

Is the Bible reliable?



One of the most important questions asked by non-Christians as they look into Christianity is whether or not the Bible is trustworthy. Can the Bible be trusted? If it has been corrupted, then we cannot trust what is attributed to Jesus' words and deeds. So, is the Bible reliable or not?

Yes, the Bible was reliable. The original writings of the Bible have been lost. But before they were lost, they were copied. These copies were incredibly accurate, very meticulous, and very precise. The people who copied them were extremely dedicated to God and their copying tasks. They took great care when copying the original manuscripts. This copying method is so exact, and so precise, that the New Testament alone is considered to be 98.5% textually pure. This means that of the 6000 Greek copies (the New Testament was written in Greek), and the additional 21,000 copies in other languages, there is only one half of 1% variation. Of this very slight number, the great majority of the variants are easily corrected by comparing them to other copies that don't have the "typos" or by simply reading the context. You should know that copying mistakes occur in such ways as word repetition, spelling, or a single word omission due to the copyist missing something when moving his eyes from one line to another. The variants are very minor. Nothing affects doctrinal truth and the words and deeds of Christ are superbly reliably transmitted to us.

The science of studying ancient literature and its accuracy of transmission to is called historicity. The Bible is so exceedingly accurate in its transmission from the originals to the present copies, that if you compare it to any other ancient writing, the Bible is light years ahead in terms of number of manuscripts and accuracy. If the Bible were to be discredited as being unreliable, then it would be necessary to discard the writings of Homer, Plato, and Aristotle as also unreliable since they are far less well preserved than the Bible.

The Bible was written by those who were inspired to God. When we look at the New Testament we realize that it was written by those who either knew Jesus personally, or were under the direction of those who did. They wrote what they saw. They wrote about the resurrection of Christ. They recorded His miracles and His sayings. It comes down to whether or not you believe what it says about Christ. Do you?

For more information on the Bible and its reliability, please go to www.carm.org/christianity/bible.

Give Me the Bad News First

When Adam and Eve were given the opportunity to live in the Garden of Eden they were free from the consequences of sinful choices (Ge. 2:8-17). Satan offered his perspective to Eve, specifically that God's one rule of not eating from the tree of knowledge was unreasonable. Eve and Adam then both listened to Satan's persuasive deception and chose to eat the forbidden fruit (Ge. 3:1-7). This resulted in a loss of innocence (Ge. 3:10,11) and a curse on the earth with all of it's inhabitants (Ge. 3:14-19; Ro. 8:20-22; Re. 21:4). Adam and Eve's sin introduced mankind and the world to spiritual and physical loss, suffering and death (Ro. 5:12). Since that time all mankind has made the same choice following Satan's lure to reject God's will (Is. 53:6). Every person who has ever lived except for Jesus has sinned (Ro. 3:23)!

In the Old Testament era God revealed his character through nature (Ro.1:20), the words of Moses and the prophets (He. 1:2). Once again the alternatives of good and evil were presented (De.30:19) and rejected in varying degrees by mankind (Is. 53:6). While no one was perfect a few persistently looked to God with faith in His goodness (He.11). God worked with the faithful few to bring about a plan to redeem mankind back from slavery to sin and Satan's deception (Ge. 3:15; 12:3; 49:10; De. 18:15; 2 Sam. 7:12; Ps.22; Is. 7:14; 9:6; 49:6; 53).

In the New Testament era God revealed himself through Jesus' and the Apostles' words (He. 1:2; Eph 2:19-22). But once again everyone chose to sin at varying degrees of rebellion. All people who have lived and remain outside of faith in Jesus Christ stands guilty, destined to eternal punishment for their sin (Jn. 3:36; Re. 20:11-15). The wages of sin is death (Ro. 6:23). There is a spiritual death that is a consequence of each individual's choice to sin (Ez. 18:22), and a consequence of physical death (He. 9:27) which was introduced at the time of Adam's sin (Ro. 5:12).

God has revealed what he expects from mankind, and what he has planned for those who reject His grace (Jn. 12:48). Those individuals who ignore His gift of grace, choosing a life absent of faithfulness to Christ will be lost into eternal condemnation (Re. 21:8). This "Hell" is literal and eternal according to Scripture (Mt. 13:50; 25:41). It isn't a place where bar room buddies toast the absence of nagging wives and irritating preachers, nor is it a short time of punishment followed by a painless ceasing to exist (Mt. 25:41).

Please, Give Me Some Good News!

When Adam and Eve were confronted by God for their sin in the garden He gave hints of a plan to crush Satan's influence and redeem mankind through Eve's family tree (Ge. 3:15). Though God was grieved by man's sin (Ge. 6:5,6) he was grieved even more by the suffering of those who chose to look to Him for forgiveness (Ex. 3:7,8; Is. 63:9). Moses and the prophets gave us the law that reveals fleshly appetites which are in us all (Ro. 7:5-8). They are described as a "sinful nature" in the NIV translation and "the flesh" in the NASBU. Living just to feed these appetites, unrestrained by God's standard of goodness, is very destructive (Ja. 1:15; Ro. 6:21-23). "Following your heart" without God's nature as a standard leads to a deceived and enslaved "heart," (Jer. 17:9) making us objects of wrath (Eph. 2:3).

Jesus, [the only righteous person to have lived] died a sinner's death (Lk. 22:37), allowing sinful man, to receive a righteous person's reward (He. 10:14). This way God (through Jesus Christ) became the one to affirm the standards of righteousness while suffering the consequences for and justifying the unrighteous (Ro. 3:26). This offer of salvation is free (Eph. 2:8-10), but not unconditional (Phil. 2:12; Mt. 7:21; Rev. 22:14). One must develop a faith and dependence on God that is life changing (Rom. 12:1-2). This faith is "conceived" by hearing the word of God. Acting upon its guidance (Rom. 10:17; Mt. 7:24,26) "gives rebirth" to anyone who will accept Jesus as Lord and Savior (Jn. 3:7,16-18). The price of this gift was extreme and demands a "faithful" response (Tit. 3:4-7) [not perfection based on fear (1 Jn. 4:17-19), but a pursuit of perfection rooted in love (Tit. 2:10; 3:8)]. Any response less than our best makes a mockery of Jesus' sacrifice and calls our faith into question (He. 10:26-31).

God has revealed what he expects from mankind (1 Jn. 3:23; 8:24; Lk. 13:3; Ro. 10:9; Ac. 2:38; Re. 2:10). His word describes only a fraction of what He has planned for those who accept his grace as revealed and fulfilled through Jesus Christ (1 Cor 2:9-10). There will be a new order of life. There will be no sin, sorrow, sickness, nor death (Rev. 21:4; 1 Jn. 2:17). Until that day God is calling the church to a ministry of sharing this good news throughout the world (2 Cor. 5:18). The church has been equipped through the ministry of the Holy Spirit (Eph. 4:11-13; 1 Cor. 12:11) to serve one another and win the lost (Gal. 5:13; Mt. 28:18-20)!

Truths I Can Count On

1. **The Bible is the Word of God** (*2 Tim. 3:16*)
2. **The Bible contains God's will for you and me** (*Psa. 119:7-8*)
3. **All disobedience to God's will is called sin** (*1 Jn. 3:4.; Ja. 4:17*)
4. **All have sinned** (*Ro. 3:23; Is. 53:5-6; Pr. 16:2*)
5. **The wages of sin is death** (*Ro. 6:23; Ez 18:20; Re. 21:8*)
6. **Jesus is God in the flesh** (*Jn. 1:1; Mt. 16:16; Mt. 4:23; Ac. 2:22-24*)
7. **Jesus paid the wages [our debt] of sin** (*1Pe. 3:18; 2:24; 2 Cor. 5:21; Ro. 5:6-9*)
8. **Man must respond to God's offer of grace** (*Jn. 1:12-13*)
 - a. The Bible says to BELIEVE— *I told you that you would die in your sins; if you do not believe that I am [the one I claim to be]. John 8:24 (He. 11:6; Ro. 5:8)*
 - b. The Bible says to REPENT— *I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish. Luke 13:3, (Ac. 17:30,31; 2 Pe. 3:9; Lk. 15:17,18)*
 - c. The Bible says to CONFESS— *That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. Rom 10:9, (Mt. 10:32,33 Ro. 10:10; Mt. 16:14-17)*
 - d. The Bible says to be BAPTISED— *Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Acts 2:38, (Gal. 3:26,27; Ac. 22:16; 1 Pe. 3:21)*
 - e. the Bible says to be FAITHFUL— *Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life. Rev 2:10, (Mt. 10:22; 1 Cor. 15:2:)*
9. **The benefits of the gospel are greater than gold** (*He. 8:12; Acts 2:38; Phil. 4:19; Jn. 3:36;*)
10. **You can accept Christ — or reject Him, NOW!** (*Ac 8:36-38; 24::24-25*) (See Don Dewelt's outline Ten Timely Truths)
11. **To not accept these biblical truths will result in consequences.** *2 Thess 2:9-10 "They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. Luke 12:47-48 ""That servant who knows his master's will and does not get ready or does not do what his master wants will be beaten with many blows. But the one who does not know and does things deserving punishment will be beaten with few blows.*

Above Articles with Scriptures Footnoted

THE BAD NEWS

When Adam and Eve were given the opportunity to live in the Garden of Eden they were free from the consequences of sinful choices¹(Ge. 2:8-17). Satan offered his perspective to Eve, specifically that God's one rule of not eating from the tree of knowledge was unreasonable. Eve and Adam then both listened to Satan's persuasive deception and chose to eat the forbidden fruit² (Ge. 3:1-7). This resulted in a loss of innocence³ (Ge. 3:10,11) and a curse on the earth with all of its inhabitants⁴ (Ge. 3:14-19; Ro. 8:20-22; Re. 21:4). Adam and Eve's sin introduced mankind and the world to spiritual and physical loss, suffering and death⁵ (Ro. 5:12). Since that time all mankind has made the same choice following Satan's lure to reject God's will⁶ (Is. 53:6). Every person who has ever lived except for Jesus has sinned⁷(Ro. 3:23)!

¹ **Ge. 2:8-17** Now the Lord God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed. 9 And the Lord God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground — trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. 10 A river watering the garden flowed from Eden; from there it was separated into four headwaters. 11 The name of the first is the Pishon; it winds through the entire land of Havilah, where there is gold. 12 (The gold of that land is good; aromatic resin and onyx are also there.) 13 The name of the second river is the Gihon; it winds through the entire land of Cush. 14 The name of the third river is the Tigris; it runs along the east side of Asshur. And the fourth river is the Euphrates. 15 The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. 16 And the Lord God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; 17 but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die."

² **Gen 3:1-7** Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden?'" 2 The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, 3 but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'" 4 "You will not surely die," the serpent said to the woman. 5 "For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." 6 When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. 7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

³ **Ge. 3:10,11** He answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid." 11 And he said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?"

⁴ **Ge. 3:14-19:** So the Lord God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, "Cursed are you above all the livestock and all the wild animals! You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life. 15 And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he (Jesus) will crush your head, and you will strike his heel." 16 To the woman he said, "I will greatly increase your pains in childbearing; with pain you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you." 17 To Adam he said, "Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat of it,' "Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. 18 It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. 19 By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return."

Ro. 8:20-22 For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope 21 that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God. 22 We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.

Re. 21:4 He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."

⁵ **Ro. 5:12** Therefore, just as sin entered (introduced not necessarily forced upon) the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned (not just Adam)—

⁶ **Is. 53:6** We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

⁷ **Ro. 3:23** There is no difference, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

In the Old Testament era God revealed his character through nature⁸ (Ro.1:20), the words of Moses and the prophets⁹ (He. 1:1,2). Once again the alternatives of good and evil were presented¹⁰ (De.30:19) and rejected in varying degrees by mankind¹¹ (Is. 53:6). While no one was perfect a few, people persistently looked to God with faith in His goodness¹² (He.11).

⁸ **Ro.1:20** For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities — his eternal power and divine nature — have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.

⁹ **He. 1:1,2** In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, 2 but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe.

¹⁰ **De.30:19** This day I call heaven and earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live

¹¹ **Is. 53:6** We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

¹² **Heb 11:4-40** 4 By faith Abel offered God a better sacrifice than Cain did. By faith he was commended as a righteous man, when God spoke well of his offerings. And by faith he still speaks, even though he is dead. 5 By faith Enoch was taken from this life, so that he did not experience death; he could not be found, because God had taken him away. For before he was taken, he was commended as one who pleased God. 6 And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him. 7 By faith Noah, when warned about things not yet seen, in holy fear built an ark to save his family. By his faith he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness that comes by faith. 8 By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going. 9 By faith he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. 10 For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God. 11 By faith Abraham, even though he was past age — and Sarah herself was barren — was enabled to become a father because he considered him faithful who had made the promise. 12 And so from this one man, and he as good as dead, came descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as countless as the sand on the seashore. 13 All these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance. And they admitted that they were aliens and strangers on earth. 14 People who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own. 15 If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they would have had opportunity to return. 16 Instead, they were longing for a better country — a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them. 17 By faith Abraham, when God tested him, offered Isaac as a sacrifice. He who had received the promises was about to sacrifice his one and only son, 18 even though God had said to him, "It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned." 19 Abraham reasoned that God could raise the dead, and figuratively speaking, he did receive Isaac back from death. 20 By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau in regard to their future. 21 By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of Joseph's sons, and worshiped as he leaned on the top of his staff. 22 By faith Joseph, when his end was near, spoke about the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt and gave instructions about his bones. 23 By faith Moses' parents hid him for three months after he was born, because they saw he was no ordinary child, and they were not afraid of the king's edict. 24 By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. 25 He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a short time. 26 He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt, because he was looking ahead to his reward. 27 By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the king's anger; he persevered because he saw him who is invisible. 28 By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of blood, so that the destroyer of the firstborn would not touch the firstborn of Israel. 29 By faith the people passed through the Red Sea as on dry land; but when the Egyptians tried to do so, they were drowned. 30 By faith the walls of Jericho fell, after the people had marched around them for seven days. 31 By faith the prostitute Rahab, because she welcomed the spies, was not killed with those who were disobedient. 32 And what more shall I say? I do not have time to tell about Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel and the prophets, 33 who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, and gained what was promised; who shut the mouths of lions, 34 quenched the fury of the flames, and escaped the edge of the sword; whose weakness was turned to strength; and who became powerful in battle and routed foreign armies. 35 Women received back their dead, raised to life again. Others were tortured and refused to be released, so that they might gain a better resurrection. 36 Some faced jeers and flogging, while still others were chained and put in prison. 37 They were stoned; they were sawed in two; they were put to death by the sword. They went about in sheepskins and goatskins, destitute, persecuted and mistreated— 38 the world was not worthy of them. They wandered in deserts and mountains, and in caves and holes in the ground. 39 These were all commended for their faith, yet none of them received what had been promised. 40 God had planned something better for us so that only together with us would they be made perfect.

God worked with the faithful few to bring about a plan to redeem mankind back (buy back from Satan's dominion) from slavery to sin and Satan's deception¹³ (Lk. 24:44; Ge. 3:15; 12:3; 49:10; De. 18:15; 2 Sam. 7:12; Ps.22; Is.

¹³ *Prophecies revealing the identity of Jesus and God's plan to redeem mankind from Satan's deceitful plan to destroy God's creation.*

Lk 24:44 He (Jesus) said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms."

2 Cor 11:3-4 I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ.

Ge. 3:15; And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; He(Jesus) will crush your head, and you will strike His (Jesus') heel."

Ge. 12:2,3; I (God) will make you (Abraham) into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. 3 I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."

Ge. 49:10; The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until he comes to whom it belongs and the obedience of the nations is his. (Jesus was of the genealogy of Judah.

De. 18:15; The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me (Moses) from among your own brothers. You must listen to Him (Jesus).

2 Sam. 7:12; When your (David's) days are over and you rest with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring (Jesus was of the lineage of David) to succeed you, who will come from your own body, and I will establish His kingdom.

Ps.22; (Written by David under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit nearly 1,000 before Jesus said these words on the Cross. My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? (Mk. 15:34) Why are you so far from saving me, so far from the words of my groaning? 2 O my God, I cry out by day, but you do not answer, by night, and am not silent. 3 Yet you are enthroned as the Holy One; you are the praise of Israel. 4 In you our fathers put their trust; they trusted and you delivered them. 5 They cried to you and were saved; in you they trusted and were not disappointed. 6 But I am a worm and not a man, scorned by men and despised by the people. 7 All who see me mock me; they hurl insults, shaking their heads: (Mt. 27:39) 8 "He trusts in the Lord; let the Lord rescue him. Let him deliver him, since he delights in him." (Mt. 27:42-43) 9 Yet you brought me out of the womb; you made me trust in you even at my mother's breast. 10 From birth I was cast upon you; from my mother's womb you have been my God. 11 Do not be far from me, for trouble is near and there is no one to help. 12 Many bulls surround me; strong bulls of Bashan encircle me. 13 Roaring lions tearing their prey open their mouths wide against me. 14 I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint. My heart has turned to wax; it has melted away within me. 15 My strength is dried up like a pots herd, and my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth; (Jn. 19:28) you lay me in the dust of death. 16 Dogs have surrounded me; a band of evil men has encircled me, they have pierced my hands and my feet. (Jn. 19:37) 17 I can count all my bones; people stare and gloat over me. 18 They divide my garments among them and cast lots for my clothing. (Mt. 27:35) 19 But you, O Lord, be not far off; O my Strength, come quickly to help me. 20 Deliver my life from the sword, my precious life from the power of the dogs. 21 Rescue me from the mouth of the lions; save me from the horns of the wild oxen. 22 I will declare your name to my brothers; in the congregation I will praise you. 23 You who fear the Lord, praise him! All you descendants of Jacob, honor him! Revere him, all you descendants of Israel! 24 For he has not despised or disdained the suffering of the afflicted one; he has not hidden his face from him but has listened to his cry for help. 25 From you comes the theme of my praise in the great assembly; before those who fear you will I fulfill my vows. 26 The poor will eat and be satisfied; they who seek the Lord will praise him — may your hearts live forever! 27 All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations will bow down before him, 28 for dominion belongs to the Lord and he rules over the nations. 29 All the rich of the earth will feast and worship; all who go down to the dust will kneel before him — those who cannot keep themselves alive. 30 Posterity will serve him; future generations will be told about the Lord. 31 They will proclaim his righteousness to a people yet unborn — for he has done it.

Is. 7:14; Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

Is. 9:6; For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Is. 49:6 "It is too small a thing for you to be my servant to restore the tribes of Jacob and bring back those of Israel I have kept. I will also make you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring my salvation to the ends of the earth."

Is. 53 He (Jesus) grew up before him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of dry ground. He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him. 3 He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. 4 Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. 5 But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. 6 We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. 7 He was oppressed and

7:14; 9:6; 49:6; 53).

In the New Testament era God revealed himself through Jesus' and the Apostles' words¹⁴ (He. 1:2; Eph 2:19-22). But once again everyone chose to sin at varying degrees of rebellion. All people who have lived and remain outside of faith in Jesus Christ stands guilty, destined to eternal punishment for their sin¹⁵ (Jn. 3:36; Re. 20:11-15). The wages of sin is death¹⁶ (Ro. 6:23). There is a spiritual death that is a consequence of each individual's choice to sin¹⁷ (Ez. 18:22), and a consequence of physical death¹⁸ (He. 9:27) which was introduced at the time of Adam's sin¹⁹ (Ro. 5:12).

God has revealed what he expects from mankind, and what he has planned for those who reject His grace²⁰ (Jn. 12:48). Those individuals who ignore His gift of grace, choosing a life absent of faithfulness to Christ will be lost into eternal condemnation²¹ (Re. 21:8). This "Hell" is literal and eternal according to Scripture²² (Mt. 13:50; 25:41). It isn't a place where bar room buddies toast the absence of nagging wives and irritating preachers, nor is it a short time of punishment followed by a painless ceasing to exist²³ (Mt. 25:41).

afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth. 8 By oppression and judgment he was taken away. And who can speak of his descendants? For he (Jesus) was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgression of my people he was stricken. 9 He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth. 10 Yet it was the Lord's will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the Lord makes his life a quilt offering, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the Lord will prosper in his hand. 11 After the suffering of his soul, he will see the light [of life] and be satisfied; by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many, and he will bear their iniquities. 12 Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

¹⁴ **Heb 1:2** but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son (Jesus), whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe.

Eph 2:19-22 Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household, 20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. 21 In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. 22 And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

¹⁵ **Jn 3:36** Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him."

Rv 20:11-15 Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. Earth and sky fled from his presence, and there was no place for them. 12 And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. 13 The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what he had done. 14 Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. 15 If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

¹⁶ **Rom 6:23** For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

¹⁷ **Eze 18:22** None of the offenses he has committed will be remembered against him. Because of the righteous things he has done, he will live

¹⁸ **Heb 9:27** Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment,

¹⁹ **Ro 5:12-13** Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned-

²⁰ **Jn 12:48** There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; that very word which I spoke will condemn him at the last day.

²¹ **Rv 21:8** But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars - their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death."

²² **Mt 13:50** throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Mt 25:41 "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.

²³ **Mt 25:41** "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.

THE GOOD NEWS

When Adam and Eve were confronted by God for their sin in the garden He gave hints of a plan to crush Satan's influence and redeem mankind through Eve's family tree²⁴ (Ge. 3:15). Though God was grieved by man's sin²⁵ (Ge. 6:5,6) he was grieved even more by the suffering of those who chose to look to Him for forgiveness²⁶ (Ex. 3:7,8; Is. 63:9). Moses and the prophets gave us the law that reveals fleshly appetites that are in us all²⁷ (Ro. 7:5-8). They are described as a "sinful nature" in the NIV translation and "the flesh" in the NASBU. Living just to feed these appetites, unrestrained by God's standard of goodness, is very destructive²⁸ (Ja. 1:15; Ro. 6:21-23). "Following your heart" without God's nature as a standard leads to a deceived and enslaved "heart,"²⁹ (Jer. 17:9) making us objects of wrath³⁰ (Eph. 2:3).

Jesus, [the only righteous person to have lived] died a sinner's death³¹ (Lk. 22:37), allowing sinful man, to receive a righteous person's reward³² (He. 10:14). This way God (through Jesus Christ) became the one to affirm the standards of righteousness while suffering the consequences for and justifying the unrighteous³³ (Ro. 3:26). This offer of salvation is free³⁴ (Eph. 2:8-10), but not unconditional³⁵ (Phil. 2:12; Mt. 7:21; Rev. 22:14). One must develop

²⁴ **Ge 3:15** And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel."

²⁵ **Ge 6:5,6** The LORD saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time. 6 The LORD was grieved that he had made man on the earth, and his heart was filled with pain.

²⁶ **Ex 3:7-8** The LORD said, "I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers, and I am concerned about their suffering.

Isa 63:9 In all their distress he too was distressed, and the angel of his presence saved them. In his love and mercy he redeemed them; he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old.

²⁷ **Ro 7:5-8** For when we were controlled by the sinful nature, the sinful passions aroused by the law were at work in our bodies, so that we bore fruit for death. 6 But now, by dying to what once bound us, we have been released from the law so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit, and not in the old way of the written code. 7 What shall we say, then? Is the law sin? Certainly not! Indeed I would not have known what sin was except through the law. For I would not have known what coveting really was if the law had not said, "Do not covet." 8 But sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, produced in me every kind of covetous desire. For apart from law, sin is dead.

²⁸ **Ja. 1:15** Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.

Ro. 6:21-23 What benefit did you reap at that time from the things you are now ashamed of? Those things result in death! 22 But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves to God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life. 23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

²⁹ **Jer. 17:9** The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?

³⁰ **Eph. 2:3** All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature^a and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath.

³¹ **Lk. 22:37** It is written: 'And he was numbered with the transgressors'; and I tell you that this must be fulfilled in me. Yes, what is written about me is reaching its fulfillment."

³² **He. 10:14** Because by one sacrifice he (Jesus) has made perfect forever those who are being made holy.

³³ **Ro. 3:26** He did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.

³⁴ **Eph. 2:8-10** For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith — and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— 9 not by works, so that no one can boast. 10 For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

³⁵ **Phil. 2:12** Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed — not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence — continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling,

Mt. 7:21 "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.

Rev. 22:14 Nevertheless, I have a few things against you: You have people there who hold to the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to entice

a faith and dependence on God that is life changing³⁶ (Rom. 12:1-2). This faith is “conceived” by hearing the word of God. Acting upon its guidance³⁷ (Rom. 10:17; Mt. 7:24,26) “gives rebirth” to anyone who will accept Jesus as Lord and Savior³⁸ (Jn. 3:7,16-18). The price of this gift was extreme and demands a “faithful” response³⁹ (Tit. 3:4-7) [not perfection based on fear⁴⁰ (1 Jn. 4:17-19), but a pursuit of perfection rooted in love⁴¹ (Tit. 2:9-12; 3:8)]. Any response less than our best makes a mockery of Jesus’ sacrifice and calls our faith into question⁴² (He. 10:26-31).

God has revealed what he expects from mankind⁴³ (1 Jn. 3:23; 8:24; Lk. 13:3; Ro. 10:9; Ac. 2:38; Re. 2:10). His word describes only a fraction of what He has planned for those who accept his grace as revealed and fulfilled through

the Israelites to sin by eating food sacrificed to idols and by committing sexual immorality.

³⁶ **Rom. 12:1-2** Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God — this is your spiritual act of worship. **2** Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is — his good, pleasing and perfect will.

³⁷ **Rom. 10:17** Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.

Mt. 7:24,26 Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. ... But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand.

³⁸ **Jn. 3:7,16-18** You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.'... **16** "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. **17** For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. **18** Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son.

³⁹ **Tit. 3:4-7** But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, **5** he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, **6** whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, **7** so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.

⁴⁰ **1 Jn. 4:17-19** In this way, love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment, because in this world we are like him. **18** There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love. **19** We love because he first loved us.

⁴¹ **Tit. 2:9-13** Teach slaves to be subject to their masters in everything, to try to please them, not to talk back to them, **10** and not to steal from them, but to show that they can be fully trusted, so that in every way they will make the teaching about God our Savior attractive. For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. **12** It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, **13** while we wait for the blessed hope — the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Tit. 3:8 This is a trustworthy saying. And I want you to stress these things, so that those who have trusted in God may be careful to devote themselves to doing what is good. These things are excellent and profitable for everyone.

⁴² **He. 10:26-31** If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, **27** but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God. **28** Anyone who rejected the law of Moses died without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. **29** How much more severely do you think a man deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God under foot, who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified him, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace? **30** For we know him who said, "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," and again, "The Lord will judge his people." **31** It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

⁴³ **1 Jn. 3:23** And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us.

Jn. 8:24 I told you that you would die in your sins; if you do not believe that I am [the one I claim to be], a you will indeed die in your sins."

Lk. 13:3 I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish.

Ro. 10:9 That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

Ac. 2:38 Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Re. 2:10 Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer. I tell you, the devil will put some of you in prison to test you, and you will suffer persecution for ten days. Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life.

Jesus Christ⁴⁴ (1 Cor 2:9-10). There will be a new order of life. There will be no sin, sorrow, sickness, nor death⁴⁵(Rev. 21:4; 1 Jn. 2:17). Until that day God is calling the church to a ministry of sharing this good news through out the world⁴⁶ (2 Cor. 5:18) . The church has been equipped through the ministry of the Holy Spirit⁴⁷(Eph. 4:11-13; 1 Cor. 12:11) to serve one another and win the lost⁴⁸ (Gal. 5:13; Mt. 28:18-20)!

TRUTHS THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE

1. **The Bible is the Word of God⁴⁹ (2 Tim. 3:16)**
2. **The Bible contains God's will for you and me⁵⁰ (Ps. 19:7-8)**
3. **All disobedience to God's will is called sin⁵¹ (1 Jn. 3:4.; Ja. 4:17)**
4. **All have sinned⁵² (Ro. 3:23; Is. 53:5-6; Pr. 16:2)**
5. **The wages of sin is death⁵³ (Ro. 6:23; Ez 18:20; Re. 21:8)**
6. **Jesus is God in the flesh⁵⁴ (Jn. 1:; Mt. 16:16; Mt. 4:23; Ac. 2:22-24)**

⁴⁴ **1 Cor 2:9-10** However, as it is written: "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him"— 10 but God has revealed it to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God.

⁴⁵ **Rev. 21:4** He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."

1 Jn. 2:17 The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever.

⁴⁶ **2 Cor. 5:18-20** All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. 20 We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us.

⁴⁷ **Eph. 4:11-13** It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, 12 to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up 13 until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

1 Cor. 12:11 All these (gifts/talents/abilities) are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines.

⁴⁸ **Gal. 5:13** You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature ("flesh"-NASB) ; rather, serve one another in love.

Mt. 28:18-20 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

⁴⁹ **2 Tim. 3:16,17** All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 17 so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

⁵⁰ **Ps. 19:7-8** The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul. The statutes of the Lord are trustworthy, making wise the simple. 8 The precepts of the Lord are right, giving joy to the heart. The commands of the Lord are radiant, giving light to the eyes.

⁵¹ **1 Jn. 3:4** Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness.

Ja. 4:17 Anyone, then, who knows the good he ought to do and doesn't do it, sins.

⁵² **Ro. 3:23** For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Is. 53:5-6 But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. 6 We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Pr. 16:2 All a man's ways seem innocent to him, but motives are weighed by the Lord .

⁵³ **Ro. 6:23** For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Ez 18:20 The soul who sins is the one who will die. The son will not share the guilt of the father, nor will the father share the guilt of the son. The righteousness of the righteous man will be credited to him, and the wickedness of the wicked will be charged against him.

Re. 21:8 But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars — their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death."

⁵⁴ **Jn. 1:1** In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

Mt. 16:16 Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

7. **Jesus paid the wages [our debt] of sin.**⁵⁵ (1Pe. 3:18; 2:24; 2 Cor. 5:21; Ro. 5:6-9)

8. **Man must respond to God's offer of grace**⁵⁶ (Jn. 1:12-13)

- a. The Bible says to BELIEVE— *I told you that you would die in your sins; if you do not believe that I am [the one I claim to be], John 8:24*⁵⁷ (He. 11:6; Ro. 5:8)
- b. The Bible says to REPENT— *I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish. Luke 13:3,*⁵⁸ (Ac. 17:30,31; 2 Pe. 3:9; Lk. 15:17,18)
- c. The Bible says to CONFESS— *That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. Rom 10:9,*⁵⁹ (Mt. 10:32,33 Ro. 10:10; Mt. 16:14-17)
- d. The Bible says to be BAPTISED— *Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Acts 2:38,*⁶⁰ (Gal. 3:26,27; Ac. 22:16; 1 Pe. 3:21)
- e. the Bible says to be FAITHFUL— *Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life. Rev 2:10,*⁶¹ (Mt. 10:22; 1 Cor. 15:2;)

9. **The benefits of the gospel are greater than gold**⁶² (He. 8:12; Acts 2:38; Phil. 4:19; Jn. 3:36;)

Mt. 4:23 Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people.

Ac. 2:22-24 But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him.

⁵⁵ **1Pe. 3:18** For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit.

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

2 Cor. 5:21 God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Ro. 5:6-9 You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. 7 Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die. 8 But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. 9 Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him!

⁵⁶ **Jn. 1:12-13** Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—

⁵⁷ **He. 11:6** And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

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

⁵⁸ **Ac. 17:30,31** In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent. 31 For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead."

2 Pe. 3:9 The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

Lk. 15:17,18 When he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired men have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! 18 I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you.

⁵⁹ **Mt. 10:32,33** "Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven. 33 But whoever disowns me before men, I will disown him before my Father in heaven.

Ro. 10:10 For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.

Mt. 16:14-17 They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets." 15 "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?" 16 Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." 17 Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven.

⁶⁰ **Gal. 3:26,27** You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, 27 for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

Ac. 22:16 And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away, calling on his name.'

1 Pe. 3:21 And this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also — not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ,

⁶¹ **Mt. 10:22** All men will hate you because of me, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved.

1 Cor. 15:2 By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain.

⁶² **He. 8:12** For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more."

Acts 2:38 Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will

10. You can accept Christ — or reject Him, NOW!⁶³ (*Ac 8:36-38; 24:24-25*) (See Don Dewelt's outline Ten Timely Truths)

11. To not accept these biblical truths will result in consequences. *2 Thess 2:9-10 "They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. Luke 12:47-48 ""That servant who knows his master's will and does not get ready or does not do what his master wants will be beaten with many blows. But the one who does not know and does things deserving punishment will be beaten with few blows.*

receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Phil. 4:19 And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.

Jn. 3:36 Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him."

⁶³ **Ac 8:36-38** As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water. Why shouldn't I be baptized?"

38 And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him.

Ac. 24:24-25 Several days later Felix came with his wife Drusilla, who was a Jewess. He sent for Paul and listened to him as he spoke about faith in Christ Jesus. 25 As Paul discoursed on righteousness, self-control and the judgment to come, Felix was afraid and said, "That's enough for now! You may leave. When I find it convenient, I will send for you."