

,BOOKLET STUDY No.1

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THE PERSON AND WORK OF JESUS CHRIST

(THE MOST IMPORTANT STUDY ANYONE COULD EVER UNDERTAKE)

- Unless otherwise noted all quotations from Scripture are from the New King James Version.
- I often type words in capitals for EMPHASIS. You will notice it occurring in the expression of my own thoughts AND in quotations.
- All my comments and opinions are given from my viewpoint as a Christian who believes that the text of the Holy Bible, as originally given, is the Word of God. My opinions are based on my understanding of God's opinion as expressed in the Bible and I offer them with good intention without any will to cause offense to anyone holding a different opinion. They are offered in the hope of shedding light and providing help to anyone open to receive it.
- The text of this booklet would be too lengthy if I typed out in full every Scripture referred to, but you will miss much of the message if you do not turn to, and read, each of the Scriptures concerned.

THE PERSON AND WORK OF JESUS CHRIST

Read: Luke 24.13-35

NO SUBJECT COULD BE MORE IMPORTANT! JESUS CHRIST IS GOD!

- No other subject is as ENJOYABLE to study. Its refreshes and invigorates the soul (HE is “altogether lovely” – Song of Solomon 5.9-10 + 16, Isaiah 11.1-5, 42.1-3, 61.1-3).
- Your relationship to Him determines your SALVATION (“Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved” – Acts 4.12, Romans 10.9-10, John 1.11-12, John 8.24).
- Your BELIEF concerning Jesus Christ determines your ORTHODOXY (“Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; for many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world” – 1 John 4.1-3, 2 John 7-11, Galatians 1.6-9).
- HE is ALL WE NEED (Colossians 2.3 and “FOR IN HIM DWELLS ALL THE FULLNESS OF THE GODHEAD BODILY; and YOU ARE COMPLETE IN HIM, who is the head of all principality and power” - Colossians 2.9-10)

JESUS often DIRECTED PEOPLE’S ATTENTION to the SCRIPTURES (“Search the SCRIPTURES” – John 5.39, He said to the people of His day), and He often QUOTED the SCRIPTURES (during His sermon on the mount He said, “You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not murder’ – Matthew 5.21). It is not just the case that JESUS SPOKE OF THE SCRIPTURES, but, as our initial reading shows, THE SCRIPTURES SPEAK ABOUT JESUS.

What a wonderful experience it must have been, for the two on the way to Emmaus, to listen to the Lord Himself “beginning at Moses and all the Prophets” and expounding to them, “IN ALL THE SCRIPTURES the things concerning Himself” (Luke 24.27).

Jesus Christ is spoken about, in some way, either directly, prophetically or by “type or shadow” in every book of Scripture (every book of the Hebrew (OLD TESTAMENT) Scriptures that Jesus, as God, acknowledged to be Divinely Inspired Scripture, and every book of the NEW TESTAMENT that has been added to them – after passing all appropriate tests). Examining each book of the Old and New Testaments for these references is a worthwhile exercise for every true believer . It is one of the tests

of true, inspired Scripture that anyone can carry out. Claims are made for many books and writings that they are inspired by God, but unless they pass this simple test they are not inspired Scripture.

As noted in the dot points on the cover page, if I was to type out in full every Scripture reference to each point made in this booklet it would no longer be a booklet, but rather it would be a major volume. On each point I will merely type out in full one or two extracts from Scripture, then note a few other Scripture references to reinforce the point. On no point will I attempt to be exhaustive as regards Scripture references.

At best this is AN OUTLINE STUDY. I recommend that you fill in some more of the information available in the Scriptures for yourself. It will help you to:

- APPRECIATE JESUS MORE: “We love Him because He first loved us” (1 John 4’19)
- BE ENRICHED BY HIS GIFTS: “But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us WISDOM from God – and RIGHTEOUSNESS and SANCTIFICATION and REDEMPTION” (1 Corinthians 1.30)
- BENEFIT FROM HIS PROMISES: “For ALL THE PROMISES OF GOD in Him are yes and in Him are amen, to the glory of God through us” (2 Corinthians 1.20)

Paul longed to know Jesus to the maximum degree. He writes to the believers at Philippi of his desire to “know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death” (Philippians 3.10).

Our calling is to preach Christ as PETER did (Acts 2.22-25(a) + 36 and 3.11-26); as Philip did (Acts 8.5 + 26-28 + 35); as Paul did (Acts 17.1-3 and 28.28); as Apollos did (Acts 18.24-28) and as was the common practice in the early days of the New Testament Church (Acts 11.19-21).

Jesus invites us to learn from Him. He said, “Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls, for My yoke is easy and My burden is light” (Matthew 11.29-30). May it be our experience to do that as we follow the OUTLINE OF STUDY set out below:

HIS PERSON

HIS DEITY

A good way to gain an understanding of the Deity of Jesus Christ is to carefully read the FIRST CHAPTER of each of the following books:- the gospel of John, Colossians, Hebrews and Revelation. This is simple to remember, and is a good thing to recommend to any young believer (or anyone interested in knowing more about Christianity and Jesus Christ) as the following extracts show:

- John 1: “In the beginning was THE WORD, and the Word was with God, and THE WORD WAS GOD. And THE WORD BECAME FLESH AND DWELT AMONG US” (vs 1 + 14)
- Colossians 1: “For by HIM (Jesus Christ) ALL THINGS WERE CREATED that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. ALL THINGS WERE CREATED THROUGH HIM AND FOR HIM” (v.16)
- Hebrews 1: “But to the Son HE (God the Father) says: Your THRONE O GOD, IS FOR EVER AND EVER; “ (v.8) and “YOU, LORD in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands” (v.10)
- Revelation 1: “I (Jesus Christ) AM THE ALPHA AND THE OMEGA, the Beginning and the End, says the Lord, who is and who was and who is to come, THE ALMIGHTY” (v.8)

Jesus Christ is UNLIMITED in POWER, in KNOWLEDGE, in SPACE and in TIME as Scripture confirms:

- “ALL POWER is given unto Me” (Matthew 28.18 King James Version)
- “You (Jesus Christ) KNOW ALL THINGS” (John 16.30)
- “I (Jesus Christ) am THERE IN THE MIDST” (in every meeting) and “Lo I (Jesus Christ) am WITH YOU ALWAYS” (with every missionary) (Matthew 28.20)
- “Whose (Jesus Christ’s) goings forth are FROM EVERLASTING” (Micah 5.2)

WHAT HE SAYS ABOUT HIMSELF

HIS DESIRES

- “Jesus said to them, ‘My food is to DO THE WILL OF HIM WHO SENT ME AND TO FINISH HIS WORK” (John 4.34)
- The first recorded words of Jesus, during His life on earth were, “WHY did you seek Me? Did you not know that I MUST BE ABOUT MY FATHER’S BUSINESS?” (Luke 2.49) and His LAST words were, “IT IS FINISHED” (John 19.30)

HIS COMMANDS

- “A new commandment I give to you. That you love on another; AS I HAVE LOVED YOU, THAT YOU ALSO LOVE ONE ANOTHER. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13.35-35). This attitude should mark all the work we do as we spend our time among believers.

- “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. GO THEREFORE AND MAKE DISCIPLES” (Matthew 28.18-19). As opportunity presents itself, this hope and intention should lie behind all activity we have among unbelievers.

HIS CLAIMS

- Jesus Claims to be THE GREAT “I AM”. This was the “Name” of God given to Moses when he was being sent back to Egypt from Midian (Exodus 3.13-14). As Jesus debated with the Jews He said concerning Himself, “before Abraham was I AM” (John 8.58). This claim is seen in so many of the statements He makes about Himself, For example, “I AM:
 - “the BREAD OF LIFE” (John 6.48)
 - “the LIGHT OF THE WORLD” (John 8.12)
 - “the RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE” (John 11.25)
 - “the WAY THE TRUTH AND THE LIFE” (John 14.6)
 - “the TRUE VINE” (John 15.1)
 - “the ALPHA AND OMEGA, THE BEGINNING AND THE END, THE FIRST AND THE LAST” (Revelation 1.8, 1.11 and 22.13)
 - “the ALMIGHTY” (Revelation 1.8)
 - “HE WHO LIVES, AND WAS DEAD” (Revelation 1.18)
 - “the ROOT AND THE OFFSPRING OF DAVID, the BRIGHT AND MORNING STAR” (Revelation 22.16)

HIS ABILITIES

- In a way none other can do, HE GIVES REST. He said, “Come to Me, all you who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you REST. Take my yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find REST FOR YOUR SOULS. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light” (Matthew 11.28-30). The PEACE He gives is PERFECT (Isaiah 26.3) for it is the very peace Jesus enjoys Himself! He said, “PEACE I leave with you, MY PEACE I GIVE TO YOU; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid” (John 14.27). Surely we all wish to enjoy this REST!
- In a way none other can do HE GIVES JOY. Again, it is the same brand as He Himself enjoys, for He said as He spoke to His disciples, “These things I have spoken to you , that MY JOY might remain in you, and that your joy may be full” (John 15.11). Surely we all wish to experience this JOY!
- AND in a way no one else can do, HE GIVES FREEDOM. Scripture says, “Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed in Him, “If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall

know the truth, and THE TRUTH SHALL SET YOU FREE" (John 8.31-32). Surely we all wish to live in this FREEDOM!

WHAT OTHERS SAY ABOUT HIM

GOD THE FATHER

- At His incarnation, "Your throne, O God, is for ever and ever" (Hebrews 1.6-9).
- At His baptism, "This is MY BELOVED SON, in whom I am well pleased" (Matthew 3.16-17)
- When He was "transfigured" before Peter, James and John on a high mountain. As I stood on the mount of transfiguration, during a visit to Israel, I tried to imagine the puzzlement that may have been in the mind of anyone who was near the mountain, and looked up, and saw the bright cloud descend on the mountain (or was it hidden from the eyes of all, except Peter, James and John? We do not know.) (Matthew 17.1-6). The Father said, "Hear HIM" (v.5).

GOD THE SPIRIT

Jesus said of GOD THE SPIRIT, "He will GLORIFY ME" (John 16.13-15), and so He does in the messages to the seven churches, recorded in chapters 2 and 3 of The Revelation. Jesus is described, in WORDS INSPIRED BY GOD THE SPIRIT as:

- "He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands" (2.1). The meaning of the "stars" and the "lampstands" is given in chapter 1 verse 20. The SEVEN STARS are the "angels" (or MESSENGERS) of the seven churches. Jesus holds them in His right hand (indicating His control over what is preached). The LAMPSTANDS are the seven churches. Jesus walks in their midst (indicating His supervision of their condition and service).
- "the FIRST AND THE LAST who WAS DEAD AND CAME TO LIFE" (2.8). This confirms what Jesus says about Himself, but in connection with the CHURCHES it gives Him the authority to say to His followers, "Be faithful until Death, and I will give you the crown of life" (2.10), and, as the conqueror of death He can assure them, "He who overcomes SHALL NOT BE HURT BY THE SECOND DEATH" (2.11).
- "He who HAS THE SHARP TWO-EDGED SWORD" (2.12). Comparing Scripture with Scripture (as the surest way to make a correct interpretation) THE WORD OF GOD is likened to a two-edged sword (Hebrews 4.12-13). This is indeed the use being made of the analogy for the letter to the church in question says, concerning some who were holding with wrong doctrine and practices, "Repent, or else I will come to you quickly and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth" (2.16, as part of verses 14-16)
- "the SON OF GOD, who HAS EYES LIKE A FLAME OF FIRE" (2.18). This simile, like others presented in relation to the churches, is taken from the vision in chapter 1 verses 12-16. The risen, glorious Lord has such piercing vision that He can read the thoughts and intents of our hearts. He says to the church concerned, as He warns them of impending judgement for

permitting grossly wrong doctrine and practices, "I am He who SEARCHES THE MINDS AND HEARTS" (V.23).

- "He who HAS THE SEVEN SPIRITS OF GOD" (3.1). To me this takes us into THE MYSTERY OF THE GODHEAD ("Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, THE LORD IS ONE"). Just as Jesus could say, "I AND MY FATHER ARE ONE" (John 10.30), so THE SON HAS THE SEVENFOLD SPIRIT! The three Persons of the Godhead act as ONE and AGREE ON ALL THINGS. As is seen at Calvary, JESUS was forsaken by the FATHER (Matthew 27.46), yet "GOD (THE FATHER) WAS IN CHRIST reconciling the world to Himself" (2 Corinthians 5.19) and Jesus "THROUGH THE ETERNAL SPIRIT offered Himself without spot to God" (Hebrews 9.14). ALL THREE WERE THERE! And none of this affects the SEPARATE WORK they do, or the POSITIONS THEY OCCUPY (1 Corinthians 15.28).
- "HE WHO IS HOLY, HE WHO IS TRUE, HE WHO HAS THE KEY OF DAVID, HE WHO OPENS AND NO ONE SHUTS, AND SHUTS AND NO ONE OPENS" (3.7). Jesus is the only person who, living in the flesh, was HOLY for He NEVER SINNED (Hebrews 4.15). He IS the TRUTH (John 14.6) and SPOKE the TRUTH (John 8.45). He is the one who can OPEN DOORS (present opportunities) or CLOSE DOORS (remove opportunities). He says to the church to which this saying was given, "See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it" (3.9).
- "the AMEN, the FAITHFUL AND TRUE WITNESS, THE BEGINNING (or ORIGINATOR) OF THE CREATION OF GOD" (3.14). Jesus is THE ULTIMATE IN ALL THINGS, from eternity to eternity. "FOR ALL THE PROMISES OF GOD IN HIM ARE YES, AND IN HIM AMEN, to the glory of God the Father" (Corinthians 1.20). All that He says TO us, and all that He says ABOUT us, is true.

Of-course, all Scripture is inspired by God the Spirit (2 Timothy 3.16 and 2 Peter 1.21), so saying after saying could be quoted under this heading. Choice is almost unlimited, but the sayings to the local churches named in these chapters of the Revelation are favourites for valuable exposition.

THE ANGELS

John, in receiving the revelation, sees in excess of one hundred million angels, around the throne, saying with a loud voice, "WORTHY IS THE LAMB WHO WAS SLAIN to receive power and riches and wisdom, and strength and honour and glory and blessing" (Revelation 5.11-12). As the verse that follows shows, we will one day join them in praising THE LAMB (Revelation 5.13).

THE PROPHETS

As was the case with God the Spirit, I could quote many verses under this heading. I will, however, just quote a few:

- "For unto us a CHILD is BORN, unto us a SON is GIVEN; and the government shall be upon His shoulder. And HIS NAME shall be called WONDERFUL, COUNSELOR, MIGHTY GOD, EVERLASTING FATHER, PRINCE OF PEACE. Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David and over His kingdom to order it and establish it with judgement and justice from that time forward, even forever. THE ZEAL OF THE LORD OF HOSTS WILL PERFORM THIS" (Isaiah 9.6-7).

- “Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is AN EVERLASTING DOMINION, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom the one which shall not be destroyed” (Daniel 7.14).
- “The Lord shall be KING OVER ALL THE EARTH” (Zechariah 14.9).

HIS LIFE ON EARTH

As Jesus carried out His ministry here on earth He demonstrated:

HIS WISDOM

- When He preached ‘the sermon on the mount’ it is recorded that, “the people were ASTONISHED AT HIS TEACHING” (Matthew 7.28)
- When, as part of His earthly ministry, He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up, and read from the prophecy of Isaiah, and commented on it, it says they “MARVELLED at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth” (Luke 4.22).
- When He debated with the Pharisees, the Herodians and the Sadducees, and answered their POLITICAL (v.17), DOCTRINAL (v.28) and PRACTICAL (v.36) QUESTIONS perfectly, He silenced His questioners completely. It says, “No one was able to answer Him a word, nor from that day on did anyone dare question Him anymore” (v.46) (Matthew 22.15-46).

HIS COMPASSION

- Jesus had compassion on individuals (like the leper of Mark 1.40-42) and on multitudes (as He saw their needs – Matthew 9.35-36)
- Confronted by Mary and Martha’s grief the Scripture says, “JESUS WEPT” (John 11.18-36, refer to verse 36)
- Viewing Jerusalem and reflecting on all that lay in store for it, AGAIN JESUS WEPT, and said, “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing! See! Your house is left to you desolate: for I say to you, you shall see Me no more till you say ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!’” (Matthew 23.37-39) (compare Luke 19 41-44).

HIS LORDSHIP

Jesus did not at any time set aside His DIVINITY. He never has, and never will, cease to be GOD. Whilst here on earth HE WAS GOD INCARNATE. Regardless of whether or not we can fully understand it, HE WAS FULLY MAN (“born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law” – Galatians 4.4-5) AND FULLY GOD (“The Father said, “THIS IS MY BELOVED SON” – Matthew 3.17). His Lordship, while here on earth, was acknowledged by:

- ANIMALS: When He was in the wilderness, to be tempted by Satan, He was with the “WILD BEASTS” – but they did not touch Him (Mark 1.12-13). When the disciples, on His instruction, brought to Him a COLT (“on which no one had sat”) He sat on it and it offered no resistance (Mark 11.1-7).
- THE ELEMENTS: The WIND AND THE WAVES ceased raging at His command (Luke 8.22-25).
- PLANTS: When He rebuked the FIG TREE it withered (Matthew 21.18-20).
- DISEASE: No manner of disease or affliction could stay when He commanded it to leave (Matthew 4.24).
- DEATH: Not even DEATH could hold a victim if Jesus commanded that he be released (Luke 7.11-17).
- SATAN: When Satan approached Eve he knew that God had given Adam and her instructions, but in his twisted way of speaking he said, “Has God indeed said?” Knowing that Jesus IS God the Son Satan said to Him, in the same twisted way, “IF You are THE SON OF GOD...” (Matthew 4.3). He knew beyond shadow of doubt that Jesus, as FULLY GOD, could be addressed as “THE SON OF GOD” and as FULLY MAN could be addressed as “SON OF MAN” (MARK 2.10-12).

Studying the events that occurred during Jesus’ life on earth is inspiring, illuminating and refreshing.

HIS WORK

WHAT HE HAS DONE IN THE PAST (HIS SAVING WORK)

Jesus is the ONE “whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting” (Micah 5.2). To write the half of what Jesus has done in the past would, I feel sure, fill more books than could be written in a normal human lifetime.

- “HE was in the beginning with God” (John 1.2). It seems to me that this is the “beginning” that has no beginning, for it is the beginning of ETERNITY (not the beginning of TIME referred to in the first verse of Genesis when “God created the heavens and the earth”). We know little about what we refer to as “eternity past”, but knowing that there are hundreds of millions of angels (Revelation 5.11) there must have been plenty of things happening.

- “All things were made through HIM, and without Him nothing was made that was made” (John 1.3). HE “laid the foundation of the earth” and the heavens “are the work of HIS hands” (Hebrews 1.11). We do have knowledge of much that has happened since then.

But our main interest is in what Jesus Christ has done to purchase our redemption.

The **OLD TESTAMENT** speaks with clarity about WHAT JESUS CHRIST HAS DONE TO SAVE LOST SINNERS LIKE YOU AND ME. It is little wonder that the prophecy of Isaiah has been called THE GOSPEL OF ISAIAH!

- No chapter could be clearer than ISAIAH 53 where we are told that, for us, He was “a MAN OF SORROWS and ACQUAINTED WITH GRIEF” (v.3); that “He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows” (v.4); that “He was wounded for our transgressions” and “bruised for our iniquities” and that “the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed” (v.5); and “the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all” (v.6); and that “He was led as a lamb to the slaughter” (v.7); and “it pleased the Lord to bruise Him” to “make His soul an offering for sin” (v.10); and “He poured out His soul unto death” and “made intercession for the transgressors” (v.12). SO MUCH IS SAID ABOUT THE SAVING WORK OF JESUS CHRIST IN THAT ONE CHAPTER! Several years ago I met a young man who purchased a Bible out of pure curiosity, to find out what it taught. He read it like you would read any book, starting at page one. God spoke to him as he read and when he came to Isaiah 53, without anyone (except the Lord) speaking to him, he prayed to God for forgiveness and salvation. We should not be surprised that this would happen. Within two years that young man was working with YWAM (Youth With A Mission), as a short term missionary in China.
- Jesus read from ISAIAH to reveal to people the work He had come to do. Isaiah 61.1-2 says, “The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, because the Lord has anointed Me to preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord”. He stopped his reading part way through verse 2 (see Luke 4.16-21) because the next statement in the verse refers to His future work!
- ISAIAH draws our attention to the GENTLENESS of Jesus in 42 1-3, “Behold! MY SERVANT whom I uphold, MY ELECT ONE in whom My soul delights! I have put My Spirit upon Him; He will bring forth justice to the Gentiles. HE WILL NOT CRY OUT, NOR RAISE HIS VOICE, nor cause His voice to be heard in the street. A BRUISED REED HE WILL NOT BREAK, AND A SMOKING FLAX HE WILL NOT QUENCH; He will bring forth justice for truth.” But this same prophet draws attention to THE CRUEL TREATMENT He received, “I gave My back to the those who struck Me, and My cheeks to those who plucked out the beard; I did not hide My face from shame and spitting” (50.6). And he shows the effects of this treatment, “HIS VISAGE WAS MARRED MORE THAN ANY MAN, and His form more than the sons of men” (52.14).
- THE PROPHETS SPOKE OF THE SAVING WORK OF JESUS CHRIST IN OTHER PARTS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT, like, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?” (Psalm 22.1, quoted by Jesus on the cross – Matthew 27.46); “They pierced My hands and My feet” (Psalm 22.16); “Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself” (Daniel 9.26) and so much more.

The **NEW TESTAMENT** has been given to us TO COMPLETE THE STORY.

- We have no less than FOUR FULL ACCOUNTS of the LIFE, DEATH, RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION OF OUR BLESSED SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST. The CROSS IS EMPTY (Matthew 27.57-60); THE TOMB IS EMPTY (Matthew 28.1-6): and JESUS IS ALIVE (Acts 1.1-3).
- JESUS HAS PURCHASED OUR REDEMPTION. Writing to the Colossians Paul refers to Jesus as THE SON OF GOD'S LOVE "In whom WE HAVE REDEMPTION through His blood, THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS" (Colossians 1.14).
- God has made Jesus "who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Corinthians 5.21). "For BY ONE OFFERING HE HAS PERFECTED FOREVER THOSE WHO ARE BEING SANCTIFIED" (Hebrews 10.14).
- This PERFECT SALVATION is a GIFT from God for those who recognize their need of it, REPENT of their sins and unreservedly ACCEPT JESUS CHRIST as their personal SAVIOUR AND LORD. Paul put it well when he wrote to the Ephesians, "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves: it is the GIFT of God, NOT OF WORKS, lest anyone should boast. For we are HIS WORKMANSHIP, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them" (Ephesians 2.8-10). Again, Paul puts it well, in referring to his own experience, when he says, "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me" (Galatians 2.20).

This leads us on, quite naturally, to consideration of:

WHAT HE IS DOING NOW (HIS HIGH PRIESTLY WORK)

Jesus has not left us to live out the Christian life in our own power. It would be utterly impossible for us to live to the standard God expects without His help. Even after we are converted we are still sinners. John tells us that "if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ God's Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1.7-9). He tells us this "so that we may not sin" (that is, we are to avoid sin as much as possible) but if (and when) we do sin "we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (1 John 2.1). So we learn that JESUS CHRIST IS WORKING ON OUR BEHALF RIGHT NOW! He has not returned to heaven and forgotten us, or left us to fend for ourselves.

Let me BRIEFLY OUTLINE to you the help we have as believers:

- We have the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. Jesus, in preparing His disciples for His departure, told them He would pray to the Father and He would give them "another Helper" to

abide with them forever “the Spirit of Truth” to be “WITH” them and “IN” them. As believers we are “BORN” of the Spirit (John 3.8) and “INDWELT” by the Spirit (Romans 8.11). We are exhorted to “WALK” in the Spirit (Galatians 5.16) and to be FILLED with the Spirit (Ephesians 5.18).

- We have the indwelling presence of Jesus Christ for Jesus said, “I will not leave you orphans; I WILL COME TO YOU” (John 14.18).
- We have the indwelling presence of God The Father, for Jesus said, “If anyone loves Me he will keep My word; and MY FATHER will love him, and WE WILL COME TO HIM and make our abode with him” (John 14.23).

These are MASSIVE PROMISES, and GOD keeps His promises! But I would like to give a little more information on WHAT JESUS IS DOING FOR US, throughout our lives HERE ON EARTH, as His people. We are told, in very clear language that we have been RECONCILED TO GOD, but there is “**MUCH MORE**”! Paul writes to the Romans, “For if when we were enemies we were RECONCILED to God through the **DEATH** of His Son, **MUCH MORE**, having been reconciled WE SHALL BE SAVED BY **HIS LIFE**” (Romans 5.10). There is, I believe a TWOFOLD TRUTH conveyed by these words. First, there is the truth that Christ’s LIFE BY RESURRECTION completed His work by which we are once and forever saved (“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope THROUGH THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST FROM THE DEAD” - 1 Peter 1.3). Second, there is the HIGH PRIESTLY LIFE OF CHRIST in which He cares for us day by day (“Therefore He is also able to SAVE TO THE UTTERMOST those who come to God through Him, SINCE HE ALWAYS LIVES TO MAKE INTERCESSION FOR THEM. For such a HIGH PRIEST was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens” (Hebrews 7.25-26).

We are told that God The Spirit “HELPS IN OUR WEAKNESSES” for “we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but THE SPIRIT HIMSELF MAKES INTERCESSION FOR US with groanings which cannot be uttered” and “HE MAKES INTERCESSION FOR THE SAINTS ACCORDING TO THE WILL OF GOD” (Romans 8.26-27).

While we are receiving this help from God the Spirit, **JESUS CHRIST HIMSELF IS INTERCEDING FOR US:**

- “Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true, but into heaven itself, NOW TO APPEAR IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD FOR US” (Hebrews 9.24).
- “It is CHRIST that died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD who also MAKES INTERCESSION FOR US” (Romans 8.34).

Chapters like Romans 6, with the CHALLENGES like “do not let sin reign in your mortal body” (v.12) and STATEMENTS like “sin shall not have dominion over you” (v.14) need to be read in conjunction with chapters like Romans 8 with the ASSURANCES like “the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death” (v.2) and “If God be for us, who can be against us?” (v.31) (and that is stating the obvious for both chapters are in the same book and form part of the same argument).

I am tempted to say much more on this part of the subject, but I will now move to the last heading.

WHAT HE WILL DO IN THE FUTURE (HIS GLORIOUS RETURN AND FUTURE KINGDOM)

Jesus is coming back! This is THE MOST IMPORTANT EVENT IN THE FUTURE OF THIS WORLD! Every individual, every family, every tribe, every nation every state, country, government and institution will be affected by it. If we are to be ready for it we need to know what will happen when He comes (and we will need to comply with whatever preparation He requires).

When I have spoken on the subject at conferences I have generally drawn attention to:

- THE CERTAINTY OF HIS COMING..... For the “Day of the Lord WILL COME “ (verse 10 of 2 Peter 3.1-10). Jesus said, “if I go....I will come again” (verse 3 of John 14.1-3). He went away and He will return!
- THE COMPLEXITY OF HIS COMING.....For there are many things to happen before He comes, “when you see ALL THESE THINGS, know that it is near – at the doors” (Verse 33 of Matthew 24.1-36) and many will be saying, “Where is the promise of His coming?” (2 Peter 3.4).
- THE CHALLENGE OF HIS COMING.....”Therefore you also BE READY” (verse 44 of chapter 24 of Matthew 24.37- 25.46).
- THE COMFORT OF HIS COMING.....For those who are ready it will be exceedingly more than the fulfilment of all their dreams, “Therefore comfort one another with these words” (verse 18 of 1 Thessalonians 4.13-18)

Each of these areas of the subject occupies a couple of hours of speaking and covers the information contained in a host of Scriptures. For the purposes of this booklet I will merely highlight some major events associated with the Lord’s return and note a few Scriptures relating to each event.

A simple way of getting a BASIC UNDERSTANDING OF the events surrounding THE RETURN OF JESUS CHRIST is to read CHAPTERS 24 AND 25 OF MATTHEW’S GOSPEL. In these chapters Jesus answers the questions posed by His disciples (in verse 3 of chapter 24). As He answers their questions Jesus reveals that:

IN THE TIME LEADING UP TO HIS RETURN THERE WILL BE:

- A great deal of deception abroad (false Christs- 24.4-5 – false prophets -24.11 – false alarms – 24.23-27, etc.)
- Wars and rumours of wars (24.6)
- Noticeable incidences of famines, pestilences and earthquakes (24.7)
- Persecution of believers (24.9-10)
- Noticeable lawlessness (24.12)
- Christian evangelism touching all nations (24.14)

- Fulfilment of prophecy concerning the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem and the reign of the “Beast” (24.15-20)
- The worst period of tribulation the world has ever seen (24.21-28). Immediately after this period Jesus will return (24.29-31)
- The believers will be “caught up” to meet the Lord as He comes (24.31)

Having outlined these events Jesus then proceeded to warn of the suddenness and unexpected nature of His return (24.32-41), warning of the necessity to be ready (24.42-51). He then revealed that many who will think they are ready will be condemned as being totally unprepared (25.1-13). Then He makes it clear that, in human terms, it will be a long period between His departure and His return (25.14-30). To round off His answer He speaks about the Judgement (25 31-46).

The answer Jesus gives is clear and quite lengthy, it is restricted to answering the direct questions posed by the disciples (and, incidentally, you need to study the other records of His answer, in Mark 13 and Luke 21.5-36, to understand better what He was telling them). IT IS NECESSARY TO STUDY MANY OTHER PARTS OF THE WORD OF GOD TO SEE THE FULL PICTURE.

Many of the details of EVENTS LEADING UP TO HIS RETURN are contained in other Scriptures, as are details of THINGS THAT WILL HAPPEN AFTER HIS RETURN. For example:

- The changes in the last world empire, prior to his coming, including information relating to the last phase of it, when the “Beast” reigns, are given in Scriptures like Daniel 7.
- Graphic detail on the Lords encounter with the “Beast” and his armies are given in Scriptures like Revelation 19.11-21.
- Details of THE KINGDOM ON EARTH that the Lord will set up when He returns are given in such Scriptures as Revelation 19.20 – 20.10, Zechariah 14.8-21, Isaiah 65.19-25, Ezekiel 37.15-23, Ezekiel 47.1-12, Micah 4 1-2 etc., etc., etc.
- Details of THE FINAL JUDGEMENT are given in Scriptures such as Revelation 20.11-15
- Details of THE FUTURE ETERNAL KINGDOM are given in Scriptures like Revelation 21 and 22.

I will finish this booklet with a few inspiring verses describing that Eternal Kingdom:

“Now I saw a NEW Heaven and a NEW EARTH, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. Then I, John, saw the holy city, NEW JERUSALEM, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, ‘Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. And GOD WILL WIPE AWAY EVERY TEAR from their eyes; there shall be NO MORE DEATH, NOR SORROW, NOR CRYING. THERE SHALL BE NO MORE PAIN, for the former things have passed away.’ Then He who sat on the throne said, ‘BEHOLD I MAKE ALL THINGS NEW’ And He said to me, ‘Write, for THESE WORDS ARE TRUE AND FAITHFUL’” (Revelation 21.1-5).

Praise God! THE BEST IS YET TO BE!