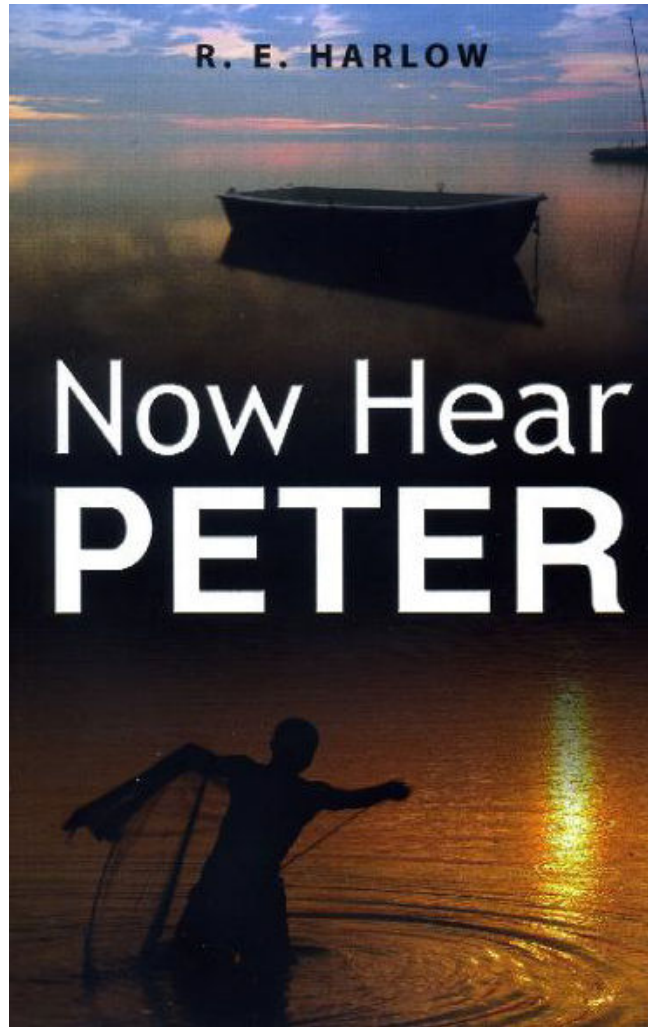


R. E. HARLOW

Now Hear **PETER**



Originally copyrighted 1972 and published
as a correspondence course entitled
PETER AND THE CHURCH by
Emmaus Bible School,
Dubuque, Iowa.
This book is reprinted by permission.

ISBN 978-0-919586-10-9
Reset 2010

Front Cover Design: Rachel Vandenberg

Printed in Canada

NOW HEAR PETER

Chapter	page
Please read this	4
1 Simon Peter and the Lord Jesus Christ	5
2 Peter and the Holy Scriptures	10
3 Peter's First Message	15
4 Peter and the Priests	20
5 Peter and the Elders of the Church	26
6 Peter and the Beloved Mother	31
7 How People Can Be Delivered from their Sins	35
8 How to Become a Child of God and How to Know that You Are One	41
9 Christ our Shepherd and Bishop	47
10 How to Become a Priest and a Saint	53
11 The Judgment of God	59
12 Waiting and Growing.	65

PLEASE READ THIS

Simon Peter, the son of John, was a great man. He was not born great, but he became great when he lived with the Lord Jesus Christ. It is more important still to remember that God told Peter what he should write. It is necessary that everyone should listen to the words of Peter.

If you have a New Testament, look up the verses which are given in each chapter of this book. You can understand what Peter said even if you do not own a New Testament, but it is better if you have one and look up each verse.

Pray that the Holy Spirit will help you to understand and obey the sacred Scriptures. When you learn some new truth, tell your friends about it.

Do not try to learn what men teach, but learn what Peter said or wrote in the Bible. You have listened to what men think: NOW HEAR PETER.

When you have read through each lesson carefully,
write down your answers to the questions
then use the back arrow ↩ at the top left of your screen
to return to the website menu.

Click on

'EXAM FORM A'.

Complete this Form, including your answers and click **'SUBMIT'**.

Do this for each lesson.

Your exams will be marked and returned to you.

CHAPTER 1

Simon Peter and the Lord Jesus Christ

Push out into the deep water and let your nets down for a catch, Luke 5:4.

The Lord Jesus Christ spoke these words to Simon Peter. Christ had used Peter's little ship and wanted to pay him for it. Peter and his friends had been fishing all night but had caught nothing. Peter was an expert fisherman and knew that it is easier to catch fish at night. Now it was bright day light, and this Teacher told him to try again! Jesus was the son of a carpenter; He knew how to make things out of wood, but what did He know about fishing?

The Sea of Galilee was a good place for fishing. There were many cities along its shore, and many people earned money from the fish they caught with their nets in its water.

Simon Peter lived in the city of Bethsaida and often went fishing with Andrew, his brother. One day Andrew had heard John the Baptist say that Jesus was the Lamb of God, John 1:29.

Andrew brought Simon to Christ, and Jesus gave him a new name, Cephas, or Peter. Both these words mean

“stone”. In the Scripture, a rock is a picture of God. Jesus gave Simon this name to show that Simon had become a son of God. He would share in God’s nature, 2 Peter 1:4. Now, on the Sea of Galilee, the Lord Jesus told him to try again to catch some fish.

When Peter and his partners obeyed, they caught a great many fish. Peter was so surprised that he asked the Lord to go away, because he, Peter, was a sinner, Luke 5:8. But Jesus told Peter to follow Him, and soon He made Peter one of the twelve apostles, Luke 6:14.

So Peter had the great honor of living with the Lord Jesus Christ for nearly three years. One of the greatest things that Peter said in his whole life was that Christ is the Son of God. Jesus asked His disciples who men said He was. Some said John the Baptist, some Elijah or Jeremiah. Then He asked them, But who do you say that I am? Simon Peter said, You are the Christ, the Son of the living God. The Lord praised Peter for these words. How did Peter know that Christ is the Son of God? God had revealed it to him. Then the Lord said that He would build His Church, and He gave Peter the keys to the kingdom of heaven, Matthew 16:15-19.

But Peter did not always speak the words which God wanted him to say. In the very same chapter, Christ told His disciples that He must be killed and rise again the third day. Peter could not understand how anyone could kill the Son of God, the King of Israel. He said, Lord, this will never happen to You. But Jesus told Peter he was like Satan who tried to keep Him from following God’s path for Him, Matthew 16:22,23.

Peter said the wrong thing at other times also. At one

time, a change came over the Lord Jesus, and He looked very different. Moses and Elijah came and talked with Him. Peter said,

Lord, it is good for us to be here: if you are willing, let us make here three tents, one for you, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah, Matthew 17:4.

Peter wanted to honor Christ together with Moses and Elijah. But God will not allow any man or woman to receive as much honor as His Son. So He spoke out of a cloud,

This is my own dear Son, in whom I am well pleased: listen to Him, Matthew 17:5.

When the Lord was getting close to the end of His life, He told His disciples that the Jews would make Him a prisoner. At that time, His disciples would all run away and leave Him alone. Peter could not believe that he himself would ever act like that. He thought he would never run away even if all the other disciples did. The Lord warned him that he would deny his Master three times that very night. Peter said he would rather die with Christ than deny that he knew Him, Matthew 26:34,35.

Soon they came to a garden, and Jesus went on to pray to His Father. But Peter and the others fell asleep. Christ said that their spirits were willing, but the flesh was weak, Matthew 26:41.

When a crowd of people came to arrest Jesus, Peter thought he should fight, and he cut off one man's ear. Peter was wrong again, and Jesus healed the man. Then all the apostles ran away. Peter followed the crowd, but stayed far behind them.

They soon came to the high priest's courtyard, and the priests condemned the Lord Jesus and began to spit in His face. They said many evil things to Him and beat Him with a whip. Peter was sitting near the fire when a girl said to him, You, too, were with Jesus, the man from Galilee, Matthew 26:69. But Peter said it was not true. Finally he swore with an oath, I do not even know this Man, Matthew 26:72.

Just then a rooster crowed which showed that it was almost day. The Lord turned and looked at Peter. Then Peter remembered what the Lord had said to him, and he went out and wept with great sorrow.

So the Lord Jesus went to the cross by Himself. He alone bore the punishment for our sins. At the time of His greatest pain and sorrow, He cried,

My God, my God, why did you leave me,
Matthew 27:46?

Why did God abandon Him? Because He was bearing our sins. Finally Jesus cried out with a loud voice, It is finished, John 19:30. He meant that He had finished the work which was necessary to save men. So then He died.

But, on the third day, God raised Him from death. Peter and John went to the grave and found it empty. Then they knew that He had risen. A little later, Jesus met Peter and forgave him. He allowed Peter to serve Him again and told him to teach the young believers.

So we see that Simon Peter, the son of John, was a great man. He was a man, a human being, and did not always do the right thing. But he was with the Lord Jesus for three years, and he became great because the Lord made him great.

Peter called himself a sinful man. But he believed in Christ, and the Lord forgave him. Christ forgives anyone's sins only when that person believes in Him. He Himself died on the cross and took God's punishment for sin, my sin. I believe this. That is all.

But Peter was not only a forgiven sinner. He became an inspired apostle and wrote part of the Scripture. Because he was an inspired apostle, we must hear what he said. In this book, we will consider what Peter said and wrote when he was here on earth. He would say the same things if he were alive today. Let all men listen to Peter and believe.

NOW HEAR PETER
EXAM 1.
PETER AND THE LORD JESUS
(USE EXAM FORM A)

Enter the letter of the correct answer.

1. Peter was brought to the Lord Jesus by
 - a. his mother.
 - b. his father, John.
 - c. his brother, Andrew.
 - d. his friend, John.

2. The new name the Lord Jesus gave to Simon was Peter which means
 - a. A stone.
 - b. A vicar.
 - c. A shepherd.
 - d. A fisherman.

3. By giving Simon Peter a new name the Lord Jesus indicated Peter would
 - a. lay the foundation of the church.
 - b. become a true son of God.
 - c. be unyielding in the face of danger.
 - d. become the chief of the apostles.

4. One of the grandest moments in Peter's life was when he
 - a. introduced a little boy with five loaves and two fishes to Jesus
 - b. cut off the ear of the high priest's servant in an attempt to defend Jesus
 - c. tried to persuade the Lord Jesus not to go to the cross.
 - d. proclaimed Christ as the Son of God.

5. Peter was
 - a. always infallible in his pronouncements.
 - b. sometimes said the wrong thing.
 - c. always commended by the Lord Jesus for his words and deeds.
 - d. the first of the Twelve to become a follower of Jesus.

6. When Peter, wanted to make three tabernacles, one for the Lord, one for Moses and one for Elijah
 - a. God commended him for wanting to honour Jesus in this way.
 - b. he was guilty of attempting to put the Lord on the same level as mere men.
 - c. he was acting on a special revelation from the Father.
 - d. he was acting in his capacity of chief apostle.

7. When the Lord was in agony in the garden, just before the cross, Peter
 - a. was a great encouragement to the Lord.
 - b. was the only one of the apostles who stayed awake.
 - c. fell sound asleep with the other apostles.
 - d. sat apart by himself to sharpen his sword for the coming conflict.

8. When Peter realized that he had denied the Lord Jesus he
 - a. confessed his sin to the high priest.
 - b. went out and wept bitterly.
 - c. was glad because he realized he had helped a prophecy come true.
 - d. fasted in sackcloth and ashes for seven days.

9. When the Lord cried out on the cross, "It is finished" it mean that
 - a. the time of the Marriage Supper of the Lamb had come.
 - b. the way was now open for all men to do good works and earn salvation.
 - c. the days of His manhood were over, now He would be truly God.
 - d. the work necessary to save men was complete.

10. When we think of Peter we remember that
 - a. he confessed to the Lord that he was a sinful man.
 - b. his sins were forgiven by the Lord Jesus.
 - c. he became an inspired apostle whose words are very important.
 - d. all the above are true of him.

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

Why is Peter's life an encouragement to us?

CHAPTER 2

Peter and the Holy Scriptures

True Christians have always believed that God inspired the writers of the Holy Scriptures and that in the Scriptures we find everything our hearts and souls need. Did Peter also believe that the Bible is inspired by God? We have seen that Peter was a very great man because he lived with the Lord Jesus. Today, many people do not believe that the Scriptures are inspired. Others say that they do not provide all that we need spiritually. What did Peter say? What would he say if he were here today?

1. Peter quoted from the Old Testament

The apostle Peter preached seven times in Jerusalem and Caesarea. We do not read in the New Testament that he preached anywhere else. You can read his messages in Acts chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 10, 11 and 15. In the first three chapters, Peter quoted seven times from Old Testament writers: Joel, David, and Moses. He believed that these writers were inspired by God and quoted their words to prove what he was saying. God had made known through the prophets that Christ would suffer, and Peter said that their words had now been fulfilled. See Acts 3:18. So Peter knew that God spoke through the Old Testament prophets.

Peter wrote two letters which are in the New Testament. In these letters, he quoted nine times from the Old Testament to prove what he was saying. The books he used are Leviticus, Psalms, Proverbs, and Isaiah. Peter never quoted from any books that are not in the Old Testament as if these books were of equal value with the Holy Scripture. The Lord Jesus Christ also often quoted from the Old Testament. He and many of the New Testament writers said that the Old Testament was inspired by God.

2. Peter believed that the New Testament is inspired by God

One day, Peter and Matthew and John and eight other apostles were with the Lord Jesus. He taught them many things which would happen after He died. We can read what Jesus said in John chapters 14, 15, and 16. Jesus taught Peter and the others that He would send the Holy Spirit to dwell in them. He also taught them that the Holy Spirit would give them the New Testament.

Now the New Testament has three parts: 1. the Gospels and Acts (five books); 2. the Letters (21 books); 3. the book of Revelation. The Gospels and Acts tell us about the past (the story of the Lord Jesus and the beginning of the Church). The Letters teach us what we should do now. The book of Revelation tells what will happen in the future. The Lord Jesus told the apostles that the Holy Spirit would teach them everything and would remind them of the things which the Lord Himself had said to them, John 14:26.

The Holy Spirit helped the apostles to remember the words of Christ, and He inspired Matthew and John to

write their Gospels. Mark was not there at that time, but it seems that Peter helped him write the Gospel of Mark. Others helped Luke, but all wrote only as they were led by the Holy Spirit.

It happened just as the Lord had said in John 16:13. The Holy Spirit came and taught them all the truth and showed them what would happen later. Two of the apostles (Peter and John) wrote down this truth for us in five letters. Later, Paul believed in Christ, and he wrote 14 letters in the New Testament. James and Jude wrote the other two.

Christ had also said that the Holy Spirit would show them what would happen in the future, John 16:13. John wrote these things in the book of Revelation. Peter also told about things that will happen later. We will study these in chapter 12.

3. Peter taught that the Bible is inspired

Peter quoted from the Old Testament because he believed that it was inspired by God. He also taught very plainly that the Bible is inspired. He said that the Holy Spirit led the prophets in the Old Testament to tell how Christ would suffer, and that glory would follow His sufferings, 1 Peter 1:10,11. The prophets sometimes did not understand what they wrote, but they obeyed and wrote what the Holy Spirit told them to write. Christ said that the Holy Spirit would glorify Him, John 16:14. So when we read the Old Testament Scriptures, we should always look for pictures of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In his second letter, Peter said that he himself had seen the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ and could tell

about it, but it was still better for people to believe what the prophets had said, 2 Peter 1:16-19. We can trust the written Word of God more than anything else. The prophets did not write what they themselves wanted to write. They wrote only what the Holy Spirit led them to write, 2 Peter 1:20,21.

One time, the apostle Paul had to rebuke Peter. Paul and Peter both preached that people can be saved by grace alone (see chapter 7). But wherever Paul went to preach the Good News, some of the Jews from Jerusalem followed him. They told the young Christians that they had to keep the Law if they wanted to be saved. In one place, Peter did not eat with the Gentile Christians because he was afraid of what these Jews might say. When Paul heard about it, he told Peter, in front of other people, that he had done the wrong thing. Peter, a Jew, was living as the Gentiles did and not as the Jews; why should he make the Gentiles live like Jews, Galatians 2:11-14?

Peter agreed that Paul was right. It is very important to make people understand that they cannot be saved by their own good works. Later, Peter spoke in a wonderful way about Paul and his letters and showed that these letters were part of the Scriptures, 2 Peter 3:15,16.

Yes, Peter thought very highly of the Word of God and even said that we are born again through the Word, 1 Peter 1:23. (We will study this again in chapter 8.) So we see what Peter thought about the Scripture. He believed and taught that it is inspired of God and that it alone tells us all we have to know for life here on earth and for the life to come.

In this book, we will see what Peter said and wrote in

the Holy Scriptures. We can be sure that all he said and wrote is true. Are you ready to believe it and do what Peter said?

NOW HEAR PETER
EXAM 2
PETER AND THE HOLY SCRIPTURES
(USE EXAM FORM A)

Enter the letter of the correct answer.

1. The New Testament is made up of
 - a. The Gospels and the Acts (5 books).
 - b. The Letters (21 books).
 - c. The Book of Revelation.
 - d. All the above.

2. True believers have always
 - a. believed in the inspiration of the Bible.
 - b. put the Bible on a par with other religious books.
 - c. given the Bible an important but not the sole voice in deciding what should be believed.
 - d. revered the Bible even though they question its Truths.

3. The first four chapters of Acts record sermons of Peter which show that he
 - a. considered the Old Testament to be less important than the New Testament.
 - b. based his arguments on the Bible and quoted from it as inspired.
 - c. appealed to tradition rather than Scripture.
 - d. ignored the Bible in seeking to prove his points.

4. Of the twenty-seven books which make up the New Testament, Peter wrote
 - a. two letters.
 - b. one gospel.
 - c. the Apocalypse.
 - d. one book in each section.

5. The Lord Jesus taught the apostle that
 - a. the Holy Spirit would inspire the writing of the New Testament.
 - b. the Church would decide who should write the New Testament.
 - c. Peter would superintend the writing of the New Testament.
 - d. all of the apostles would be involved in writing the New Testament.

6. The promise, “But the Advocate... will teach you all things, and bring to your mind whatever I have said to you,” was primarily fulfilled in the writing of
 - a. the Gospels.
 - b. the Book of Acts.
 - c. the Letters.
 - d. the Apocalypse.

7. The fact that some parts of the Bible are hard to understand
 - a. greatly detracts from the doctrine of its inspiration .
 - b. proves that the key to the Scriptures was placed in Peter’s hands alone.
 - c. in no way affects the inspiration of the Bible.
 - d. makes “wresting” the Scriptures inevitable.

8. Peter frequently quoted from the writings of
 - a. Joel, David, Moses.
 - b. Leviticus, Psalms.
 - c. Proverbs, Isaiah.
 - d. All the above.

9. Paul on one occasion had to correct Peter because
 - a. Peter’s behaviour led to the implication the Christians had to do certain things to be saved.
 - b. Peter complained about Paul’s writings being hard to understand.
 - c. Peter refused to accept Paul as an apostle since Paul had not been one of the original twelve disciples
 - d. Peter’s preaching was uncultured.

10. Peter says that we are “born again” through the agency of
 - a. baptism.
 - b. the Word of God.
 - c. good works.
 - d. the sacraments or ordinances of the Church.

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

What is your own personal attitude towards the Bible?

CHAPTER 3

Peter's First Message

These men are not drunk as you suppose; it is only nine o'clock in the morning, Acts 2:15.

Peter said these words when some of the people of Jerusalem thought that the disciples were drunk. Actually they were filled with the Holy Spirit, but the others did not understand this.

Today some people laugh at those who are religious. Others think it does not matter if a person is religious or not. Others are very religious and say they are God's servants. They act as if they are very holy, but they do not obey God's Word. We have seen that Peter and all true Christians believe that the Bible is inspired by God and that in it we find all that we need spiritually.

But what had really happened on that day in Jerusalem? When the Lord Jesus was on earth, He had called all who were thirsty to come to Him and drink. He said that streams of living water would pour out of those who believe in Him. He was speaking about the Holy Spirit who would come to live in those who believe. Up until that time, the Holy Spirit had not come because the Lord Jesus Christ was still on earth and had not yet been

glorified, John 7:37-39.

So here are three things that every person must do:

1. He must come to Christ.
2. He must drink of the water of life.
3. He must allow God's truth to flow out through him to others.

But three important things had to take place first:

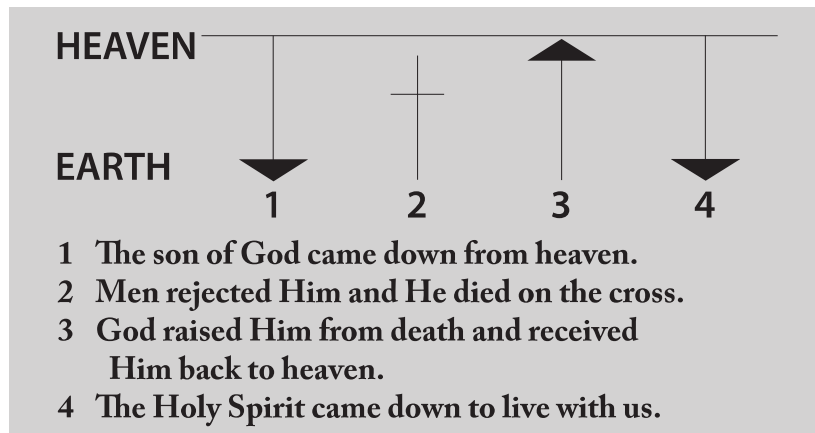
1. Christ would be glorified, that is, He would go back to heaven.
2. The Holy Spirit would come.
3. Believers would receive the Holy Spirit.

Christ had promised at different times that the Holy Spirit would come. He said He would ask God to give us the Holy Spirit, John 14:16. These promises were fulfilled fifty days after Christ died. On the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came.

Peter and the ten other apostles were all witnesses that Christ had risen from death. They saw and heard Him during the 40 days before He went back to heaven.

Yes, Christ was raised from death, but this was not enough. God also wanted to glorify Him. He changed all the evil things men did to His Son:

Men rejected Him	God received Him
Men killed Him	God gave Him life
Men spoke evil against Him	God honored Him
Men nailed Him to a cross	God set Him on His own throne.



So God the Father glorified Christ and seated Him at His own right hand; then He sent the Holy Spirit. When the Lord Jesus was on earth, the Holy Spirit had come on Him in the form of a bird, Matthew 3:16. Now, on the day of Pentecost, He came on the disciples in the form of fire. The disciples also heard a sound from heaven like the noise of a strong wind. The Holy Spirit filled them all and made them able to speak in other languages. Read Acts 2:1-4.

Some of the people in Jerusalem did not know anything about the power of God. They thought that the disciples were drunk! Peter reminded them that it was only nine o'clock in the morning. People are not usually drunk that early in the day. Then he explained to them from the Word of God what had really happened.

First he repeated what God said through the prophet Joel:

In the last days...I will pour out my Spirit upon all men, Acts 2:17.

Then Peter told them what a wonderful Person the Lord Jesus is. God was well pleased with Him, and He did great miracles and signs among them. Peter reminded his hearers that wicked people had crucified the Lord, that this was all part of God's plan, and that God raised Him from death because it was impossible for His Son to remain in death, Acts 2:22-24.

Hundreds of years before this, David had said that God would not abandon his soul in death nor allow His Holy One to suffer decay, Acts 2:27; Psalm 16:10. Peter explained this by saying that David's body was still in a grave and had certainly decayed long ago. God inspired David to write these words and he was speaking of Christ's body, not his own. The body of the Lord Jesus went into the grave, but it did not decay.

David also wrote what God would say to Christ:

The LORD said to my Lord: Sit here at my right side until I put your enemies as a footstool under your feet, Acts 2:34,35; Psalm 110:1.

Christ finished the work needed for man's salvation, God wanted to honor Him, and so He told Him to sit down at His right hand. Christ's enemies will all be forced to obey Him.

Peter's message had a great effect on the people. Their hearts were stirred, and they asked the apostles what they should do. Peter told them to turn from their sins and to be baptized everyone in the name of Christ, for the forgiveness of sins, Acts 2:38. Three thousand people did so that very day. God forgave their sins and gave them the Holy Spirit. He is willing to do the same today.

Many people are baptized, but they do not repent of

their sins. Yet it is more important to repent than to be baptized. The thief on the cross repented of his sins, but was not baptized. Yet the Lord told him that he would be in Paradise with Him that same day, Luke 23:43.

Peter taught that people can become sons of God and be sure that they really have eternal life. We will read about this in chapter 8. But right now you can be glad because the Lord Jesus died for your sins and rose again. Today He is alive and is sitting at God's right hand in heaven.

Why did Christ send the Holy Spirit to live in our hearts? The work of the Holy Spirit is to keep us from sinning. God forgives us when we turn from our sins and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. Now He wants to keep us from sinning again and again. The Lord Jesus saved us from the punishment of sin, and He does not want sin to rule over us, Romans 6:14.

This is very important. I knew that I was a sinner and had rebelled against God. I knew also that my sins would put me in hell forever and ever. So I repented of my sins and asked God to forgive me. He did forgive me because the Lord Jesus Christ bore the punishment for my sins. I am very happy now, but when I sin again, my joy will turn to sorrow. God does not want us to sin at all. He gave us His Holy Spirit so that the Spirit would help us to overcome temptations every day. Why not accept this wonderful salvation now?

NOW HEAR PETER
EXAM 3
PETER'S MESSAGE
(USE EXAM FORM A)

Enter the letter of the correct answer.

1. The people of Jerusalem thought that Peter and the other Spirit-filled apostles were
 - a. holy.
 - b. crazy.
 - c. drunk.
 - d. Inspired.

2. Before a person can have the truth of God flow through them in spiritual blessing to others, they must
 - a. study for years at a theological seminary.
 - b. take a vow of poverty.
 - c. come to Christ and drink of the water of life.
 - d. act very piously.

3. Before God's Spirit could be poured out on men
 - a. Christ had to be glorified.
 - b. the New Testament had to be completed.
 - c. the world had to be evangelized.
 - d. Satan had to be imprisoned.

4. The signs which accompanied the coming of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost included His appearing as
 - a. a dove.
 - b. cloven tongues of fire.
 - c. a river of living water.
 - d. a pillar of cloud.

5. The people of Jerusalem mistook what was happening on the day of Pentecost because
 - a. the apostles were speaking in tongues.
 - b. the moon was turned to blood.
 - c. it was so early in the morning.
 - d. it seemed impossible that God could speak through men who were not properly ordained priests.

6. Peter, in his first sermon,
 - a. apologized for his poor grammar and rural dialect.
 - b. avoided stirring up opposition by refraining from any mention of the crucifixion.
 - c. quoted from a prophecy in Malachi as explaining what was happening.
 - d. contrasted the wickedness of men in crucifying Jesus with the action of God in raising Him from the dead.

7. Peter mentioned in his sermon that David had prophesied about
 - a. the birth of Christ.
 - b. the death of Christ by crucifixion.
 - c. the exaltation of Christ to God's right hand.
 - d. the priestly, intercessory work of Christ.

8. The Bible teaches that
 - a. only baptised people can be saved.
 - b. baptism is unimportant.
 - c. baptism is more important than repentance.
 - d. true repentance is more important than baptism.

9. The Lord Jesus told the thief on the cross
 - a. that he would be with Him in paradise.
 - b. that he was beyond redemption because he had committed mortal sin.
 - c. that he needed to be baptized in order to get to paradise.
 - d. that he was forgiven his sins because his (the thief's) agonizing death was sufficient to atone for them.

10. God can forgive us our sins because
 - a. every person has at least a spark of the divine nature.
 - b. God does not take sin as seriously as some people think.
 - c. Christ paid the penalty.
 - d. absolution depends on our good works, thus putting it within the reach of all.

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

Where is Jesus today?

CHAPTER 4

Peter and the Priests

I have no money at all, but I will give you what I have: in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth I order you to walk,
Acts 3:6.

As Peter said these words, he took the lame man by the right hand and helped him to stand up. The man's feet and legs became strong immediately, and he jumped and walked and praised God.

We have already read about the wonderful things which happened in Acts chapter 2. Soon after these things, Peter and John went to the Temple to pray. At the gate of the Temple, they saw a man who had been crippled since the day he was born. He was asking people for money, but Peter healed him in the name of Jesus Christ.

People were very much surprised when they saw this miracle, and many of them came together. So Peter had a wonderful opportunity to preach the Gospel to them and to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ. First, he told the people plainly that he and John did not have the power to heal this man. He reminded them how they had rejected the Lord Jesus Christ and had brought Him before Pilate to be judged and killed. Then He told them that God had raised Him from death and glorified Him. The

crippled man had been healed by believing in His name. Read Peter's own words in Acts 3:13-16.

So the apostle Peter, inspired by God, showed the people that the name of the Lord Jesus Christ is very great. God loves to honor His Son, and He had allowed this wonderful miracle to happen to glorify Him. Peter told the man to stand up in the name of Jesus Christ. He told the people that the man was healed by His name.

Then Peter told the people good news. God would take away their sins if they would repent and turn to Him. Many of them were really worried about their sins. God is righteous and must punish men who break His Law. But here Peter told the people that God would wipe away their sins. How could this be? Peter did not say that they should pay for their sins and God would treat them as if they had not sinned. All he said was:

*Repent therefore, and turn to God so He will
wipe away your sins, Acts 3:19.*

God could do this because Jesus Christ paid the price of our sins. We shall study this when we come to Peter's first letter.

But the Sadducees did not believe that people could rise from death, and the priests did not want to be blamed for the death of Christ. So they put Peter and John in prison. People who reject the truth often try to use force to avoid it.

The next day the high priest asked Peter and John how they had healed this man and what name they had used. Peter was filled with the Holy Spirit and said that the man had been made well by the name of the Lord Jesus Christ of Nazareth, Acts 4:7,8,10.

Here again, Peter glorified the Lord Jesus. The high priest had asked him what name he used. Peter answered, The name of Jesus Christ. But this was not all. He went on to say that there is no salvation in any other name:

*Salvation is to be found through him alone;
for there is no one else in all the world, whose
name God has given to men, by whom we can be
saved, Acts 4:12.*

Christ is the only One who was crucified, the only One whom God raised from death, the only One who could heal the lame man. Now Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said in front of all the people that they cannot receive salvation in the name of any other person, whether man or woman or angel, not even in the name of Peter himself or that of any apostle. ONLY CHRIST'S NAME CAN SAVE.

When Peter first said these words, he was speaking to men who were guilty of putting Christ on the cross. Yet he said that they too could be saved in Christ's name. If Peter were here today, he would say exactly the same things to us. He was inspired by God then and would surely tell us the truth now also. Some men may find out after they have died that they have been teaching errors and lies. But Peter was full of the Holy Spirit that day, and he certainly told the truth. If he came back from heaven after all these years, he would say again,

*Salvation is to be found through him alone;
for there is no one else in all the world, whose
name God has given to men, by whom we can be
saved, Acts 4:12.*

There is no sinner living today who is too wicked to

be saved in the name of Christ. The priests had been guilty of murdering God's Son. The name of Christ is sufficient to save any living person today. God has not given any other name in the world to save men. This one Name is enough and quite sufficient. We have no other name. We need no other name. Just believe in Him.

Christ Himself taught the same thing:

I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father but through me, John 14:6.

Christ is the only way for men to approach God. He is sufficient, and we need no other way.

The apostle Paul also taught this truth. He said that there is one God and one Mediator who brings God and men together. This Mediator is the Lord Jesus Christ, 1 Timothy 2:5. He is perfect and sufficient and we do not need any other mediator, man or woman or angel, to bring us together with God. Christ is enough.

Today Christ is our Mediator, Intercessor, and Advocate.

As Mediator, He brings sinful men to God. No one could stand before God because of his sins. But the Man Christ Jesus can bring us to God. We do not need to be afraid of Christ. He loves us and understands us. We do not need anyone to lead us to Him, but He alone can lead us to God.

If I come to God through Christ, I become a child of God. I receive a new nature which makes me want to please God my Father. But I need help every day, or I will fall into sin. This is why I need Christ the Intercessor to pray for me at all times.

1. He is able to help: When He was here on earth, He became like men in every way so that He might be their faithful and merciful High Priest. He Himself suffered when He was tempted, and so He can help others who are tempted, Hebrews 2:17,18.
2. He lives so that He can pray for us: He is able also to save for ever those that come to God through Him; because He lives forever to plead with God for them, Hebrews 7:25.

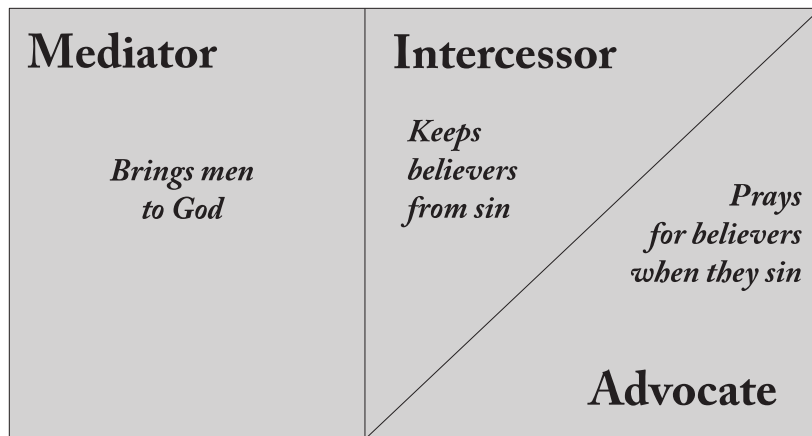
So we see that Christ is at God's right hand in heaven. There He is praying for us to keep us from sinning.

But what happens if we do sin? The apostle John wrote that, if any man sins, there is One who pleads for him with God the Father. This Advocate is the Lord Jesus Christ, 1 John 2:1.

The inspired apostle John did not say that you will lose your salvation if you sin. He did say that you have an Advocate, the Lord Jesus Christ. Just when you need Him most, He is right there in God's presence praying for you. You do not need anyone else. Christ's prayers for you are enough.

So we see that the apostles Paul and John and the inspired writer of Hebrews all agree with Peter in glorifying Christ. The Lord Himself said that He is the only Way. There is no other name in heaven or earth through which people can be saved. No other name is needed. He can save from the punishment and the power of sin. He alone! Believe in the Lord Jesus now and be saved, Acts 16:31.

What is Christ Doing Today?



NOW HEAR PETER
EXAM 4
PETER AND THE PRIESTS
(USE EXAM FORM A)

Enter the letter of the correct answer.

1. Peter and John told the lame beggar that
 - a. they would be glad to give him some money.
 - b. they had no money and were unable to help him.
 - c. God helps those who help themselves.
 - d. they had no money but would give him something else they had.

2. The lame man was healed
 - a. in the name of St Peter.
 - b. in the name of St John.
 - c. in the name of Jesus.
 - d. in the name of the Virgin Mary.

3. Peter used the occasion of the miraculous healing of the lame man to
 - a. raise money for the church.
 - b. preach the gospel to the people.
 - c. increase his own prestige.
 - d. stir up resentment against the religious authorities.

4. Peter's doctrine of salvation is that
 - a. salvation resides only in the Lord Jesus.
 - b. salvation resides in us but we have to work it out.
 - c. salvation resides in Christ and in the Church.
 - d. salvation depends on all the above.

5. The reaction of the religious authorities in Jerusalem to the miracle and preaching of Peter was to
 - a. congratulate the apostles in their success.
 - b. repent of their sins and join the infant church.
 - c. refuse the truth and to resort to force to stifle it.
 - d. deny that a miracle had happened.

6. Peter told the men who were responsible for crucifying Christ that
 - a. they had committed the unpardonable sin.
 - b. they could have salvation in Christ's name.
 - c. they should show repentance by giving the apostles a high position in their religious hierarchy.
 - d. only by walking barefoot through the city clothed in sackcloth could they hope for salvation.

7. The doctrine of salvation emphasized by Peter in Acts 4:12 is
 - a. supported by the Lord Jesus in John 14:6.
 - b. supported by the Apostle Paul in 1 Timothy 2:5.
 - c. supported both by the Lord Jesus and by the apostle Paul in the places cited above.
 - d. unique to Peter and is found nowhere else in Scripture.

8. The New Testament teaches that
 - a. the Lord Jesus is the one Mediator between God and men.
 - b. the Lord Jesus is one of several mediators.
 - c. the Lord Jesus is angry at us for our sins, therefore we need another mediator.
 - d. God is a loving God and needs no mediator to come between Him and the sinner.

9. When a person who has trusted Christ as personal Saviour falls into sin,
 - a. they lose their salvation altogether.
 - b. they need to seek absolution for their sin from a human agent and do penance.
 - c. they should confess that sin to the Lord Jesus Who is their "Advocate with the Father".
 - d. they prove, by sinning, that they were never really saved at all.

10. Memorize Acts 4:12.

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

What impresses you most about salvation as taught by Peter in Acts 4?

CHAPTER 5

Peter and the Elders of the Church

Christ promised Peter that He would give him the keys of the kingdom of heaven, Matthew 16:19, but, a little later, Peter swore with oaths that he never knew the Lord Jesus. You might think that this would cause Christ to change his mind and take back His promise. No, the Lord did not change His mind. When Peter repented, Christ forgave him, and, when the time came He fulfilled His promise.

On the day of Pentecost, Peter preached the Gospel in Jerusalem and opened the door of God's grace to the Jews. Later, Peter went to Caesarea and preached Christ to Cornelius, a Gentile. So he opened the doors to the Gentiles. God always fulfils His promises.

Peter was truly a great man. He was great because Christ made him great. He was great because he preached Christ and glorified Him. Even so, he was a man. When he first went into Cornelius' house, Cornelius fell down to worship him. Cornelius was a Gentile and did not know that it was very wrong to worship any creature. But Peter knew better. As soon as Cornelius fell down to worship him, Peter told him to stand up, because he himself was only a man, Acts 10:25,26.

Paul and Barnabas did the same as Peter. They also

refused to allow men to bow down before them. Once they did a great miracle in Lystra; they healed a lame man, just as Peter had done. The people in Lystra thought that this was so wonderful that they brought sacrifices to worship the apostles. But Paul and Barnabas cried out, Why are you doing these things? Acts 14:15. They could hardly keep the people from worshipping them.

Wicked King Herod once allowed people to praise him as if he were God, but God judged him immediately, Acts 12:23.

Only Christ, the Son of God, has the right to accept people's worship here in this world. In the book of the Apocalypse, we read that John the apostle fell down to worship the angel but was rebuked for it, Revelation 19:10; 22:8,9. So we see that Peter did right when he did not allow Cornelius to worship him.

At the beginning of the Church, the Christians recognized that Peter was a great man, but they never thought of bowing down to him. They even argued with him when they thought that he had disobeyed the Scripture, Acts 11:3. They felt he did wrong when he went into Cornelius' house, because Cornelius was a Gentile who had never been circumcised. Now Peter knew that he was no greater than they were. He might have said, "How dare you accuse me, Christ's apostle?" and he could have refused to explain what he had done. Instead, he told them everything that had happened. When they heard these things, they glorified God.

Peter did not rule over the people of God, and he told others not to do so. Each of the early churches had elders who were responsible to God for the Christians in that

church. Peter said he himself was an elder just like these other elders. He told the elders to take care of the Christians as a shepherd takes care of his sheep. They should look after them because they loved them, not because they felt they had to, and not in order to get money for themselves. They should not rule over the Christians but should be a good example to them. Read 1 Peter 5:1-3.

Another time, there was a big meeting of Christians at Jerusalem. Peter, Paul and Barnabas, and James were there together, with the apostles and elders. After they had talked for some time, Peter stood up and told what God had done through him. Then Paul and Barnabas told how God had done great things among the Gentiles through them. Finally James stood and proved from Scripture that these things were correct. Peter and Paul agreed that the Scriptures are the final authority. Later, they themselves were inspired by God to write part of the New Testament. We have already seen that Peter was an elder who did not rule over God's people, but fed them with God's Word.

Peter told the elders that they should obey the Chief Shepherd, the Lord Jesus Christ. If they serve Him faithfully, they will receive a glorious crown which will never lose its brightness, 1 Peter 5:4.

But what was the meeting in Jerusalem about? Paul and Barnabas had been telling the people everywhere that they could be saved by grace alone. But some of the Jews followed them everywhere, and taught that Christians must keep the Law of Moses to be saved. It is not possible to be saved by keeping the Law, and grace is the opposite to the Law.

If anyone is saved by grace, it is not by works; if it were, grace is no more grace, Romans 11:6.

A man who works is paid; his wages are not regarded as a gift but as something he has earned. But the man who does not work simply puts his trust in God. God will justify this guilty man and count his faith as righteousness, Romans 4:4,5.

It must be one or the other: works or grace. The apostle Paul said salvation is by the grace of God and through faith. The Jews said it must be by the works of the Law. Peter and all the New Testament writers agreed with Paul. In later lessons, we shall see what Peter himself taught on this question.

What is the value of the Law? God gave the Law to show us what to do and what not to do. He never promised to save anyone who obeyed the Law completely. The purpose of the Law is to show us that we are sinners. Paul said that the Law made him know what sin was. Without the Law, he would not have understood what it meant to covet, Romans 7:7.

The law shows us God's perfect standard. It tells us what He requires us to do. It cannot give us the power to obey, but it can prove that we are sinners. It shows us that we need a Savior. It was our instructor until Christ came so that we might be justified by faith, Galatians 3:24.

Christ has done all the work necessary for our salvation. On the cross, He cried, It is finished. It is very wrong for anyone to add his good works to Christ's work. That would be to say that Christ's work was not good enough.

How important it is to see that Christ has done all

the work! Every false religion in the world tells men to do something, to keep some law and they will be saved. Only true Christianity teaches that the work is finished. It is a good thing that Peter and Paul insisted on this great truth. All you have to do is believe on Christ. Do it now.

NOW HEAR PETER
EXAM 5
PETER AND THE CHURCH ELDERS
(USE EXAM FORM A)

Enter the letter of the correct answer.

1. Peter used "the keys" to
 - a. make himself head of the Church.
 - b. open the door of world dominion for the Church.
 - c. open the door of the Church, first to Jews and later to Gentiles.
 - d. unlock the Scriptures.

2. When Cornelius fell down to worship him, Peter
 - a. was very pleased with the humility of Cornelius.
 - b. accepted the divine honours bestowed upon him.
 - c. gave Cornelius his ring to kiss.
 - d. forbade Cornelius to worship him since worship belongs to God alone.

3. At Lystra Paul and Barnabas
 - a. accepted the worship offered them by the heathen.
 - b. refused worship on the ground that Peter was the head of the Church.
 - c. refused to heal the lame man until the heathen showed them the respect due to their position.
 - d. tried to dissuade the ignorant heathen from offering them divine honours.

4. When the people offered King Herod divine honour he
 - a. rightfully accepted it as his due.
 - b. was smitten by an angel for not giving that honour to God.
 - c. refused to accept their worship because he did not wish to displease Caesar.
 - d. refused to accept their worship because He did not wish to trespass on God's sole right to be worshipped.

5. In the Apocalypse it is recorded that an angel
 - a. rebuked John for falling down to worship him..
 - b. rebuked John for not falling down to worship him..
 - c. accepted John's worship but told him to be sure to reserve the highest type of worship for God.
 - d. told John to write in his book that all angels should be worshipped.

6. Christians in the early church
 - a. regarded Peter as the undisputed head of the Church whose word was to be accepted without question.
 - b. sometimes argued with Peter.
 - c. always gave special weight to Peter's words because of who he was.
 - d. were excommunicated for criticising Peter.

7. Peter
 - a. tried to dominate other Christians.
 - b. called himself as a “fellow-elder”.
 - c. build a hierarchy of church leaders.
 - d. boasted that he had walked with Jesus.

8. The verdict of the first Church council was that
 - a. salvation is by grace alone.
 - b. salvation is by good works alone.
 - c. salvation is by grace plus good works.
 - d. salvation is by grace and sanctification is by works.

9. God gave men the Law in order to
 - a. help them behave as they should.
 - b. keep them out of heaven.
 - c. help men see their need of a Saviour.
 - d. make it possible for them to be saved by accumulating merit through good works.

10. For a person to add their own good works to the work of Christ
 - a. is well pleasing to God because this proves they sincerely want to do what the Bible teaches.
 - b. is wrong because it amounts to saying that Christ's work is not enough.
 - c. is not an important because since the New Testament is silent on the subject.
 - d. is desirable but not necessary.

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

How did Peter say the elders should look after the Christians in the churches?

CHAPTER 6

Peter and the Beloved Mother

God greatly honored Mary when He chose her to bring the Lord Jesus into this world. He sent the angel Gabriel to tell her what would happen.

Gabriel told Mary not to be afraid because God had been gracious to her. He told her she would give birth to a son, and would call his name Jesus. He would be great and would be called the Son of the Most High God, Luke 1:30-32. Mary asked how this could be, and prayed that God might do His will in her and through her, Luke 1:38.

After that, Mary went to see Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist. When Mary entered the house, Elizabeth blessed her and said that the child whom Mary would bear would also be blessed. She was very happy about this visit from the mother of her Lord, Luke 1:42,43.

When Mary heard these things, she said:

My heart praises the Lord, my soul is glad because of God my Savior, Luke 1:46,47.

These verses show us that God honored Mary, Gabriel honored Mary, and Elizabeth did the same. But Mary praised God and called Him her Savior.

Yes, Mary called God, or Christ, her Savior. This is exactly what Peter did, Acts 5:31; also Paul, Acts 13:23; John, 1 John 4:14; and Jude, Jude 25. Everyone needs a Savior, and Christ is the Savior for all, 2 Peter 1:1,11; 2:20; 3:2,18.

Peter and Mary

Did Peter ever speak to Mary? We know they were sometimes together, but we do not read in the New Testament that they talked with each other. We will look at three occasions when Peter and Mary were both together.

1. One time, Christ and His mother and disciples were invited to a wedding. When all the wine was gone, Mary told Jesus they had no wine. Jesus said, Woman, my time has not yet come, John 2:4. Then Jesus' mother said to the servants, Do whatever he tells you, John 2:5.

In this story we see:

1. that Mary did not perform a miracle;
2. that she did not ask Peter to do a miracle;
3. that she gave very good advice to the young men:
Do whatever he tells you.

It would be a good thing today if everyone would follow the blessed mother's advice. She simply told the men to obey Christ. If Mary were here today, she would say the same thing. She would tell people about the Lord Jesus.

Are you ready to obey the Lord? It is necessary first to find out what He wants you to do. How can you do this? By studying the sacred Scripture, the Word of God. But you must do more than just study; you must first

know what He says, then do it....

2. Another time, Jesus was busy teaching His disciples. His mother, Mary, and His brothers came, stood outside and called for Him. The people told Him that His mother and brothers were looking for Him. But Jesus asked them who His mother and brothers were. Then He looked at those who were sitting around Him and said that these were His mother and brothers because all those who do the will of God are His mother and sisters and brothers, Mark 3:33-35.

The Lord did not say that Peter or the other disciples were closer to Him than Mary. He did say that the most important thing is to do what God wants us to do. This was what He Himself wanted more than anything else, Hebrews 10:9, and He called men and women who do the will of God brother and sister and mother.

3. Peter and Mary were together again after the Lord had risen from death. In Acts 1:13,14, we read that Peter and the ten disciples were all together praying, also the half-brothers of the Lord, Mary, and some other women. This is the last time we read about Mary in the Bible. Peter is seen and heard again and again, but neither Peter, nor Paul, nor any other New Testament writer even mentioned Mary's name. They wrote to the various churches in order to teach about the Lord Jesus and to instruct the Christians how to pray and what to do. They did not say anything about Mary.

Jesus and Mary

What did the Lord Jesus say to His mother? When He was a boy twelve years old, Joseph and Mary took

Him to Jerusalem. When they left to return to Nazareth, He stayed behind in the Temple. Joseph and Mary found Him on the third day talking with the Jewish teachers. Mary asked Him why He had done this to them, because they had been very worried about Him, Luke 2:48. The Lord Jesus answered,

Why did you look for me? Didn't you know that I must be about my Father's business, Luke 2:49?

The Lord did not dishonor His mother, but He wanted to obey and glorify His Father in heaven. He went back to Nazareth with them, and was obedient to them.

The Lord Jesus said that the one who does God's will is near and dear to Him; but still, when He was dying on the cross, Christ remembered His mother. It is not good for a woman to have no one to look after her. Therefore the Lord Jesus told her that John would take care of her as if she were his own mother. John was glad to do this for his Lord, John 19:26,27.

After Christ had died and had risen again from death, He entered into heaven and sat on God's right hand. His work on the cross was finished. Now His work is to pray for His people, Hebrews 7:25.

We saw in chapter 4 that Christ is our Advocate and our Mediator. There is no other, and we need no other. He is able to do all that is needed for our salvation.

NOW HEAR PETER
EXAM 6
PETER AND THE BELOVED MOTHER
(USE EXAM FORM A)

Enter the letter of the correct answer.

1. God honoured Mary by
 - a. calling her the 'mother of God'
 - b. choosing her to be the mother of the Lord Jesus.
 - c. exempting her from any need of salvation.
 - d. all of the above.

2. The Lord's mother was told by the angel that her Son would be called
 - a. the Son of Man.
 - b. the Son of righteousness.
 - c. the Son of God
 - d. the Son of the Most High.

3. Mary's cousin, Elizabeth, said of Mary that she was
 - a. blessed above all women.
 - b. blessed among women.
 - c. blessed by God.
 - d. blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places.

4. Mary called God
 - a. her divine Spouse.
 - b. her Saviour.
 - c. her kinsman Redeemer.
 - d. her heavenly Father.

5. At the wedding at Cana
 - a. Mary performed a miracle.
 - b. Mary asked Peter to perform a miracle.
 - c. Mary told people to do just what Jesus told them to.
 - d. Jesus told the people they must approach Him through His mother.

6. On the occasion when Mary and His brothers came to Jesus the Lord said that
 - a. Peter and the apostles were closer to Him than Mary.
 - b. anything Mary asked of Him would always be granted.
 - c. all men were His brothers.
 - d. whoever did God's will was His brother, sister and mother.

7. The last time Mary is mentioned in the Bible shows her
 - a. holding the infant Jesus in her arms.
 - b. praying with other believers in the Lord Jesus.
 - c. accepting the homage of Peter and the apostles.
 - d. going to John's home.

8. The great function of the New Testament is to
 - a. show Paul's primacy in the Church.
 - b. show Peter's primacy in the Church..
 - c. teach about the Lord Jesus and to instruct the Christians how to live.
 - d. do all the above.

9. As a boy of twelve, the Lord Jesus
 - a. refused to obey His mother because He knew Himself to be God.
 - b. told Mary and Joseph to leave Him in the Temple and return to Nazareth without Him.
 - c. asked Mary and Joseph if they did not know He had to be about His Father's business.
 - d. acknowledged Joseph to be His father.

10. The sole Advocate, Mediator, Intercessor and Saviour we have and need today is
 - a. the apostle Peter.
 - b. the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - c. God the Father.

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

Why do you think Mary said, "My spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour," when she heard she was to become the mother of the Lord Jesus?

CHAPTER 7

How People Can Be Delivered from their Sins

Peter was a great man, but he was not perfect. Christ alone never sinned; He pleased God in everything He did, Mark 1:11.

God's Spirit led Peter to teach many things. We can be sure the things that he taught are true. If he were here today, he would teach the same things. All men should believe what Peter taught in the New Testament. In chapters 7-12, we will study Peter's two letters.

What did Peter teach about being delivered from sin?

Deliverance from the punishment of sin

God created men and has the right to tell them what to do, and what not to do. Only those who do God's will perfectly are without sin. Very few people would claim that they are perfect, and no one is really without sin in God's sight. Yet only a person without any sin could stand before God in heaven. Those who do not obey God's commands will be kept out of heaven forever.

I know that I am a sinner. Who will pay my great debt? Some people think they can pay their own great debt by doing many good works, or by giving all their money. Some think that other good people will pay it for them. What did Peter say? Peter said that before we were

saved we lived in the same worthless manner as our ancestors, but that now we have been set free by the sacrifice of Christ, who was like a lamb without defect or spot, 1 Peter 1:18,19. In these verses, he also said very plainly that we are not redeemed with gold and silver...not with money. God has created all things and does not need anyone's money. I cannot buy my way into heaven. Many people have done terrible things to get money. The love of money is a source of all kinds of evil, 1 Timothy 6:10.

Some people think they can buy anything with money, even what God wants to give them as a gift. One day a man called Simon wanted to give Peter some money, but Peter refused to take it. He told him to keep his money that it might be destroyed together with him, because he had thought that the gift of God could be purchased with money, Acts 8:20.

We cannot pay our debt by doing good works either:

It was not by any good works that we ourselves had done, but because of His own mercy that He saved us through the washing by which the Holy Spirit gives us new birth and new life,
Titus 3:5.

So we see that God will not forgive us because we do good works or give a lot of money. How, then, can we be saved? What did Peter say about this? We are redeemed with the precious blood of Christ, who was like a lamb without defect or spot, 1 Peter 1:19.

John the Baptist called the Lord Jesus Christ the Lamb of God. On the cross, He gave up His life and poured out His blood to pay the price of our redemption. Was this enough, or do we have to pay more? Peter called

the blood of the Lord Jesus precious. Why was it so precious? The value of the blood depends on whose blood it is. The blood of an animal is not worth much. The blood of a man is worth much more, but Christ is the Son of God. His life cannot be measured. The value of His blood also cannot be measured. It is enough to pay for the sins of all men. Christ is the means by which our sins are forgiven, and the sins of all men, 1 John 2:2.

Does this mean that all men will be saved? No; it means that all men can be saved. What then do we have to do? Simply listen to God's Word, believe what He says, and trust in the work of Christ for your salvation. This is true faith, and Peter often spoke about faith. He said our faith is much more precious than gold, 1 Peter 1:7.

So we see that the punishment of sin against God is death, but if we have faith in Christ we can be redeemed by His precious blood. If we believe in Christ, God forgives our sins, and, when we stand before Him in heaven, we will not be afraid.

But what about today? How can I be delivered each day from the power of bad habits which try to make me sin against God? Only God can do this, for His power is greater than the power of my sinful habits.

Deliverance from the power of sin

Sin is to rebel against God. When you understand this, you will not want to sin any more. You will see that it was necessary for Christ to die on the cross because of your sin. You will learn to hate sin and to avoid it at all times, but you still have your old habits and thoughts. What can keep you from sinning?

Jude said that God is able to keep us from falling into sin, and to present us faultless before His glory with very great joy, Jude 24.

Paul talked about his natural desire to sin; then he cried out, What an unhappy man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is taking me to death, Romans 7:24? Then he answered,

The grace of God by JESUS CHRIST, our Lord, Romans 7:25.

What did Peter say?

1. He said that believers are dead to sin and should live good and righteous lives, 1 Peter 2:24.

Think of it this way: You are a sinner. It was certain that God would judge you and you would die. But Christ died for you, and so you are alive; but you must live for Him. Paul said that we are ruled by Christ's love now because Christ died for us so that we would no longer live for ourselves, but for Him who died for us and rose again from death, 2 Corinthians 5:14,15.

2. Peter also said that we should not give in to the evil desires of our bodies which always fight against our souls, 1 Peter 2:11.

He said that we are receiving (at the present time) the salvation of our souls, 1 Peter 1:9. God gives us power every day to live for Him. It is possible for us to overcome these fleshly desires and to be saved from them. This can only be through the Lord Jesus Christ.

You were like sheep that had lost their way; but now you have been brought back to the Shepherd and Keeper of your souls, 1 Peter 2:25.

Christ is our Shepherd and Bishop. He alone is able to keep us. Through faith, we are kept safe by the power of God, 1 Peter 1:5.

Here is another wonderful promise from God, that He will keep us from sin:

God keeps his promise; and he will not allow you to be tempted beyond your power to resist; but at the time you are tempted he will give you the strength to endure it, and so provide you with a way out, 1 Corinthians 10:13.

3. But someone says, "What can I do if Satan tempts me?" Peter gives us the answer to this question also. He tells us to be alert and watch out, because our enemy, the devil, goes around like a lion looking for someone to tear and eat up. We must stand firm in our faith, and resist him, because we know that our fellow believers all over the world are going through the same kind of suffering, 1 Peter 5:8,9.

Satan may tempt you to sin, but you should stand up against him and not give in. If you oppose him, he will leave you alone.

Oppose the devil and he will flee from you,
James 4:7.

4. The Holy Spirit gives us the power to live good, pure lives. Everyone who belongs to Christ has the Holy Spirit, Romans 8:9.

It is not possible for us to please God in our own strength. God does not want us to try, but He gives us the power to live for Him. The Holy Spirit works in our hearts to produce fruit, the fruit of love, joy, peace, pa-

tience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, humility, and self control, Galatians 5:22,23.

So we see that God inspired Peter to write down His promise that we can be completely delivered from sin.

1. God forgives us because (and only because) Christ poured out His precious blood for us.
2. Christ our Shepherd and Bishop can save us from the power of sinful habits, and will do it right now.
3. The Holy Spirit will produce in us the lovely fruit which will please God.

Would you like to be delivered both from the punishment and power of sin? You can, right now, by believing in the Son of God.

NOW HEAR PETER
EXAM 7
DELIVERANCE FROM SIN
(USE EXAM FORM A)

Enter the letter of the correct answer.

1. Peter teaches that the debt of sin
 - a. can be paid by the sinner in the form of charity and donation to the Church.
 - b. can be paid by the sinner in the form of good works.
 - c. was partially paid for by Christ but that the residue must be paid for by the sinner.
 - d. can be cancelled only by the precious blood of Christ.

2. It is impossible to
 - a. be sure of getting to heaven.
 - b. buy my way into heaven.
 - c. be redeemed from sin without money.
 - d. get to heaven by grace alone.

3. When Peter spoke of the “lamb unspotted and undefiled” he was referring to
 - a. Moses.
 - b. Elijah.
 - c. John the Baptist.
 - d. the Lord Jesus.

4. When John spoke of Jesus as the Lamb of God, he meant that
 - a. all people would eventually be saved after they had been punished for their sin.
 - b. all people could be saved because Christ's shed blood is precious.
 - c. all people will be saved who trust in both the blood of Christ and their own good works.
 - d. all people will eventually be saved regardless of their attitude to Christ.

5. Once a person is saved they will
 - a. never sin again.
 - b. want to be delivered from living a sinful life.
 - c. go straight to heaven.
 - d. lose their salvation if they sin again.

6. Paul discovered that the way of victory over sinful tendencies after he became a believer was
 - a. through the grace of God by Jesus Christ our Lord.
 - b. through the intercession of saints and angels.
 - c. through prayers to Mary.
 - d. through his own efforts to live a good, clean life.

7. The attitude of the true believers should be
 - a. I'm saved and sure of it so I can sin as much as I please.
 - b. I'm saved but still have evil tendencies therefore victory over sin is hopeless.
 - c. I'm saved so long as I live a holy life.
 - d. I'm saved through God's grace and Christ's death and my life must be lived to God's glory.

8. God has promised that the believer
 - a. will never again be tempted.
 - b. will never be tempted beyond their power to withstand.
 - c. will never again fall when tempted.
 - d. will never have victory over temptation in this life.

9. James teaches that the secret of victory over Satan lies in
 - a. denying the existence of the Devil.
 - b. resisting the Devil.
 - c. yielding to God and resisting the Devil.
 - d. resolving never to listen to the Devil's lies.

10. The power to live a clean, pure life comes from
 - a. the Holy Spirit.
 - b. the blessed mother.
 - c. the apostle Peter.
 - d. the natural goodness of our hearts.

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

How can we be delivered from our sins?

CHAPTER 8

How to Become a Child of God – and How to Know that You Are One

Would you like to be a child of God – and be sure that you are one? Almost everyone would like to have the privilege of belonging to the family of God. Many people hope that they will become children of God. But can a person be certain even now that he has been born into God's family? As usual, let us see what Peter has to say about this.

How can I become a child of God?

Of course only God can make me His child. I cannot become a member of God's family through any work that I might do, and I certainly cannot become a child of God by paying money.

Think of a poor king who needs money very badly. If a rich young man came to his house one day, the king might want to adopt him as his son so that the young man would help him in his money problems. But the adopted son would not have the life of the father in him; he would not really be his son. And of course God does not need any money.

Peter said,

Let us give thanks to the God and Father of

*our Lord Jesus Christ! Because of his great mercy
he gave us new life, 1 Peter 1:3.*

To get new life means to be born again. Everybody in the world is born with the life of his parents in him. This makes it possible for him to live in this world. Heaven is different from earth, and we need a new kind of life to live there. We can get this life only by accepting it as a free gift from God.

*For sin pays its wage – death; but God's free
gift is eternal life in union with Christ Jesus our
Lord, Romans 6:23.*

We are born again with this new life through the Scriptures, the Word of God. Peter said that we are born again through the living and eternal Word of God, the Word that the Gospel has brought to us, 1 Peter 1:23,25. Many people think that they can be made children of God by some other means, but we will believe what Peter said. We are redeemed by the precious blood of Christ and born again by the Word of God, not by something that can be spoiled and lose its value. Because this is true, you should:

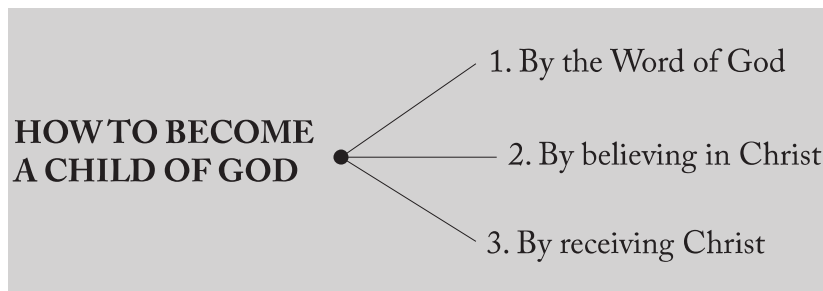
Read the Scriptures, the Word of God. Peter believed and taught that the Scripture is the inspired Word of God. (We saw this in chapter 2.) Read the Bible humbly, carefully, and with prayer; God will speak to you through it.

Believe the Scripture. Many people read the Scripture but do not really believe it and obey it as the Word of God. Jesus said,

*If you know these things, you shall be happy if you do
them, John 13:17.*

Accept Christ as your own personal Savior. Christ is also called the Word of God, so you are born again through Him. If you receive Christ and believe in His name, He gives you the right to become a son of God.

He came to his own country, but his own people did not receive him. Some, however, did receive him and believed in him; so he gave them the right to become God's children. They did not become God's children by natural means, by being born as the children of a human father; God himself was their Father, John 1:11-13.



How can I know that I am a child of God?

During a war, all the king's sons were killed except one. A woman ran away with this little boy and saved him. When he grew up, people told him that he was a king's son, but at first he could not believe it. Then they showed him papers and books which proved that he was really a son of the king. When he saw these, he was very happy.

HOW CAN I BE SURE THAT I AM A SON OF GOD?

If it depends on my own works, I will never be able to know. Perhaps I have not done enough works or God cannot accept my works because they are not good enough.

If it depends on Christ's work, I can be sure. His work is complete and perfect. He finished it long ago. He Himself said just before He died, It is finished. God was satisfied with Christ's work and accepted it. He showed this by raising Christ from death.

Does God want me to know that I am His child? Yes. Peter said that we should try hard to add goodness and knowledge to our faith, 2 Peter 1:5. We should know as well as believe. As we read and believe the Word of God, we will learn more about God, and we will see that we are His sons.

Peter also spoke of preaching peace by Jesus Christ, Acts 10:36. Paul said,

Now that we have been put right with God through faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, Romans 5:1.

God wants you to have peace in your heart, so He helps you to be sure that your sins are forgiven and that you are His child. How? Through the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit:

I write you this so that you may know that you have eternal life – you who believe in the name of the Son of God, 1 John 5:13.

So we see that a person can become a child of God through the Word of God, and, through this same Word of God he can be certain that he is a child of God.

What happens if a child of God falls into sin?

You are saved by the work which Christ finished on the cross. There is nothing that you have to do for your salvation. But when you are a Christian, God expects you to obey Him as a child obeys his father. If you do not

obey Him, He will punish you as a father punishes his child. When you first believe in Christ, God gives you eternal life and great happiness. If you disobey Him later on, He will take away that happiness, but not the eternal life.

1. We are saved by grace, not by works:

For it is by God's grace that you have been saved, through faith. It is not your own doing, but God's gift. There is nothing here to boast of, since it is not the result of your own efforts, Ephesians 2:8,9.

2. But after we are saved, God wants us to do good works which He has already prepared for us, Ephesians 2:10.

3. If we do not obey Him, He will punish us because He punishes everyone He loves and has accepted as a son, Hebrews 12:6.

We should not go back again to the old life of sin. Peter said that some people are like a dog that goes back to what it has vomited, or a pig which goes back to roll in the mud after it has been washed, 2 Peter 2:22.

It is wonderful to be a son of God and to know it. As a son, I have a loving heavenly Father. I have a home in heaven where Christ will receive me. I have brothers and sisters in the family of God. God will take care of all His children. He wants you to be happy. Accept the Lord Jesus into your heart as your Saviour, and you will become a true child of the Father. Think about the verses in this chapter and believe them. You will be happy when you know that you are in God's family.

**HOW TO KNOW
THAT YOU ARE
A CHILD OF GOD**

God said it... *Read the Bible*

I accept it... *Believe God's Word*

That settles it ... *Never doubt it again*

NOW HEAR PETER
EXAM 8
BECOME A CHILD OF GOD
(USE EXAM FORM A)

Enter the letter of the correct answer.

1. A position in God's family
 - a. can be granted by God alone.
 - b. can be purchased with money.
 - c. can be attained by working oneself up to it.
 - d. is beyond all human hope.

2. The word "regenerated," as used in the Bible, means
 - a. to be convicted of sin.
 - b. to be born again.
 - c. to be purchased.
 - d. to be set free.

3. Everlasting life is
 - a. the natural inheritance of man.
 - b. the end result of evolutionary forces.
 - c. the reward for holy living.
 - d. the gift of God.

4. The active agent in the new birth of an individual is
 - a. leaven.
 - b. the salt of the earth.
 - c. the Word of God.
 - d. the breath of life.

5. Since the Scriptures play so important a part in imparting God's life to us we must
 - a. read them.
 - b. believe them.
 - c. obey them.
 - d. do all the above.

6. Those who are made the sons of God are those who
 - a. receive Christ personally as Saviour.
 - b. depend on their own will power to obey God's Word.
 - c. are born into a Christian home.
 - d. are baptized.

7. Assurance that one is really a true child of God comes from
 - a. God's Word
 - b. doing one's best.
 - c. one's subjective feelings about the matter.
 - d. signing a pledge.

8. John said that he wrote his first letter so that his readers could know
 - a. the major themes of prophecy.
 - b. the basic relationship between the Old Testament and New Testament.
 - c. that they have eternal life by believing in the name of God's Son.
 - d. that the things written in his Gospel were true.

9. Once a person is saved they will
 - a. lose their salvation if they fail to obey God's Word
 - b. be punished by God if they sin but will still remain God's child.
 - c. never again be unhappy.
 - d. no longer care whether or not their lives please God.

10. Memorize John 1:11-13

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

Are you a child of God? If so, how do you know you are?

CHAPTER 9

Christ our Shepherd and Bishop

We learned in chapter 4 that the Lord Jesus Christ is now in glory, and that He is our Mediator, Intercessor, and Advocate. In chapter 9, we will see that Peter called Him our Shepherd and Bishop, or Keeper.

Christ Himself suffered for you and left you an example, so that you should follow in His steps ...He placed His hope in God, the righteous Judge...so that we might die to sin and live for righteousness. By whose wounds you have been healed. You were like sheep that had lost their way; but now you have been brought back to follow the Shepherd and Keeper of your souls, 1 Peter 2:21,23-25.

Christ is our SHEPHERD

A shepherd is one who looks after sheep. If Christ is the Shepherd, who are His sheep, and what does He do for them? We will consider Christ as the Good Shepherd, the Great Shepherd, and the Chief Shepherd.

The GOOD Shepherd

The Lord Jesus Christ called Himself the Good Shepherd:

I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd is willing to die for the sheep, John 10:11.

A good shepherd must be willing to give his life to save the sheep. David was a shepherd before he became king. One day, a bear and a lion came to attack the sheep. David put his own life in danger to kill these wild animals. But the Lord Jesus, the Good Shepherd, gave His life for the sheep. He died for them on the cross.

Jesus Himself is the Good Shepherd. He said,

My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never die; and no one can snatch them away from me. What my Father has given me is greater than all, and no one can snatch them away from the Father's care. The Father and I are one, John 10:27-30.

Who then are His sheep? Those who hear His voice and follow Him, verse 27. You can hear His voice speaking through Holy Scripture. Are you willing to follow Him? If so, you will never perish, nor can anyone snatch you out of His hand, nor out of His Father's hand. You will know you are His sheep, His child.

Peter tells us that:

1. Christ suffered for us, 1 Peter 2:21.
2. He bore our sins in His own body on the cross, 1 Peter 2:24.
3. Christ died once for our sins, the Just One for us the unjust, 1 Peter 3:18.

Here we note:

1. In the first of these verses, Peter tells that Christ

suffered for us. I was condemned to die because of my sins. I could not save myself by paying money or doing good works, but Christ suffered for me. Now I believe in Him, and I do not have to suffer for my own sins.

2. Peter also tells us that the Lord Jesus Christ bore the penalty for our sins in His own body when He was nailed to the cross. This was His literal, physical body. No one else could do this for us, no angel or man or woman. Only the perfect Son of God could take our place.

3. Then Peter tells us that Christ died once for our sins. If His sacrifice had not been perfect and sufficient, more sacrifices would be needed. But Christ Himself said, It is finished, John 19:30, and God showed that the one sacrifice was perfect when He raised Christ from death.

In Old Testament times, people offered millions of sacrifices to God. It is clear that these sacrifices could not make perfect those who offered them. That is why men had to make the same offerings again and again. Every Jewish priest performed his services every day and offered the same sacrifices many times, but these sacrifices could never take away sins. But Christ offered one sacrifice for sins, an offering that is good forever, and then sat down at the right side of God. With this one sacrifice, He has made perfect forever those who are clean from sin, Hebrews 10:1,2,11,12,14.

Christ's sacrifice was perfect and complete and does not ever need to be repeated. If you say it has to be repeated, you are saying that the first sacrifice was not good enough.

The high priest went into the Holy Place once every year with the blood of an animal. But Christ did not go

in to offer Himself many times, for then He would have had to suffer again and again ever since the creation of the world. Instead, He came once and for all to remove sin through sacrificing Himself, Hebrews 9:25,26. So now God says that He will no longer remember our sins and wicked deeds. Our sins have been forgiven, and we need no other offering to take them away, Hebrews 10:17,18.

The GREAT Shepherd

At the end of the book of Hebrews, we read,

God has raised from the dead our Lord Jesus, who is the great Shepherd of the sheep because of his death, by which the eternal covenant is sealed. May the God of peace provide you with every good thing you need in order to do His will, and may he, through Jesus Christ, do in us what pleases Him. And to Christ be the glory forever and ever! Amen, Hebrews 13:20,21.

The work of the Great Shepherd of the sheep is to help us do the will of God. In chapter 7, we learned that Christ delivers us from the punishment and the power of sin. As the Good Shepherd, He died for us and saves us from the punishment of sin. God raised Him from death, and, as the Great Shepherd, He helps us day by day to do God's will. In this way, He saves us from the power of sin.

The CHIEF Shepherd

Peter heard the Lord Jesus call Himself the Good Shepherd, the One who came to die on the cross for His sheep. Peter knew that Christ is coming back again to rule in this world (see chapter 12). When He comes, He

will give a reward to those who have faithfully served Him. This reward will not be eternal life or a place in heaven. Eternal life is a gift from God, Romans 6:23.

The Chief Shepherd will give a wonderful reward to those who serve Him faithfully. Peter said that He will give them a glorious crown which will never lose its brightness, 1 Peter 5:4. This promise is especially for the church elders, v.1, but all God's children can earn a reward when the Chief Shepherd comes again. We will study this in chapter 11.

Christ is our BISHOP

Peter called Christ both the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls. He is also the Bishop of the churches.

The word bishop means "overseer". Christ as our Shepherd keeps us, guides us and feeds us. As Bishop, He requires that we walk according to His Word.

Do whatever he shall say to you, John 2:5.

1. As my Bishop, Christ knows how I do my work and how I behave in my home. Peter gave many instructions as to how we should behave in the world and in the home:

1) He told us not to give in to the desires of the old nature which are at war with our souls, but to behave ourselves properly before unbelievers. They may accuse us of doing wrong, but they will see our good works and praise God, 1 Peter 2:11,12.

2) He also told wives to submit to their husbands, 1 Peter 3:1, and husbands to treat their wives with respect, 1 Peter 3:7.

Christ even knows what I think. Peter wrote both his letters to stir up our minds by reminding us of the things the prophets and the Lord Jesus Christ had said, 2 Peter 3:1.

Christ has a right to know all about you. Is everything He sees in your life in accord His Word?

2. Christ is also the Bishop of the churches. In Revelation chapters 1-3, we see Christ inspecting the churches. He was pleased with some of them and promised to give the people a reward or crown. Others were not obeying His Word. He told the people of one church that He would spit them out of His mouth because they were neither hot nor cold, but just a little warm, Revelation 3:16.

We must obey the Word of God in our work, in our own thoughts, in the church and in everything else. Only this can please Him who gave Himself for us.

NOW HEAR PETER
EXAM 9
CHRIST OUR SHEPHERD AND BISHOP
(USE EXAM FORM A)

Enter the letter of the correct answer.

1. The Lord Jesus is described in the New Testament as
 - a. the bishop or overseer of our souls.
 - b. the Vicar of the church.
 - c. the Holy Father.
 - d. all the above.

2. The Lord Jesus, describing Himself as "the good Shepherd," tells us that
 - a. He risked His life to save His flock from a lion.
 - b. He was willing to give His life for His sheep.
 - c. His sheep will perish if they stray.
 - d. all the people in the world are His sheep.

3. The penalty of sin was
 - a. partially borne by the Lord Jesus and must be partially borne by the penitent sinner.
 - b. borne by the Lord Jesus in His own body when He was nailed to the cross.
 - c. symbolically borne by the Lord Jesus but is actually borne by the sinner in Purgatory.
 - d. borne by saints and angels as substitutes for sinful mankind.

4. The Bible teaches that the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus is
 - a. finished, perfect and complete.
 - b. partial, unfinished and incomplete.
 - c. repeated daily in the sacraments of the Church.
 - d. not valid apart from the addition of human deeds of merit.

5. God says of the believer's sins that
 - a. they are temporarily covered by the blood of Christ.
 - b. they must be paid for in acts of penance.
 - c. He will remember them no more.
 - d. a full accounting will have to be made for them in the coming judgement.

6. In His character of the **Great** Shepherd, the Lord Jesus
 - a. died to save us from the penalty of sin.
 - b. helps us do the will of God.
 - c. assumes the title of "the God of peace".
 - d. is evidently subservient to the **Chief** Shepherd.

7. The reward the Lord Jesus will give to those who faithfully serve Him will be
 - a. eternal life.
 - b. a home in heaven.
 - c. a crown of glory.
 - d. all the above.

8. The Chief Shepherd at present resides in
 - a. Rome.
 - b. Jerusalem.
 - c. Canterbury.
 - d. Heaven.

9. The Head of the church, according to Peter, is
 - a. himself.
 - b. Christ.
 - c. Paul.
 - d. John.

10. As the One who watches over us the Lord Jesus is known as our
 - a. Shepherd.
 - b. Redeemer.
 - c. Priest.
 - d. Bishop.

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

Can you say 'The Lord is My Shepherd'? If so, why?

CHAPTER 10

How to Become a Priest and a Saint

Peter teaches us quite clearly how a person can become a child of God: by the Word of God and through believing in the Lord Jesus Christ. We saw this in chapter 8.

Now we will consider the only verses in the Bible in which Peter gives teaching on how to become a priest. Of course Paul and other New Testament writers had much to say about this also. We will look at only a few of these verses. But all books in the Holy Scriptures are inspired by God. They all contain the truth of God and nothing but the truth. Therefore all parts of the Bible agree in doctrine because they are all the truth of God. Peter and Paul and others may teach about the same general subject, but the teaching of each one agrees with that of the others.

How to become a PRIEST

What did Peter teach about priests?

1. He said that we should come as living stones, and let ourselves be used in building the spiritual temple where we can serve as holy priests, to offer spiritual and acceptable sacrifices to God through Jesus Christ, 1 Peter 2:5.

2. Peter also said that we are the chosen race, the King's priests, the holy nation, God's own people, chosen to tell others about the wonderful acts of God, who called us from the darkness into His own wonderful light, 1 Peter 2:9.

This is all that Peter said about priests. He said that those to whom he wrote his letter are:

1. holy priests
2. the King's priests.

A holy priest has a special place before God. The priest of the King has a special place among men. Peter said a holy priest should offer up spiritual sacrifices which God can accept. He said the King's priest should declare to men the praises of Him who called us out of darkness into His wonderful light.

How do we offer spiritual sacrifices? We offer the sacrifice of praise when we give thanks to God's name with our voices, Hebrews 13:15.

All who love the Lord can give thanks to God. Everyone can declare God's praises before men and women of the world. Who then are the priests to whom Peter is speaking?

Peter used the word you when he spoke to those to whom he was writing. These were people who:

1. had been given new life, 1 Peter 1:3.
2. were being kept safe by faith and who wait for salvation, 1 Peter 1:5.
3. loved Christ although they could not see Him with their eyes, 1 Peter 1:8.

4. had been redeemed, or set free, from their old life,
1 Peter 1:18.

All these things are true of all believers in Christ. But Peter called them priests. Therefore Peter teaches that all believers are priests, and this is true. A priest can come near to God. In the Old Testament, only certain men had the privilege of being priests. Any Israelite could come to the altar in the courtyard of the Temple, but only the priests could go into the Holy Place. Only the High Priest could go into the Most Holy Place, and even he could go in only once a year. Then he came out again and blessed the people.

In the book of Hebrews, we learn that Christ alone is our Great High Priest. Jesus, the Son of God, has gone into the very presence of God, Hebrews 4:14. He has made it possible for us also to enter into God's presence, the Most Holy Place, by dying for us. Now we have complete freedom to go into the Most Holy Place. We have a Great High Priest who is in charge of the temple of God and we can come near to God with a true heart and a sure faith, Hebrews 10:19, 21, 22.

Peter taught exactly the same thing. He said that Christ suffered for our sins, that He might bring us right into the presence of God, 1 Peter 3:18.

How can I become a priest of God? Every son of God is a priest. In the Old Testament, only those born into the family of Aaron could be priests. Now all who are born into the family of God are priests. You can become a child of God by faith in Jesus Christ. Then you are also a priest the way Peter taught.

Why then should I be afraid of God? Christ is my

Savior, and He is my Great High Priest. Peter declared that I, too, am a priest. I should draw near in spirit to God and offer Him true praise and worship because He gave His Son to die for me. I should also go out into the world and show forth the glories of Christ by the way I live and by the things I say. I can show men the love of God by what I do. With my lips, I can tell them about Christ who is the only Saviour of sinners. I should act as a holy priest and as a priest of the King.

How to become a SAINT

Peter teaches that all who believe in Christ are priests, and Paul teaches all who believe in Christ are saints. This is very plain in Paul's letter to the church at Rome, as well as in many other letters. He wrote this letter to "all who are in Rome, the beloved of God, called to be saints", or God's holy people, Romans 1:7.

Paul taught that the Holy Spirit prays for the saints and helps us in our weakness. We do not know how we ought to pray, but the Spirit Himself prays to God for us, Romans 8:26,27.

Then Paul told us to help the poor saints and to take good care of guests, Romans 12:13. Peter said that we should willingly open our homes to all the children of God, 1 Peter 4:9.

Paul took a gift of money from believers in Macedonia and Achaia to the saints at Jerusalem, Romans 15:25,26,31. He told the members of the church at Rome to receive Phoebe as saints should, and to salute the saints who were with Philologus, etc., Romans 16:1,2,15. In these eight verses in Romans, the Holy Spirit used the

word saint for all the people of God, not just for certain ones in the church.

How can I become a saint of God? Christ said it is through the truth, and Peter said it is through the Holy Spirit. In His great prayer in John 17, Christ asked God to sanctify through His truth those for whom He prayed. He added that God's Word is truth, v.17.

To sanctify means to set apart or make someone holy. God makes us His own holy people through the truth, that is, through His Word. Of course it is not enough simply to know the truth. You are learning the truth from the Word of God as you study this book. You must believe the truth and act according to the truth; then God will sanctify you, make you a holy saint.

In his first letter, Peter was speaking to all the people of God. He said that they were chosen as a result of God's purpose, to be made a holy people by His Spirit, 1 Peter 1:2.

A saint is a holy person, set apart for God's purposes. It is the work of the Holy Spirit to make us into holy saints. God forgives our sins because Christ died for them on the cross. The Holy Spirit comes to live in our hearts and to make us clean and to sanctify us, and so God's Word calls us saints.

Peter said that we should act like saints and be holy in all that we do because God who has called us is holy, 1 Peter 1:15,16, and because one day this world will be destroyed, 2 Peter 3:11.

So I become a saint when I believe the truth about the Lord Jesus Christ and accept Him as my Savior. The Holy Spirit makes me a saint and helps me to act like one.

PRIESTS and SAINTS

(Today some people are priests and a very few are called saints.) Peter and Paul taught: all believers are both saints and priests.

<p>You become a priest when you are born into God's family</p> <hr/>	<p>You become a saint by the Truth and by the Holy Spirit</p> <hr/>
<p><i>A priest should</i> – offer sacrifices to God – tell others about God</p>	<p><i>A saint should</i> – be holy – act like a saint</p>

NOW HEAR PETER
EXAM 10
HOW TO BECOME A PRIEST AND A SAINT
(USE EXAM FORM A)

Enter the letter of the correct answer.

1. On the matter of becoming a priest
 - a. all the New Testament writers agree except Peter and Paul who contradict each other.
 - b. Peter and Paul agree but the other New Testament writers disagree.
 - c. all the New Testament writers disagree.
 - d. all the New Testament writers agree.

2. Peter speaks about priesthood for the Church
 - a. in five different places in the New Testament.
 - b. only in two verses in his first epistle.
 - c. in every chapter of his first epistle.
 - d. in both his epistles.

3. Peter said that the office of a priest was
 - a. the privilege of all those to whom he was writing.
 - b. the privilege of none of those to whom he was writing.
 - c. the privilege of those so ordained by the Church.
 - d. the special privilege of some of those to whom he was writing.

4. The sacrifice offered up by a New Testament priest is described by Peter as
 - a. a bloodless sacrifice.
 - b. the body and blood of the Lord Jesus.
 - c. a spiritual sacrifice.
 - d. a sacrifice of a sweet savour offering.

5. The “sacrifice of praise” and it can be offered by
 - a. anyone at all.
 - b. any person who loves the Lord Jesus.
 - c. priests ordained by the Church only.
 - d. those in the line of apostolic succession only.

6. Believers can come to God today
 - a. only through the mediation of a human priest.
 - b. directly, even though they are not priests, if they are authorized to do so by the Church.
 - c. on their own merits without any mediator,
 - d. confidently by the blood of Christ, Who is High Priest over the house of God.

7. You can become a New Testament priest only by
 - a. Studying in a Bible college.
 - b. personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour.
 - c. accepting holy orders.
 - d. doing all the above.

8. The New Testament regards as saints
 - a. only those canonised by the Church.
 - b. only those so designated by Peter.
 - c. all who believe in Christ.
 - d. all who live lives of outstanding piety and holiness.

9. Paul addressed the church in Rome as “the beloved of God, called to be **saints**” and later told them to receive Phoebe into their company “ as saints should ”. Paul evidently believed that
 - a. only a select company of the Church members at Rome would read his letter.
 - b. Phoebe would be received into a special fellowship of the
 - c. Church reserved for those of exceptional piety.
 - c. sainthood could be bestowed upon the faithful only.
 - d. the word “saint” is a name for all believers.

10. God calls "saints" all those
 - a. whose sins are forgiven because of the finished work of Christ on the cross.
 - b. in whose hearts the Holy Spirit dwells.
 - c. who are purified and sanctified by the Spirit of God.
 - d. of whom all the above things are true.

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

Are you a priest and a saint? Explain your answer.

CHAPTER 11

The Judgment of God

They must give an account of themselves to God, who is ready to judge the living and the dead, 1 Peter 4:5.

In this verse, Peter taught that God will judge all men, those who are alive, and those who are already dead. God created heaven and earth and all people. He has given men the right to choose what they are going to do, but He has the authority to tell them what they should do and what they should not do. In the Bible, God shows us what is right and warns us that He will judge us if we do what is wrong.

There are four different kinds of judgment:

1. God's judgment on sin

Adam and Eve disobeyed God, and at once they became sinners. They passed on their sinful nature to the entire human race. In addition, all men choose to sin against God, even though the result of sin is death.

For sin pays wages, which is death; but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord,
Romans 6:23.

Why did God create men if He knew that they would

all sin and be judged? God planned to provide a sacrifice so that men can be saved. He Himself in the person of His Son made a way for men to be saved from judgment. Christ carried our sins on His body on the cross, 1 Peter 2:24.

Christ was willing to accept God's judgment for our sins, and so it was necessary for Him to die. But God raised Him from death and has given Him glory, 1 Peter 1:21. It is also God's will that His Son should be the Judge of all men. God the Father does not judge anyone, but has given the work of judgment to His Son so that all men will honor the Son in the same way as they honor the Father. Those who do not honor the Son do not honor the Father who sent Him, John 5:22,23.

2. God's judgment of believers

God forgives every guilty sinner when he comes to Christ and asks for mercy. God will never judge him for his sins because Christ was judged for them when He died on the cross. The forgiven sinner is born again and becomes a member of the family of God. Now he does not need to worry about his sins because they have been forgiven, but he must be careful about how he behaves. He is now a son of God and must act like one. If he disobeys his Father, his Father will punish him while he is still alive. A son enjoys being with his Father. If he sins, he does not cease to be a son, but he is not a happy son any longer. He loses his joy, but not his eternal life.

Peter taught that God will first judge His own people, and then the unbelievers. He also said that God's judgment on unbelievers will be much worse than that on believers. Read 1 Peter 4:17.

God's judgment on an unbeliever will go on forever and ever, but the Father punishes His children while they are still alive to teach them how they should behave in this world. He punishes everyone whom He loves and accepts as a son, Hebrews 12:6. All true children of God should know that the Father will punish them if they disobey His Word. They should be willing to accept this punishment because it shows that God is treating them as His sons; every son is punished by his father at one time or another, Hebrews 12:7. This punishment will make them sad at the time, but they should learn the lessons God is teaching them; then their own lives will be more righteous afterwards, Hebrews 12:11.

If I suffer pain or loss, it may be because the Father wants me to stop doing something that grieves Him. It may also be for some other reason. Many Christians suffer just because they belong to Christ. If so, they should rejoice:

But if you suffer because you are a Christian, don't be ashamed of it, but thank God that you bear Christ's name, 1 Peter 4:16.

3. Rewards for believers

It is a terrible thing to sin against God. Your sins are completely forgiven if you have truly believed in Christ as your Savior.

You will be punished if you grieve your Father by sinning against Him. But even if you commit a very great sin, God will never put you out of His family or take away your eternal life or send you to hell. This eternal life is a gift from God and does not depend on my works. Christ

did all the work to make it possible for God to give me eternal life. My good works did not make God give me eternal life, and my sins will not make Him take it away. If I sin now, I will be punished. If I serve God, I will receive a reward. Believers will receive these rewards at the Judgment Seat of Christ. All true believers must appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ, 2 Corinthians 5:10.

It is important to see that no true believer will be cast out of heaven into the Lake of Fire. But what happens if his works are not right? Paul tells us that the quality of each man's work will be seen when the Day of Christ shows what it really is. That Day's fire will test the work of every man and show its real quality. If a man's work is not destroyed by the fire, he will receive a reward. If his work is burned up, he will lose his reward, but he himself will be saved, 1 Corinthians 3:13-15.

What a wonderful God we have! I am a sinner, but because of the blood of Christ He forgives me. He gives me the Holy Spirit and a new life so that I can please Him. If I do His will, He promises to give me great rewards. I do not have to pay anything in order to get into heaven, but, if I serve the Lord faithfully, He will honor me. If I die, I go to be with Christ, which is far better than staying in this world. I can say with the apostle Paul,

To me, to live is CHRIST: and to die is far better, Philippians 1:21.

4. The judgment of the Great White Throne

We have seen that only true believers will appear at the Judgment Seat of Christ and that none of them will be condemned as a guilty sinner. All other men must

appear before God at the Great White Throne:

And I saw a Great White Throne and the One who sits on it. Earth and heaven fled from His presence, and there was no place found for them. And I saw the dead great and small, standing before the throne, and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged by those things which were written in the books, according to what they had done, Revelation 20:11,12.

All these people will be thrown into the Lake of Fire if their names are not written in the Book of Life, Revelation 20:15. These are the cowards, those who do not believe, and those who commit all kinds of sin such as lying and worshipping idols, Revelation 21:8. The Lord Jesus said that their worms never die in this terrible place, and the fire is never put out, Mark 9:43,45,46.

The big question is: WHEN and HOW can you avoid going to the Lake of Fire?

When you stand before the Great White Throne, it will be too late for you to do anything to save yourself from the Lake of Fire. You will have no more opportunity to be saved after you have died. It is clear that TODAY is the right time to do something. But WHAT? How can you be certain that your name is written in the Book of Life? Surely this Book is in heaven. It is not the book which lists the members of any church. In Revelation 21:27, it is called the Book of Life of the Lamb.

Now the Lamb of God is the Lord Jesus Christ. Come directly to Him and accept Him as your own personal Savior, and He will accept you, for He will never

turn away anyone who comes to Him, John 6:37.

Jesus Christ will give you the gift of eternal life. He will write down your name in His Book of Life and never remove it again. Why not ask Him NOW to become your Savior?

NOW HEAR PETER
EXAM 11
THE JUDGEMENT OF GOD
(USE EXAM FORM A)

Enter the letter of the correct answer.

1. Peter teaches that God's judgement deals with
 - a. the living only.
 - b. the dead only.
 - c. living and dead.
 - d. with fallen angels and demons only.

2. Romans 6:23 teaches that death is the direct result of
 - a. physical disease.
 - b. social maladjustment.
 - c. evolutionary laws.
 - d. sin in the life.

3. The Lord Jesus died on the cross
 - a. for sins He had committed.
 - b. for our sins.
 - c. for both His own and our sins.
 - d. for causes totally unrelated to the matter of sin.

4. Since sin has been judged at the cross,
 - a. the believer will never be judged for their sins.
 - b. all people will be saved.
 - c. it is impossible for a true believer ever to sin again.
 - d. all the above are true.

5. God's present judgement of the believer
 - a. means that he/she can be lost if their behaviour displeases God.
 - b. will last for all eternity.
 - c. may be likened to paternal chastisement.
 - d. is far worse than God's judgement on the unbeliever.

6. Good works
 - a. if performed by a person sincerely doing their best will earn them eternal life.
 - b. if performed by a believer will be rewarded by God.
 - c. are not important to God.
 - d. are needed to supplement the work of Christ for salvation.

7. Rewards are given at the Judgement Seat of Christ to
 - a. Angels
 - b. Believers
 - c. Satan
 - d. All the above.

8. When a believer dies
 - a. the life he/she lived no longer matters.
 - b. he/she goes to be with Christ.
 - c. he/she goes into purging fire.
 - d. he/she appears before the great White Throne.

9. When an unbeliever dies they will
 - a. be given a second chance to be saved after death.
 - b. have their names erased from the book of life.
 - c. be annihilated at the Great White Throne.
 - d. be ultimately cast into the lake of fire.

10. Those who would have their names written in the Lamb's Book of Life must
 - a. turn over a new leaf and sincerely try to please God.
 - b. come to the Lord Jesus via some other Mediator.
 - c. recognise and accept the sacrifice of Christ, the Lamb of God, on their behalf.
 - d. first conquer evil habits which displease God.

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

Is your name written in the Lamb's book of Life? How can you be sure it is?

CHAPTER 12

Waiting and Growing

We have seen that Peter was a great man, an inspired apostle. As a man, he made mistakes, but his letters in the New Testament give us the truth of God. God's truth never changes, and no one may add to it or take from it. The Holy Scriptures give us the complete revelation of God today. All men should hear what Peter and the other Bible writers teach us. We come now to the last subject of this book.

Glory follows suffering

Before the Lord Jesus Christ died, He told His disciples that He would be put to death, then come to life again. They knew that He was the King of Israel and could not believe that He would die. Peter spoke for the other disciples when he rebuked the Lord about this. Christ had to say to Peter, Get away from me, Satan! You are an obstacle in my way, Matthew 16:23.

Peter could not understand that even Christ would have to suffer before He entered His glory. When the Lord rose from death, Peter understood that glory follows suffering. His first letter shows us that he really learned this lesson. In it, we find this truth repeated several times:

1. The Old Testament prophets told that Christ

would suffer first and then be glorified, 1 Peter 1:11 .

2. Christ died as the Lamb of God, but God raised Him up from death and has given Him glory, 1 Peter 1:19,21.
3. Christ bore our sins in His body on the cross, but now in the glory He is the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls, 1 Peter 2:24,25.
4. Christ died once for our sins, the Just One for us who were unjust, but now He is in heaven at the right side of God and rules over all angels and heavenly creatures who have authority and power, 1 Peter 3:18,22.

We, too, must suffer before we can receive glory. Peter said we should be glad when we share in Christ's sufferings so that we may be full of joy when His glory is revealed, 1 Peter 4:13. He said that he himself had seen Christ when He suffered and that he will share in His glory which will be revealed later, 1 Peter 5:1.

Christ suffered in this world, and so do we. In the future, we, too, will share in His glory.

After you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called us unto his eternal glory, in Christ Jesus, will himself perfect you, and confirm you and establish you, 1 Peter 5:10.

Christ's Second Coming

Peter taught that Christ is already in glory, at the right side of God. But men of this world rejected the Son of God; they insulted Him and crucified Him. God will never be satisfied until His Son is glorified right here in

this world. So it is necessary for Christ to come back again.

Prophets in the Old Testament and apostles in the New Testament told that Christ will come in glory. The Lord Jesus Christ Himself said the same. But there are people today who laugh at this idea. Peter tells us that this would happen in the last days. He said that some men will appear whose lives are controlled by their own passions. These people will make fun of believers and ask them why the Lord has not yet come as He promised, 2 Peter 3:3,4.

It is true that we do not know when Christ will return, but we can be very sure that He will come some day. What should we do to be ready for that great day? Peter said that we should do our best to be pure and without fault in God's sight and to be at peace while we wait for Christ to come, 2 Peter 3:14.

The grace of God

Peter told us that we should be pure and faultless in God's sight and be at peace when the Lord comes. He also told us how this is possible. It is not by our own works, no matter how good or how many they are. It is possible only through the grace of God. Almost the last thing Peter tells us in his first letter is to stand firm in the true grace of God, 1 Peter 5:12.

What is the grace of God? It is not the same as works; it is the opposite to works, Romans 11:6.

No man can be saved partly by God's grace and partly by his own works. Are you partly trusting your own good works to save you, or to help save you? If so, you are not

standing in the true grace of God. Why do you not right now stop trusting in your own good works and fully put your trust in the work which Christ finished on the cross? Is Christ's work not enough for you? God says it is sufficient to save you. Just believe what God has said.

But we should not only stand in the grace of God. We should also grow in God's grace. In the last verse of Peter's second letter, we are told, to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, 2 Peter 3:18.

When you trust in Christ and Him alone, you will rejoice in the grace of God. But as you read God's Word and pray to Him every day, you will thank Him more and more for His grace. This is what it means to grow in grace. As you learn more and more about your Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, you will be growing in grace. You will understand that the grace of God is the most wonderful thing in the world.

But what will happen to those who refuse the grace of God? There are many people who hold on to the idea that a man must work for his salvation. They are refusing God's grace. They will never be saved because of their own works.

What about you? Why do you think you will go to heaven? Because of your works, your gifts, your church? None of these things can give you salvation. Peter tells us to stand and grow in the true grace of God.

Do it now!

NOW HEAR PETER
EXAM 12
WAITING AND GROWING
(USE EXAM FORM A)

Enter the letter of the correct answer.

1. The Bible
 - a. may be added to since it is incomplete.
 - b. contains some things placed there in error.
 - c. is a complete, divine revelation which demands our attention.
 - d. is a good Book but only for learned men to read.

2. When Peter tried to dissuade the Lord Jesus from going to the cross, the Lord said
 - a. "Blessed you are, Simon."
 - b. "get behind me, Satan, you are an obstacle unto me."
 - c. "my meat is to do the will of Him that sent me."
 - d. "Simon, Simon, Satan has desired to have you."

3. God's purpose is that
 - a. glory should follow suffering.
 - b. suffering should follow glory.
 - c. glory should be experienced apart from suffering.
 - d. suffering should be experienced apart from glory.

4. The Old Testament prophets
 - a. spoke God's Word and then ignored them.
 - b. spoke God's word and always knew intuitively exactly what God meant.
 - c. spoke God's word and then searched to understand what God had said about Christ's sufferings and glories.
 - d. could not have spoken God's word, without understanding it.

5. When we think of the Lord Jesus today we must remember that He is
 - a. still a holy Babe in the arms of the blessed Mother.
 - b. still on the cross as depicted in many churches.
 - c. now gone into heaven where angels are subject to Him.
 - d. unapproachable except through the mediation of saints and angels.

6. Since the world has rejected God's Son by crucifying Him,
 - a. God has decided to leave the world to its own devices.
 - b. God has determined that one day the Lord Jesus will be vindicated and glorified here in this world.
 - c. God has decided that it would be pointless to send His Son back again to this world.
 - d. God has decided to give the world another chance by sending His Son again as He did the first time.

7. Peter says that the scoffers of the last days will mock at the doctrine of
 - a. the virgin birth of Christ.
 - b. the atoning death of Christ.
 - c. the bodily resurrection of Christ.
 - d. the return of Christ.

8. The exact time of Christ's return is
 - a. a truth unrevealed to us.
 - b. revealed in the Old Testament only.
 - c. revealed in the New Testament only.
 - d. revealed in both Old and New Testaments.

9. Salvation comes to men through the grace of God which is
 - a. available only to those who belong to a church.
 - b. the opposite of works.
 - c. dependent on the good works of the recipient.
 - d. effective only for those who are particularly sinful.

10. Once a person has accepted the grace of God for salvation he should then
 - a. trust his own good works to keep secure.
 - b. trust in the good works of others.
 - c. learn more about the Lord Jesus and so grow in grace.
 - d. live in sin so that God's grace may be given full scope to operate.

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

1. What is the basis of your hope of salvation?
2. How has this course helped you most?