunited with his resurrection body.

Application: We Christians should recognize that God uses all things to accomplish His purpose of making us like Jesus, therefore we should cooperate with the Holy Spirit (**Rom. 8:28-29**).

18-Sins against the Holy Spirit

Matt. 12:31-32

Explanation: All sin is serious, and to some degree challenges and attacks the character and authority of God. But six sins are specifically identified as sins against the Holy Spirit. Since the Holy Spirit is a person. He may be sinned against. Since He is also God, it is an extremely serious matter to be guilty of sinning against Him. These six sins are:

- (1) blaspheming (**Matt. 12:31-32; Luke 12:10**),
- (2) lying or tempting (**Acts 5:4,9**),
- (3) despising (**Heb. 10:29**),
- (4) resisting or striving with (**Gen. 6:3; Acts 7:51**),
- (5) vexing or grieving (**Isaiah 63:10; Eph. 4:30**),
- (6) and quenching (**1 Thess. 5:19**) the Holy Spirit.

Illustration: Because of the severity with which Jesus describes blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, some people unnecessarily fear that they may have committed the unpardonable sin. One of the characteristics of such sin is that the Holy Spirit ceases to convict of sin in one’s life---so the fact that someone may be concerned about a particular sin indicates he is not beyond grace. He should immediately repent of that sin to restore fellowship with God .

Application: The keys to not sinning against the Holy Spirit are to:

- (1) to be led by the Spirit,
- (2) be filled with the Spirit, and
- (3) be illuminated by the Spirit.

V-The Doctrine of Man

1-Creation of Man

Gen. 1:27

Explanation: Man was created by God on the sixth day of Creation and is the grand climax of all that God had accomplished in the Creation week of miracles. The final act of Creation was that God joined the material and immaterial parts of man. Man's body was shaped from the dust, but he became a living soul only after God breathed the breath of life into his nostrils (**Gen. 2:7**).

Application: Our formation and natural birth is no less noteworthy than Adam's formation from the dust. With David we need to say, **"I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made."** (**Psalm 139:14**).

2-Soul

Gen. 2:7

Explanation: In the Old Testament, the word *soul*, among other uses, refers to the whole person. It identifies something that cannot be defined materially and that is therefore distinct from the body (**Isaiah 10:18**). The soul is that part of us that is life. It is incorporeal existence.

Illustration: At the creation of Adam, man did not have a soul but he became a soul, and the life-principle was the breath or Spirit of God (**Gen. 2:7**). Death is described as the soul's departing from the body (**Gen. 35:18**).

Application: The fundamental desire of a Christian's soul should be for a deeper fellowship and communion with God (**Psalm 25:1**).

3-Image and Likeness of God

Gen. 1:26

Explanation: Man was created in both the image and likeness of God. An image is a representation or replica of one person or thing by another.

Illustration: An image may be similar but not necessarily identical to its original. The term likeness is used as a gauge of comparison, or analogy. When man fell, he retained an impaired image of God (**Gen. 9:6**). Regaining a likeness of God is one of the accomplishments of salvation. Our spiritual likeness is restored in justification. Our character likeness is being continuously developed in the process of sanctification. We will be like Christ physically when we are glorified.

Application: God's purpose in our lives today is to conform us to the image of Christ (**Rom. 8:29**).

4-Immaterial Part of Man

Heb. 4:12

Explanation: The writer here draws an interesting parallel between the *joints* and the *marrow*, which have different functions, yet *both* are part of a **human's bone structure**. *Thoughts* and *intents* are also two distinct activities, yet *both* are **activities of the mind**. And while the *soul* and *spirit* are distinct in function, *both* have **an immaterial character**. When considering the nature of humanity, we must realize a person is a two-part being, that is, with body and soul. But in activity or function the body, soul, and spirit of a person each has a different function. Paul desired that his converts' **"whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."** (**1 Thess. 5:23**).

5-Heart

Prov. 4:23

Explanation: The Old Testament word *heart* often refers to the physical organ of the circulatory system. Both Testaments also see the heart figuratively as the center of the personality or spiritual life. The heart is the seat of intellect, emotions, will and moral consciousness. It is the personality which has that extraordinary ability to perceive itself. The heart is presented as the seat of conscious life and the fountainhead of life.

Illustration: Jesus taught that sin came out of the heart of people, thus defiling them (Mark 7:21-23). Yet after conversion, one of the characteristics of Christians is that they have the law of God written in their hearts (Heb. 8:8-12).

Application: Christians should love the Lord with all their hearts (Matt. 22:37).

6-Conscience

Rom. 2:15

Explanation: Deep within man is the consciousness of God (John 1:9), and the sense of what God requires (Rom. 2:15). The conscience of man dwells in the heart (see the key doctrine of the heart as well as Prov. 4:23), acting as a moral regulator of what is right or wrong. The implied meaning of the word conscience is “a knowing within oneself.” Since memory and thinking are functions of the heart, that is the apparent location of the conscience.

Illustration: The heart is the place where God communicates to the individual. However, continually stifling the conscience renders it inoperative (1 Tim.4:2). An incapacitated consciousness of God is called a “seared” conscience.

Application: A wise Christian will be careful not to engage in activities that bother his conscience.

7-Temptation

1 John 2:16

Explanation: Though all people are tempted differently according to their individual weaknesses, temptations follow patterns. They appeal to three fundamental areas of life:

- (1) the lust of the flesh (physical desires);
- (2) the lust of the eyes (personal desires); and
- (3) the pride of life (self-interests).

Illustration: When Satan caused the fall of the race, he appealed to each of these areas of weakness (Gen. 3:6). He also appealed to them when he tempted Christ (Matt. 4:1-11), who defied Satan’s temptations by relying on the authority of the Scriptures.

Application: The Christian today should also depend on the Scriptures to defeat temptation.

8-Headship of Adam

Rom. 5:12

Explanation: Adam, the federal head of the human race, was also the seminal head. The word *seminal* (seed) implies that everyone existed in seed form within Adam, and that he was the head of the human race. We were all in the body of Adam when he sinned, just as Levi was in the body of Abraham when he met Melchizedek (Heb. 7:10). In that sense, every member of the human race played a part in the fall of man. When Adam sinned, we were actually sinning with him. Adam was also the federal head of the race. In this sense, Adam’s vote for sin is similar to the vote of a representative in the legislature (Congress, Senate or Parliament), who by his vote obligates his constituents for certain indebtedness. While Adam’s disobedience resulted in the human race being plunged into sin, the

obedience of Christ (the Second Adam) gives Christians the power to overcome sin in their lives.

9-Marriage

Gen. 2:24

Explanation: God's ideal plan for marriage is one man for one woman for one lifetime. God's pattern for marital happiness is evident when a man loves and leads his family, with children who obey and reverence their parents (**Eph. 6:1-4**), with a wife who respects and supports her husband's leadership (**Eph. 5:21-33**). A mutually supportive attitude must characterize both husband and wife if they are to succeed in building a harmonious home.

Illustration: Marriage is so important in the mind of God that it was the first of three divine institutions and was patterned to illustrate Christ's love for the church.

Application: Christians should therefore do their part in contributing to the success of the family.

10-Divorce

Matt. 19:13

Explanation: Divorce was never part of God's perfect plan for human experience, but every generation has engaged to some degree in this practice. Because of the hardness of men's hearts, divorce was permitted under the law in cases of fornication, which would include all deviant sexual practices, that is adultery, homosexuality, bestiality, and so on. While divorce is permitted, it is not necessarily prescribed.

Illustration: God used the experience of Hosea, a prophet with an unfaithful wife, to teach a spiritual lesson to the people of that day.

Application: A person should be very careful in taking any action to dissolve a marriage, fully understanding the extreme seriousness of such a move.

VI-The Doctrine of Sins

1-Personal Sins

Rom. 3:23

Explanation: A *personal sin* may be one of commission (doing something that is prohibited) or a sin of omission (failing to do what is required of us). It may also express itself in either an act or attitude.

Illustration: Sin is portrayed in Scripture as falling short of God's glory (**Rom. 3:23**), going astray like a wandering sheep (**Isaiah 53:6**), transgressing or overstepping the law (**Psalm 51:1; Luke 15:29**), and trespassing, which means exercising our own wills in the realm of divine authority (**Eph. 2:1**). Sin brings hideous results, affecting not only our relationship with God, but also our relationship with others. If not checked, sin will destroy the natural process of every person.

Application: Christians should not sin; but if they do they should remember their Advocate (Jesus Christ), and confess their sins in order to restore fellowship with God (**1 John 1:9-2:2**).

2-Sin Nature

Psalm 51:5

Explanation: When the word *sin* appears in the singular, it usually denotes the sin nature of humanity. The sin nature, which everyone possesses, influences us to sin and is the source of lust. It negatively affects people's minds (**Rom. 1:28**).

Illustration: The sin nature is partially responsible for blinding people's thoughts and understanding, so that they cannot perceive spiritual things (**1 Cor.2:14**). Although our sin nature continues to operate within us, it was judged when Christ died (**Rom.6:6-7**).

Application: Until Christ returns, we must live in the strength of the new man, to overcome the sinful desires arising from the sin nature. We cannot eradicate our sin nature, but we can allow the Holy Spirit to control us so that we do not give in to temptation.

3-Imputed Sin

Rom. 5:12

Explanation: The meaning of *impute* is "to ascribe to" or "reckon." The imputation of sin occurred originally when the sin of Adam was charged to the account of every person. The imputation of sin is not arbitrarily charging people with sins for which they are not naturally responsible, but reckoning to them the guilt they deserve. Imputation of sin is charged to all because we are all connected to with Adam's race.

Illustration: God not only imputes the sin of Adam to the race; He also offers to do the same with the righteousness of Christ (**Rom.5:21**). When God imputes the righteousness of Christ to the account of a believer, He makes the person's record as good (or as perfect) as Jesus Christ's.

Application: Imputed righteousness is the only remedy for imputed sin.

4-Backsliding

Jer. 3:22

Explanation: The word *backslide* literally means "turning back" or "turning away." Although it occurs throughout the Old Testament, Moses and Jeremiah especially use it to describe Israel's failure in their covenant relationship with God.

Illustration: Backsliding implied a stubborn and rebellious attitude on the part of ancient Israel and may have referred either to their forsaking the covenant (in whole or in part), or to their failure to grow spiritually according to God's progressive revelation.

Application: The term is often applied today to Christians who have fallen into sin, but it could also apply to those who have failed to grow spiritually (Paul's use of carnal in **1 Cor.3:1-3**). The cause of backsliding is the desire to do things our way rather than God's way (**Prov.14:14**). Christians should be careful to follow the Lord and grow in grace so as not to backslide.

5-Leaven

Lev. 2:11

Explanation: *Leaven* is used throughout the Old Testament to represent sin, probably because of its degenerative influence. In the New Testament it usually signifies malice and wickedness, in contrast to sincerity and truth (**1 Cor. 5:6-8**).

Illustration: Jesus identified three forms of leaven during His ministry. The leaven of the Pharisees was an unhealthy emphasis on the externalism (**legalism**) of religion (**Matt. 23:14-16**). The leaven of the Sadducees was their denial of the supernatural (**Matt. 22:23,29**). The leaven of the Herodians was worldliness (**Mark 3:6**).

Application: The corruptive influence of a little leaven emphasizes the need for churches to practice church discipline when sin becomes rampant in the lives of members of a congregation (**1 Cor. 5:6-7**).

6-Apostasy

2 Thess. 2:3

Explanation: The word *apostasy* means "a standing away from" in the sense of a falling away, withdrawal, or defection from the truth. It may be the result of persecution (**Matt. 24:9-10**), false teachers (**Matt. 24:11**), temptation (**Luke 8:13**), worldliness (**2 Tim. 4:4**), inadequate knowledge of Christ (**1 John 2:19**), moral lapse (**Heb. 6:4-6**), forsaking spiritual living and worship (**Heb.10:25-31**), or unbelief (**Heb. 3:12**). While there are those in every generation who fall away, this will be a general condition prior to the revelation of the Antichrist. In classical Greek the word *apostasy* was used of a revolt staged by a military commander.

Illustration: The apostasy of Saul and Amaziah are but two examples of individuals rebelling against the revealed will of God.

Application: The Christian should be careful to obey the Word of God to the best of his ability.

7-Pollution by Sin

1 Cor. 5:6

Explanation: Even a little sin has a corrupting and polluting influence in the life of the saved or the lost.

Illustration: man in his sin is compared to a snake ("adder" or "viper") for its venom (**Job 20:16; Psalm 140:3**), a donkey for its stubbornness (**Job 11:12**), a bear for its cruelty (**Dan. 7:5**), a dog for its uncleanness (**Prov. 26:11**), a fox for its cunning (**Luke 13:32**), a leopard for its fierceness (**Dan.7:6**), a moth for its appetite (**Job 27:18**), a sheep for its stupidity (**Isaiah 53:6**), a spider's web for its flimsiness (**Isaiah 59:5**), a pig for its filthiness (**2 Peter 2:23**), and a wolf for its ferociousness (**John 10:12**).

Application: By contrast, Christians should be characterized by the evident fruit of the Holy Spirit in their lives (**Gal. 5:22-23**).

8-Penalty of Sin

Rom. 6:23

Explanation: The *penalty of sin* is death, both spiritual and physical. The moment Adam sinned he died spiritually; in that sense, everyone is born dead in sin (**Eph. 2:1**). Physical death, described as the separation of the body and spirit (**James 2:26**), is the ultimate result of sin (**Gen.3**). People who die in their sin (in an unsaved state) will have to face a “second death” portrayed as a “lake of fire” (**Rev. 20:15**).

Application: The only escape from this second death is to receive the gift of eternal life in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

9-Flesh

Rom. 8:13

Explanation: The Scriptures use the word flesh in five ways. It may refer to:

- 1) the body or physical being;
- 2) the old nature or sin nature;
- 3) the epidermis (skin);
- 4) man’s immaterial nature; or
- 5) the whole being of man.

Paul uses the term in each of these verses in this chapter. Flesh itself is not evil (**Job 19:26**), yet Paul uses it to represent humanity’s evil nature, which cannot please God (**v.8**).

Application: Christians should glorify God in their physical bodies (flesh) as well as in their spirits, since both belong to God (**1Cor. 6:20**).

VII-Doctrine of Salvation

1-Gospel

1Cor. 15:1

Explanation: The most important message of Scripture is summarized in the word gospel, meaning “**Good News.**”

The gospel is both a proposition and a person. As a proposition, it embraces the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (**1 Cor. 15:3-4**). But the gospel is also a person---the person of the Lord Jesus Christ (**Mark 1:1**). To alter this gospel in any way is to subject ourselves to a curse from God (**Gal.1:8-9**). To be saved, we must believe the gospel. This requires that we both receive the person of Christ as Savior (**Rev.3:20**) and trust in His death, burial, and resurrection to save us from sin (**Rom.10:9-10**).

Application: Every Christian is responsible for sharing the Good News with others.

2-Salvation

Rom. 10:13

Explanation: *Salvation* is the most common biblical expression used to identify the subjective changes in people’s lives, when by faith they have received the benefit of the Christ’s death and resurrection. The term implies deliverance, safety, preservation, healing, and soundness. It occurs in Scripture in three phases.

First, the Christian has been saved from the guilt and penalty of sin (**Eph.2:5, 8**).

Second, the Christian is being saved from the habit and dominion of sin in his life (**Gal.2:19-20**).

Finally, when the Lord returns, the Christian will be saved from all the physical results of sin and of God’s curse on the world (**Rom. 8:18-23**).

Illustration: Although Jesus used this word only once (**Luke 19:9**), He used many other expressions to describe salvation. The dramatic change in Zacheus was proof of his salvation.

Application: The Christian today should also demonstrate a change in his life to confirm this “**so great salvation.**”

3-Reconciliation

2 Cor. 5:19

Explanation: *Reconciliation* is the act whereby God on the basis of Christ’s death, has eliminated the cause of hostility between Himself and humanity, making possible a complete and maturing fellowship. (The hostility was caused by sin, and was eliminated by the Cross.)

Illustration: When David prepared to fight for the Philistines, they feared he might betray them in battle in order to become reconciled with Saul. They answered that such an act would greatly please King Saul and be sufficient to restore a decayed relationship between Saul and David.

Application: Those who have become reconciled to God have also been given the ministry of reconciliation, which is fulfilled when they engage in soul-winning (**v.19**).

4-Propitiation

Rom. 3:25

Explanation: *Propitiation* is the act of God, motivated by His immense love, whereby He accepts the blood of Christ as the complete and satisfying sacrifice for all human sin, thus establishing a means of reconciliation between God and man. While the offering of the blood of Christ was a sufficient propitiation for the sins of the whole world (**1 John**

2:2), the complete benefits of His sacrifice are available only to those who by faith accept this provision for sin.

Illustration: The first occurrence of the Greek word for propitiation in the New Testament is in an expression used by Peter, sometimes translated as “**God have mercy on you**” (**Matt. 16:22**). Ironically, it was only because mercy was not extended to Christ in His suffering that propitiation was made for Peter and for the world.

Application: Those of us who have benefited from this expression of God’s love ought also to love one another (**1 John 4:10-11**).

5-Redemption

1 Peter 1:18-19

Explanation: The word **redeem** means “**to purchase.**” When Christ died for our sins, He paid the price that satisfied the demands of God’s holiness. The price of redemption was the blood of Christ (**1 Peter 1:18-19**).

Illustration: In explaining redemption to the Galatians, Paul used three different words that were applied to purchasing servants at the ancient slave markets.

The first, “**agorazo,**” meaning “**to purchase in the market,**” is used to explain how Christ paid the redemption price of His blood, which was sufficient to purchase every one “**sold under sin**” (**Gal. 3:10; 2 Peter 2:1**).

The second “**ekagorazo,**” meaning “**to purchase and take home,**” emphasizes that Christians have been purchased out of the marketplace and are no longer for sale (**Gal. 3:13**).

The third word, “**lutroo,**” meaning “**to purchase and give freedom,**” emphasizes the liberty that belongs to a soul redeemed by God (**Gal. 4:5**).

Application: The Christian is encouraged to “stand fast” in that liberty (**Gal. 5:1**).

6-Substitutionary Death

Rom. 5:8

Explanation: One of the historic fundamentals of the faith is the vicarious Atonement, in which Christ died as a substitute for sin.

Illustration: In the **Old Testament**, this was taught typologically by the offering of an animal sacrificed for sin, looking forward to that ultimate sacrifice for sin, Christ (**Gen. 22:8**).

In the **New Testament**, Christ is described as having died in the place of the Christian (**v.8**), of the church (**Eph. 5:25**), and of the world (**Heb. 2:9**). The concept of substitutionary death is illustrated by the offering of a ram in the place of Isaac (**Gen. 22:13**). Though Abraham was willing to offer his son as requested, God was prepared to accept a substitute that He had provided.

Application: Because Jesus died for everyone, Christians should take the message of the gospel to “**every creature**” (**Mark 16:15**).

7-Predestination

Eph. 1:5

Explanation: The verb *predestinate* literally means “**to mark off or chose before.**” God chooses those He knows will participate in His plan of salvation and extends it to all who respond in faith. The doctrine of predestination in Scripture relates to the foreknowledge of God (**Romans 8:29**).

Illustration: Predestination is especially noticeable in the conversion of the apostle Paul. Since he was a blasphemer and persecutor of the church, some Christians had a difficult

time believing Paul could be saved even after he so testified (**Acts 9:13; Acts 9:26**). Still, knowing what was ahead and how Paul would respond, God chose him as Apostle to the Gentiles.

Application: When we understand that God has chosen and predestined us, we should also realize we have been ordained to good works (**Ephesians 2:10**), to bear fruit (**John 15:16**), and to become like Jesus (**Romans 8:29**).

8-Foreknowledge

Rom. 8:29

Explanation: *Foreknowledge* speaks of God's awareness of the actual and potential future (**Acts 2:23; Acts 26:5; Romans 8:29; Romans 11:2; 1 Peter 1:2, 1 Peter 2:20; 2 Peter 3:17**). Those whom God foreknew, He also loved and ordained to be conformed to the image of His Son.

Illustration: On the Day of Pentecost, the apostle Peter vividly illustrated the harmony between God's sovereignty and man's personal responsibility. Even though the Cross was in the eternal plan of God and part of His sovereign will, those who crucified Christ did so as a rebellious act of their will. Therefore, they bore personal responsibility for Christ's death.

Application: We too are responsible for our personal actions and behavior (**Acts 2:23**).

9-Conversion

Rom. 6:17

Explanation: The term *conversion* refers to the human response to the gospel, while regeneration is God's creation of a new nature in the one who believes. Conversion requires the commitment of the total personality, intellect, emotion, and will. This is how people respond to the message of the gospel, when they understand the nature of Christ's atonement, feel the guilt of conviction, love God, and surrender their wills to the offer of salvation. The result of conversion is the changed life.

Illustration: Paul noted that the Romans had been servants of sin, but had "*obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine,*" that is, the gospel.

Application: Just as conversion results in our obtaining salvation and ultimate liberty from sin, so a continuous yielding of our will to God as Christians is the key to spiritual victory (**Romans 6:13**).

10-Repentance

Luke 13:3

Explanation: This was the common theme in the preaching of the prophets (**Jeremiah 18:8**), John the Baptist (**Matthew 3:8**), Jesus (**Mark 1:15**), and the apostles (**Acts 2:38**).

Repentance is necessary for salvation, but repentance alone does not save. It means to change one's mind about sin in such a way as to result in a change of action. In this sense, it is similar to conversion, which involves both repentance and faith. Repentance begins with a change of thought concerning sin, often resulting in a sense of godly sorrow. In coming to Christ for salvation there is also a change in the will. Repentance is produced in the life by means of the Word of God (**Romans 2:4**), the chastisement of the Lord (**Rev. 3:19**), belief of the truth (**Jonah 3:5**), and a new vision of God (**Job 42:5-6**). Jesus taught that repentance could not be produced by miracles (**Matthew 11:20-21**), not even by someone rising from the dead (**Luke 16:30-31**).

Illustration: In the Old Testament, Manasseh was carried into captivity before he acknowledged his sin and repented. On His trip through Jericho, Jesus encountered a man

named Zaccheus. This man repented, although he had lived an evil life for many years. Both of these men found salvation, yet others, whose lives have been less evil, remain unsaved because they will not repent.

Application: Whenever God speaks to a Christian about a certain sin in his life, he should immediately repent and depend on God to give victory.

11-Saving Faith

Eph. 2:8

Explanation: *Saving faith* is part of humanity's response to God in the salvation experience. It is as simple as looking to Jesus for salvation (**John 3:14-16**). Saving faith is both simple and complex. It is as simple as a drowning man reaching for a rope, yet at the same time it sets in motion all the judicial machinery of heaven, in keeping with the ultimate purpose of God. While believing is simple, there are some for whom it is too simple, and they find that too difficult. In the Scriptures, the intensity of one's faith is not as important as its object. Often belief in the gospel produces an emotional response (Acts 16:34), although, because individual personalities differ, it is not wise to use emotion as a test of faith. Ultimately, saving faith is expressed as an act of the will. Repentance and faith are in essence two sides of the same coin called "**conversion.**"

Illustration: When the Philippian jailer asked, "**What must I do to be saved?**" (thus reflecting a spirit of repentance), Paul and Silas responded, "**Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved**" (**Acts 16:30-31**).

Application: To be saved a person must trust Christ alone for his salvation.

12-Justification

Rom. 3:28

Explanation: *Justification* is the act of God whereby our legal standing in heaven is changed and we are declared righteous. The verb *justify* and the adjective *righteous* are linked in Scripture, since both share a common Greek root. When we express saving faith in God, he adds righteousness and perfection to our record. God is the source, with the power to declare righteous, and man is the recipient, being declared righteous.

Illustration: Abraham is the first person the Bible describes as being justified. This does not mean he was the first child of God, only that his is the first recorded case of justification. With Abraham, as with the others later, justification was the result of saving faith (**Genesis 15:6; Romans 5:1**).

Application: Anyone who comes to God and trusts Christ for salvation will be justified.

13-Forgiveness of Sins

Eph. 1:7

Explanation: The word *forgiveness* literally means "**to send off or away.**" In Scriptures this means separating the sinner from his sin. God accomplishes forgiveness by transferring our sin to Christ on the cross and judging it there. When an individual receives Christ as Savior, he is forgiven by means of this transfer.

Illustration: When Cain was discouraged by his failure to be accepted by God, he was invited to make a sin offering (a "type" of Calvary) and resolve the problem (**Genesis 4:6-7**).

Application: Because God has forgiven us, we also ought to be forgiving in our attitude toward others (**Matthew 6:14-15**).

14-Regeneration

Titus 3:5

Explanation: *Regeneration* refers to the work of the Holy Spirit in the salvation experience that produces new life in the believer. To express this concept, Jesus used the expression “born again” in His conversation with Nicodemus (**John 3:3-7**).

Regeneration is the work of God, through the Holy Spirit, of placing in one who has faith a new nature, capable of doing God’s will. The Holy Spirit is the agent or divine workman of this regeneration. His instrument is the Bible, which is likened to a hammer that judges sin (**Jeremiah 23:29**), a mirror that reveals sin (**James 1:23**), a sword that defeats Satan (**Hebrews 4:12**), and a lamp that guides the believers (**Psalms 119:105**).

Illustration: People are instantaneously “born again,” the moment they trust Christ as Savior (**1 Peter 1:23**).

Application: Christians should be careful to cooperate with God in growing as children of God after they are regenerated, or given new life.

15-Adoption

Eph. 1:5

Explanation: Five times the apostle Paul uses the word adoption to describe an important aspect of the salvation experience (**Romans 8:15; Romans 8:23; Romans 9:4; Galatians 4:5; Ephesians 1:5**). Under Roman law adoption was a common means of appointing an heir. It legally transferred a person from the natural father’s authority to the adoptive father. Paul uses this term to describe the believer’s position with God. This is the means whereby the Christian becomes a son of God, and therefore an heir with Christ.

Illustration: When Abraham was without a son, he apparently considered adopting Eliezer his servant as the heir of his household.

Application: Because the Christian is an adopted son of God, he can enjoy an intimacy with his heavenly Father (**Galatians 4:6**).

16-Union with Christ

John 15:5

Explanation: The uniqueness of the Christian experience results from the union of Christ and the believer. This is expressed in Scripture as Christ being in the believer and the believer in Christ. Ten times Paul uses the Greek preposition “*sun*” (**together**) to describe this relationship. Believers were crucified (**Galatians 2:20**), dead (**Colossians 2:20**), buried (**Romans 6:4**), quickened or made alive (**Ephesians 2:1-5; Colossians 2:13**), raised (**Colossians 3:1; Ephesians 2:6**), seated (**Ephesians 2:6**), and glorified (**Romans 8:17**) together with Christ.

Illustration: Jesus used the image of the vine and its branches to describe His union with the believer.

Application: On the basis of this union, the apostle Paul showed how the successful Christian life can be opened **with four key words** in **Romans 6: know (v.6), reckon (v.11), yield (v.13) and obey (v.17)**. The Christian can conquer sin because Christ lives in him (**Galatians 2:20**).

17-Assurance

1 John 5:13

Explanation: The Scripture clearly teaches that it is possible to know whether you are saved or unsaved. The assurance of the believer is not based on feeling, (though the Christian may *“feel”* saved), but on the principles of God’s Word. We can know we are saved because Christ is in our hearts (**Colossians 1:27; 1 John 5:12**), because of the witness of the Word of God (**1 John 5:10-11**), because of answered prayer (**John 14:14; 1 John 5:14-15**), because of our understanding of the Scriptures (**1 John 5:20**), because we keep His commandments (**2 Corinthians 5:17; 1 John 5:18**), because we love the brethren (**1 John 3:14**), and because we have the inner witness of the Holy Spirit (**Romans 8:16**).

Illustration: Paul claimed to have this inner confidence and was fully persuaded concerning the keeping power of God in salvation (**2 Timothy 1:12**).

Application: Because of this assurance, the believer need not be ashamed of Christ, even when he finds himself in difficult circumstances (**2 Timothy 1:12**).

18-The Security of the Believer

John 10:28

Explanation: The doctrine of *eternal security* teaches that God is able to complete the good work of eternal life that He has begun in every believer (**Philippians 1:6**). The eternal security of the believer is guaranteed by the person and work of God. He is true and just, and cannot deny Himself. Therefore anyone who *has* eternal life, has it forever. God promises that no one can ever be separated from His love (**Romans 8:33-39**).

Illustration: Some argue that this doctrine leads to antinomianism, that is, allowing Christians to live in sin. This charge, however, denies the very nature of salvation, which involves union with Christ and death to sin (**Romans 6**). But to the extent that a Christian fails to serve God, his reward may be lost, though he will be saved from everlasting wrath (**1 Corinthians 3:15**).

Application: The Christian is saved and secured by faith, but in love and gratitude to Christ will seek to faithfully serve Him.

19-Separation

2 Cor. 6:17

Explanation: A Christian should live a holy life that reflects the nature of God, who saved him (**1 Peter 1:16**). He should separate himself from actions, influences, or people that will contaminate him. A Christian should apply the biblical principles of separation and avoid what is

- (1) against a biblical standard of purity (**1 Cor.6:17-20; 2 Cor.10:4-5**);
- (2) against a biblical prohibition (**Exodus 20:3-17**);
- (3) an association that will harm (**1 Cor.6:14-18**);
- (4) harmful to the body (**1 Cor.6:19**);
- (5) harmful to a weaker brother (**1 Cor.8:8-13**);
- (6) offensive to the conscience (**James 4:17**); or
- (7) failure to follow the example of Christ (**1 Peter 2:21**).

Illustration: The Corinthian church was an immature congregation, with problems in many areas, but victory was available through Christ (**1 Cor.15:57**).

Application: Correct relationship to the Holy Spirit will make a believer *“holy”* and *“spiritual.”*

20-Priesthood of Believers

1 Peter 2:9

Explanation: Every believer has the privilege and responsibility of direct access to God.

Illustration: In the Old Testament the family of Aaron was designated as priesthood to God. In the New Testament that priesthood becomes the birthright of every Christian. Like their Old Testament counterparts, believer-priests have the privilege of access to God.

Application: With privilege comes a twofold responsibility-sacrifice and intercessory prayer. The sacrifices of the believer are his body (**Romans 12:1-2**), his praise to God (**Hebrews 13:5**), his substance (**Romans 12:13**), and his service (**Hebrews 13:6**). The Christian ought also to pray on behalf of others (**Colossians 4:12**).

21-Liberty and Responsibility

1 Cor. 9:19

Explanation: One of the results of redemption is the liberty of the believer. Christians are free from depending on the law and free from the bondage of their old nature. Christian liberty releases us to accomplish all our potential. But that liberty should not be abused to justify hedonistic behavior. Although believers live in a state of freedom, concern for reaching others with the gospel and helping weaker believers grow will result in voluntary self-restraint in areas that might offend others, or hinder our efforts in reaching and helping people.

Illustration: Paul referred to the example of eating meat offered to idols. He had the freedom to eat such meat, but he suggested that believers abstain because the practice acted as a stumbling block for weaker believers (**Romans 14**).

Application: Believers should act responsibly in exercising their liberty if they wish to be most effective in service to Christ.

22-Prayer

Matt. 7:7

Explanation: Both *Jesus* (**Luke 18:1**) and *Paul* (**1 Timothy 2:1**) emphasized the importance of prayer, noting that people ought always to pray. Prayer includes asking and getting answers from God. But it is more than just asking; it is confession, adoration, thanksgiving, and fellowship with God. By its nature, prayer is talking to God. It is the basis of the successful Christian life, and is so important that not praying is considered a sin (**1 Samuel 12:23**). When we pray, we should follow the model prayer Jesus gave His disciples and address it to our heavenly Father---beginning with adoration, including thanksgiving and confession of sins, making reconciliation with others, praying for our needs and the needs of others, and concluding in Jesus' name (**Matthew 6:9-15; John 14:14**).

Illustration: Jesus pointed out that God heard the prayer of a humble publican rather than that of a proud Pharisee (**Luke 18:14**).

Application: God will answer our prayer when we obey Him (**1 John 3:22**), confess sin (**Psalms 66:18**), abide in Christ (**John 15:7**), ask according to the will of God (**1 John 5:14**), ask in faith (**Mark 11:24**), have pure motives (**James 4:3**), and live peaceably with our mate (**1 Peter 3:7**).

23-Fasting

Isaiah 58:6

Explanation: Fasting is the discipline of abstaining from food for biblical reasons. It is called “afflicting one’s soul” (Isaiah 58:3), and is often practiced to demonstrate the sincerity of our prayers. There are several biblical reasons for fasting. Christians should fast when facing a national crisis (2 Chronicles 20:3; Ezra 8:21; Esther 4:16), for individual needs (Matthew 17:21), during periods of distress (2 Samuel 3:35; Psalm 35:13), when facing spiritual decisions (Matthew 4:2; Acts 13:2), and in anticipation of Christ’s return (Luke 5:35).

Illustration: Many people have found that heavy burdens are relieved through fasting (Isaiah 58), wisdom is obtained through fasting (Daniel 10), revival comes from fasting (Isaiah 58:6), God’s protection from danger is secured by fasting (1 King 21:27-29), recovery of a sick loved one may come after fasting (Psalm 35:13), and the inauguration of a great ministry may follow fasting (Matthew 4:2).

Application: When a Christian fasts, he should begin with a short fast—one day from sundown to sundown—and attempt to spend time alone with God during the fast.

24-Infant Salvation

Matt. 19:14

Explanation: Children who die before the age of accountability go to the presence of God and are considered safe in Jesus, rather than using the traditional word saved. This is based on the nature of God, who would not condemn anyone who lacked the ability to respond.

Illustration: Based on David’s words concerning a future meeting with his dead infant (2 Samuel 12:23), most Christians are assured that children who die before the age of accountability will be in heaven. How this is accomplished is open to speculation, since the Bible does not specifically say. The age of accountability is generally thought to be the time at which a child understands the difference between right and wrong.

Application: Sometimes God will allow tragic events like the death of a child to enter our lives, so that we can understand and appreciate His comfort and be prepared to comfort others in their time of need. (2 Corinthians 1:3-4).

25-Dedication to the Will of God

Rom. 12:1-2

Explanation: God’s will refers to His purpose for the life of the believer. It implies His guidance or direction in all of life’s decisions. Dedication is an act of surrender or submission to His will for our lives whereby we become a “living sacrifice.” Daily dependence on God results in our transformation into the image of Christ.

Illustration: When we seek to discern the will of God we must also be committed to doing the will of God as it is revealed in the Word of God (John 7:17).

Application: The believer should evaluate every decision on the basis of biblical principles, knowing that obedience brings God’s blessing.

VIII-The Doctrine of Angels

1-Angels

Heb. 1:4

Explanation: Angeles are created, spiritual beings who are servants of God. The word angel means “messenger”. Though they also have power to become visible in human form, they are incorporeal beings, possessing intellect, emotion, and will. The word angel is always used in the masculine gender, although sex in the human sense is never ascribed to them. They have great power (2 Kings 19:35), but are not omnipotent. They have extensive wisdom (2 Sam.14:20), but are not omniscient. Their number is great (Heb. 12:22), but not limitless.

Illustration: Man is made “a little lower than the angels” (Heb. 2:7), although the same writer reminds us that Christ is greater than the angels (Heb. 1:4).

Application: There are a number of benefits derived from understanding the ministry of angels. When we realize that they constantly observe our Christian lives (1 Cor. 4:9; 1 Cor. 11:10; Eph. 3:10), we will improve our conduct. When we understand how they protect us, we will appreciate God’s care for us (Heb. 1:7). When we consider their tremendous strength and ability, we will be encouraged. Finally, their example of unceasing service ought to motivate us to more consistent service for God. (Genesis 1:1—heaven is plural in Hebrew, meaning God created the whole, with its innumerable separate parts, including angels; Heb. 1:4; cf. Heb. 12:22)

2-Ranking of Angels

Heb. 12:22

Explanation: The description of angels suggests that they exist in orderly arrangement, perhaps with specialized responsibilities.

Illustration: Michael is the archangel (Jude 9), the highest in the order of angels.

Gabriel appears to be the messenger angel of God, usually cited when an angel gives a message from God to man. The cherubim are portrayed as being in diligent service to God and attached to the throne of God to guard His holiness. Seraphim is the title applied to those angels assigned to God’s altar; they, like the cherubim, are concerned with the holiness of God. The seraphim probably relate to sacrifice and cleansing, whereas the cherubim deal with judgment.

Application: When a Christian recognizes the order within the various ranks of angels, he will realize that what is done for God should be done in an orderly manner. (Genesis 1:1; Heb. 12:22; cf. Isaiah 14:12).

3-Satan

Isaiah 14:12

Explanation: Originally created as one of God’s highest angels, possessing all angelic attributes, Satan (“Adversary”) led angels in a rebellion. He is described as the originator and chief practitioner of sin (1 John 3:8), “that wicked one” (1 John 5:18), a thief and destroyer (John 10:10), a deceiver (Rev. 12:9), murderer and liar (John 8:44), and the accuser of the brethren (Rev. 12:10).

Illustration: Satan’s subtle nature is reflected in the first temptation (Gen. 3:1), and in his titles “angel of light” (2 Cor.11:14), and him that “deceiveth the whole world” (Rev. 12:9). His present-day activities include opposing the will and work of God, counterfeiting the work of God, and destroying all that is good.

Application: A Christian can overcome Satan when he remembers four basic principles: **First**, though Jesus is greater than the Devil (**1 John 4:4**), a Christian must still have a healthy respect for the Enemy; even the archangel Michael did not confront Satan except in the name of the Lord (**Jude 9**).

Second, a wise Christian will evaluate his life and avoid those situations where he is most likely to be tempted (**1 Thess. 5:22**).

Third, he should resist the Devil by submitting to God (**James 4:7-10**).

Finally, the Christian should always be prepared by wearing the whole armor of God (**Eph. 6:13-17**). (**Isaiah 14:12-17**; cf. **1 Tim. 4:1**).

4-Demons

1 Tim. 4:1

Explanation: Demons are real, incorporeal beings, probably fallen angels who rebelled against God in heaven and were cast out of His presence. Thus, much of what is true of angels is also true of demons. They, however, appear to be evil in nature and loyal to Satan. Underestimating their immense power would be a grave mistake. Christians who believe they can “wrestle” with demons without using “the whole armor of God” are seriously deluded. While apparently some demons are currently confined (**2 Peter 2:4**; **Jude 6**), most are not and will not be finally punished until the Millennium (**Rev. 20:3**). After a brief period of freedom at the end of the Millennium (during which they inspire a final rebellion), they will be eternally confined to hell, which was originally prepared for them (**Matt. 25:41**). (**2 Peter 2:4**; **1 Tim.4:1**; cf. **Eph. 6:12**).

5-Activities of Demons

Eph. 6:12

Explanation: Several activities in the Bible may involve demons. Sometimes they cause physical disease or mental suffering. However, not all mental disorders are demonic in origin. Demons also tempt people into immoral practices. They originate and propagate false doctrines taught by heretical religious groups (**1 Timothy 4:1**). The Bible also teaches that some people were possessed by demons (**Mark 1:23**). Although demons are committed to do evil, God will use them to accomplish His plan during the end of the age (**Rev. 16:14**).

Illustration: Demons are also objects of worship in various occult practices forbidden by God. These include divination (an illegitimate means of determining the will of God), necromancy (efforts to communicate with and interrogate the dead), magic (using formulas and incantations), sorcery (perhaps the non-medical use of drugs) witchcraft, and astrology (**Deut. 18:10-12**).

Application: When the Ephesians Christians who were “dabbling” in the occult repented, there was a great revival in that place. No Christian can ever justify his participation in demonic activities.

IX-The Doctrine of the Church

1-Church

Matt. 16:18

Explanation: The word *church* is a translation of *ekklesia*, meaning “called out” or “assembly.” In the New Testament it usually refers to a local group of Christians. In this sense a church is an assembly of baptized believers under the discipline of the Word of God. They are organized to carry out the Great Commission, the administration of New Testament ordinances, teach the biblical doctrines and the exercise of spiritual gifts. When a group of Christians today follows this example, it is a church in the biblical sense of the word. In the New Testament, Christians assembled as churches for fellowship, instruction, and worship and to carry out the Great Commission.

Illustration: Perhaps the best-known New Testament churches were at Jerusalem, Antioch, Thessalonica, Philippi, Corinth, Ephesus, and the other six cities mentioned in **Revelation 2** and **3**.

Application: Every Christian should follow the example of New Testament believers by identifying with a local church, and getting involved in its ministry. (**Matt. 16:18; cf. Acts 2:42**).

2-Church Discipline

Acts 2:42

Explanation: One of the first religious exercises of the New Testament church after Pentecost was persevering in the apostles’ doctrine. **Doctrinal purity was essential to a New Testament church.** The local churches placed themselves under God’s authority by accepting the discipline of the Word of God. The proclamation of Scriptures became a positive discipline, developing correct beliefs and life-style. When Christians need to be confronted and rebuked for sin or false belief, either individually or corporately, negative discipline will correct the error and bring the church back to its biblical role. When an assembly of people removes itself from the authority of Scripture, that assembly ceases to be a New Testament church.

Illustration: Although the church at Sardis had quite a reputation in its community, Jesus viewed it as having already died (**Rev. 3:1**).

Application: All Christians should carefully evaluate the beliefs and practices of a church by the standard of God’s Word. Then they should associate with and support the one that meets the New Testament standards. (**Matt. 18:17; Acts 2:42; cf. Matt. 28:19**).

3-Purpose of the Church

Matt. 28:19

Explanation: The controlling purpose of the local church is to make disciples of all kinds of people. Those who are evangelized and converted should then be baptized, attesting to their identification with Christ and the local body of believers. The final phase of the Great Commission is to train disciples in Christian knowledge and for effective service. A church cannot choose one aspect of its responsibility and neglect the others. The Great Commission is a simple command with three steps—evangelism, baptism, and education.

Illustration: The Great Commission is the strategy by which the church at Jerusalem saturated its community with the gospel.

Application: Every Christian should determine that his ministry for Christ in the church upholds God’s objectives for that institution. (**Matt. 16:18; Matt. 28:19; cf. Phil. 1:27**).

4-Fellowship

Phil. 1:27

Explanation: Fellowship, one of the keys to spiritual growth, occurs when Christians share their walk with God in an atmosphere of love and respect. Fellowship occurs when everyone communicates in love with other believers, and the whole assembly becomes strengthened as a result. Sometimes fellowship requires confessing our faults (**James 5:16**) as we strive to develop a unity of spirit and mind. Those who work to hinder the fellowship of the brethren practice a sin that is hated by God. (**Prov. 6:19**).

Illustration: The church at Philippi was particularly noted for its spirit of fellowship, but Paul's warning to two women in the church reminds how we must constantly work to maintain fellowship (**Phil 4:1-3**).

Application: Fellowship is so vital that we cannot live for God by ourselves. As we develop deeper relationships with others, we should remember that we come to resemble those with whom we fellowship. (**Matt. 18:19; Phil 1:27; cf. Rom. 6:4-10**).

5-Baptism

Rom. 6:4

Explanation: The word *baptism* derives from a verb meaning “to immerse” or “to identify with”. Spiritual baptism happens when the new believer is united with Christ and His people (**1 Cor.12:13**), and is identified with Him in death, burial, and resurrection. Water baptism should be practiced by every Christian after conversion; hence it is sometimes called the first step of faith. There are many reasons why every Christian should be baptized, but perhaps Christ's example is the compelling one. Water baptism is the act of immersing the new believer in water as a testimony that he has experienced the reality of the conversion experience. The act is not to be equated with salvation.

Illustration: Paul reminds the Romans of baptism's symbolic significance.

First, it represents redemption, picturing the gospel (**Rom. 6:4**).

Second, baptism represents our hope in a future resurrection (**Rom. 6:5**).

Ultimately, baptism symbolizes our new life (**Rom. 6:6**).

Application: Every believer should be baptized but only of his own free will. (**Matt. 3:6; Romans 6:4-10; cf. 1 Cor.11:20**).

6-Lord's Supper

1 Cor.11:20

Explanation: The Lord's Supper is the distinctive symbol of Christian worship instituted by the Lord on the eve of His death, being a spiritual partaking of bread and the fruits of the vine. These elements are presented as a thankful expression of Christ's sacrifice, taken in fellowship with Him and with one another. It is a memorial conducted in remembrance of Christ's atoning death, anticipating His return to earth. The two symbols of this ordinance are the bread, representing the broken body of Christ, and the cup, representing His shed blood. Christians are divided as to whether the table should be “open” or “closed”. The chief argument supporting open communion is that it is the Lord's Supper, not a ceremony of a particular religious denomination. Those who believe that the table should be restricted argue that the church should not allow a person to eat unworthily or bring judgment on his own head (**1 Cor. 11:27-30**). “Close” (not “closed”) communion is an attempt to have the best of both. However, the symbolism of the elements clearly represents the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ which is the very acknowledgment of the believer in his or her salvation experience.

Illustration: God judged some Corinthian Christians with sickness and death for their failure to properly observe this ordinance.

Application: Every Christian should use the Lord's Supper to examine his own spiritual progress and attitudes before partaking. (**Matt. 26:26; 1 Cor. 11:20-34; cf. John 13:10**).

7-Foot Washing

John 13:10

Explanation: Some denominations see the example of foot washing as a third ordinance of the church. Although early Christians washed feet as an act of hospitality (**1 Tim. 5:10**), they never practiced this as a church ordinance. The real meaning of Jesus' actions was twofold.

First, washing feet was a slave's task, so Jesus washed the disciples' feet out of humility, attempting to teach them the principle of servant leadership.

Second, foot washing symbolized cleansing.

Illustration: Although Christians are clean, having been "**bathed**" with the washing of regeneration (**Titus 3:5**), sins committed after salvation "**soil our feet**" (our walk with God) hindering our fellowship with God and renewing the need for a cleansing to restore fellowship. When a Christian senses sin in his life, he should confess this sin to God, who will forgive and cleanse (**1 John 1:9**).

Application: Jesus said, "**He that is washed**"—referring to salvation---"**needeth not save to wash his feet**"---cleansing for renewed fellowship. He could not get saved again---"**Ye are clean.**" (**John 13:14-17; cf. 1 Peter 5:1-4**).

8-Pastoral Office

1 Tim. 3:1

Explanation: The **pastor**, who shepherds today's church, also fulfills the New Testament role of **elder** and **bishop (overseer)**, and is responsible to God for the spiritual welfare of the church (**Acts 20:28**). When Christ returns, He will judge and reward these **pastors (elders)** according to their faithfulness in leading the church to accomplish God's will (**1 Peter 5:4**). There are at least seven different titles for the New Testament pastor. The term *elder* is used over **20 times**, emphasizing the pastor's wisdom and maturity. The title *bishop* emphasizes the administrative function of the office. The word *pastor* emphasizes the responsibility of caring for the church, as a shepherd cares for the sheep. The word *preacher* emphasizes the ministry of publicly proclaiming God's Word. The title *teacher* emphasizes that the pastor should be "**apt to teach**". The *pastor* is also called a *servant*, reminding him that he is to minister to others; and he is a *steward*, managing the property of others (the church of Christ).

Illustration: Both Timothy and Titus were pastors of churches started by Paul, who wrote Pastoral Epistles to them.

Application: Christians should be supportive of their pastors, as they attempt to fulfill their biblical ministry. (**Jer.2:8; 1 Timothy 3:1-7**).

9-Deacons

1 Tim. 3:8

Explanation: The word *deacon* derives from a Greek word for servant; hence, the deacons are a serving office in the church. In order to free the apostles for the more important duties of prayer and ministry of the Word, seven men were appointed to care for the church. These are generally thought to have been deacons (**Acts 6:1-4**). While there is no "**job description**" for a servant, the nature of a deacon's qualification gives

insight into his duties (**Acts 6:1-8; 1 Tim. 3:8-13**). The first deacons performed routine labors in the church, and were responsible for promoting harmony among various groups within the assembly. Deacons may also have served in an advisory capacity, and they engaged in spiritual ministries, including preaching and church planting. There is no biblical evidence that deacons established and controlled the financial and administrative operations of the church or the supervision of the pastor.

Application: In one sense, every Christian should act like a deacon in encouraging church harmony and helping others serve Christ more effectively. (**Phil 1:1; 1 Tim.3:8-13; cf. Eph. 4:11**).

10-Evangelist

Eph. 4:11

Explanation: The word *evangelist* is used only three times in Scripture. Therefore, relatively little can be concluded about this person's role. Philip, who planted churches, is called an evangelist (**Acts 21:8**), and Timothy was instructed to do the work of an evangelist (**2 Tim.4:5**). Some have the gift of evangelism and are given to the church (**v.11**). The root meaning of evangelist is "to bring good tidings" or "to bring the gospel message".

Illustration: In the New Testament, the evangelist appears to have gone to unbelieving people, attempting to win them to Christ. Some people view the evangelist as a particularly effective soul-winner.

Application: Soul winning is the responsibility of all Christians regardless of their spiritual gifts, offices, or ministries. (**Acts 21:8; Eph. 4:11; cf. Eph.2:20**).

11-Apostles

Eph. 2:20

Explanation: The word *apostle* identifies someone commissioned with authority by Jesus Christ. In the New Testament, this applies in a technical sense to certain men who played a prominent role in establishing the church. They had been eyewitnesses to the Resurrection (**Acts 1:22**). Apostles were recipients of revelation and possessed the sign gifts, also called "the signs of an apostle" (**2 Cor.12:12**). The apostles gave us the Epistles of the New Testament.

Illustration: In the case of Paul, it appears that he was endowed with spiritual gifts which he exercised; and he fulfilled the requirements for being an apostle.

Application: Because the New Testament is complete, and there are none who presently meet the biblical qualifications of the apostle, this office is unfilled in the contemporary church. (**Matt. 10:2; Eph. 2:20; cf. Acts 13:3**).

12-Ordination

Acts 13:3

Explanation: This act is the symbolic laying of hands on a candidate for the ministry, after he has been examined by the church and it has been verified that he is called by God and equipped to provide leadership for the church. Following ordination, he is generally recognized to lead the church in ministry, to determine its soundness of doctrine, to administer its ordinances, and to educate its adherents. Ordination does not imply the communication of power or authority but rather recognizes the minister's being called and gifted by God.

Illustration: In the Old Testament, God's servants were often anointed with oil before undertaking a work to which He had called them. The practice of laying on of hands was

a biblical act of identification and accreditation and was practiced by New Testament Christians in the initiation of ministries (**Acts 6:6; Acts 13:1-13**).

Application: Jesus taught that all Christians are ordained to bear fruit and have their prayers answered (**John 15:16**). (**Num.28:6; Acts 13:3; cf. Mal. 3:10**).

13-Tithing

Mal. 3:10

Explanation: Tithing is the practice of giving **10 percent** of one's income to the Lord. It is called "**storehouse tithing**" by some who require that the tithe be given the Lord through the local church.

Illustration: While some Christians disagree, the principle of "**God's place**" for worship is the basis for storehouse tithing (**Deut.12**). The temple in the Old Testament

- (1) was the central place characterized by God's presence;
- (2) possessed the symbols of redemption; and
- (3) was where the man of God served.

In the New Testament, these three attributes characterize the local church. Hence, the principle of storehouse tithing continues into the church age.

Application: Some people withhold their tithe from their local church because they disagree with its expenditure of funds. These Christians should join another church where they can wholeheartedly make their contributions in good conscience. Because our actual tithe belongs to the local church, giving to Para church organizations should be in addition to the tithe. (**Gen. 14:20; Mal. 3:10; cf. Matt.22:21**).

14-Church and State

Matt. 22:21

Explanation: In distinguishing obedience to God from obedience to Caesar, Jesus identified the underlying principle of two different kingdoms: church and state. Both are divinely ordained institutions, but ought to remain separate, since they have two distinct purposes. When church and state are united, the integrity of each institution is often called into question. This separation does not prohibit the involvement of Christians in areas of social responsibility. A government of the people, by the people, and for the people is anarchy unless governed by eternal, self-evident principles, which are reflected in Scripture.

Illustration: Jesus taught us not only to "**render unto God**" but also to "**render unto Caesar**". Christians are therefore responsible for obeying laws, paying taxes, praying for those in authority, and actively speaking out and standing for God and His laws in government.

Application: The example of Christians involved in the political system demonstrates how God uses them to be both **salt and light** to the world (**Matt.5:13-14**). (**Dan.6:2; Matt. 22:21; cf. Eph. 5:32**).

15-Bride of Christ

Eph. 5:32

Explanation: The relationship of Christ to His church is illustrated by that of a husband to his wife. Christ is called the Bridegroom, and His church is called the bride. Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify, cleanse, and glorify it.

Illustration: In the Old Testament, several brides are typical of the church, including Eve (**Gen. 2:23-24**), Rebekah (**Gen. 24:1-7**), Asenath (**Gen. 41:45**), and Zipporah (**Ex. 2:21**).

The Song of Solomon is often interpreted typologically of the union and communion between Christ and His church.

Application: As wives should be submissive to and reverence their husbands, so Christians should submit to and worship Christ. (**Gen. 2:23; Eph.5:32; cf. 1 Cor.12:27**).

16-Body of Christ

1 Cor. 12:27

Explanation: The church in the New Testament is called the “**body of Christ**”, and reflects the spiritual organism of the whole church on earth. When the local church is called the body of Christ, the spiritual aspect is always emphasized.

Illustration: As the church is considered to be the body, so individual members are seen as parts of the body. For any church to function properly, every member must do his or her part in a harmonious spirit of cooperation with the other members. Had the church at Corinth learned this lesson, many of their problems would have been solved.

Application: When Christians disrupt the harmony of a church, they bring reproach on the body of Christ. (**1 Cor.12:27; cf. Matt. 16:18**).

X-The Doctrine of Last Things

1-Signs of Christ's Return

Matt. 24:33

Explanation: Signs are indications that Christ is about to return to earth. Technically, they refer to the revelation of Christ, and not the Rapture. There are obvious signs during the seventy-year Tribulation before the revelation, but there are no signs that precede the Rapture. However, there are conditions that suggest the Rapture will happen soon. No one will ever know the date of Jesus' return until He comes. Still there are certain things happening in our world to suggest that His return may be very close. These are:

- (1) Israel's return to the Promised Land;
- (2) The obvious accelerations of lawlessness;
- (3) Increase of apostasy (**1 Timothy 4:1**);
- (4) The socio-religious climate preparing for the one world church; and
- (5) The rapid acceleration of life-threatening conditions—such as potential atomic/nuclear annihilation, population explosion, and pollution—that require Christ's return before events run their natural course and terminate the world.

Paul listed certain conditions which, though true in every age, appear to be more prevalent today (**2 Timothy 3:1-5**).

Application: The Christians in Thessalonica lived in expectation of Christ's imminent return, just as all Christians ought to live today.

2-Dispensations and Covenants

Eph. 3:2

Explanation: People must recognize the relationship between a dispensation and a covenant if they would understand God's plan and objective throughout the ages. A **dispensation** is an administration within a period of time that is based on a conditional test to determine if people will be faithful to God and His conditions. A covenant is an eternal agreement made by God with humanity, revealing what God will do for people individually or collectively. God made covenants with the human race throughout history that specifically relate to one of the seven dispensations. Each covenant reveals principles in embryonic form by which God will relate to humanity. Man can choose to reject the covenant or principles of God, and will, to some extent, in every dispensation. When he violates the covenant, man suffers the consequences in the form of a judgment, bringing that dispensation to an abrupt end. While all Christians recognize at least two dispensations—laws and grace—the notes in this Bible survey outline seven major dispensations and their covenants. Some include the Palestinian covenant in the list, but other theologians recognize that as a land covenant, which was temporary rather than involving eternal consequences (**Deut. 28:63-68**; cf. **Genesis 1:28**).

3-Innocence—Edenic Covenant

Gen. 1:28

Explanation: The first dispensation, innocence, was governed by the Edenic covenant. Under this covenant, Adam had six obligations:

- (1) to replenish the earth with children (**v.28**);
- (2) to use nature for his physical needs including food and shelter (**v.28**);
- (3) to have dominion over animal life (**v.28**);
- (4) to eat fruit and vegetables (**v.29**);
- (5) to labor for his sustenance (**Genesis 2:15**); and
- (6) to obey God by abstaining from eating the forbidden fruit.

Adam's failure under this covenant resulted in his expulsion from the garden and in the fall of the human race from a state of innocence into a condition characterized by sin, (cf. **Genesis 3:15**).

4-Conscience—Adamic Covenant

Gen. 3:15

Explanation: The dispensation of conscience was based on Adam's limited experience with good and evil. He should have remembered the positive results of obedience and the disastrous consequences of disobedience. The Adamic covenant was introduced at the beginning of this period. Under the covenant, the serpent was cursed (**v.14**); God promised redemption through the seed of the woman (**v.15**); the woman experienced multiplied sorrow and pain in childbearing (**v.16**); the earth was cursed (**vv.17-18**); sorrow, pain and physical death became part of the experience of life, and labor became burdensome (**v.19**). Man failed under this covenant, degenerating to the point where people only did evil continually (**Genesis 6:5**) until God judged them with the Flood (cf. **Genesis 9:12**).

5-Human Government—Noahic Covenant

Gen. 9:12

Explanation: This covenant involved the dispensation of human government, with humanity governing itself. Man was responsible to govern the world for God. The governing covenant of this era was the Noahic covenant (**v.11**). Under it, man's relationship to the earth and to the order of nature was confirmed (**vv.2-11**), human government was established, and God promised never again to use a universal flood to judge the world (**vv.11-17**). The failure of man under this dispensation culminated in the building of the tower of Babel and resulted in the judgment of the confusion of tongues (cf. **Genesis 11:1-3,7**).

6-Promise—Abrahamic Covenant

Gen. 12:1

Explanation: When God established a covenant with Abraham, it was another dramatic turning point in human history. Abraham and his heirs (the nation of Israel) received an unconditional promise. Under this covenant, God promised to make Israel a great nation, to bless the seed of Abraham, to give him a great name, to make him a blessing, to bless those who blessed him and curse those who cursed him, to give him the Promised Land, and through his descendants to bless all of the families of the earth with a Redeemer. Israel's failure in this dispensation was illustrated by their leaving the land to settle in Egypt, and resulted in bondage there. Israel's final testing under this dispensation occurred when God attempted to draw them back to the land. But they refused Him in unbelief at **Kadesh-barnea** (cf. **Exodus 19:5**).

7-Law—Mosaic Covenant

Ex. 19:5-8

Explanation: The dispensation of Law meant government by the Mosaic covenant. The covenant was given to Israel in order to reveal sin and death. The Law reflected the holiness of a personal God, instructed the people in God's discipline, reminded them through its priests and sacrifices of God's salvation, and acted as a pedagogue (teacher) to lead them to Christ. The Law contained three elements:

- (1) commandments revealing the righteousness of God;
- (2) judgments expressing social requirements; and

(3) ordinances directing the religious life of Israel.

No one was ever saved by keeping the Law; it was simply God's moral guideline for Israel. This dispensation ended with vicarious judgment at the Cross, as Christ died for the sins of all men. (cf. **Jeremiah 31:31**).

8-Grace—New Covenant

Jer. 31:31

Explanation: In this prophecy Jeremiah foresees the new covenant ("testament") that God will make with mankind by extending His grace to the Gentiles. Under this new covenant, God will call out a people for Himself from all the nations of the earth to form the bride of Christ (**Rev. 21:1-9**). This new and unconditional covenant is better than the old covenant because it rests on the efficacy of Christ's atonement for the sins of mankind (**Hebrews 8:10-12**). (cf. **Luke 22:17-20; Ephesians 1:10**).

9-Fullness of Times—Davidic Covenant

Eph. 1:10

Explanation: The "Dispensation of the Fullness of Times" refers to the future millennial kingdom when David's Son will rule. In that age:

- (1) Christ will take control of the kingdom and put an end to all anarchy and misrule (**Isaiah 11:3-4**);
- (2) Men will be rewarded and given rest (**2 Thess. 1:6-7**);
- (3) The curse on the creation will be lifted (**Romans 8:19-20; Isaiah 11:6-8**);
- (4) All Israel will be saved (**Romans 11:26**);
- (5) Her blindness will be cured (**2 Corinthians 3:14-17**);
- (6) She will be restored to the land (**Ezekiel 39:25-29**); and
- (7) The times of the Gentiles will cease.

The governing covenant of this age is unique, in that considerable time elapses between its revelation and accomplishment. The Davidic covenant offers God's fourfold promise:

- (1) to establish David's throne;
- (2) to guarantee authority to rule over His people;
- (3) to establish His kingdom; and
- (4) to recognize David's reign in perpetuity (**2 Samuel 7:13**).

The failure of humanity in the final dispensation is shown by the final revolt, causing the rebels to be judged in the lake of fire (**Rev. 20:7-15; Ephesians 3:2**).

10-Kingdom Parables

Matt. 13:52

Explanation: In the Gospel of Matthew, the kingdom of heaven receives special treatment. The terms kingdom of heaven and kingdom of God are often used interchangeably to refer to the whole body of believers. The seven parables in **Matthew 13** prophetically describe the course of this age.

First, there will come a period of sowing the gospel throughout the world (**vv. 1-23**).

Second there will occur a counter-sowing by Satan (**vv.24-30, 36-43**).

Third, there will be an outward growth of Christendom, but not necessarily of the true church. It will grow from insignificant beginnings to exert worldwide influence (**vv.31-32**).

The fourth parable of leaven (principle of corruption) contrasts true doctrine with the false doctrine sown by a corrupt church in an unconverted world (**vv.33-35**).

The **fifth** parable pictures Christ seeking the lost in the entire world (**v.44**), to gather a special people to Himself.

The **sixth** parable of the lost pearl represents Christ finding the church (**vv.45-46**).

The **seventh** parable tells how God will end the age in judgment (**vv.47-51**).

Illustration: Some believe that the seven parables, like the seven churches (**Rev.2, 3**), suggest a development of the gospel in this age.

Application: Even though the parables show growth of the church, each Christian should plant the seed of the gospel in the hearts of others. (**Psalms 125:5-6; cf. Ezekiel 37:11-14**).

11-Israel in Prophecy

Ezek. 37:11-14

Explanation: The energy that keeps God's prophetic clock running on schedule is the Jewish nation. The gathering of the Jews to a Palestinian homeland is setting the stage for Christ's return. God promised Ezekiel to restore Israel by returning the Jews to the land God had given Abraham, and by regenerating that people in the land (**Romans 11:25-26**). Even though many Jews have returned there today, most are still not believers (**Deut. 30:1-3**). God will probably use conditions in the Great Tribulation to draw His people to Himself as their Savior. Thus "**all Israel shall be saved**" (**Romans 11:26**).

Illustration: The national turning to God by Israel scripturally coincides with the return of Christ.

Application: While many Jews are being saved today, probably the greatest fruit of contemporary evangelistic efforts among them will not be reaped until the after the Rapture. (**Genesis 12:1-3; cf. 1 Thess. 4:17**).

12-Rapture

1 Thess. 4:17

Explanation: Although the word *Rapture* does not occur in the English Bible (the Latin Bible uses the verb here from which *rapture* derives), the idea is expressed in the words "**caught up.**" **The Rapture** is the first phase of Christ's return, involving every Christian alive at that time. These Christians will be caught up to meet Him in the clouds, instantaneously receiving glorified bodies. All those who have died "in Christ" will be resurrected; those who are alive and saved at the time of the Rapture will be caught up with Christ before the start of the "**Seventieth Week of Daniel,**" that is, the Great Tribulation. There are many reasons to believe that the Rapture precedes the tribulation, but fundamentally this view is consistent with a historical-grammatical interpretation of the Scriptures.

Illustration: A close examination of the prophetic Scriptures reveals a distinction between the Rapture (which relates to the church) and the revelation of Christ in power and glory (which relates more to Israel).

Application: Christians should find comfort in the truth of the Rapture, and should comfort one another with this truth (**v.18**). (**Jude 14; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; cf. Matt. 24:21**).

13-Character of the Great Tribulation

Matt. 24:21

Explanation: In no other period of history (past or future) of the world will there be so much suffering and universal destruction as during the seven years called the Great Tribulation. These years are fraught with wrath (**Ezekiel 7:19**). Judgment (**Rev. 14:7; 15:4; 16:5-7**), darkness (**Joel 2:2; Amos 5:18**), trouble (**Jeremiah 30:70**), suffering

(**Isaiah 24:20-21**), desolation (**Daniel 9:27**), gloominess (**Amos 5:18-20**), indignation (**Isaiah 26:20-21**; **Isaiah 34:1-3**), and sorrow. The scriptural representations of the Great Tribulation are wholly negative with no attempt to minimize the severity of human suffering in that time. During the Great Tribulation, God will pour out His wrath on mankind and will judge all of creation, just before peace of the Millennium is ushered in. **Illustration:** If Christians do not realize that they will be taken out of the world before the Great tribulation begins, they could become very discouraged looking forward to those years.

Application: The realization of what awaits the unsaved following the Rapture ought to motivate every believer to win souls before it is too late. (**Daniel 9:27**; **Matt. 24:21**; cf. **2 Thess 2:3-9**).

14-**Seventy Weeks Prophecy**

Dan. 9:24

Explanation: These **70 prophetic weeks** of Daniel's vision describe God's dealings with Israel, and are divided into two periods—the first **69 weeks**, and the final (**seventieth**) week. During this period, the messianic work of God will be completed. According to Daniel's prophecy, at the end of the **sixty-ninth week**, the Messiah will be cut off and the city of Jerusalem, including the temple, destroyed. This particular dispensation—which was among God's secret things in the Old Testament but is a mystery revealed in the New Testament—falls within this gap. The **70 weeks** began from the only biblical decree authorizing the rebuilding of Jerusalem and its wall (**Nehemiah 2**). It is dated in the Jewish month of **Nissan 445 B.C.** Using a 360-day year (12 30-day months; cf. **Genesis 7:11** with **Genesis 8:4**; **Genesis 7:24** with **Genesis 8:3**; **Rev. 12:6,7,13,14** with **Rev. 13:4-7**), Sir Robert Anderson calculated the end of the sixty-ninth week to fall on Palm Sunday, just before the Lord's crucifixion.

Illustration: Just as the events of the **first 69 weeks** have been literally fulfilled, so will be the events of the final week.

Application: The Christian should realize that God is not yet through with Israel. (**Deut. 29**; cf. **Luke 21:24**).

15-**The Times of the Gentiles**

Luke 21:24

Explanation: This is that period beginning with the Babylonian captivity and ending with the defeat of the Gentile world alliance when Christ returns in glory at the Battle of Armageddon. Until that time, the city of Jerusalem will be “**trodden down of the Gentiles**” (v. 24).

Illustration: Paul reminds the Romans that God's primary plan is for His promised people (**Genesis 12:1-3**) and calls Israel the natural olive branches. But he says that God turned his attention to the Gentiles and “**grafted in wild olive branches**” (**Romans 11:15-26**).

Application: God's willingness to allow Israel, with which He so closely identifies in the Old Testament and in the future kingdom age, to be so mistreated should remind the Christian that no one is exempt from the consequences of rejecting God's plan. (**Hosea 3:4**; **Romans 11:15-26**).

16-Antichrist

1 John 2:22

Explanation: The term *antichrist* refers to anyone usurping the place of Christ or opposing Christ. But the title of *Antichrist* identifies a person who emerges during the Great tribulation to lead Satan's strategy on earth. The term is used **five times** in the New Testament and only by John, although the Antichrist of the Great Tribulation is identified by many other names and titles in Scripture: **"that Wicked" (2 Thess. 2:8); "the son of perdition" (2 Thess. 2:3); the willful king (Daniel 11:36)**. He is chiefly depicted in the Scriptures as an immensely powerful political leader. He apparently heads the revived Roman Empire, but will not be revealed until after the Rapture (2 Thess. 2:3).

Illustration: In the past, overzealous teachers of prophecy have identified several principal world leaders with the Antichrist.

Application: Christians should not only be aware of this tendency and avoid it and they should also recognize that the spirit of antichrist is already at work in this world. (Psalm 5:6; cf. Rev. 13:11).

17-False Prophet

Rev. 13:11

Explanation: The chief religious figure in the world during the Tribulation years is identified in Scripture as the False Prophet or the second beast. He will apparently be a Jew, influential in religious affairs, motivated by Satan, having authority delegated to him promoting the worship of the Antichrist, authenticating his ministry with signs and wonders, successfully deceiving the unbelieving world, promoting idolatrous worship, having the power of death, having authority over commerce, and having an identifying physical mark.

Illustration: As the Father sent the Son, so will Satan send the Antichrist. As the Son sends the Holy Spirit to accomplish His purpose, so will the False Prophet carry out the program of the Antichrist.

Application: Christians should recognize Satan's attempts to minimize the plans and people of the Godhead, and therefore should guard themselves with biblical doctrine. (2 Thess. 2:9; Rev. 13:11-18; cf. Matt.17:11).

18-Coming of Elijah

Matt. 17:11

Explanation: During the first half of the Great Tribulation, two witnesses will begin to preach, having the power of God to perform miracles similar to those of Moses and Elijah (Rev. 11:6). One of these witnesses will probably be Elijah, who will appear before the Messiah returns (Malachi 3:1; Malachi 4:5-6).

Illustration: While noting the similarity between Elijah's future ministry and that of John the Baptist in revealing Him to the nation, Jesus also confirmed the still future role of Elijah. Some have speculated the other witness may be Enoch, who also went to heaven without dying (cf. Hebrews 9:27), or Moses, whose body was guarded by Michael (Jude 9) and who appeared transfigured with Jesus and Elijah (v.3).

Application: The world will largely reject the ministry of these witnesses, and even after their death and subsequent resurrection, will continue to live in sin and follow the Beast. (Malachi 3:1; cf. Rev. 19:11).

19-Second Coming of Christ

Rev. 19:11

Explanation: Throughout both Old and New Testaments, the Scriptures teach a literal, physical (bodily), and visible return of Christ to this earth to establish His kingdom and rule for a thousand years. The greatest theme of all Bible prophecy is the second coming of Christ. This was the theme of mankind's first prophecy (**Jude 14-15**), and of the last message of the Bible (**Rev. 22:20**).

Illustration: While certain events and experiences may occur in the lives of individuals (Christ appearing to those who are saved, or to those who die), these are of course not the ultimate return of Christ. The term Second Coming should be reserved for His final revelation at the end of the age.

Application: In anticipation of the Second Coming, Christians should live soberly, righteously, and godly (**Titus 2:12**). (**Jude 14**; cf. **Romans 2:1-16**).

20-Judgments

Rom. 2:1-16

Explanation: Throughout the Scriptures, God is presented as a Judge. In the Old Testament, the judgment of God is observable through the Flood, the destruction of Sodom, and the collapse of various nations, including both Israel and Judah. In the New Testament, judgment tends to occur in eight areas:

- (1) the Cross judgment (**John 16:11**);
- (2) the believer's self-judgment (**1 Cor. 11:31**);
- (3) the chastisement by the Father (**Heb. 12:6-11**);
- (4) the Bema (judgment seat) of Christ (**2 Cor. 5:10**);
- (5) the Tribulation (**Ezek. 20:37-38**);
- (6) the judgment of Gentile nations (**Matt. 25:31-46**);
- (7) the Great White Throne judgment (**Rev. 20:11-15**).

Illustration: The fundamental principle of divine judgment is that God will judge according to truth (**v.2**), deeds (**v.6**), light (**vv.11-15**), and the gospel, which reveals human thoughts and motives (**v.16**).

Application: Christians should live their lives accountable to God for their attitudes and actions. (**Genesis 3:15**; cf. **Obad. 15**).

21-Day of the Lord

Obad. 15

Explanation: The day of the Lord is that predicted time when God will intervene actively in the affairs of humanity and all creation, in both blessing and judgment. This period begins with the Rapture of the church and ends following the kingdom age with the purging of heaven and earth.

Illustration: Throughout the Old Testament, this day was a recurring twofold theme of the prophets, identifying that time when the enemies of Israel would be defeated and God would bless the nation under the Davidic covenant. But this day also covered the tribulation and punishment of Israel, as it is sometimes characterized by judgment and wrath.

Application: For the Christian whose sins have already been judged on the Cross, the day of the Lord is mainly a time of hope and blessing. (**Isaiah 2:12**; cf. **Hosea 3:5**).

22-David in the Kingdom

Hos. 3:5

Explanation: Although Christ will reign as sovereign in the kingdom, it is not clear whether He is the only One on the throne. Several passages suggest that David will reign in the Millennium (**Isaiah 55:3-4; Jeremiah 30:9; Jeremiah 33:15-21; Ezekiel 34:23-24; Ezekiel 37:24-25; Hosea 3:5; Amos 9:11**). These verses may be interpreted:

- (1) typologically, with Jesus as the Son of David, fulfilling David in type, reigning; or
- (2) literally, with David being resurrected, returning to the throne, and having a sphere of regal authority under the regency of Christ.

Illustration: One of Christ's millennial titles, "**King of kings, and the Lord of lords**" (**Rev. 19:16**), may suggest the presence of lesser kings and lords. So it could be that David will serve under Christ's authority as vice-regent of Palestine, just as others may similarly rule other regions or cities (**Luke 19:12-18**).

Application: Those who suffer for Christ will someday reign with Him. (**2 Samuel 7:12-16; Psalm 89:34-37; cf. Ezekiel 47**).

23-Millennial Sacrifices

Ezek. 47:1-12

Explanation: One feature of the millennial kingdom will be a rebuilt temple, complete with animal sacrifices. Since the Scriptures indicate that much typological significance of both the temple and its service has already been fulfilled by Christ, we might question the need for a temple or for animal sacrifice in the next dispensation. But the temple might

- (1) demonstrate God's holiness;
- (2) provide a dwelling place for the glory of God;
- (3) perpetuate a memorial of sacrifice;
- (4) become a center for divine government; and
- (5) assure victory over the curse.

Illustration: The sacrifices in the Millennium will be memorial, much as the observance of the Lord's Supper is memorial today. When both practices were instituted, they were pointing typologically to the atoning death of Christ. At no time did the sacrifices or the Lord's Supper have atoning value, though the atonement message is central to their symbolism. When practiced after the Cross, both can have only memorial significance.

Application: As the believer confesses his sin (**1 John 1:9**) God will forgive and cleanse. (**Ezekiel 47:1-12; cf. Rev. 20:12**).

24-Death

Rev. 20:15

Explanation: The Scriptures never refer to death as the mere cessation of life, but instead as the unnatural separation of something from that to which it belongs. Therefore, a body without the spirit suffers physical death (**Genesis 35:18**). The expression second death defines the separation of a man from God.

Illustration: Human consciousness is conveyed in the biblical description of second death, suggesting that the beast and the False Prophet will both remain alive for a thousand years after being cast into the lake of fire (**Rev. 19:20; Rev. 20:10**).

Application: When a person is saved, he has passed from death to life, and can be assured he will never come into condemnation (**John 5:24**). (**Genesis 2:17; cf. Mark 9:43**).

25-Gehenna

Mark 9:43

Explanation: The Greek word for hell, the eternal state of the wicked, is *Gehenna*, a place of torment and suffering. With but one exception, every use of *Gehenna* in Scripture comes from the lips of Jesus. It was probably used to describe hell because of its background in the minds of Jews. It had been associated with the valley of Hinnom outside of Jerusalem, the site of human sacrifices during the dark days of Israel's history; and a refuse dump at the time when Jesus spoke. The term *Gehenna* in the New Testament confirms that it is more than an ancient valley outside of Jerusalem. *Gehenna* is associated with fire, punishment, torment, the undying worm, the gnashing of teeth, and eternity without God. All of the language stressing the repulsiveness of hell is a description of *Gehenna*.

Illustration: The Scriptures incompletely describe *Gehenna*, because such a place is psychologically impossible to comprehend.

Application: The existence of this place, where the unsaved will consciously suffer for eternity without God, ought to stir every Christian to win souls. (**Matt. 5:22**; cf. **Luke 16:19-31**).

26-Sheol/Hades

Luke 16:19

Explanation: The terms **Sheol** (Hebrew *she'ôl*) and **Hades** (Greek *hadēs*) both refer to the place of suffering where the unsaved go until they are released into hell (*Gehenna*). In the **Old Testament** to descend into **Sheol** was apparently a penalty for sin (**Psalm 55:15**; **Prov. 9:18**). It is described as “**destruction**” (**Job 26:6**; **Job 28:22**; **Job 31:12**; **Psalm 88:11**; **Prov. 15:11**; **Prov. 27:20**). It was further described as “**naked before God**” (**Job 26:6**) and the place where the wrath of God burns (**Deut. 32:22**). At times **Sheol** is also pictured as the home of the wicked only (**Psalm 9:17**). At times **Sheol** is identified simply as the grave of the physically dead, where all people go when they die. In the **New Testament**, the rich man went to **Hades** on dying, and suffered the torments of burning, separation, loneliness, conviction by memory, thirst, and stench. Also, those lost in **Hades** can glimpse the paradise of the saved (“**Abraham's bosom**”), although there is no biblical indication that the reverse is true. Some believe that, until the Ascension, Abraham's bosom was also located in **Sheol**, that is, the place of the physically dead. When Christ died, He descended into **Hades** and “**led captivity captive**” (**Ephesians 4:8-10**).

Application: Everyone should give careful consideration to the gospel and trust the Lord as Savior in order to escape the torments of Hades. (**Deut. 32:22**; **Luke 16:19-31**; cf. **Rev. 9:1**).

27-Bottomless Pit

Rev. 9:1-2

Explanation: John employs the image of a pit seven times in Revelation to describe hell (**Rev. 9:1, 2, 11**; **Rev. 11:7**; **Rev. 17:8**; **Rev. 20:1, 3**). Each time, the pit is closely associated with demons; it is also associated with the unsaved (**Romans 10:7**). This image of hell may also imply darkness and imprisonment since pits were often used as prisons in ancient cultures. Obviously, the pit appears as a place of suffering.

Illustration: If you have trouble believing God could ever make a hell, remember it was prepared for the Devil and his angels (**Matt. 25:41**).

Application: Those who go to hell are in essence choosing to spend eternity with Satan rather than with Christ. ([Genesis 2:17](#); [Rev. 9:1-12](#); cf. [Luke 16:23-25](#)).

28-Torments

[Luke 16:23](#)

Explanation: The word used here for torments originally referred to a stone used for testing gold and other metals, and then came to mean the torture-rack used to extract prisoners' confessions. In this context, the word can refer only to the most extreme forms of human suffering.

Illustration: Specific torments in this passage are the flame, the sight of the righteous, thirst, the victims' memories of their previous lives, and the realization that they are in a hopeless situation.

Application: Because of the severity of these torments, no one should assume he is going to heaven unless he has personally trusted Christ as Savior. ([Matt. 8:29](#); [Luke 16:23-25](#); cf. [Romans 1:18](#)).

29-Wrath of God

[Rom. 1:18](#)

Explanation: In order to express His nature (**holiness, truth, and justice**), God must punish sin. Since sin personally offends God, no one should be surprised that sin makes God angry. To deny His anger is to reject the necessity of Christ's reconciling work on the cross. God's wrath is revealed both in nature and in the Scriptures.

Illustration: The rage that today is vented against sin will someday be completely unleashed in hell against those who refuse to accept the satisfaction (propitiation) that Christ made on the cross for sin.

Application: Since this propitiation by Christ suffices for the whole world, there is no reason anyone should spend eternity in hell unless he voluntarily rejects God's truth. ([Genesis 49:7](#); [Romans 1:18](#); cf. [John 14:2](#)).

30-Heaven

[John 14:2](#)

Explanation: Heaven is a place and the eternal hope of the saved. Scripture describes it as a beautiful city where the redeemed will live for eternity. The activities in heaven include singing ([Rev. 15:3](#)), worship ([Rev. 5:9](#)), serving ([Rev. 22:3](#)), ruling ([2 Tim. 2:12](#); [Rev. 22:5](#)), fellowship with others ([Matt. 17:3](#)), and eating ([Rev. 2:17](#)).

Illustration: The quality of existence in heaven is a life of fellowship with God ([Rev. 22:4](#)), a life of rest ([Rev. 14:13](#)), a life of service ([Rev. 22:3](#)), a life of growth ([Rev. 22:2](#)), and a life of worship ([Rev. 19:1](#)).

Application: The glories of heaven belong only to those who have personally trusted Christ for their salvation. Christians who work to win souls are gathering friends who will spend eternity with them in heaven. ([Genesis 1:1](#); [Rev. 21:1-5](#); cf. [Matt. 24:33](#)).