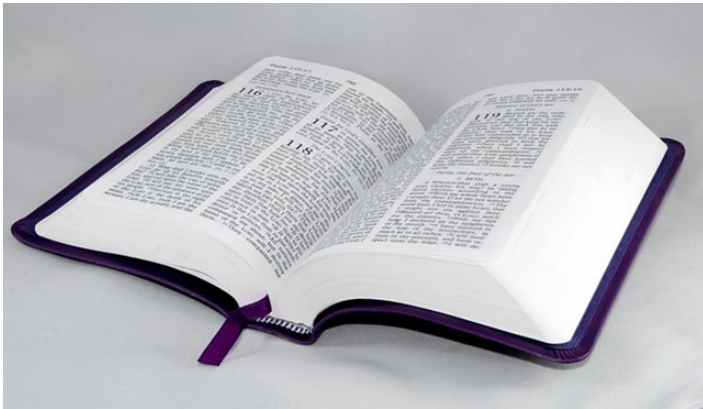


The Manual of
**FUNDAMENTAL
DOCTRINES**

BOOK 1



Dr. Gerald Johnson

The Manual of
FUNDAMENTAL
DOCTRINES
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Greenville, SC 29607

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Published by:

FAITH MINISTRIES, INC..
2 Buckskin Road
Greenville, SC 29607-5107

www.faithministriesliterature.org

Printed in the United States of America

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PREFACE

Gerald Johnson, the author of the *Manual of Fundamental Doctrine*, served as a missionary in Japan from 1949 to 1965. He founded a Bible Institute in Japan for the purpose of training men as evangelists and pastors. He also held evangelistic campaigns throughout Japan, reaching thousands with the gospel of Christ.

From 1967 to 1995 the author served the Lord in Korea. The first five years in Korea Dr. Johnson preached to multitudes throughout the nation and many souls came to Christ. In 1972 he founded a seminary in Korea. Over 500 students are graduates of the Seminary. More than 100 churches have been started and are now pastored by seminary graduates.

Dr. Johnson began a nation-wide gospel tract ministry in Korea in the late 60's. Many Koreans, after receiving gospel tracts, wrote asking for instruction in Christian doctrine and Dr. Johnson wrote the *Manual of Fundamental Doctrine*.

The Manual of Fundamental Doctrine explains the major doctrines of our Christian faith such as the doctrine of God, the Scriptures, the Deity and Atonement of Christ, the Holy Spirit and Man. A careful study of this manual will be a great help to new Christians. It also will be a beneficial review and confirmation of faith for mature Christians.

A Christian is a person who seeks to know and obey all truth because he or she has accepted Jesus Christ Who is Truth Incarnate. The purpose of this manual is to rightly divide the Word of Truth in order that it may be easily understood and received. The great doctrines of the faith are interpreted by comparing Scripture with Scripture. May this publication be a means of enlightenment to earnest souls seeking to know the truth as it is revealed in Christ Jesus. To Him be the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Lesson 1

GOD

“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth” (Genesis 1:1). In the very first verse of the Bible God makes known to us that He is the Creator of all things. He makes it plain that we didn’t come about by accident or so-called *evolution*. According to evolutionists, the stars created themselves and all living things, including you and me, got here by chance. A careful study of the facts of science will convince a reasonable person that the universe could not have created itself, and that all living beings, including humans, could not have happened by chance or accident. They had to be created by God. True science is knowledge based on facts. There are no facts that prove evolution. There is only one answer to this great universe, to our earth, to man and where he came from, and that is God. The Bible begins with the words, *“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth”* (Genesis 1:1).

THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

Of course it is impossible to demonstrate God’s existence by means of our physical senses because God is not a physical being. But admitting our own existence and the existence of the universe, we must logically go one step further and admit the existence of God. It is absurd to think that the universe could evolve into being or create itself. Likewise it is irrational to think that the first man created himself or accidentally evolved into a human being.

The existence of the universe must have a cause, and the cause must be great enough to create the universe. Evolutionists believe that somehow or other by chance over a period of billions of years the universe evolved. Evolution is a denial of God’s existence. The theory of evolution gives us no cause for this gigantic and complex universe. The law of cause and effect requires that all things must have a cause.

The law of cause and effect demonstrates the existence of God. Everything in the universe manifests organization and design from the smallest atom to the greatest star. Organized design implies purpose, and purpose proves the existence of God. The universe and everything in it was designed and created for a purpose. Think of the wonderful design of the human body and each of its parts. Everything in the universe, yes, even our own existence proves the existence of God.

“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse” (Romans 1:18-20).

The fact that God graciously provides for man’s needs is manifested by the seasons, the rain and the sunshine. God’s goodness is not extended only to human beings, but even to the birds, fish, animals and creeping things. All living creatures are recipients of the infinite benevolence of God. *“Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall He not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?”* (Matthew 6:26, 28-30).

GOD IS A SPIRIT

The Bible teaches that God is a Spirit. *“God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth”* (John 4:24).

GOD IS ONE

“I am the Lord, and there is none else beside Me” (Isaiah 45:5). God is One in His Being, yet there are three persons in the Godhead, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. We cannot fully comprehend the Trinity because the Trinity involves the personality of the infinite God. There are some truths that are impossible for human beings to fully understand. One of these truths concerns the Trinity.

There are three Persons in the Godhead, and yet at the same time God is One. This is a great truth which we must receive by faith.

The doctrine of the Trinity is revealed in Christ’s Great Commission, *“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost”* (Matthew 28:19). The doctrine of the Trinity is also taught in Paul’s benedictory prayer, *“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen”* (II Corinthians 13:14).

GOD IS ETERNAL

“Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever Thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting Thou art God. For a thousand years in Thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night” (Psalm 90:2, 4).

God never had a beginning and neither will He have an ending. When there were no stars, sun and moon; when there was no earth and no human beings, God existed. Fifty years seem a long time to us. A person one hundred years of age is considered to be a very old individual. However one hundred years to God is less than a moment of time. *“One day is with the Lord as a thousand years”* (II Peter 3:8). God never was young and He never will grow old. God always was and al-

ways will be. He is the Eternal Being. All who believe in Christ will live as long as God lives. Everyone who accepts Jesus Christ as personal Savior will live with Christ forever.

GOD IS UNCHANGEABLE

“I am the Lord, I change not” (Malachi 3:6). God is always the same. He is perfectly holy. He will never change His righteous character. God will never change His attitude of hatred toward sin. Since God is self-existent He cannot change His nature. God did not create Himself. His existence depends upon no cause. There is no power or enemy that can change God’s nature.

Man changes. He changes often in feelings, thoughts, ideas, plans and purposes, but not God. If God’s nature is subject to change, it would mean that God is not perfect. All that which is imperfect is in a state of change and development. There never was and never can be any change in the nature and character of God. God’s perfect holiness was, is, and always will be the same. Because God is unchangeable, His law also is unchangeable. *“The soul that sinneth, it shall die”* (Ezekiel 18:4). This is the unchangeable law of God. God must always punish sin and the penalty of sin is death. But God is love and His love is also unchangeable. God manifested His infinite love, and at the same time His unchangeable attitude toward sin by sending His only Son to die for our sins on the cross.

GOD IS OMNIPRESENT

“Whither shall I go from Thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, Thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall Thy hand lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me” (Psalm 139:7-10). God is omnipresent. He is everywhere.

To God there is no right, left, up or down, behind, before, but all is here. There is no ‘over there’ or ‘nearby’ to God. Because God is omnipresent His infinite Being is always here. There is no place that God is not. God’s works of creation and providence give evidence for His omnipresence. God rules over the entire universe and He must exist where He rules.

How foolish men are when they think they can sin and get away with it. God watches every move they make, listens to every word they speak and knows even the very thoughts and intents of their hearts. If people would always realize that God is present wherever they go, whatever they do, think or say, it would cause them to live more pure and holy lives.

GOD IS LOVE

The total sum of God’s character is love. *“He that loveth not knoweth not God: for God is love”* (I John 4:8). God’s ultimate purpose in all His works is to enhance the highest well being of all his creatures. Of course, human beings have the highest value of all God’s creatures on this earth. Jesus said, *“Ye are of more value than many sparrows”* (Matthew 10:31). Only human beings are created with an eternal soul. God loves all mankind with an infinite love.

But someone may counter, “If God truly loves us and seeks our happiness, why is there so much unhappiness and misery in the world?” The answer is that man has turned his back on God. *“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God”* (Romans 3:23). By nature man is a rebel against God. The apostle Paul, in speaking of himself and all believers in Christ, wrote, *“we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath”* (Ephesians 2:3). When we refuse to obey God’s just laws the inevitable result is unhappiness and misery. It is only through faith in God and obedience to His laws that man can be truly happy.

The greatest proof that God sincerely seeks the happiness of mankind is the fact that He sent His only begotten Son to die as a sacrifice on the cross in behalf of the entire sinful human race. The reason why Christ died on the cross is because God is love and Jesus is God manifest in human flesh. God seeks the salvation of all human beings. He is not willing that any should perish. If God were not love He would not have sent Jesus into this world to suffer and die on the cross. There is no sin greater than rebellion against God. By nature we are totally corrupt, and if God treated us as we deserve, He could justly send everyone of us to an eternal lake of fire. That is our just desert for our wickedness. The person who refuses to repent of his sins and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ is rejecting the great and infinite love of God.

ATTRIBUTES OF GOD'S LOVE

◆ Holiness

God is separate from all sin and everything that defiles. God is everything that makes up purity and righteousness. *“For I am the LORD your God: ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I am holy: neither shall ye defile yourselves with any manner of creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth....Ye shall be holy: for I the LORD your God am holy”* (Leviticus 11:44, 45; 19:2). God is infinitely holy. *“God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all”* (I John 1:5). *“As He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, be ye holy; for I am holy”* (I Peter 1:15, 16).

Holiness consists of obedience to God's laws, not just some of them but all of His laws. *“For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all”* (James 2:10). The greatest law of God is to love God with all the heart, soul and mind. The second law in order of importance is to love all other human beings as we love our-

selves (Matthew 22:37-39). The Ten Commandments are a part of God's laws. Because God sincerely loves us, He requires that we obey His laws. God Himself is infinitely holy and He requires us to be holy. *"Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord"* (Hebrews 12:14). If we do not obey God's laws, it is impossible for us to be happy. The consequence of disobedience is misery.

◆ **Patience**

God is very patient and longsuffering toward us even though we have sinned and rebelled against Him. If God were not longsuffering toward us He would have sent us all to hell long ago because of our sins against Him. The Lord is *"longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance"* (II Peter 3:9).

◆ **Mercy**

Mercy is a distinguishing attribute of God's great love. It is a tenderness of heart on God's part to forgive our sins when we repent rather than carrying out the punishment that we justly deserve. The Lord in His mercy treats us much better than we deserve. Instead of sending us to hell, on condition of our sincere repentance He shows compassion and removes our sins as far as the east is from the west. *"Who is a God like unto Thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He retaineth not His anger for ever, because He delighteth in mercy"* (Micah 7:18).

◆ **Truthfulness**

God is a God of truth. God cannot stand falsehood and lies. He is *"a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he"* (Deuteronomy 32:4). The Math fact $2 \times 2 = 4$ is true and never can be changed. Why? Because God made it

so. Truth cannot be changed. Someone may say $2 \times 2 = 5$, but just saying so does not make it 5. No, whatever we may say, $2 \times 2 = 4$. Telling lies will not change truth. God is the Creator of all that is true because He is the source of truth. Jesus said, “*I am the truth*” (John 14:6). God seeks to promote our happiness by revealing unto us His truth. Only by accepting the truth as it is revealed in Christ can a man be saved. Happiness is the result of living according to God’s truth. The Christ-rejecting sinner cannot be happy because God has put a conscience in his breast that will always convict him with an accusing finger, saying, “Christ is true but you are a liar!

◆ **Self-Denial**

Self-denial is an attribute of God’s great love. God demonstrated His love by His self-denial in sending Jesus Christ to die for us. Think of Christ’s self-denial. The Lord Jesus was with the Father in heaven; the angels worshipped Him, and yet he emptied Himself and became a human being to die for our sins on the cross.

Just how great is God’s self-denial? A glimpse of His great self-denial can be portrayed by comparing ourselves as human beings to ants. Of course in the scale of being, a human being is infinitely more valuable than an ant. But suppose, in order to save a large colony of ants from destruction, you could change yourself into an ant and then give your life as an ant in order to save the ant family!

God is of infinitely greater worth than any human being, or for that matter, the entire human race combined. We are mere dust in comparison to God. Yet the second Person of the Godhead became a human being and died a cruel death on the cross in order to bring salvation to the human race. What unspeakably wonderful self-denial! One of the great attributes of the love of God is self-denial.

Lesson 2

THE SCRIPTURES

The foundation of our faith is the Bible. We as Christians believe that the Bible is the verbally inspired Word of God. If the Bible is not true, then our faith is built upon a foundation of sand. In order that our faith might remain unchanged from generation unto generation, God gave us the Scriptures.

Through the centuries Satan has made vicious attacks upon the Bible because of its infinite worth. Many ignore the Bible as though it were a book of no importance. Many prefer to spend their time reading newspapers, magazines, novels and other worldly literature. Some criticize and find fault with the Bible, claiming there are mistakes in the Word of God. But these people are deceived by Satan. It is most important that Christians know why they believe the Bible is the Word of God.

1. WE BELIEVE THE BIBLE IS THE WORD OF GOD BECAUSE THE BIBLE ITSELF CLAIMS TO BE GOD'S WORD.

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (II Timothy 3:16, 17).

Not just certain parts of the Bible, but all Scripture is given by inspiration of God. The word for inspiration in the Greek language is *theopneustos*, which literally means God-breathed. God breathed His Spirit into the minds of the authors of the Bible in order that they might know the exact words to write. Every single word of the Bible is God-breathed. The Scriptures declare that the authors of the Bible spoke and wrote as they did because they were moved upon

by the Spirit of God. *“Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost”* (II Peter 1:20, 21).

2. WE BELIEVE THE BIBLE IS THE WORD OF GOD BECAUSE THE LORD JESUS GAVE TESTIMONY TO THE INSPIRATION OF THE SCRIPTURES.

In His confrontation with the unbelieving Jews, Jesus stated *“the Scripture cannot be broken”* (John 10:35). By these words Jesus meant that the Scriptures are without error and of final authority in all matters. The great purpose of Scripture is to reveal Jesus Christ and His salvation unto man. *“And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning Himself”* (Luke 24:27).

3. WE BELIEVE THE BIBLE IS THE WORD OF GOD BECAUSE OF THE MANY PROPHECIES THAT HAVE BEEN LITERALLY FULFILLED.

A large portion of Scripture is history written before it actually occurred. In many instances in the Scriptures history was written centuries before it took place. This is especially true of the birth, life, death, resurrection and ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ. Many of the minute details in the life of Christ were written hundreds of years before Jesus was born into this world.

Through His prophets, God made many prophecies concerning the Jewish nation which were literally fulfilled. God made prophecies concerning great countries, such as the destruction of Babylon, which were literally fulfilled. God prophesied that the Edomites, the descendants of Esau, would be destroyed. *“And there shall not be any remaining of the house of Esau; for the Lord hath spoken it”* (Obadiah 18). Today there is no descendant of Esau living on the earth.

4. WE BELIEVE THE BIBLE IS THE WORD OF GOD BECAUSE OF THE FACT THAT THE BIBLE IS INDESTRUCTIBLE.

In past history God's enemies persecuted and killed Christians, and burned all the Bibles they could find; yet today the Bible still stands as the world's best seller. *"For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth forever"* (I Peter 1:24, 25).

5. WE BELIEVE THE BIBLE IS THE WORD OF GOD BECAUSE OF ITS WONDERFUL UNITY.

There are no contradictions or mistakes in the Bible. The Bible is composed of 66 different books. Forty different writers wrote these books over a period of 1500 years in three different languages. In spite of this, there is not one single mistake. The Bible is one great unity of mind and thought. How can we explain such a great miracle? God, by His Spirit, breathed into the minds of the writers the words they should write.

6. WE BELIEVE THE BIBLE IS THE WORD OF GOD BECAUSE OF ITS GREAT TRANSFORMING POWER.

Literally millions of people all over the world from every race and nation have experienced a complete transformation of life through the message of the Bible. The Bible's influence upon the lives of men and women is greater than any other book in the world. Through the reading of the Scriptures, men and women, enslaved to the world, the flesh and the devil, have been transformed to live a life of godliness and righteousness. How can we explain such phenomena? The Bible must be the Word of God!

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and

shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life” (John 5:24).

“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Romans 10:17).

“Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever” (I Peter 1:23).

7. WE BELIEVE THE BIBLE IS THE WORD OF GOD BECAUSE OF ITS UNSURPASSED WONDERFUL TEACHINGS.

Surely there is no book in the world which teaches us such great truths about God, man’s salvation, and how man should live on this earth other than the Scriptures. This is true because God is the Author of the Bible. Even small children can understand the great truths of the Bible pertaining to salvation. On the other hand, men with great intellects who have studied the Bible for many years, give testimony that they have only begun to skim the surface of the wonderful truths of the Word of God.

“O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who hath been His counsellor?” (Romans 11:33, 34).

“For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts” (Isaiah 55:8, 9).

8. WE BELIEVE THE BIBLE IS THE WORD OF GOD BECAUSE IT IS APPLICABLE TO OUR LIVES EVEN THOUGH IT IS VERY ANCIENT.

The Bible never grows old. It is practical for our lives no matter when we live. This is not true of other books. Many

textbooks written several years ago are not usable today because the ideas found in these books are out of date, or are found to be false. This is not true of the Bible. In whatever age a man may live, the Bible still is his guide and light along the road of life.

The gas and oil we obtain from the earth is very ancient, but who would be so foolish to say that because gas and oil are ancient they are not usable for us today? Ancient though they be, we use these fuels for multiple purposes such as transportation, heating and cooking. Though the Bible is an ancient book, it enlightens our minds and regenerates our souls as God speaks to us through the Scriptures.

9. WE BELIEVE THE BIBLE IS THE WORD OF GOD BECAUSE OF THE INWARD WITNESS AS TO THE INSPIRATION OF THE SCRIPTURES.

“But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God: that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth: comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned” (I Corinthians 2: 10-14).

Many people of the world scoff at and ignore the Word of God. They have never been born of the Holy Spirit. Only the person who is born of the Holy Spirit can understand and appreciate the teachings of the Bible. When the believer reads the Bible, it witnesses to his own spirit that it is truly the Word of God.

Have you ever met a born-again believer who said, “I don’t believe the Bible” or “there are many mistakes in the

Bible”? No true born-again Christian would utter such words! The Holy Spirit Who indwells every Christian also breathed into the minds of the writers of the Bible to write the very words of God. Therefore the Spirit of God within us and the words of the Scripture unite together to give testimony to the inspiration of the Bible.

We Christians ought to praise God every day of our lives for giving us such a wonderful gift and treasure as the Bible. Also, we must take great care that we do not neglect this precious gift, but meditate upon the words of Scripture daily and make it our aim to pattern our lives according to the doctrines of the Bible.

Our experience ought to be the same as the Psalmist David who said, “*O how love I Thy law! It is my meditation all the day*” (Psalm 119:97). Again he exclaimed, “*How sweet are Thy words unto my taste! Yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!*” (Psalm 119:103).

Lesson 3

MAN

MAN'S ORIGINAL STATE

MAN WAS CREATED IN THE IMAGE OF GOD.

“And God said, Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them” (Genesis 1:26, 27).

IN WHAT WAYS WAS MAN CREATED IN THE IMAGE OF GOD?

1. Consciousness

Man was created with a sense of knowledge of his own existence, feelings, mental state or the thoughts that pass through his mind. We know that we exist, and in our existence we experience various kinds of emotions. Sometimes we feel anger and at other times feel sadness, fear, love, hate, joyfulness, hope, peace of mind, tranquility. Under various circumstances in life we all have experienced these emotions and feelings. The Bible portrays God as a conscious Being who knows what passes through His infinite mind. God is angry with men who persist in sinning. *“God is angry with the wicked every day”* (Psalm 7:11). God rejoices when sinners repent of their sins. *“I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth”* (Luke 15:7).

2. Knowledge

Man was created with the ability to think. God is infinite in knowledge and knows all things, past, present and future.

Though man is finite he has a great potential for increasing his knowledge because he is created in the likeness of God.

3. Free Will

God created man with the power to choose between right and wrong. Every man has the ability to understand right from wrong and is fully responsible for his own decisions. God possesses free will. He is not some sort of mechanical robot in the sky. He determines all His actions according to His infinite wisdom and knowledge. Therefore all God's purposes are wise and good.

4. Spiritual Nature

God created man with a spiritual nature which means he has the capacity of knowing and loving God. Of all God's earthly creation, only human beings have a spiritual nature. *"True worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth"* (John 4:23, 24).

THE FALL OF MAN

1. Genesis 3:1-6 gives us the fact of the fall.

"Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat" (Genesis 3:1-6).

2. *God tests Adam and Eve.*

The important question is, how were the first man and woman able to commit sin in the first place? Were not Adam and Eve created in the likeness of God? Did they not have a perfect body, mind, and spiritual nature? In spite of the fact that they were perfect in body and soul, they committed sin. How did Adam and Eve sin? This is a vital question. When we understand the reason for Adam's and Eve's disobedience, we also will know why the rest of the human race, including ourselves, have sinned.

In the beginning when God created Adam and Eve they were in a state of innocence. They knew neither good nor evil. It was not a part of their experience. But then God enlightened their minds as to what they could and could not do. They had no human parents; therefore, God Himself had to teach them what was right and what was wrong. *“And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die”* (Genesis 2:15-17).

God used the tree of the knowledge of good and evil as a means of testing Adam and Eve to see whether they would obey God or not. God's purpose in testing the first man and woman was benevolent. God supplied Adam and Eve with all the things they needed to enjoy life in the garden of Eden. He gave them permission to eat the fruit of all the trees in the garden except the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God used this particular tree as a testing point so they could make a decision of their own free will as to whether they would obey or disobey God. Adam and Eve had perfect minds and understood God's command concerning what they were permitted to do and not permitted to do. Both had a free will and were not under any coercion or force to break God's commandment out of necessity.

3. *Temptation is the source of sin.*

As moral beings Adam and Eve possessed free wills and it was their duty to obey God at all times. However it wasn't long before they came face to face with temptation. What is temptation? Temptation is an enticement to do evil, or in other words, it is a form of allurements to disobey God. Like Adam and Eve we all meet temptations to do wrong. As human beings we are daily exposed to temptations. They are unavoidable. But this does not mean that we must necessarily yield to temptation and commit sin.

4. *Temptation gains access to our minds in three different forms.*

First, Satan is an occasion of temptation. Satan, the great enemy of God, came into the garden of Eden and persuasively tempted Eve by telling lies to her. Satan, disguised as a serpent, said to Eve, "*Ye shall not surely die*" (Genesis 3:4). This was a lie! It was the very opposite of what God said, "*Thou shalt surely die*" (Genesis 2:17). Also, Satan attacked God's moral character by saying, "*For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil*" (Genesis 3:5). However there was no excuse for Eve to listen to Satan's lies. Eve possessed a perfect mind and knew the character of God to be infinitely good. She understood that whatever God told her was true and that God would not lie.

Second, temptation gains access to us by means of our mind and body. Adam and Eve's mind and body was not in itself sinful. Having been directly created by the hand of God they had perfect minds and bodies. However, their minds and bodies were occasions of temptation. "*The woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise*" (Genesis 3:6). Eve's feelings and desires were aroused by Satan's subtle words and by her gazing upon the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Yielding to temptation, Eve ate

of the forbidden fruit. Eve gave some of the fruit to Adam and he, likewise, yielding to impulse, was tempted and ate of the fruit of the tree.

Third, the world is an occasion of temptation. Adam and Eve were tempted by the forbidden fruit itself. The forbidden fruit is symbolic of the world with all its treasures, glory, pride and pleasures. Satan tempted Jesus by offering Him all the kingdoms of the world if Jesus would only worship him. The apostle John wrote, *“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever”* (I John 2:15-17).

The first two human beings knew that it would be a sin against God if they would eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Yet because of the very fact that the tree stood there in the garden, it was an occasion of temptation to both Adam and Eve.

These three, Satan, our own flesh, and the world with its transient glory, pleasures and pride, are the three sources of temptation and sin. Satan came along and tempted Eve’s mind in cleverly persuading Eve that she should not put her confidence in God’s Word. By lies, Satan slandered God’s good character and truthfulness. The tree itself became a source of temptation to Eve because God had strictly warned her against eating of its fruit. But the more she looked at the tree and its fruit, the more she wanted to eat the fruit. So her own feelings, her flesh, became a source of temptation to Eve.

Here they are, Satan, the tree (the world and all that is in it) and the flesh working in unison to overcome Eve’s will. Eve had to make a decision to obey or to disobey God. The moment Eve gave in to Satan and the desires of her flesh and

yielded her will to the temptation, she committed sin. And, of course, the same was true of Adam, who went through the same process of temptation and yielded his will to the desires of the flesh in a forbidden manner.

Both obedience and disobedience concern free will. In the face of temptation each person must decide for himself. Are you going to obey God or disobey God? That is the question. Adam and Eve deliberately chose to do what they knew was wrong and in violation of God's command. The source of Adam's and Eve's disobedience was their unbelief. When they were tempted to sin, they did not put their trust in God. Instead they listened to Satan's lies.

5. Sin is the transgression of the law

The Biblical definition of sin is found in I John 3:4, "*Sin is the transgression of the law.*" We can only transgress the law of God through an act of the free will. Our first parents were tempted from without by Satan and by the desirable appearance of the fruit on the forbidden tree, but they were also tempted from within by their own fleshly desires. As long as they stood steadfast and refused to give in to these desires, they were without sin. But the moment they submitted their wills to the temptation, they committed sin. Sin is choosing one's own pleasure and interests in a manner prohibited by God. In a word, sin is selfishness. Sin is a selfish state of the heart that in unbelief puts its own selfish interests before God and His laws. Sin is the spirit of self-seeking instead of seeking the glory of God. Sin is not just a mere act of the will but it is a state of the mind. It is a state of mind that is not willing to obey God's Word but chooses to be selfish.

6. What was the state of Adam's and Eve's mind when they became sinners?

First, they had a knowledge of right and wrong. They received this knowledge from God Himself. They knew it was wrong to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of

good and evil because God strictly forbade them from eating of the fruit of that particular tree. In order to be accountable for a crime a person must know the difference between right and wrong. For example, in a court of law if a person has committed a crime but it is proven that he was insane at the time he committed the crime, he cannot be treated as a criminal. The reason being that an insane person cannot differentiate between right and wrong and therefore does not know what he is doing. Such a person can be committed to an insane asylum but not to a prison. Adam and Eve were accountable to God for what they did because they knew right from wrong.

Second, Adam and Eve possessed ordinary human bodies capable of feelings and emotions. Their feelings could be aroused and tempted by looking upon the forbidden tree and also by listening to Satan's persuasive language.

Third, Adam and Eve possessed a free will. They had the power to say yes or no, to make their own personal decisions in the time of temptation. They could not be forced to do wrong against their own free will. They had the power to obey or disobey God. Adam and Eve of their own free will deliberately chose to disobey God. That is why God punished Adam and Eve after they sinned and banished them from the garden of Eden.

7. ***“By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin: and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned”*** (Romans 5:12).

According to the Word of God, all men have followed in the footsteps of Adam and Eve. *“But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death”* (James 1:14, 15).

The Scriptures teach that the entire human race are sinners and under God's condemnation of death.

“And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually” (Genesis 6:5).

“This is an evil among all things that are done under the sun, that there is one event unto all: yea, also the heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and madness is in their heart while they live, and after that they go to the dead” (Ecclesiastes 9:3).

“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?” (Jeremiah 17:9).

“Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God” (John 3:3).

“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23).

“Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be” (Romans 8:7).

“Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind: and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others” (Ephesians 2:3).

8. “The wages of sin is death” (Romans 6:23).

Sin is inexcusable. The Bible teaches *“The soul that sinneth, it shall die”* (Ezekiel 18:20). There is no justifiable reason for being selfish and committing sin. Yet men are always ready to cover up their sins by making excuses. Some people speak as though sin is a necessary part of human nature and therefore a minor matter that may be overlooked. Such is not the case. Breaking God’s commandments is not a small matter. God did not overlook Adam’s and Eve’s sin and he will not pass over our sins. We have sinned against an infinite God and therefore the full extent of our sins cannot be measured. The penalty of sin is eternal death.

Sin is not a virus or a disease that we could not avoid catching. Sin is not some kind of microbe located in our genes that has been passed down through our ancestors from one generation to the next. Sin is a state of mind that is basically selfish and in rebellion against God. Paul explains sin as being a *carnal mind*. To be carnally minded means to set one's mind on being selfish and disobeying God's laws. "*For to be carnally minded is death*" (Romans 8:6).

When Adam and Eve listened to Satan and decided to do Satan's will instead of God's will they became carnally minded. To be carnally minded is to be selfish. Adam and Eve chose to be selfish and became God's enemies. This is the state of all sinners. The person who is selfish has set his mind against God to be God's enemy. "*The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be*" (Romans 8:7). Paul is saying that a selfish person is not obedient to God's law and it is impossible for him to be obedient to God's law as long as he chooses to be selfish in heart. Therefore Paul goes on to say, "*They that are in the flesh (selfish) cannot please God*" (Romans 8:8).

It is the highest duty of every person to love, worship, honor and obey God. God is our Creator and the supreme Ruler of the universe. Sin is inexcusable. There was no good excuse for Adam and Eve to disobey God by eating the forbidden fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Listening to the lies of Satan was inexcusable. Their lack of confidence and trust in God was inexcusable. This can also be said of all the sins that we have committed in our lifetime. Selfishness is caused by unbelief and all men by nature stand before God without excuse. "*For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness. For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse*" (Romans 1:18, 20).

We cannot blame our sins on anybody but ourselves. We cannot lay the blame on our ancestors or our parents or on the society in which we live. The blame for sin lies with each individual person. *“The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son; the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him”* (Ezekiel 18:20).

When we put our trust in God, no one can force us to commit sin. Sin is not a necessity. Adam and Eve tried to make excuses for their sins and that is what man has been doing ever since. When God asked Adam if he ate of the forbidden tree Adam pointed his finger at Eve and put the blame on her. Indirectly, Adam blamed God by intimating the Lord gave him the woman, who in turn caused him to sin. When God required an answer from Eve, she in turn blamed the serpent. *“And the man said, The woman whom Thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. And the Lord God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat”* (Genesis 3:12, 13).

Human nature has not changed. People today, instead of confessing their sins, blame others for their own selfishness and wicked deeds. Go to a prison and talk with the men behind bars. Invariably you will hear the same excuses as given by Adam and Eve. In early childhood we learn the art of making excuses. Men always try to place the blame for disobedience on someone else. But the truth of the matter is that Adam and Eve, of their own voluntary will, chose to disobey God, which is likewise true of the entire human race. Human beings, of their own free will, disobey God, and there is no good excuse in all the world for the commission of sin.

9. *The Biblical account of Adam’s and Eve’s sin is likewise an account of every human being.*

“Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin: and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned” (Romans 5:12). We have all personally

sinned against God and broken His laws. *“All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way”* (Isaiah 53:6). The entire human race is under the condemnation of God. God said unto Adam, *“In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die”* (Genesis 2:17). The teaching of the Old Testament is, *“The soul that sinneth, it shall die”* (Ezekiel 18:4). The teaching of the New Testament is *“The wages of sin is death”* (Romans 6:23). *“It is appointed unto man once to die; but after this the judgment”* (Hebrews 9:27). The basic reason for physical death is that man is a sinner. But physical death is not the end. Unless God provides a substitute and shows mercy to the sinner, he must suffer in hell forever.

Lesson 4

THE DIETY OF CHRIST

Every true Christian believes that Jesus Christ is God manifested in human flesh. The Scriptures teach that a person who claims to be a Christian, but does not believe that Jesus is God is a deceiver and an antichrist. *“For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist”* (II John 7). The distinguishing mark of a Christian as opposed to an unbeliever is that a Christian believes that Jesus Christ is God and the Savior of the world.

THE VIRGIN BIRTH OF JESUS CHRIST PROVES THE LORD JESUS TO BE GOD IN HUMAN FLESH

Jesus Christ was the only person in human history to be born of a virgin. Hundreds of years before His birth, the Old Testament prophesied that Jesus would be born of a virgin. *“Therefore the Lord Himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel”* (Isaiah 7:14).

In the New Testament Christ’s miraculous birth is recorded in Matthew and Luke. *“Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as His mother Mary was espoused to Joseph before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost”* (Matthew 1:18). *“Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God”* (Luke 1:34, 35).

The fact that Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary is very important. Jesus was not an ordinary human being. He was conceived of the Holy Spirit. Thus Jesus was God manifest in human flesh. Certain so-called “Christian professors”

teach that Jesus was not born of a virgin because such a thing is naturally impossible. They contradict the Scriptures and reveal their own wicked unbelief. If we deny the virgin birth of Christ, then we are rejecting the authority of the Bible. We are indeed repudiating the Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ. If Jesus was not born of a virgin, He is not the Son of God. If Jesus is not God we have no Savior, and the Bible is false. The person who denies the virgin birth of Christ is not a Christian but an infidel.

THE MIRACLES OF JESUS PROVE HIM TO BE GOD

No one in the history of mankind except Jesus Christ performed such wonderful miracles. Jesus turned water into wine, caused fishermen to catch huge draughts of fish, cast demons out of people and healed all kinds of disabilities. Jesus healed the most difficult and incurable diseases. Lepers, paralytics, blind, lame, deaf and dumb—all were instantaneously and miraculously healed. There was no case too hard for Jesus. He not only healed people of their diseases, He even raised people from the dead. One of his greatest miracles was feeding 5,000 people with only five loaves and two fish. The miracles Jesus performed cannot be explained from a human viewpoint. They can only be explained by accepting the Scriptural doctrine that Jesus was God in human flesh.

THE WORDS OF JESUS MANIFEST HIS DEITY

No one ever spoke like Jesus spoke. Anyone with an unprejudiced mind will recognize that the words spoken by Jesus were the very words of God. This was the attitude of Peter when he said to Jesus, *“Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life”* (John 6:68). Jesus claimed to be One with God the Father and claimed the authority to give eternal life to all who came to Him. Either Jesus was God or He was the greatest liar and blasphemer that ever lived.

THE NAMES OF JESUS MANIFEST HIS DEITY

Jesus: The very word, Jesus, declares the Deity of Christ. *Jesus* is the transliteration of the Hebrew word *Joshua* and it means “Jehovah is Salvation.” “*And thou shalt call His name JESUS, for He shall save His people from their sins*” (Matthew 1:21).

Christ: The word, Christ, refers to His Deity. *Christ* in the Greek language means “The Anointed One.” Christ is not only the anointed King of Israel, but he is the King of kings and Lord of lords.

Lord: In the New Testament Jesus is called Lord. Jesus is the Lord of all men. We must not doubt the Deity of Jesus as did the disciple Thomas. Thomas doubted that Jesus was truly risen from the dead. Thus Thomas doubted the Deity of Jesus Christ. Finally, with his own eyes Thomas saw the resurrected Christ. For the first time he truly believed, and he exclaimed, “*My Lord and my God!*”

Son of God: In the New Testament Jesus is also called the Son of God, which means that Jesus is equal with God. “*The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God*” (Mark 1:1).

God: The apostle John declared Jesus is “*the true God, and eternal life*” (I John 5:20).

JESUS HAS THE AUTHORITY TO FORGIVE MEN’S SINS

Only God has the authority to forgive men’s sins. If Jesus were not God, He was the greatest deceiver in the history of the world. Jesus claimed to forgive the sins of men. “*When Jesus saw their faith, He said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee*” (Mark 2:5). “*And He said unto her, thy sins are forgiven*” (Luke 7:48).

Jesus has the authority to forgive our sins because He is God. “*Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren,*

that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins” (Acts 13:38). Upon the condition of true repentance, Christ removes our sins as far as the east is from the west.

***THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST
COUPLED TOGETHER WITH THAT OF
GOD THE FATHER DECLARES HIS DEITY***

The reason why the names of Jesus and God the Father are coupled together in the New Testament is because Jesus the Son is God even as the Father is God. The apostles coupled together the names of God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

“To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ” (Romans 1:7).

“Now God himself and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way unto you” (I Thessalonians 3:11).

“James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting” (James 1:1).

JESUS DECLARED THAT HE WAS ONE WITH GOD

“I and My Father are one” (John 10:30).

“Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me” (John 14:1).

“Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love Me, he will keep My words: and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him” (John 14:23).

“And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ Whom thou has sent” (John 17:3).

OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECIES PROVE JESUS CHRIST TO BE GOD

One of the greatest proofs that Jesus is God is the many Old Testament prophecies concerning Jesus Christ. These prophecies were written hundreds of years before Jesus was born in Bethlehem. However, everyone of these Old Testament prophecies was literally fulfilled.

1. Jesus Would be Born in Bethlehem

“But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting” (Micah 5:2).

2. Jesus Would be Born of a Virgin

“Therefore the Lord Himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel” (Isaiah 7:14).

3. Infants Would be Slain in Bethlehem

“Thus saith the Lord; A voice was heard in Ramah, Lamentation, and bitter weeping; Rachel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children because they were not” (Jeremiah 31:15). This was fulfilled during Jesus’ baby-hood when King Herod in his wrath slew all the infants in Bethlehem and the localities nearby.

4. Jesus Would Flee Into the Land of Egypt

“When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt” (Hosea 11:1). This was fulfilled when Joseph and Mary, with the infant Jesus, fled into Egypt to escape the wrath of Herod.

5. The Ministry of Jesus Would be Preceded by a Prophet

“Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me” (Malachi 3:1). *“Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and*

dreadful day of the Lord” (Malachi 4:5). This prophecy was fulfilled in the person of John the Baptist who was the fore-runner of Jesus.

6. Jesus Would be Rejected by His Own nation, Israel

The 53rd chapter of Isaiah graphically prophesies that Jesus would be silent before His accusers; His enemies would smite and spit upon Him; and that He would be hated without a cause. This same prophecy teaches that Jesus would die for the sins of others. All these details were literally fulfilled when Christ was crucified on the cross.

7. The Hands and Feet of Jesus Would be Pierced

“They pierced My hands and My feet” (Psalms 22:16).

8. Jesus Would be Given Gall and Vinegar While He was Dying

“They gave Me also gall for My meat; and in mM thirst they gave Me vinegar to drink” (Psalms 69:21). The Gospels record this event as being fulfilled when Jesus hung upon the cross.

9. The Side of Jesus Would be Pierced

“And they shall look upon Me whom they have pierced” (Zechariah 12:10). This was fulfilled when a Roman soldier pierced the side of Jesus after He died on the cross.

10. Lots Would be Cast for Christ’s Garment

“They part My garments among them, and cast lots upon My vesture” (Psalms 22:18). This was fulfilled when Roman soldiers beneath the cross cast lots for the Savior’s seamless robe.

11. Jesus Would Die Without Having Any of His Bones Broken

“He keepeth all His bones: not one of them is broken” (Psalms 34:20). Soldiers broke the leg bones of the two

malefactors on each side of Jesus to speed up their deaths. However, Jesus was already dead; and the soldiers did not break His bones. This was also accomplished as a fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecy.

12. Jesus Would be Buried in a Rich Man's Tomb

“And He made His grave with the wicked, and with the rich in His death” (Isaiah 53:9). This prophecy was literally fulfilled when Joseph of Arimathea took the body of Jesus and laid it in a new sepulcher.

13. Jesus Would be Resurrected From the Dead

“For Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption” (Psalms 16:10). This prophecy was fulfilled three days after His crucifixion when Jesus rose from the dead.

14. Jesus Would Ascend to the Right Hand of the Father

“Thou hast ascended on high, Thou hast led captivity captive” (Psalm 68:18). This prophecy was fulfilled after His resurrection when Jesus ascended into Heaven.

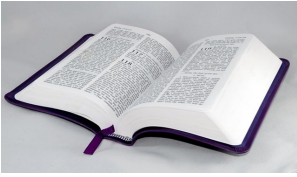
These are only a few of the many wonderful prophecies concerning the Lord Jesus Christ which were miraculously fulfilled in His life. The fulfillment of these prophecies points to one great truth: Jesus Christ was truly God in human flesh.

THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST FROM THE DEAD PROVES JESUS TO BE GOD

The message of the Gospel is that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that God raised Jesus from the dead on the third day according to the Scriptures. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the greatest proof of all for the Deity of Jesus Christ.

Faith in the resurrection of Jesus Christ is a condition of our salvation. *“That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the*

Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved” (Romans 10:9). Christ’s resurrection from the dead absolutely demonstrates that He is God in human flesh. Faith in Christ’s resurrection is a confession of His Deity. No man can be saved unless he believes in the resurrection of Jesus Christ.



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