

# **GOSPEL EVANGELISM**

**Reaping The Harvest  
Of Receptive Hearts**

**DICKSON**

# Gospel Evangelism

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**Cover picture: *REAPING* (Wheat fields east of Cape Town, South Africa -R.E.D.)**

## Introduction

**Discipleship means that individuals implement in their lives the life and work of Jesus by living the gospel of Jesus. Jesus came “to seek and to save that which was lost” (Lk 19:10). When Jesus called His first disciples, He promised that He would make them “fishers of men.” Those today who are called into discipleship will live in response to the gospel to seek and save the lost. True discipleship means that one is a fisher of men. The material of this book, therefore, is written for the purpose of aiding disciples to do that which they are to be living, that is, seeking and saving the lost. If we seek to be a disciple of Jesus, then we will make every effort to follow Jesus as those early disciples who were personally equipped by Jesus to preach the gospel to the world. Since it is our calling as disciples to populate heaven by winning souls to Jesus, then it is imperative to apply His word in a way that will help us be better fishers of men. This is not an option in being a disciple of Jesus. This is discipleship. The mark of a true disciple of Jesus is that he or she is doing what Jesus came to do in this world, that is, to be a fisher of men in seeking and saving the lost.**

Jesus said that we too must preach the gospel to the world (Mt 28:19,20; Mk 16:15). In order to accomplish this mission in our lives as disciples of Jesus, we must equip ourselves with the most effective way to share (preach) the gospel of Jesus with others. The material of this book is a simple graphical method by which one can lead others to understand the simple message of the gospel, as well as give confidence to others to also share the gospel with their friends.

One of the first responsibilities of the disciple of Jesus is to encourage others to learn an easy way by which to share the simple message of the gospel. One can extend his evan-

gelistic efforts far beyond himself by teaching others how to share the gospel. Since every Christian should be able to teach the gospel to others, the material that follows in this book will give everyone the confidence that is needed to do the work of sharing the foundation of their faith with their friends.

When Paul went to Corinth, as well as to all locations to which he went as a messenger of the gospel, the first thing he preached was the gospel. He later wrote to the Corinthians, “*For I delivered to you **first of all** that which I also received: that **Christ died for our sins** according to the Scriptures, and that **He was buried**, and*

that **He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures**" (1 Co 15:3,4). When we approach people about their salvation, the first thing we must share with them is the gospel of Jesus' death for our sins, His burial and His resurrection for our hope. If we have not shared this message that was revealed through the historical fact of Jesus' death, burial and resurrection, then we have not preached the gospel. It is the good news of Jesus' atoning death for our sins and bodily resurrection for our hope that people must hear. All other discussions are less important than our discussion with the lost concerning the gospel of Jesus. Therefore, we seek to encourage everyone through the following graphical presentation of simple gospel truths to share the gospel with their friends.

We use the nine charts of this book to graphically explain the message of the gospel. These charts illustrate the basic concepts that should be emphasized when leading someone to Jesus. One may not have enough time in one discussion session to share all the information of all nine charts. Therefore, in one's initial sharing of the gospel, he or she may want to share the thoughts of only three or four scriptures. It is important, however, to eventually cover the concepts of all the charts in order for one to be truly discipled to Jesus before his or

her obedience to the gospel.

If one feels that he or she has only one opportunity to share the gospel with someone, then the concepts of **charts 6, 7 and 8** should be taught. These charts illustrate the central message one must know in order to understand and obey the gospel. These three charts emphasize the concepts of **2 Thessalonians 1:7-9, 1 Corinthians 15:1-4** and **Romans 6:3-6**. These are the three most important scriptures of this series that convey the principle concepts that everyone must know in reference to the gospel. All the charts, as well as our Christian life, are centered around what is taught in these three scriptures. The concepts of these scriptures reveal the motivation for our gospel living.

A general principle to remember is that all our teaching and lives must be centered around and based upon the gospel. This is our purpose for believing and living with Jesus as our Savior. Whenever we teach the gospel to others, it is best to refer others continually to the atonement of the incarnate Jesus for our sins and His resurrection to give us hope. This is the revelation of the heart of God that was revealed on the cross of Calvary. The sincere person will respond to this revelation of the heart of God. In other words, people **respond to the gospel of God's heart** in order to do what God wants us to do to be saved.

If we simply teach people what to do to be legally saved, they will not have the proper motivation to respond to the gospel of God's heart that was revealed on the cross. People must respond to the grace of God that was revealed through Jesus. Response to the gospel must always be a response to the heart of God that was revealed through Jesus.

The following instructions are directed toward helping one to effectively present the concepts of each chart to those who must obey the gospel. With each chart, we have given some information that can be presented as one discusses the major concepts that each chart represents. Other teachings can be given that are not presented in this series of charts. One should certainly seize the opportunity to teach what one personally understands about the gospel. However, it would be best to present other material that is not covered in the charts in follow-up studies. The reason for this is that at first it is best not to present a great deal of information to one who may be a novice Bible student. And we must always keep in mind that the gospel message is simple. We must guard ourselves from preaching "church." We must initially stay with the gospel message when talking to people about Jesus. People must respond to the gospel of Jesus, not to church.

Another important point in learning how to present the gospel is to present the material of the charts as many times as possible to many different people. In doing this one develops his or her own manner by which he or she shares the gospel. We have found that the more one presents the message of the gospel, the more confidence he or she has in sharing the gospel with others. By developing a gospel life-style of sharing the gospel, one learns how to express key concepts that surround the gospel, as well as to answer commonly asked questions.

The following are some fundamental points to remember when developing one's skill in sharing the gospel:

1. ***Remember the objective.*** Each chart has one or more objectives that are to be emphasized. Before progressing to the following chart, these objectives must be understood and accomplished in one's presentation. Before progressing to the next chart, be sure to use the scriptures that are listed with each particular chart in order to emphasize the prime objectives of the chart. Though each chart has primary objectives, keep in mind that all the charts are leading the study to the primary objective of obedience to the gospel.

2. ***Remember to use the key***

**scriptures.** Each chart has one or more key scriptures that are listed with the chart. It is best to use only these scriptures in order to emphasize the objectives of each chart. Keep in mind that it is best to use as few scriptures as possible when studying with those who do not know the Bible well. The use of many scriptures will often confuse the person with whom one is studying. One passage that is adequately explained is sufficient to teach a particular concept. A great number of scriptures do not make the truth of one scripture more evident. Truth is most often made in one simple statement.

If one has an opportunity for a second study with a particular person, then other scriptures can be used to reinforce material that was previously studied. It is not the multiplicity of scriptures that are presented that prove a point, but one's understanding of a particular scripture in its biblical context. It is good to know many scriptures, but it is not necessary to present all that one knows to someone who knows little about the Bible. We must always keep in mind that it is the gospel to which people must respond, not to our overwhelming knowledge of the Bible.

**3. Remember the spiritual journey.** As one studies through the charts with another person, he or she must keep in mind that one is taking some-

one on an intellectual and emotional journey to Jesus. It is important to convey to others the information that is revealed in the Bible concerning their salvation. However, as teachers of the gospel, we must be sensitive to the emotional impact the gospel has on the hearts of sincere believers. As we present the gospel to others, therefore, we must be sensitive to the feelings of others. We must remember the first time we heard the gospel and the impact it had on our own hearts. Presenting the gospel to someone is more than sharing facts and reading scriptures. It involves our understanding of the impact the gospel must have on the heart of the truly repentant believer.

Knowledge of the Scriptures without repentance will not produce obedient results. We must keep in mind as a teacher of the gospel, to teach God's word in a way that reflects our loving response to God in our own obedience to the gospel.

**4. Writing one's own charts.** The charts of this presentation of the gospel are only examples of what one can do in writing his or her own charts. We have found it best to approach someone only with a pencil, a piece of paper, and a Bible. In this way the individuals with whom we are sharing the gospel are not intimidated by a prepared presentation. We would encourage those who use the charts

of this book to learn to design their own diagrams in presenting the truth of the gospel. When one has written

his own charts, then he can leave his written chart in the hands of the one who has been taught.

## Chapter 1 SELF-DISCOVERY

The following are objectives to keep in mind when presenting the information of Chart 1:

### A. Chart 1 objectives:

**1. To show one's interest in the religious experience of the person with whom one intends to share the gospel.**

**2. To allow one's religious friend to share his or her own religious conversion in order that he or she in turn gives one the opportunity**

**to share his or her obedience to the gospel as it is defined by the Bible.**

**3. To make a written record of the time line of religious "conversion experiences" before a study is made of the message of the charts.** This is a very important point. Before one shares the gospel, it is best to make a written record of how the person with whom one is speaking actually came to the point of what he or she believes is a state of salvation.

CHART 1

### Your Response To God's Love

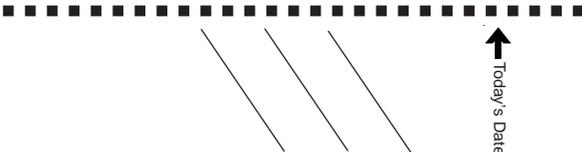
1. Are you <b>SAVED</b> ?	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
2. <b>WHEN</b> were you saved?	Date: _____	
3. Are you a <b>MEMBER</b> of a church?	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
4. <b>WHEN</b> did you become a member of this church?	Date: _____	
5. Have you been <b>BAPTIZED</b> ?	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
6. <b>WHEN</b> were you baptized?	Date: _____	
7. <b>HOW</b> were you baptized?	_____	

**Directions:** In relation to today's date, indicate on your "life line" when you were saved, baptized or became a member of a church.



**YOUR BIRTH!**

**Your "life line"**



Today's Date: ↑



**YOUR DEATH?**

## B. Presentation instructions:

1. It is very important to be interested in the religious conversion experiences of the one with whom one discusses religious matters. Our interest in other people's conversion will motivate the one with whom the teacher is speaking to be interested in the teacher's conversion. In doing this, one is earning the right to share the gospel.

2. Write on the chart the date of the study with your friend. If the one with whom you are sharing the gospel gives you permission, you may write his or her birth date on the chart, though this is not necessary.

3. Ask if the one with whom you are sharing is saved. Draw an arrow to the life line and write the date the person says he or she was saved and the word "saved" on the line.

4. If the person with whom you are studying is a member of a church, ask and write on the chart where he or she is presently a member. Determine when he or she became a member of the church to which he or she is presently a member. Write this information on the chart on the arrow that extends to the life line. Be sure to write everything in chronological order. **After** you have studied with the interested individual, you will need to refer later to the information

on this chart in order to help the person with whom you are sharing the gospel to see that there may be some confusion in their minds concerning how they were saved.

5. Ask and write on the chart if your religious friend has been baptized. Ask how he or she was baptized.

6. You might ask where the person was saved. Allow the person with whom you are sharing the opportunity to explain his or her "conversion experience." Be interested in the experience and write details down that you feel might be important later for comparison with what you are going to share in reference to the gospel.

### **IMPORTANT!**

**What your friend may have shared, and you have written down on the first chart, may be completely different from the truth of the gospel. However, simply keep your silence until you have the opportunity to share what the Bible teaches concerning obedience to the gospel.**

7. After your friend has shared his or her conversion experience, make the following statement and ask the following question if their experience is different from what the Bible teaches concerning obedience to the gospel.

**That is not the way I was saved.  
May I share with you  
how I was saved?**

If you have been sincere about asking your friend concerning his or her conversion experience, then you will have an opened door for your friend to allow you the opportunity to share the Bible's teaching concerning the gospel and obedience to it. If the one with whom you are discussing these matters does not allow you the opportunity to also share your conversion, then there is nothing you can do but wait for another opportunity when he or she may seek your guidance. If you ask the preceding question, at

least they know that you have different views on the matter in relation to their conversion experience. If there comes a time when they want to know your conversion experience, then be ready to share the gospel with them (See 1 Pt 3:15). Every disciple must be ready to share the gospel with others at all times. We must keep in mind, however, that if the person with whom we are sharing information concerning the gospel, and obedience thereof, has obeyed the gospel, then we must embrace that person as a brother or sister in Christ. God has added that person to the body of Christ (At 2:47).

## Chapter 2 ORIGIN OF THE GOSPEL

### CHART 2

<b>Since God is Our Creator, ...</b>	
	... does He have the authority to give laws to man?
	<p><b>YES NO</b> (READ John 12:48)</p>
	... does He have authority to hold us accountable to His laws?
	<p><b>YES NO</b> (READ 2 Corinthians 5:10)</p>

#### A. Chart 2 objectives:

##### 1. To emphasize that there is a

*God to whom obedience must be rendered because He is the Creator of man and all things.* If one does not believe in God, or questions whether God exists, then there is no reason to consider continuing the study of these charts. This is the time to begin a study in Christian evidences in order to show that it is more reasonable to believe that God exists. If one is studying with a person who does not have a biblical background, and he or she claims to believe in God, then it would be good to ask questions concerning what they believe about God.

Those who have a lack of Bible knowledge may believe in God, but their concept of God is often contrary to the God of the Bible.

**2. To emphasize the authority of God's word and the fact that it will be the only standard by which all people will be judged in a final judgment that is to come.** If this point cannot be agreed upon at the beginning of any study of the Bible, then it is useless to continue the study. If the study is continued, then there will be endless arguments over what the Bible claims to be truth and what one personally believes to be truth according to his or her personal experiences. In presenting the gospel, it is absolutely essential that all of us who are studying agree on the fact that the Bible will be our only authority in religious discussions concerning what one must do to please God. If someone is from a very traditional religion, then it is very important to establish the fact that the Bible must be obeyed regardless of our religious heritage. (A good context to discuss in reference to religious traditions is Mark 7:1-9.) If we do not agree that the Bible is our only authority to establish what we must do to serve God, then a thorough explanation of Mark 7:1-9 is in order. Every religious person must understand that traditions will not save us.

## **B. Presentation instructions:**

**1. Genesis 1:1,26,27** is the reason for the gospel plan of salvation, for God is not willing that any of His creation should perish (2 Pt 3:9).

**2.** After reading Genesis 1:1,26,27, ask this question, "**Since God is our Creator, does this give Him the right or authority to give us law that we must obey?**" There must be a definite "YES" answer to this question. If there is not, then the study must be discontinued until there is agreement that we must obey the word of God.

**3.** Read **John 12:48**. This passage directs us specifically to the word of Jesus as the authority for those who live in this dispensation of time. John 12:48 teaches that we will be judged by the word of Jesus, not the religious traditions of men. In explaining this passage, we must be reassured that when we stand before God in judgment, we need not have any fear concerning obedience to human religious traditions as a standard of judgment. We will not be judged by religious traditions, and thus, we must not make religious traditions an obstacle to our obedience to the will of God. Since we all have our religious traditions, this point must be made very clear.

**4.** Ask, "**Since God is our Creator, does He have the authority to**

**judge us by His law?”** Be sure to circle the answer “YES” on the chart if there is agreement concerning this truth. The purpose for asking this question is to establish again the Bible as our only authority in discussing those matters that are necessary for obedience to God and our salvation. If the question is answered negatively, then there is no need to continue discussions until there is agreement on the authority of the word of God.

**5. Acts 17:30,31** specifically states that God will through Jesus judge those of this dispensation (Compare also Jn 5:22; At 10:42). It

is important to emphasize the point that Jesus will be the final judge of all men (2 Co 5:10). Therefore, it is important to understand the word of Jesus, and our accountability to keep His word, since this word will be the standard of our judgment. By establishing the truth that we will stand before Jesus in judgment, we are establishing the necessity that all of us must listen to what Jesus says, as opposed to what our religious traditions dictate. We must never underestimate the hold that religious traditions have on the hearts of people.

## Chapter 3

### THE PROBLEM WITH SIN

CHART 3



#### A. Chart 3 objectives:

**1. To emphasize man's separation (alienation) from God because of rebellion against God's will.** In order to appreciate the gospel, we

must realize the consequences of our separation from God. Eternal life is sustained **only** in the presence of God because God only is eternal. If one is not in the presence of God after death, then he or she cannot eternally exist.

**2. To emphasize the fact that every man has personally sinned against God, and thus is separated from God and in need of reconciliation (to be brought back) to God.** We must clearly understand the concept that reconciliation is a restoration of ourselves to the presence of God. This is the work of the gospel. God is not reconciled to us. We are reconciled to Him. Since sin separates us

from God, then we must be reconciled to Him through obedience to the gospel. When discussing the concept of reconciliation, we are establishing the foundation upon which the appeal of the gospel is emphasized. The more we emphasize the curse of sin in our lives, and subsequent separation from God, the greater the appeal of the gospel that we be reconciled to God. Therefore, when studying through the concepts of sin, separation and death, the point must be emphasized that in a state of separation from God there is absolutely no hope for salvation. In this state of separation we cannot save ourselves by keeping religious traditions or by doing meritorious good works. Because we have no solution for sin, we are lost.

## B. Presentation instructions:

1. We must read **Romans 3:9,10,23** and ask, “**Have all people sinned against God?**” The answer must be, “Yes.” If the answer is “No,” then there may be a misunderstanding concerning the concept of sin, and its existence in the life of every individual. We must keep in mind that when going through concepts concerning sin, we must emphasize the fact that **we are totally unable to make any personal atonement for our sins.** In other words, one cannot do good works in order to put God in

debt to forgive our sins (See Rm 4:4).

Sin is a violation of God’s law, not man’s law. We cannot rectify our sin against God’s law as we would against man’s laws. In order to find atonement for sin against God’s law, we must call upon God’s grace. When discussing the curse of sin in our lives, therefore, we are emphasizing the grace of the gospel of God as it was revealed on the cross.

2. Read **Isaiah 59:1,2**, and ask, “**What is the key word in this passage that stresses the result of sin in one’s relationship with God?**” The answer is, “Separation.” When we are separated from God, we are separated from the presence of God and eternal life that only God can give. Therefore, we must be reconciled to God in order to have eternal life.

3. We must conclude the following: “**When we think about sin, therefore, we must think about separation from God. Sin and separation must always be thought of together.**”

4. If a better understanding of the concept of sin must be explained, Consider **1 John 3:4** and **James 4:17**.

a. **1 John 3:4: God gives both positive laws and negative laws.** In order to explain the nature of sin in reference to God’s law, it is necessary to explain how one sins.

**(1) Positive laws:** These are things that **God says we must do**. For example: *"Take care of the orphans and widows"* (Js 1:27). If one does not do this, then he or she sins against God. This is the **sin of omission**. In other words, we commit a sin by omitting to do that which God specifically says we must do. We omit doing His commandments in our lives.

**(2) Negative laws:** These are things that **God says we must not do**. For example: *"Avoid foolish controversies and genealogies and contentions, and strivings about the law, for they are unprofitable and worthless"* (Ti 3:9). If one does that which God says we must not do, then he or she sins against God. This is a **sin of commission**. We do that which God says we should not do.

**b. James 4:17: God gives biblical principles of good.** If one does not do a biblical principle of good, then he or she sins against God. A biblical principle of good is a good that is stated in principle in the word

of God, but not specified in detail. For example, we must take care of orphans and widows (Js 1:27). However, the specifics of how we are to do such are not stated in James 1:27, or any other scripture. The principle of what we must do is stated in the passage. However, we must work out the specifics of exactly how we are going to accomplish the principle, realizing that the specifics in order to accomplish a principle of good cannot become a religious law (Compare Gl 6:10). The important thing to remember is that if we do not work out a way to accomplish a biblical principle of good, and do such, then we sin against God. If one thinks his or her life is without sin, then he either does not understand sin, or is not being honest. However, most people will confess that they have not always done the good that they know they should have done. All have sinned, therefore, because we all have failed to do all the good we know we should do (Rm 3:9,10,23).

## Chapter 4

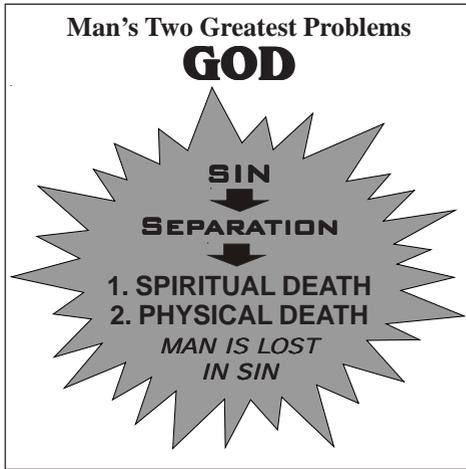
### TWO GREAT "DEATH" PROBLEMS

#### A. Chart 4 objectives:

**1. To emphasize the two great "death" problems of man that are spiritual death and physical death.**

Every man must recognize these two great problems. Without finding a solution for these problems, there is no hope of eternal life. It is imperative, therefore, that the teacher of the gos-

## CHART 4



pel emphasize these two great problems when sharing with those who have not obeyed the gospel.

**2. To move one to seek the good news (gospel) that the gospel was revealed for the above problems that face men.** We must keep in mind that the better one understands that there is no hope for salvation when separated from God, the more he or she will desire to draw close to God. The gospel is what draws people to God and provides a solution for the problems of both spiritual and physical death.

## B. Presentation instructions:

**1. Romans 6:23:** The interpretation of the verse is that the salary (wages) or result of sin is spiritual death. When we think about sin, we must always think about death, spe-

cifically, spiritual death that results from being separated from God. Romans 6:23 is stating that everyone has sinned, therefore, everyone who has not obeyed the gospel is separated from God, and thus in a state of spiritual death. We must thoroughly understand this point when considering those who have not obeyed the gospel.

We must not forget that the religious world in general is familiar with Romans 6:23. However, many do not understand why spiritual death is the result of one's personal sins against God. We must explain, therefore, that sin causes separation from God, and it is separation from God that results in death. Sin is the cause of the separation.

**2. In Romans 5:12** Paul stated, *"Therefore, as through one man sin entered into the world and death through sin, and so death passed to all men because all have sinned."* The first half of this verse refers to Adam's **personal sin** against God. It speaks of his personal spiritual death, or separation from God that resulted from his own sin of eating the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden (See Gn 2:16,17; 3:1-24). The second part of Romans 5:12 emphasizes the problem of spiritual death that **each person suffers as a result of his or her personal sin against God**. All people are personally separated from God,

and thus spiritually dead because of their own sins. Since all people sin, then all people suffer individual spiritual separation from God (See Rm 3:9,10,23).

**3. Genesis 3:22-24:** As a result of Adam's sin of eating of the forbidden fruit, he was separated from the tree of life, and thus, neither he nor all humanity after him could eat of the tree of life and live forever (Compare Hb 9:27). Therefore, we suffer the **consequences** of Adam's eating of the forbidden fruit because no one can now eat of the tree of life because Adam and all humanity were driven from Eden.

**4. 1 Corinthians 15:20-22:** The context of 1 Corinthians 15 is discussing the **bodily** resurrection. Verse 20 discusses Jesus' bodily resurrection from the dead. Jesus' resurrection was the "firstfruits" of all those who have physically died.

The word "firstfruits" is a metaphor taken from the Old Testament where the first cuttings of the harvest were offered to God. **They were an indication or promise of the greater harvest to come.** Jesus' bodily resurrection from the tomb was a signal of the greater resurrection that is yet in the future. His resurrection was different from the resurrection of Lazarus and others who were raised before Him. Jesus' resurrection was different in two ways: (1) Jesus was

resurrected never to die again. (2) Jesus was resurrected with an immortal, incorruptible body as we will have when He comes again (Compare 2 Co 5:1-8; Ph 3:21; 1 Jn 3:2).

We must ask this question: **"Who is the 'man' of verse 20?"** The answer is, "Adam." Because Adam sinned, physical death was introduced into the world when he was separated from the tree of life. As the father of humanity, Adam separated all of us from the tree of life. However, through Jesus Christ came the bodily resurrection from the dead (Compare Jn 5:28,29; 11:25; 1 Th 4:13-18). All who come to Jesus have access to the tree of life through Jesus.

All must physically die because Adam was separated from the tree of life (See Gn 3:22-24). However, those who establish an "in Christ" (covenant) relationship with Jesus, will be bodily resurrected to life when He comes again. Though all physically die as a result of Adam's separation from the tree of life, when Jesus comes again those who are in Christ will be made alive (See 1 Co 15:22). Therefore, one must be "in Christ" in order to be resurrected to life. Those who are outside Christ will be resurrected to an eternal destruction (Compare Rv 20:12-15; 21:8).

The more we emphasize the hopeless situation of being in sin, the greater the appeal there is for obedi-

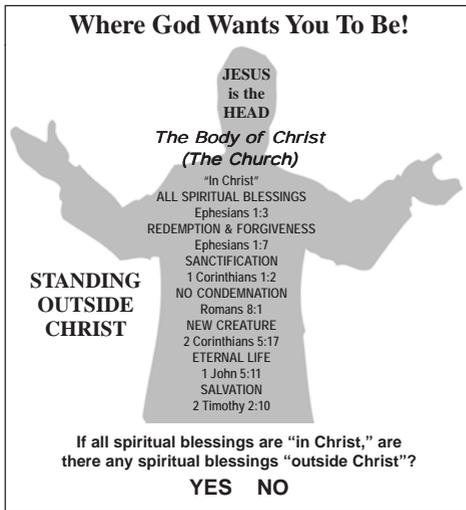
ence to the gospel. It is important, therefore, to dwell on these points in order to make sure that everyone understands the curse of being in the

bondage of sin. We must understand that there is absolutely no hope of eternal life while one is separated from God in sin.

## Chapter 5

### WHERE THE GOSPEL TAKES US

CHART 5



#### A. Chart 5 objectives:

**1. To emphasize Jesus' spiritual control over those who have responded to the gospel, and thus take advantage of His atonement for our sins on the cross.**

We must emphasize the fact that Jesus can help those who desire to be helped. If there is no desire to voluntarily submit to the gospel of Jesus, then there can be no blessings of Jesus given that produce sanctification for our sins.

**2. To emphasize the spiritual blessings that come to those who submit to the headship of Jesus.**

Spiritual blessings refer to salvational benefits one receives as a result of coming into a covenant relationship with Jesus. Obedience to the gospel brings one into contact with these blessings.

#### B. Presentation instructions:

**1.** It is important to understand the metaphor "head" as it is used in reference to Jesus' relationship with His body, the church. The word "head" refers to **control** and **center of reference**. When one voluntarily submits to Jesus, Jesus "controls" that person through his or her response to the gospel. The gospel of Jesus is the center of reference to those who obey the gospel (Compare Jn 12:48; Cl 1:12-18; Hb 1:2-3; 4:12). As the head of the individual disciple, Jesus becomes the center of reference as we live according to the gospel (See Ph 2:5-8).

It must be clearly understood that

Jesus can be our head only when we voluntarily submit to the gospel of Jesus. If Jesus controls the individual in a subjective manner through a supposed direct control of the Holy Spirit, then Jesus cannot be the total head of the individual. The headship of Jesus in the life of the individual Christian depends on the voluntary submission of the individual to Jesus (See 1 Co 14:32). Jesus brings people into freedom, not to a subjective bondage of His control through the violation of the free-moral choice of the individual.

2. The metaphor “**in Christ**” means that one is in a relationship with Jesus. When one is literally in a building, he or she has protection and security. Being in a building means being in a relationship with what the building has to offer as long as one remains inside. When one is “in Christ,” he or she is in a gospel relationship with Jesus where there is protection from Satan. In Christ there is the cleansing blood of Jesus for sins that we commit (Compare 1 Jn 1:7).

Being “in Christ” means that one is in a covenant relationship with God. In this covenant relationship, one will reap the rewards of the covenant if he or she keeps the conditions of the covenant.

When one agrees to submit to Jesus’ headship and direction through obedience to the gospel, he or she re-

ceives all spiritual blessings that result from this submission. The following scriptures begin our study of those spiritual blessings that are “in Christ”:

**a. Ephesians 1:3:** “**All spiritual blessings**” refer to those salvational blessings that were made possible by the cross of Christ and are made applicable to one’s life upon obedience to the gospel. The following points list some of these blessings that we have in Christ (Compare 2 Pt 1:2-4):

**b. Ephesians 1:7** (See also Cl 1:13,14): **Redemption** means that Jesus paid a price for our sin in order to bring us back into a reconciled relationship with God. This price redeemed (bought) us out of the captivity of sin from which we could not redeem ourselves (See Rm 3:24,25). Forgiveness means that God will forget all sin committed against Him and will remember them no more (See also Rm 11:27; Hb 8:12; 1 Jn 1:7-9).

**c. 1 Corinthians 1:2: Sanctification** means to cleanse or purify. When one is in a covenant relationship with Jesus, he or she is continually cleansed of sin by the blood of Jesus (See also 1 Co 6:9-11; 1 Jn 1:7). He need not attempt to self-sanctify himself through good works.

**d. Romans 8:1:** When one is in Christ, he or she is **not under a**

**sentence of condemnation** because of sin. When one has established a covenant relationship with Jesus, he or she is safe from condemnation (See also Mk 16:16; 1 Jn 5:13-20).

**e. 2 Corinthians 5:17:** When one is in Christ, he or she is a **new creation**, or new creature. He or she is new because the obedient believer is in a spiritual relationship with God because of the cleansing blood of Jesus (See also Ep 4:17-24).

**f. 1 John 5:11:** When one is in Christ, he or she has **eternal life** that is conditioned on remaining faithful to living the gospel of Jesus (See also Jn 10:27,28).

**g. 2 Timothy 2:10: Salvation** means that one has the spiritual blessings of redemption, forgiveness and sanctification. Having such means that one is not under condemnation, but is a new creature who has eternal life. This is what God wants every person to have (See Jn 3:16; 1 Pt 3:9). This is why Jesus came into this world to offer an eternal sacrifice for our sins in order to give us hope.

We must emphasize the fact that people must have an “in Christ” relationship with the Son of God. The following outlined information that is revealed in 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9 explains why this is so important. This information emphasizes what God had to do in order to make it possible for us to come into a covenant relationship with Him. Later, chart 8 will explain how to come into this relationship with Christ through obedience to the gospel.

In the preceding charts, we have established basic principles that emphasize the conclusion to the study of concepts that are brought out in the next three charts. If a good foundation has been laid, then the following three charts will have a great impact on the mind and heart of the one who understands the gospel. We must keep in mind that it is the gospel that turns one to the grace of God. It is not in our power of persuasion, but in the power of the gospel. The following three charts illustrate in reference to 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4 and Romans 6:3-6.

## Chapter 6

### JESUS IS COMING AGAIN!

#### A. Chart 6 objective:

**1. To emphasize the necessity of obeying the gospel in order to**

*come into Christ where there is salvation from the coming judgment of destruction when Jesus comes again.* It is very important at this point to

## CHART 6

**RESPONSE TO THE GOSPEL**

Read 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9

**ETERNAL TRUTH**

- Jesus gives assurance to those who are persecuted for His sake.
- Jesus will be revealed from heaven.
- Jesus will be revealed with mighty angels.
- Jesus will be revealed in flaming fire.
- Jesus will be revealed to take vengeance.
- Jesus will take vengeance on those who do not respond to the heart of God.
- Jesus will thus take vengeance on those who do not obey the gospel of God's heart.
- Those who do not obey the gospel will be punished with destruction from the presence of God.

**QUESTIONS TO ANSWER:**

**Must one "obey the gospel" in order to escape the judgment of condemnation when Jesus comes again?**

1. **WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?**
2. **HOW CAN ONE OBEY THE GOSPEL?**

clearly understand the text of 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9. The better one understands this text, the more impact the conclusion of this study will have. If one understands the nature of what Paul was explaining in this revelation, then there will be no question in reference to the following scriptures as to what one must do to obey the gospel.

**B. Presentation instructions:**

1. The following are some questions to ask concerning what Paul stated in this important revelation:

a. **"What future event is verse 7 discussing?"** The answer is, "The final coming of Jesus."

b. **"How is Jesus coming?"** The answer is, "In flaming fire."

c. **"Who will be judged with vengeance when Jesus comes again?"** The answer is, "Those who do not know the God of love and grace who sent His only Son into this world." If one does not know the loving heart of God for His creation, then he will never respond to what God has to offer in order to bring him into His eternal presence. One must be of the heart of God in order to reside in the presence of the heart of God.

d. **"What will happen to those who do not respond to the gospel?"** The answer is, "They will suffer eternal destruction from the presence of the God who gave His only begotten Son." They will suffer this because they do not respond to the eternal love of God.

It is important that there is complete agreement in reference to the above teaching of 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9. Agreement is important because a foundation is being established upon which a conclusion introduces the following two charts.

2. **"Does this passage teach that one must obey the gospel in order to escape the coming judg-**

**ment of condemnation?”** There must be a definite positive response to this question. If the answer is not in the affirmative, then reread the passage, for the passage is not being understood correctly. It is very important to understand what Paul said in order to motivate one to respond to the gospel. When one answers “Yes” to this understanding of the passage, then he or she is committed to a conclusion that will be established in the following charts.

3. If one must obey the gospel in order to escape the coming destruction, then two questions must be asked and answered:

1. What is the gospel?
2. How can one obey the gospel?

1 **Corinthians 15:1-4** (chart 7) and **Romans 6:3-6** (chart 8) answer these two questions. 1 Corinthians 15:1-4 answers the first question concerning what the gospel is and Romans 6:3-6 answers the second question concerning how one must obey

the gospel.

Several passages could be used to answer these two questions. However, one must not confuse or bombard someone with many scriptures that teach the same truth. If a great number of scriptures are used, those who do not know the Bible well, might be intimidated. We must always keep in mind that the gospel is a simple message to share and understand. The gospel, therefore, must be presented in its simplicity. We must not give the impression that the gospel is a complex system of theology or church tradition. Therefore, the simpler one’s presentation of the gospel the easier it is for people to understand and appreciate its message.

The above two questions must be asked and answered according to what the Bible says. The correct answer to these two questions will determine if one has correctly obeyed the gospel in order to escape the coming judgment of destruction that is explained in 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9. We must be sure to make this point very clear.

## Chapter 7

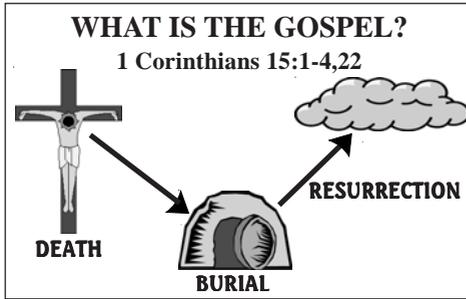
### EVENTS THAT REVEALED THE GOSPEL

#### A. Chart 7 objective:

1. *To understand the gospel as it was revealed through an event of history when Jesus answered our*

*two greatest problems.* At this point in our study, we seek to clarify a very simple fact that is confused by most religious people. This simple fact is that the gospel was revealed through

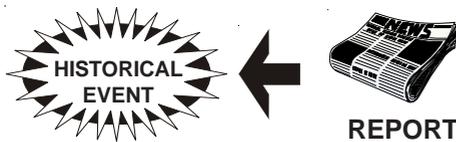
Chart 7



an event of history. Once this is established, the conclusion to what one must do in order to obey the historical event in order to connect with the gospel is clarified.

## B. Presentation of instructions:

1. Before considering **1 Corinthians 15:1-4**, we use a newspaper to illustrate the difference between a **report** (the newspaper) and an **event**, a historical happening about which reports are made in the newspaper.



The event happens **before** the report (the newspaper) is written. The newspaper is a report of the historical happening of the event that took place at a specific time in history. There is a difference between the event and the report of the event.

2. We must ask, “**What is the gospel?**” Typical answers are, “The

Bible,” “The teachings of Jesus,” or “The New Testament.” These are wrong answers, and thus illustrate that most people do not have a correct understanding concerning the difference between the gospel and the report of the gospel. These answers cannot be right because if the gospel were, for example, the teachings of Jesus, then one can never fully obey the gospel. This is true because we cannot live perfect lives according to the word of God. We can make an effort to obey the teachings of Jesus. However, we will always know that we cannot obey all the teachings of Jesus. We simply cannot **perfectly** obey the teachings of Jesus. And because we cannot perfectly obey, we need the gospel of God’s grace. It is for this reason that if the gospel were the teachings of Jesus, then one would never know for sure if he had obeyed the gospel, for no one can keep law perfectly.

3. Many people will respond that the gospel is the “good news.” But this is the meaning of the Greek word that is translated “gospel.” Therefore, if one responds that the gospel is the good news, then we would ask, “The gospel is good news about what?” The answer to this question is that the gospel is good news about our two greatest problems, spiritual and physical death. The New Testament is a report of the gospel event that took place before the New Testament was

written. Therefore, we read the New Testament in order to understand more about the revelation of the gospel through the historical event that revealed the gospel. Paul explained this in 1 Corinthians 15:1-4. This passage answers the question that was previously asked from the reading of 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9, “What is the gospel?”

4. Paul wrote, “*Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast to that word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain.*” (1 Co 15:1,2).

a. In verses 1 & 2 of 1 Corinthians 15 Paul talks **about** the gospel. Therefore, the inspired words that he used to talk about the gospel are not the gospel itself. In other words, the words of 1 Corinthians 15:1,2 are not the gospel. These are words the Spirit was directing him to use to explain the gospel. Paul reported the effect the gospel had on the lives of the Corinthians to whom he preached it.

(1) Through the medium of words, the gospel was **declared** (announced) to the Corinthians. The gospel is declared with words, and thus, the words are not the gospel.

(2) The gospel was **preached** to the Corinthians. The gospel event and message are preached by use of words. Therefore, the gospel is not the words, whether written or spoken. Words are the medium through which the gospel message is communicated to people.

(3) The gospel was **received** by the Corinthians. When one receives something, he or she accepts what is received as true. The Corinthians believed the gospel event because they received what Paul said.

(4) One **stands** in the gospel. In other words, one bases his or her emotional and spiritual self on the foundation that the gospel event was an actual historical event that revealed the grace of God through the cross. When we are sharing the gospel with others, there is more involved than a simple belief in the words that communicate the event of the gospel to us. We must accept the fact of the gospel to the point that it becomes an emotional foundation upon which feelings are based and controlled. Receiving (believing) the message of the gospel must have a spiritual and an emotional impact on our hearts. We must be cut to the heart by the atoning sacrifice of Jesus (At 2:37). The gospel deals not only with the head, but also with the heart.

(5) One is **saved** by the gospel. The Corinthians were saved by

the gospel, though they were not in Jerusalem when it occurred. The event of the gospel happened many kilometers away and several years before the preaching of Paul in the city of Corinth. But because the gospel is more than an event, the Corinthians could make contact with Jesus in obedience to the gospel that Paul preached.

(6) One is saved by the gospel **IF he or she continues to believe the word by which the gospel is communicated.** The Corinthians had to continue to believe Paul's words by which he communicated the gospel to them. Therefore, salvation by the gospel is based on the condition that one continues to believe the word by which the gospel is communicated to us. In other words, we today must believe the New Testament that communicates to us the message of the gospel that was revealed through the historical events of the cross and resurrection (Compare Rm 10:17). If we start doubting the report, then we will fall from our salvation. It is necessary, therefore, that we continue to believe the inspired Report.

In the context of the Corinthians, some were starting to doubt the resurrection of Jesus. But if this good news concerning our own resurrection is not true, then the gospel means nothing. If there were no resurrection to eternal life, then there would

be no need for the incarnational sacrifice of Jesus on the cross for our sins.

5. In verses 3 & 4 of 1 Corinthians 15, Paul continued, "*For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received, that **Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.***"

a. The gospel was the first thing Paul preached when he arrived in Corinth. It is interesting to note this point because it determines what is most important when we are approaching unbelievers. The good news of Jesus' death for our sins and resurrection for our hope is the most important subject that unbelievers must hear. It is important to those who are stuck in religion because so many people are confused concerning what they must do to obey the gospel.

b. The gospel is the event of **Jesus' sacrifice on the cross for our sin problem.** Our number one problem in our relationship with God is sin. Sin has separated us from God, and thus it is necessary to take care of our sin problem before there can be a covenant relationship with God. The resurrection would mean nothing if there were no atonement for our sins.

c. The gospel of living forever was revealed through the **burial of Jesus in a tomb in order that He**

**be victoriously raised from the dead.** The burial of Jesus is incidental. However, there could be no resurrection if there were no death and burial. It is for this reason that the empty tomb revealed the victory of Jesus over death. It has also become an apologetic of our faith. If there were no empty tomb, then the foundation of our hope to live forever would be destroyed. Our physical resurrection because of Jesus' physical resurrection is the theme of the entire chapter of 1 Corinthians 15. The gospel message is valid because of the empty tomb. The death on the cross has effect because Jesus is not like other religious leaders who have founded religions on their own selves and teachings. The teachings of Jesus are beneficial for living. However, if Jesus had not been raised from the dead, then His teachings would always be in competition with other teachings of other men who are still in their tombs. Christianity is founded on an empty tomb, not simply the teachings of Jesus. Jesus was more than a good teacher of Israel. He was proven to be the Son of God by His resurrection from the dead (Rm 1:4).

**d.** The gospel was revealed through the event of **Jesus' physical resurrection to give us hope of overcoming our physical death problem.** In our meditation on the subject of the death of Jesus on the cross, we often

fail to continue our thinking to the empty tomb. The cross is only half of the gospel. The resurrection is the other half, and thus should be equally emphasized when we discuss the subject of the gospel.

**e.** Jesus was raised to sit at the right hand of God in order to reign over all things (Ep 1:20-23; 1 Tm 2:5; Hb 8:1). When Jesus gave the great commission to the apostles, it is interesting to note that He introduced the subject of preaching the gospel to the world with an announcement of His authority over all things. He said in Matthew 28:18, "*All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.*" When presenting the gospel to someone, it is important to emphasize this fact. Jesus is not only the Savior because He took care of our sin problem, He is our King who gives hope by maintaining control over all things (Hb 1:3; 1 Pt 3:22). His authority over all things assumes that we must submit to His kingship. When presenting the gospel, we emphasize the authority of Jesus in order to establish the necessity that one submit to the reign of Jesus over all things. One is not recognizing the kingship of Jesus if he is not willing to submit to obedience of the gospel. When one is baptized, therefore, he or she is submitting to the authority of Jesus to command such in the lives of His subjects. It is for this reason that Luke

mentions several times in Acts that people were baptized “in the name of Jesus.”

**6.** 1 Corinthians 15:20-22 are important statements to read in order to emphasize the effect of Jesus’ resurrection. Verse 22 is specifically important: *“For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all will be made alive.”*

**a.** The context of 1 Corinthians 15 is the **physical resurrection**. 1 Corinthians 15 is not the context for discussing our spiritual separation from God because of sin. The context is dealing with **physical death** and **physical resurrection**. All physically die because of an indirect result of Adam’s sin. As a result of his sin, he, and all humanity, were driven from the Garden of Eden. He was driven from the garden lest he eat of the tree of life and live forever. **Genesis 3:22-24** is the historical event that states this fact. Verse 22 states that God drove Adam out of the garden *“lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever.”* We physically die, therefore, because our forefather, Adam, was driven from the tree of life. It is important to emphasize this point because the only way we can be restored (reconciled) to the source of life—God—is obedience to the gos-

pel. Those who do not obey the gospel will suffer the punishment of destruction from the presence of God. Obedience to the gospel is the answer to our second greatest problem, physical death.

**b.** Because Jesus was raised from the dead, all those who are “in Christ” will be raised to live again. It is interesting to note that there are no promises made in the New Testament that the unbelieving will be raised to eternal life. Even John 5:24,25 emphasizes the fact that the dead who “hear” the voice of the Son of God—the unrighteous do not hear—are raised to everlasting life. The unrighteous face eternal destruction, but the righteous will come out of their graves for the purpose of eternal dwelling. It is for this reason that one must be “in Christ” in order to have hope of eternal life. Only those who are “in Christ” are promised to be raised from the dead to enjoy everlasting life in the presence of God. There is no promise of resurrection for eternal life made in the New Testament for those who are outside Christ. One must have a covenant relationship with God in Christ in order to enjoy the rewards of this covenant.

**7. 1 Corinthians 15:1-4 answers the first question that 2 Thesalonians 1:7-9 poses, that is, “What is the gospel?”** We review

chart 6 in order to emphasize the fact that this question has been answered. The gospel is good news about our physical death problem. Jesus was raised from the dead, and thus He has given hope to all who are in a covenant relationship with Him. Our hope is that we too will be raised from the dead when Jesus comes again. The righteous look forward to the coming of Jesus because they will receive eternal life. The unrighteous do not look forward to His coming because they will be raised for eternal destruction.

8. Since it is imperative to obey the gospel in order to be delivered from eternal destruction, then we must ask, **“How can one obey the historical event of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus?”** The answer to this question is found in Romans 6:3-6. Romans 6:3-6 is Paul’s answer to the second question that 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9 poses, that is, “How can one obey the gospel?”

We must fully understand that the

gospel was revealed through the historical event of the death of Jesus for our sins, His burial, and His resurrection to give us hope of resurrection after physical death. Those with whom we share the gospel should be seeking an answer for their sin problem. They should also be seeking hope in view of physical death. The gospel answers these two greatest problems for which all people must find answers. It is for this reason that the gospel is good news. It is good news about our spiritual death problem. It is good news about our physical death problem.

If we have laid the correct intellectual and emotional foundation with those whom we share the gospel, the following verses and chart illustrate what one would do in obedience to the gospel. Those with whom the gospel is shared will not be able to deny the answer that Romans 6:3-6 gives as an explanation of obedience to the gospel.

## Chapter 8

### OBEDIENCE TO THE GOSPEL

#### A. Chart 8 objectives:

1. *To teach that baptism (immersion) is the manner by which we obey the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus.* As we come to this point in

sharing the gospel, a connection is made between the gospel that took place in Jerusalem over two thousand years ago and those today who want to obey the gospel.

2. *To teach that one cannot be*

*saved from the coming judgment of destruction of the wicked if he or she does not obey the gospel by immersion in water for the remission of sins.*

## B. Presentation instructions:

1. It is important to understand what the Holy Spirit said in the text of Romans 6:3-6. The following are important points that must be understood in order to identify the response of baptism with the gospel.

a. Verses 1-3 list a series of questions. There is a question mark after each verse. Paul is asking three questions that he answers in the context of chapter 6.

b. Verse 3 is the third question that is first answered by verse 4, and then again in verse 5. The questions of verses 1 & 2 are answered in the context of the chapter.

Paul asked, *“Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized*

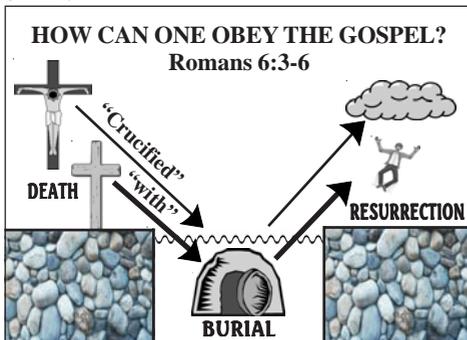
*[immersed] into Christ Jesus were baptized [immersed] into His death?”* In Paul’s answer to the question of verse 3, he first answered the question of verse 3 in verse 4. Because of the importance of the answer, he answered the question again in verse 5, but with different words and phrases. Therefore, verses 4 & 5 are the same answer to the question that is presented in verse 3.

c. After reading the question of verse 3, we must ask, **“How is one baptized into the death of Jesus that took place over two thousand years ago and several thousand kilometers away?”** Paul answers this question in verse 4, and again in verse 5. But in his answers we must discover that the event of baptism is more than a connection with the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus. Baptism is a spiritual connection with the atonement of the cross of Jesus and our future resurrection with Him.

2. In verse 4 Paul answered, *“Therefore, we are buried with Him through baptism [immersion] into death, that just as Christ was raised up from the dead through the glory of the Father, even so we also might walk in newness of life.”*

a. One is buried with Jesus in baptism. The preposition “with” emphasizes a union with Jesus in one’s

CHART 8



obedience to Jesus' death and burial. Everyone wants to be with Jesus in eternity. In fact, Paul wrote the desires of all of us when he stated, "*We are confident, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and be present **with the Lord***" (2 Co 5:8). In order for one to be **with** Jesus in eternity, he or she must be **with** Jesus in this life. In order to be **with** Jesus now, we must be buried **with** Jesus in baptism. There is nothing difficult about understanding this point.

**b.** One is buried in order to be resurrected to walk in newness of life. There is no resurrection to newness of life if there is no burial. Through burial and resurrection one comes into a saving relationship **with** Jesus. Therefore, baptism is necessary in order to receive all spiritual blessings that are "in Christ." Enjoying the benefit of all spiritual blessings is the beginning of walking the gospel in one's life. One is buried with Jesus in order to be baptized into Christ, wherein are all spiritual blessings in which one walks the gospel.

In order for one to connect with the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus, he or she must be immersed in water for the remission of sins. This is what Paul was reminding the Christians in Rome. They were immersed and resurrected with Christ. It is possible that they did not understand all the implications of their immersion at

the time they were immersed. In the context of Romans 6, they certainly did not understand the fullness of their walk in the gospel.

We must keep in mind that this passage was written to those who had already been immersed. Paul was reminding them of what happened in the spiritual realm at the time of their immersion. He was also laying the foundation for the arguments that he presented in the context of chapter 6. He was not arguing that they needed to be rebaptized because they did not fully understand all the implications of their immersion when they were immersed in the past. They were immersed for the right reasons, but they did not fully comprehend the entire journey of obeying the gospel in order to come into Christ. They did not fully understand that living the gospel meant putting away all unrighteousness.

**3.** In verse 5 Paul restated what he said in the previous verse. "*For we have been united together in the likeness of His death, we will also be in the likeness of His resurrection.*"

**a.** Paul repeated in verse 5 the concepts and actions of verse 4 in order that this very important point not be missed or misunderstood.

**b.** One is united together with Jesus in the likeness of His death in

order to be in the likeness of His resurrection. In verse 4 one is immersed **with** Christ. In this answer to the question of verse 5, one is “united together” with Christ. The thought is the same as verse 4, but the way Paul expressed it is different.

c. The conclusion to one’s immersion, therefore, is that one obeys the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus by immersion in and resurrection from a grave of water. By the event of immersion in one’s life, he or she obeys the event of the gospel. One “obeys the gospel” by being immersed (buried) in water and resurrected out of water in order to walk in newness of life. Obedience to reenact the event of the gospel connects one with the atoning blood of the cross. And in this connection, sins are washed away (At 2:38; 22:16).

Paul has now answered the second question that was posed by his statement in 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9. The first question was “What is the gospel?” This question was answered by 1 Corinthians 15:1-4. The second question was, “How can one obey the gospel?” This question is answered by Romans 6:3-5. The impact on one’s heart of this truth is life changing. When one first considers that baptism is a connection with the gospel of grace that was revealed through the cross and resurrection of Jesus, it should change one’s life in a positive

way. When one learns that in order to escape the coming destruction that is revealed in 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9, the response should be that which was expressed by the Ethiopian eunuch. He was not asked to be baptized. He took the initiative to be baptized as soon as he found water (See At 8:36).

Before one is immersed, the thought of verse 6 must be clearly understood. There is a cost that must be paid because Jesus paid a price for us. A decision to sacrifice must be made before one can go to the grave with Jesus. Becoming a disciple of Jesus calls on both sacrifice and service. Old sinful habits must be sacrificed, and living for Jesus must become a part of one’s daily walk in response to the gospel. Paul explains this decision clearly in verse 6.

**4. Romans 6:6:** “... *knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, that we should no longer be bondservants to sin.*”

a. Here again the concept of “with” Jesus is repeated. Before one is buried with Jesus, he or she must first be crucified **with** Jesus (See also Gl 2:20; Cl 2:20; 3:1-3). To be crucified with Christ means to give one’s life in submission to His will. Such is repentance, a turning from the way of the world to living the gospel (Read

also Rm 6:7-23). Emphasizing this point lays the foundation for the concept of the next chart. Before one can go to the grave with Jesus, he or she must first count the cost of the cross. Jesus said, *“If anyone will come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me”* (Lk 9:23).

**b.** The “body of sin” in verse 6 is our old way of life that must be discarded in order to walk a gospel-obedient life with Jesus. Instead of using our body to commit sin, the crucified believer must use it to the glory of God. In order to reaffirm these concepts, consider the following key passages that must be read in reference to one’s obedience to the gospel:

**Repentance** (Lk 13:3; At 2:38; 3:19; 17:30,31; 2 Pt 3:9).

**Baptism** (Mt 28:19,20; Mk 16:16; Jn

3:3-5; At 2:38; 22:16; 1 Pt 3:21)

**Examples of baptism** (At 2:41-47; 8:26-40; 9:17,18; 10:34-48; 16:13-15; 18:8; 19:1-5)

The last chart of this presentation of the gospel seeks to call on a commitment to discipleship. We have found that the term “Christian” has been misused so much in the religious world that people do not attach the concept of commitment to being a Christian. Some often refer to people as “Christian,” but see no commitment of living the gospel attached to being a Christian. On the other hand, the term “disciple” calls for action in the life of the one who would seek to follow Jesus. We are Christians. But we are Christians who are disciples of action. It is for this reason that this last chart is a call for committed discipleship on the part of the one who wants to obey the gospel.

## Chapter 9

### COMMITMENT TO THE GOSPEL

#### A. Chart 9 objectives:

**1.** *To teach that one must be willing to sacrifice all that is necessary in this life in order to obey the gospel and be a disciple of Jesus.*

**2.** *To teach that no human relationship of this life must come between Jesus and His disciples.*

#### B. Presentation instructions:

**1.** Luke 14:25-35 is a key text in reference to what Jesus requires of us to be His disciples. The following are some of the key points that Jesus emphasized in reference to discipleship:

## CHART 9

**COUNT THE COST OF DISCIPLESHIP!****Luke 14:25-35**

**Verse 26:** Are you willing to put Jesus before all personal relationships on earth? **YES NO**

**Verse 27:** Are you willing to bear the suffering of Jesus in your life as a disciple? **YES NO**

**Verse 33:** Are you willing to make all necessary sacrifices for Jesus? **YES NO**

**1 Peter 4:17: What Will Be Your End?**

**a.** In verse 26 Jesus emphasized the fact that relationships of this world should not separate one from the eternal life that one has as a disciple: *“If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple.”* We should ask ourselves the question of the chart: **“Are you willing to put Jesus before all personal relationships on earth?”** One’s answer must be “Yes.”

In this statement of Jesus it is often difficult for people to understand what is meant by the word “hate.” Matthew recorded a similar statement of Jesus that may have been made on a different occasion: *“He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he*

*who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me”* (Mt 10:37).

The use of the word “hate” in Luke’s account means to love one’s father or mother on earth less than loving Jesus. A disciple must be willing to put Jesus first before all human relationships, even his relationship with his own father or mother. If one is not willing to do this, then Jesus said, *“He cannot be My disciple”* (Lk 14:26).

**b.** In verse 27 Jesus turned to one’s personal commitment. *“And whoever does not bear his own cross and come after Me, cannot be My disciple.”* The following question must be asked and answered: **“Are you willing to bear the suffering of Jesus in your life?”** One’s answer must be “Yes” if he or she would commit to

obeying the gospel.

c. In verses 28-32 Jesus calls on us to “count the cost” of discipleship and consider the consequences of making Jesus one’s enemy.

Verses 28-30 emphasize the fact that one must first count the cost of discipleship before obeying the gospel. Emphasis is on taking the initiative to build. When one understands the simplicity of the gospel, he or she is often too quick to rush to the waters of immersion in order to start building a tower. It is great to take the initiative. However, if one fails to complete the building, it is as Peter wrote, *“For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning”* (2 Pt 2:20).

Verses 31 & 32 emphasize the fact that one must sit down and consider whether he is able to stand against Jesus if he does not take the initiative to obey the gospel. Imagine making Jesus our enemy. As the enemy of Jesus, one will suffer the fate of what Paul stated in 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9. There is only destruction for the one who would seek to make war against God. It is for this reason that one must sit down and take counsel. If one comes to the right conclusion that he cannot win the war

against God, then it is time to seek conditions for peace. And it is God who determines the conditions for peace, not man. Obedience to the gospel is God’s condition for peace with God.

d. In verse 33 Jesus emphasized the necessity for sacrifice in response to the sacrifice that Jesus made for us. **“Are you willing to make all necessary sacrifices for Jesus?”** One’s answer must be “Yes.” It is not that we will have to make many sacrifices. However, if there is no sacrifice, there is no spiritual growth. For example, when one becomes a disciple of Jesus, his or her standard of living usually comes down. Before one is a disciple, all the money that one had was often consumed upon one’s own lusts. However, after becoming a disciple one uses what he or she has for the purpose of serving others. He or she no longer consumes everything upon one’s own lusts. Living the gospel life is a life of self-sacrifice (See Rm 12:1,2).

e. In verse 33 & 34 Jesus wanted us to know that if we are not willing to make all necessary sacrifices in order to be a disciple, then we are of no use for His purpose. The uncommitted life without sacrifice is as salt that has no saltiness. It has no preservative power. It is thus cast out because it is worthless. The uncommitted disciple that is not willing to

maintain commitment to Jesus is lukewarm, and thus spewed out by Jesus (Rv 3:15,16).

The concept of discipleship that Jesus emphasizes in the context of Luke 14:25-35 is very important. Before one makes a decision to obey the gospel, the following are some points that one should first consider:

(1) For many years after the establishment of the church in Acts 2, those who had obeyed the gospel were referred to as the disciples of Jesus. It was not until the gospel was preached and obeyed in Antioch that the disciples were referred to as Christians. Luke recorded, *“And it came to pass for a whole year that they assembled with the church and taught many people. **And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch**”* (At 11:26). They were not called Christians by Christians. They were called Christians by those outside the church. The unbelievers referred to the disciples as Christians. They were called Christians about ten years after the establishment of the church in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost in A.D. 30.

It is interesting to note that the word “Christian” is used only three times in the New Testament to refer to the people of God (At 11:26; 26:28; 1 Pt 4:16). However, the term “disciple” is used over two hundred times

in reference to God’s people. The point is that one must be a disciple in order to be a Christian (Mt 28:19). One is not a Christian in order to be a disciple.

The generic term “disciple” refers to one who is an apprentice. An apprentice is one who has committed himself or herself to follow the instructions of his or her teacher. In order to be a successful apprentice, the student must be willing to leave his own life in order to cleave to his teacher. This point was illustrated in the early part of the ministry of Jesus when He called His first disciples. In Mark 1:16-18 Jesus called Simon (Peter) and Andrew to discipleship. Jesus said to them, *“**Follow Me and I will make you become fishers of men.**”* *And immediately they left their nets and followed Him.*” Becoming a disciple of Jesus means leaving something and following someone. It means seeking. Simon and Andrew immediately left their nets to follow Jesus in order to become fishers of men. They were given a new destiny when they became disciples of Jesus. Though one does not have to leave his vocational means of support as Simon and Andrew who were called into apostleship, something usually has to be left in order to accomplish one’s new purpose in life, that is, to be a fisher of men. Those who count the cost of discipleship, therefore, must

seriously consider leaving something in order to accomplish the task of being a fisher of men.

In the context of Luke 9:23-26 Jesus emphasized the extent to which discipleship would cost those who decided to build with Him. *“If anyone will come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me”* (Lk 9:23). Discipleship includes denial of self and sacrifice on a cross. In order to be crucified with Jesus (Rm 6:6), one must bear a cross. In the context of the first century disciples who committed themselves to Jesus, the cross meant death. In other words, they had to decide to go to death for Jesus if that was what discipleship meant. Such was expressed in the words of John in Revelation 2:10. *“Be faithful unto death and I will give you the crown of life.”* If one seeks to save his life through an uncommitted life, he or she will lose his or her eternal life in the destruction of hell (Lk 9:24). Jesus wants us to know in Luke 9:25 that all the possessions of the world are not worth one’s eternal salvation. Therefore, He concludes by saying, *“For whoever will be ashamed of Me and of My words, of him will the Son of Man be ashamed when He comes in His own glory and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels”* (Lk 9:26). A disciple cannot be ashamed of Jesus. He cannot be ashamed of the death of

Jesus on a cross (Rm 1:16). Ashamed Christians do not assume their responsibility of being fishers for men. If one is ashamed of sharing the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus (the gospel), then he is not worthy of the confession of Jesus before God and the holy angels.

The cost of boldly standing as a fisher of men before the world was also illustrated by the desires of a certain lawyer in Luke 10:25-28. The lawyer asked Jesus, *“What shall I do to inherit eternal life?”* (Lk 10:25). This question presented the occasion for introducing the parable of the good Samaritan. After the priest and Levite had passed by the one who had been beaten and robbed, the Samaritan took action. He defined and answered the question of the lawyer, *“Who is my neighbor?”* (Lk 10:29). For the disciple of Jesus, our neighbor is everyone who is in need, even complete strangers. Discipleship demands doing good to our neighbors (Gl 6:10).

From Jesus’ teaching and example of discipleship, we can understand why His final words on earth urged His disciples to make disciples. *“Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, immersing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit ...”* (Mt 28:19). As His disciples, we are to go and make disciples of others. Once an unbeliever makes a decision to be-

come a disciple of Jesus after counting the cost, then this person is ready to obey the gospel for the remission of his sins (At 2:38).

(2) If any of the previous three questions of chart 9 are answered with “No,” then one must consider **1 Peter 4:17**: *“For the time has come that judgment begin at the house of God. And if it first begins with us, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?”*

1 Peter 4:17 is a question. Peter assumes that we, the Christian readers, will give the correct answer. And

the correct answer to his question is that there is no hope for those who do not obey the gospel by immersion in water for the remission of sins. Peter is saying that if only by the grace of God the judgment of death is waved from those who are in a covenant relationship with God (the house of God), then those who are outside this covenant are doomed to eternal destruction from the presence of God. It is imperative, therefore, that one come into the house of God through obedience to the gospel.

### OUR GOSPEL NATURE

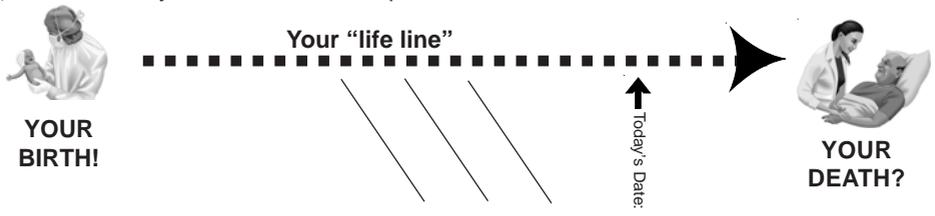
Evangelism is not a program that Christians do. It is a way of life of the true disciple of Jesus who seeks to live the gospel that he or she obeyed. True disciples of Jesus must speak the things that they have heard and learned. When the Jewish council commanded Peter and John not to speak in the name of Jesus, they replied, *“Whether it is right in the sight of God to give heed to you more than to God, you judge. **For we cannot but speak the things that we have seen and heard**”* (At 4:19,20). This is the way it is with disciples who seek to live the gospel. We cannot box the evangelistic nature of a Christian into a program. The sign of a true Christian is that he or she is using every God-given gift to reach others for Jesus. Christians realize that they have the gift of eternal life. They realize that they have the key message to bring others into eternal life. And because they are confident of their salvation by the grace of God, they seek to give others a piece of the eternal pie. It would be unnatural and selfish for a Christian not to speak about his gift of eternal salvation. One must speak about that which is most precious in his life. It is for this reason that Christians must speak those things that they know. And because they know the gospel, it is imperative that they speak and live the gospel.

**CHART 1**

**Your Response To God's Love**

- |  |             |           |
|--|-------------|-----------|
| 1. Are you <b>SAVED</b> ?                              | <b>YES</b>  | <b>NO</b> |
| 2. <b>WHEN</b> were you saved?                         | Date: _____ |           |
| 3. Are you a <b>MEMBER</b> of a church?                | <b>YES</b>  | <b>NO</b> |
| 4. <b>WHEN</b> did you become a member of this church? | Date: _____ |           |
| 5. Have you been <b>BAPTIZED</b> ?                     | <b>YES</b>  | <b>NO</b> |
| 6. <b>WHEN</b> were you baptized?                      | Date: _____ |           |
| 7. <b>HOW</b> were you baptized?                       | _____       |           |

**Directions:** In relation to today's date, indicate on your "life line" when you were saved, baptized or became a member of a church.



**CHART 2**



Since God is Our Creator, ...

... does He have the authority to give laws to man?

**YES NO**  
**(READ John 12:48)**

... does He have authority to hold us accountable to His laws?

**YES NO**  
**(READ 2 Corinthians 5:10)**

CHART 3



CHART 4

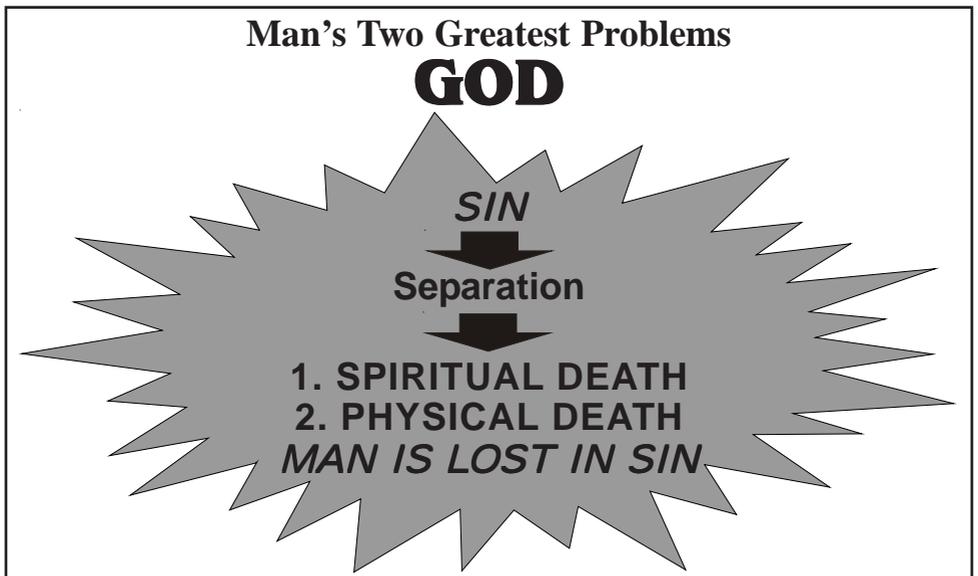


CHART 5

## Where God Wants You To Be!



If all spiritual blessings are "in Christ," are there any spiritual blessings "outside Christ"?  
**YES NO**

CHART 6

## Response To The Gospel Read 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9

### ETERNAL TRUTH

- Jesus gives assurance to those who are persecuted for His sake.
- Jesus will be revealed from heaven.
- Jesus will be revealed with mighty angels.
- Jesus will be revealed in flaming fire.
- Jesus will be revealed to take vengeance.
- Jesus will take vengeance on those who do not respond to the heart of God.
- Jesus will thus take vengeance on those who do not obey the gospel of God's heart.
- Those who do not obey the gospel will be punished with destruction from the presence of God.

#### QUESTIONS TO ANSWER:

Must one "obey the gospel" in order to escape the judgment of condemnation when Jesus comes again?

1. WHAT IS THE GOSPEL?
2. HOW CAN ONE OBEY THE GOSPEL?

Chart 7

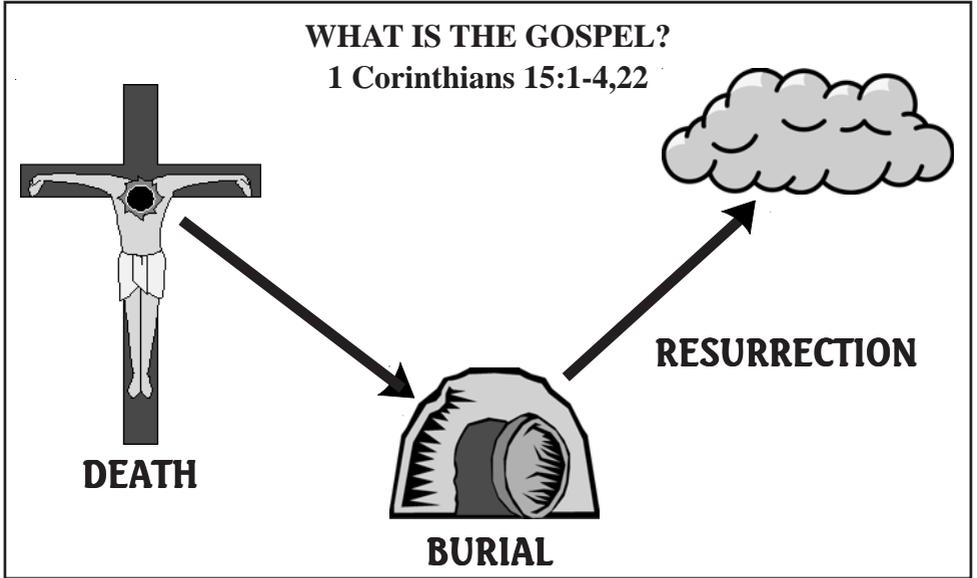
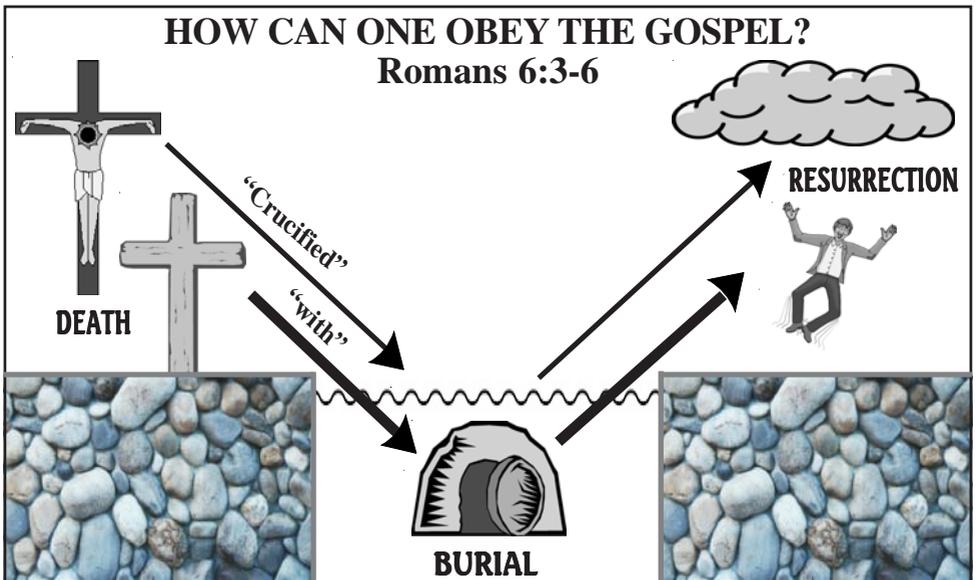


CHART 8



## COUNT THE COST OF DISCIPLESHIP!

Luke 14:25-35

Verse 26: Are you willing to put Jesus before all personal relationships on earth? YES NO

Verse 27: Are you willing to bear the suffering of Jesus in your life as a disciple? YES NO

Verse 33: Are you willing to make all necessary sacrifices for Jesus? YES NO

**1 Peter 4:17: What Will Be Your End?**