

# Present Truth

The *Bible alone* as the only rule of faith and practice; *faith alone* as the only means of acceptance with God; and *Christ alone* as the only mediator between God and men.

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*Present Truth* is a magazine dedicated to the restoration of New Testament Christianity in this generation. It is especially committed to upholding the truth of justification by faith in this time when it is being threatened by humanism, emotionalism, and ecumenism. Our publication is based on the principle of sola Scriptura – the Bible and the Bible only as a rule of faith and practice (2 Tim. 3:15-17). We desire to give the gospel trumpet a certain sound (1 Cor. 14:7-9), that through words easy to be understood (Hab. 2:2) people may “be established in the present truth” (2 Pet. 1:12) and like Noah be proclaimers of the righteousness of Christ (2 Pet. 2:5).

**Editor:** Richard A. Marin

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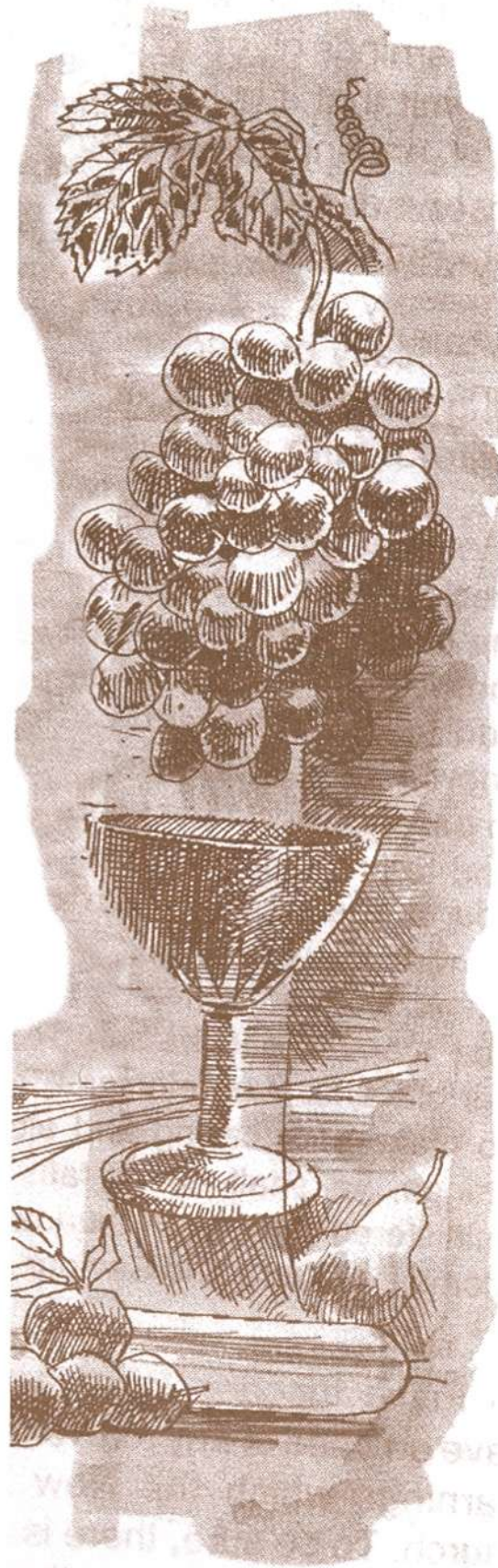
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## Editorial Introduction:

# The Belshazzar Spin

My son took a Communication major in college. I didn't know there was such a thing. I knew of English majors and Spanish majors and Math majors and History majors – but what was a Communication major? My mind began to consider the importance of communication.

Communication is vital. Without it there is no association, fellowship, or intimacy. Even before God confused the languages at the tower of Babel, God knew the power of speech. Communication was essential to harmonious human existence. In the cool of the day God communicated with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden (Gen. 3:8). Like all good parents God communicates with his children.

Through nature God communicates that he is eternal, powerful, and divine (Psa. 19:1-4; Rom. 1:20). It is through words, however, that he more clearly reveals his will. He speaks through prophets and through Christ himself (Heb. 1:1-2). God's communication with humanity is varied and unceasing.

We also communicate with each other by the use of words. Words have value only when their meaning is clear. God spoke to Adam and Eve and they understood. They spoke to one another and their words had meaning. In our day, as in Peter's, the enemy of life-giving communication uses a unique method for changing the meaning of words (2 Pet. 3:15-16). We might call it "the Belshazzar spin." I learned from my son that "spin doctors" are writers or editors that use words to communicate ideas with a positive slant toward what they are promoting. You may have heard of the events surrounding a 2010 Israeli attack on an Iranian-bound ship. Some of those reporting on this crisis chose words that favored Iran – others "spun" their words to favor Israel. The spin they gave colored the meaning of the ideas communicated often making words the vessels for carrying two opposing meanings.

At his midnight feast in the seventh century BC, King Belshazzar of Babylon did some "spin doctoring" with the wine of Babylon. Having tasted it "he gave orders to bring in the gold and silver goblets that Nebuchadnezzar his father had taken from the temple in Jeru-

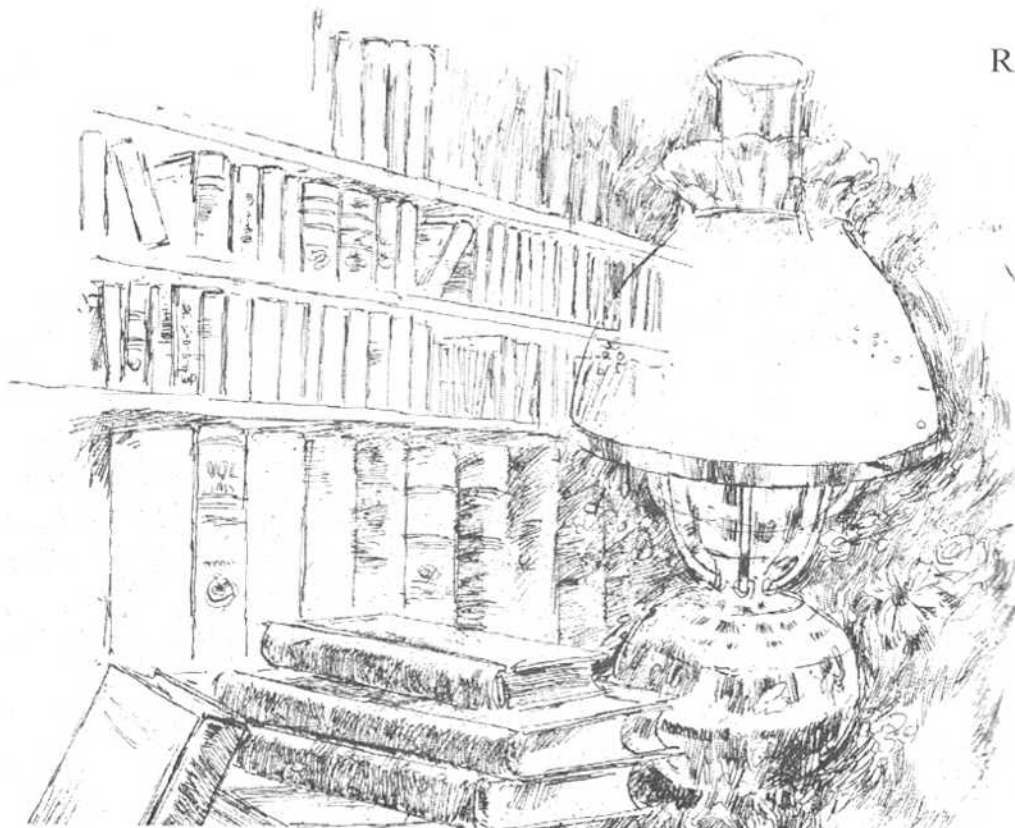


salem so that the king and his nobles, his wives and his concubines might drink from them.” Dan. 5:2 NIV. The implications are clearly spelled out: “As they drank the wine, they praised the gods of gold and silver, of bronze, iron, wood and stone.” Dan. 5:4 NIV. The “spin” was in favor of Babylonian gods and against the God of Israel. The vessels of God’s true temple were used to serve up the wine of the enemy just like a spin doctor chooses desirable words with which to share his ideas.

Today in the Evangelical world many are serving the wine of false doctrine in golden goblets stolen from God’s house. Fermented doctrines are being offered in vessels taken from the Bible. These vessels are words. Words like “justification,” “regeneration,” “imputation,” and “propitiation” are being used by contemporary spin doctors to teach concepts directly opposed to their Biblical meaning – and few of us recognize the difference!

In this issue of — Grace Cooper takes on the challenge of clearing up the definitions of some of the most important words in Christianity. Her “dictionary” of words vital to our salvation includes: “justification,” “adoption,” “regeneration,” “propitiation,” “imputation,” “sanctification,” “reconciliation,” “redemption,” “predestination,” and “glorification.” In a world where holy sanctuary goblets have been captured by the enemy, we need to be sure the doctrinal wine we are drinking comes from the grapes of the promised land.

Let’s search the Scriptures together.



RAM



This letter regards issue Volume 10, Number 2 which came in my mail last week. It concerned the "Soul of Man" and it's so called immortality. *This is one of the most excellent articles you have published in a long time.*

I intend to use this issue in teaching my SS class about this subject. It would be very helpful to me if you would follow this article with a listing of Bible verses noting man's MORTALITY. I mean verses such as are seen in Eccl. 9.

T. C. N., Idaho, USA

I thought to write you because I just finished the recent edition [V. 10 #2] of *Present Truth!* I always enjoy it so much!

You know what I liked about your publication this time? It never did jive with me that GOD would extend hell's suffering of damnation & gnashing of teeth forever.

I always ignored that type of statement. If the wrath of God upon the unrepentant causes immense pain but culminates in destruction or annihilation of the person, body and soul, that makes more sense to me & better fits the God I know. And naturally, I've gotten tired of what seems like too much emphasis at a memorial service of how the individual that has passed has entered glory and all their problems are gone... The picture you painted gives MUCH more glory to Christ and his grand return. (although, the in between "time" or "sleep" is admittedly difficult to explain and console a child with, as the thoughts are more abstract than their minds want to grasp sometimes.)

A. L. M., California, USA

Received Vol. 9 #3 "Free to Choose" and cannot tell [you] how much I enjoyed and studied *Present Truth* over these past 30-some years.

To tell the truth as one of my ministries I go to the jail with two other men on Thursday night and present the gospel to these inmates. And what I discuss is 95% what I've learned from *Present Truth*. Thank you!

E. K. G., Wisconsin USA

I greet you in the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ!

I was born a Muslim and received a full and thorough Muslim education. I am 41, and in the last decade I uncovered the truth of the Bible and God's plan. How astonished I was when I made the connections that I simply had never understood before.

I am enjoying some of your publications. Thank you! I am living on a fixed income so that I cannot order your [recordings]... in your order form... Again, thank you for equipping me with the armor of knowledge.

J. L., West Arsi, ETHIOPIA





## Wresting the Word

by theEditor

Wresting the Word is serious business! It can lead to the eternal loss of its perpetrators; it can cause true believers to stumble in their Christian walk. The apostle Peter made this clear:

“And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.

Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.” 2 Peter 3:15-18.

Webster defines the word *wrest* as “to turn... to twist from its natural or proper use or meaning by violence; to distort (the words or sense of a text).” There is a form of this word that is much more commonly used today – it is *wrestle* – which means: “to contend by grappling with, and striving to trip or throw down an opponent.” *Natah* is the Greek word that Peter used, and it means “to stretch out, turn aside or away” (*Young’s Analytical Concordance*). None of these definitions leave the impression that wresting is unintentional.

In Peter's day "wresting" took place and he warned that the inspired writings of the apostle Paul were a special target for stretching, twisting, and distorting.

In the article that follows this one Grace Cooper presents clear, concise definitions for some of the great words of Scripture. With the hope that you will examine closely her definitions we offer here some historical and contemporary distortions of the meanings of the ten words dealt with in the next article. You may be surprised at how widespread and popular these distortions are.

While we don't expect theological perfection in any person's work, we do want to prove all things and only hold fast to that which is good (1 Thes. 5:21). If God's Spirit was given to bring us all into the unity of the faith we believe the time has come to conform more fully to God's Word by letting the spotlight of truth dispel the darkness. The following headings are arranged in the same subject order as they appear in the next article. In this way you may compare the quotations cited here with the truths Grace Cooper defines in her article.

**1. Justification:** Is justification a declaration or a transformation?

The Roman Catholic Council of Trent in Chapter III stated: "...if they [men] were not born again in Christ, they would never be justified, since in that new birth there is bestowed upon them, through the merit of His passion, the grace by which they are made just." And the new *Catechism of the Catholic Church* says: "Justification includes the remission of sins, sanctification, and the renewal of the inner man." Paragraph 2019, p. 544.

From the heart of the Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod, Rolf Preus speaking at "A Congress on the Lutheran Confessions" said:

"Robert Preus subscribed to the words of that cute, conservative, Christian plaque that is found in pious family rooms and bathrooms all over America: 'God said it; I believe it; that settles it.' (Although, he might have taken the 'I believe it' out, so as to avoid suggesting that faith contributes to one's justification.) In other words, if God says that a sinner is righteous, that sinner really is righteous. Listen to the lecture notes on this point..."

"The question is not where I am justified by God. I am actually justified outside and inside and everywhere, so far as that is concerned. The question is that I am justified; and if I am justified, I am just, *not merely regarded as just*. And the question is not whether I am regarded as righteous or made righteous. If God regards me as righteous He has made me righteous." <[www.christforus.org/Papers](http://www.christforus.org/Papers)>.

In his *An American Translation Lutheran Bible* translator William F. Beck translates the Greek word, *dikaiow* (to justify), as "make righteous" rather than as "declare righteous."

Protestant scholar, E. P. Sanders says: “The forensic declaration is more than simply a proclamation; it is at the same time ‘effective’ declaration...” *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* p. 540.

**2. Adoption:** Is adoption a moral change or a legal exchange?

In his General Audience concerning “God’s Gift of Divine Adoption” on July 26, 1989 Pope John Paul II said: “The Spirit reproduces in man the image of the Son, thus establishing the intimate fraternal bond with Christ... Christ is with us and works in us through the Holy Spirit, putting into effect the eternal design of the Father, who has predestined us “to be his adopted sons through Jesus Christ” (Eph 1:5).” [[http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/john\\_paul\\_ii/audiences/](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/audiences/)

**3. Regeneration:** Is the new birth possible apart from faith in Jesus?

Bennett Broadway writes: “Rebirth takes place before the sinner *desires* to make a conscious decision to receive Jesus...” And “...a person’s regeneration does not depend on his decision to believe.” *God’s Awesome Grace* (Winepress Publishing, Enumclaw, WA) p. 32, 64.

**4. Propitiation:** For whom did Christ die? Was He a substitute or only as an example when He made propitiation?

Contemporary scholar, James D. G. Dunn writes: “Paul’s teaching is not that Christ dies ‘in the place of’ others so that they *escape* death (as the logic of substitution implies). It is rather that Christ’s sharing their death makes it possible for them to share his death.” *The Theology of the Apostle Paul* (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1998), p. 223.

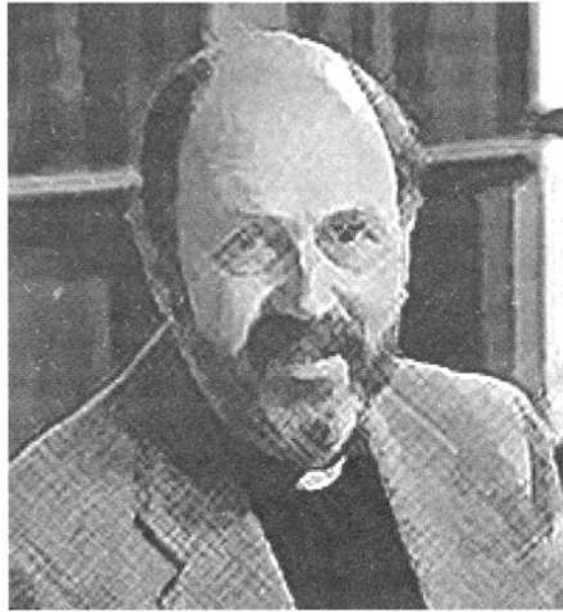
In his “Appendix II”, taken from *Definite Atonement*, (Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing, 1977. pp 85-101) Dr. Gary Long writes: “...the consistent Calvinist, who holds to a definite atonement, sees no purpose, benefit or comfort in a redemption that does not redeem, a propitiation that does not propitiate or a reconciliation that does not reconcile, which would be the case if these terms were applicable to the non-elect...”

Ray Kane writes: “Christ’s atonement is limited to God’s people – that group of people whom God ordained to be saved.” “...Christ did not die for everyone. His death, His atonement, was limited to the elect... Everyone else will have to spend eternity in hell paying for their sins themselves. And no one will be in hell for whom Christ died. His blood was not shed in vain for any man.” <Comingintheclouds.org>

**5. Imputation:** Does imputation mean “to account” or “to infuse”?



Peter Stuhlmacher in his *Rediscovering Paul's View of Justification* writes: "...the controversial and... much discussed distinction between 'imputed' righteousness (which is only credited to the sinner) and 'effective' righteousness (which transforms the sinner in his or her being) cannot be maintained from the Pauline texts." p. 61-62.



N. T. Wright

N. T. Wright rejects the traditional Protestant view of justification in general and its use of the term "imputation" which he says amounts to a "legal fiction." *What Saint Paul Really Said* (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1997), p. 102.

**6. Sanctification:** In sanctification is the Christian to work or only to believe?

John G. Reisinger writes: "I wholeheartedly agree that we do not 'believe to be justified' and then 'obey the law to be *sanctified*.' That is one of the root errors of the Covenant Theology of the Puritans." "... 'The grace of God that saves us' is the very same powerful grace that '*works in us* [as believers] to [both] *will* and *to do*' His revealed will?'... "We both agree that we are not justified by faith and sanctified by works." <[www.soundofgrace.com/jgr/index037](http://www.soundofgrace.com/jgr/index037)>

Australian Wendy Howard of *Despatch* magazine under the title of "Sanctification by Faith Alone – Have You Received this Blessing?" writes: "Those who are truly saved have received *justification by faith*. In these modern times, many believe that this is basically all that is given by the Holy Spirit – and after justification, they must "work" to be good with God's help. This is not the truth, for all of the Christian life is about the *gift* from God of the Lord Jesus Christ filling us by the Holy Spirit. *Sanctification by faith* is a neglected teaching today that is so sorely needed." <[www.despatch.cth.com.au](http://www.despatch.cth.com.au)>

**7. Reconciliation:** What portion of humanity did Christ reconcile to God?

Dr. Gary Long writes: "...the saving design of the atonement is intended by the triune God only for the elect... Can it be true... that God the Father has been reconciled by virtue of Christ's death to the

non-elect upon whom His condemning wrath eternally abides...?"  
*Op. Cit.*

**8. Redemption:** Where is our redemption accomplished?  
And for whom?

According to Peter Abelard (1079-1142) our redemption "is that supreme love *in us* resulting from Christ's passion." *Exposition of Paul's letter to the Romans* (Migne, PL, CLXXVIII, cols. 836, 861) (emphasis ours).

In *A Biblical Critique of Chuck Smith's Study: "Calvinism, Arminianism & The Word Of God"* Ray Kane states: "...that God loves everybody... happens to be unbiblical." "Are those who were 'not ordained' bought with a price? Was the ransom payment on their behalf? No. The ransom was only for 'as many as were ordained' and not one more." <cominginthecLOUDS.org>

**9. Predestination:** Whom did God elect to be saved and predestinated to be transformed into the image of His Son?

Ray Kane states: "God does the electing. Sinners do not elect themselves to be saved... God... did not intend for the... [non-elect] to be saved, only His elect." "...God is capable of saving whomever He wishes. So if He truly desired that not one solitary soul would perish, then no one would have to be concerned about hell. Yet we know from scripture that hell is very real and it will be quite full of sinners, not because God failed to save people but because those people were not among God's elect. *Op. Cit.*

**10. Glorification:** If Christ didn't rise glorified from the tomb what hope is there for us?

We quote here an analysis of the writings of Emil Brunner (*Dogmatics*, Vol. II pp.366-368) as given in *The True Image* written by Philip E. Hughes. "Brunner argued that *Paul* was 'the *earliest* and most reliable of the witnesses to the Resurrection,' and on this basis decided that it was not the idea of an empty tomb but the risen Lord, 'as a spiritual personal reality,' that mattered to him." "...he contended that 'while in the Gospel narratives the sight of the Empty Tomb is a matter of independent significance, in the mind of Paul it obviously *played no part at all.*'" "...the meeting of the Risen Lord was only granted to those who believed in him." pp. 370, 369, 371.





# Great Words of Scripture

by Grace Cooper \*

Every occupation has its own vocabulary: doctors, lawyers, mechanics, and even housewives know the name and purpose of each of their tools.

Words are the Christian's "tools." God's workers must know the meaning of such key words as: justification, regeneration, imputation, adoption, propitiation, etc. These words seem complicated but the same God who inspired holy men to write them is anxious to define them. As each word is defined our appreciation of God will increase.

## Key Word # 1: Justification

**Justification is the gracious act of God by which He judicially declares (not makes) and treats as righteous all who believe in Jesus.**

God created Adam and Eve perfect and expected them to perfectly obey Him. But sin entered. All human beings became guilty, sinful, separated from God (Rom. 3:10, 23). Now besides perfect obedience mankind owes God death for their sin.

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\* This article is a condensation of study material prepared and used by Grace Cooper over a lifetime of Christian service. What she's learned as a teacher she credits to such Bible teachers as M. R. DeHaan, M.D., Theodore Epp, and Warren Weirsbe, and most of all to God's grace. Besides teaching others she and her late husband brought up their seven children in a small community in Louisiana. Some of the illustrations included here have been added by the editor.

In order for a holy God to declare believing sinners righteous and still remain holy, three things must happen: 1) a substitute must take humanity's place; 2) humanity's sin must be placed on that substitute; 3) sin's penalty must be paid.

1. God Himself in the person of Jesus took our humanity becoming our Substitute and Representative (Isa. 53:4; John 1:14; Heb. 2:14-16). He was "in all points tempted like as we are" yet he lived a sinless life in our place (Heb. 4:15).

2. God placed the sins of humanity on His Son (Isa. 53:6) who bore them to the cross (1 Pet. 2:24) through the sacrifice of Himself (Heb. 9:26).

3. The penalty of sin is death (Rom. 6:23). This is the second or eternal death (Rev. 20:14). Only the infinite Jesus could experience this death for us and come out alive, having tasted death for every human being (Heb. 2:9). God never altered His foreordained penalty. Even when sin was placed upon His innocent Son, He still demanded the full penalty.

Justification is God's business. When Christ is lifted up He draws people to Himself, giving them faith (John 12:32; Rom. 10:17). By faith we take hold of Christ who becomes our righteousness. The righteousness (in life and death) that Jesus earned is legally credited to the believer's account. Those who believe are "accepted in the Beloved" (Eph. 1:6) and continue "being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." Rom. 3:24.

Justification is God's heavenly pronouncement that a person is part of His royal family. God imputes the finished work of Jesus to every believer's account and transfers our account to Jesus' name. In God's sight we are His sinless children, crucified, buried, raised, ascended, and seated in the heavenly places IN Christ.

### **Questions for Contemplation:**

1. What one condition must an individual meet before being justified? (Rom. 3:28; 4:5) \_\_\_\_\_
2. When/how was justifying grace made manifest to mankind? (2 Tim. 1:9-10) \_\_\_\_\_
3. Name two attributes of God that move Him to justify sinners? (Eph. 2:4) \_\_\_\_\_
4. List two things Jesus had to do in order to become our Substitute. (John 1:14; Heb. 4:15) \_\_\_\_\_
5. What else besides living a perfect life did Jesus have to do on earth so that we could be justified? (Heb. 9:22; John 11:50-52)  
\_\_\_\_\_





### **An Illustration of Justification**

The accused that goes before the judge to answer for his alleged crime may be guilty or innocent. When the judge hears the case and the evidence is presented he must make a decision, “guilty” or “not guilty.” If the judge says “Guilty!” that declaration does not make the accused into a criminal. If the judge says “Not guilty!” that doesn’t instantly transform the accused into a law-abiding citizen. The “not guilty” verdict of the judge does however clear the accused’s record. No crime remains to blacken his past. He leaves the courtroom uncondemned, just as if he had never been accused. Such a verdict should inspire him to live in harmony with the law, especially if he knows he was guilty of the crime for which he was taken to court.

### **Key Word # 2: Adoption**

**Adoption is the act of God by which He gives a person legal standing in His family.**

Before the creation of this world God had a family of angels (Job 38:6-7). The chief angel rebelled and took a third of that family with him (Rev. 12:3-9). God is making up that loss with His human family. Adam was created to be the first of many “sons” of God. But he fell and now only believers in Jesus are the adopted children, sons and daughters, of God. God’s adoption is always accompanied by new birth. This coming to life from spiritual death is brought about by the Word and the Holy Spirit (John 3:5).

Adoption into the family of God brings privileges. The eighth chapter of Romans lists some of these: a) God’s children are led by God’s Spirit (v. 14). b) They are free from following the elemental

course of this world over which Satan presides (v. 15; Eph. 2:2; Gal. 4:3). c) They are privileged to talk with God as their Abba, their dear Daddy (v. 15). d) Adopted children have assurance for they have been chosen, been legally made part of God's family, and been given the Spirit that assures them that they are the children of God (v. 16). e) They have become heirs of God, giving them right to everything that God's Son, Jesus deserves (v. 17). f) And they receive the privilege of suffering with Jesus until glorification (v. 17).

God's adoptive act not only gives privileges but each privilege brings responsibilities. These include letting the Holy Spirit guide us so that we walk worthy of our new position in God's family (Eph. 4:1).

### **Questions for Contemplation (choose the best answer):**

1. Adoption is :

- a. an act of God
- b. a process of growth from babes to adults
- c. assurance of eternal life

2. Adoption:

- a. gives believers the life and nature of God
- b. places a person in God's family where they can grow and mature spiritually
- c. helps us enjoy God's family on earth
- d. both "b" and "c"

3. Adopted children of God have the privilege of:

- a. walking and talking with God
- b. sinning without fear of punishment
- c. both "a" and "b"

4. Adopted children of God have the responsibility of:

- a. keeping themselves in the family of God
- b. walking worthy of their new name
- c. growing in grace and knowledge
- d. both "b" and "c"

### **An Illustration of Adoption**

When you want to adopt a child you must go before a judge who considers your case. Just taking a child into your home is not adoption. Any time the former parent wants to remove the child they can. But not when legally adopted! The judge signs the adoption papers giving the new parent every right to the child and giving the new child every right to the privileges and inheritance of the family.





### **Key Word # 3: Regeneration**

**Regeneration is the act of God by which the very life and nature of God is imparted into every person who trusts in Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour.**

Jesus commanded, “Ye must be born again.” The new birth, or regeneration, is as real and as necessary as is physical birth (John 3:1-7). “That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.” John 3:6.

Every human child has two parents and every child born into God’s family also has two parents: the water and the Spirit. The Spirit of God takes the Word of God (represented by water [Titus 3:5; Eph. 5:26]) and teaches the sinner that he is lost, dead in trespasses and sins. Then He points to Jesus, the solution. The sinner looks, and lives for in that moment the Holy Spirit imparts the life of God within the believer. “It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing.” John 6:63 (Cf. Job 33:4). “The Spirit giveth life.” 2 Cor. 3:6 (Cf. 2 Pet. 1:4). Peter explains it this way: “Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.” 1 Peter 1:23.

The new birth is a radical change of life and nature that initiates an ongoing regeneration in the experience of the believer. “The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost.” Rom. 5:5. We walk in the light and have fellowship with other believers knowing that we continually need the blood of Christ to cleanse us from all sin (1 John 1:7). We also know that our ongoing regeneration will culminate in glorification when we will be like Jesus (Rom. 8:17, 29; 1 John 3:2).

The word “regeneration is used only twice in the Bible. In Matthew 19:28, Jesus is speaking of the time when with new celestial bodies our regeneration will be complete in the kingdom of heaven. In Titus 3:5, Paul is writing of the cleansing work of the Holy Spirit in which the Word and the Spirit produce new life in the believer. We will deal with the ongoing effects of regeneration when we consider “practical sanctification.”

**Questions for Contemplation (choose the best answer):**

1. Regeneration is:
  - a. An act of God justifying those who believe
  - b. New birth
  - c. Reformation
  
2. Regeneration:
  - a. Affords permanent fellowship in God’s family
  - b. Imparts the divine nature and Spirit to the believer
  - c. Guarantees freedom from Satan
  
3. To experience regeneration, one must:
  - a. Be drawn of the Holy Spirit
  - b. Be baptized
  - c. Do good works

**An Illustration of Regeneration**

When placed in the soil a seed of corn is hard and inactive. Surrounded by fertile soil and life-giving moisture the kernel begins to germinate. These two elements act upon the seed and new life comes forth, first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. If regeneration continues fruit will be produced (Mark 4:26-28). Every seed that sprouts to life is an illustration of regeneration.

**Key Word # 4: Propitiation**

**Propitiation is the work of Jesus Christ on the cross by which He satisfied God’s holiness so that God could extend grace and mercy to lost sinners.**

As our representative Adam chose separation from God. We all became criminals, guilty of breaking God’s law deserving of death even the wrath of God.

Out of pure love God sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins (1 John 4:10). Jesus willingly took sin upon Himself so we



would not have to pay its penalty. God's wrath against sin fell on Him instead of on us. Jesus became the sacrificial substitute that atoned for our sin. God's holy, righteous character was satisfied. In Christ, humanity was set free.

It was love, not anger, that moved God to send His Son to die. The cross didn't change God's wrath to love. God has always been a God of wrath against sin. He has also always been holy, just, righteous, and merciful. The fall of man did not catch God unprepared. When sin entered He had to demand that it be punished according to His holy law that He might remain just and the Justifier. God's wrath against sin and His love for sinners never changes. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." James 1:17 (Cf. Mal. 3:6, Acts 2:23; 1 Pet. 1:20).

Propitiation is God's act in humanity's behalf but it benefits only those who take refuge in Christ. Outside of Him there is only condemnation. Why is this so? The apostle John tells us: "He that believeth on Him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." John 3:18. The apostle Paul agrees that Christ's propitiation becomes ours only when we believe in the shed blood of Christ (Rom. 3:25).

**Questions for Contemplation  
(choose the best answer):**

1. List words or phrases which describe propitiation:

- a. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_
- d. \_\_\_\_\_

2. Propitiation is the work of Jesus on the cross:

- a. to appease God's wrath
- b. to satisfy God's righteous law; pay the demanded price
- c. to redeem mankind
- d. both "b" and "c"

3. God was moved to to give His Son as the propitiation:

- a. By His righteous wrath against sin



- \_\_\_ b. By His love for humanity
- \_\_\_ c. By His condoning Spirit

**4. True or False (explain the false statements)**

a. God became a God of wrath after sin entered the human race.

\_\_\_\_\_

b. God's Word has power to exalt God's loving provision regardless of worldly ideas. \_\_\_\_\_

c. God was unprepared to atone for sin therefore Jesus persuaded the Father to let Him pay the price. \_\_\_\_\_

d. Jesus is the propitiation for the obedient believer but not for the carnal believer. \_\_\_\_\_

**An Illustration of Propitiation**

The motorcycle officer shouted over his loudspeaker, telling the driver to pull over. At the side of the freeway he approached the driver's window and asked what he had been reading while driving. After filling out the ticket he asked the driver to sign it and handed him a copy saying, "God bless you," before returning to his motorcycle.

What kind of a blessing could a traffic ticket be? When the court date arrived the Highway Patrol officer was not there. For a year the guilty driver was required to call the court once a month inquiring if the officer had revived the ticket.

The hurried driver had unknowingly signed a ticket that only accused him of going 50 miles an hour on a freeway whose speed limit was 70 miles an hour. Instead of adding a hearty fine to his accomplishments the officer of the law must have decided to take the loss in the driver's place. That policeman took the penalty and let the driver go free.



## Key Word # 5: Imputation

**Imputation is the act of God by which the righteousness Jesus developed on earth is legally credited to the sinner's account in heaven.**

Jesus left all the glories of heaven and came to earth to live as humans are to live. "Though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich." 1 Cor. 8:9. We owe a debt we can never pay and we are spiritually bankrupt. Jesus came to earth to settle our account. Our sin was imputed to Him who had no sin. That cost Him His life, for the wages of sin is death. Now His righteous life and propitiatory death can be credited to our account.

In Romans 4 Paul repeatedly uses the word "impute." Our English Bibles translate it in a variety of ways: "count," "reckon," "impute," "credit," "account." God put righteousness to Abraham's account. (Right in the middle of the word "impute" is the word "put.") What was it that let Abraham receive this special addition to his account? It was faith (Rom. 4:3). "Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead." Rom. 4:23-24.

Philemon had a slave named Onesimus. Onesimus stole from his master and fled. He pictures lost sinners – bankrupt and deserving death. Hiding in Rome, Onesimus met the Apostle Paul and was converted. Paul's love for Onesimus moved him to seek his freedom so he wrote a letter to Philemon: "If thou count me therefore a partner, receive him as myself. If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account." Philemon 1:17-18. Paul's requests portray both aspects of imputation: crediting a person with the value of another person and debiting a person's account with another's debt. In like manner God credits believers with the work and character of Jesus placing on Jesus' account their sin debt.

### Questions for Contemplation:

1. What should be our attitude towards our past sins? (Rom. 6:11; Phil. 3:13) \_\_\_\_\_
2. What should be our attitude towards the sins of others? (Matt. 6:14-15) \_\_\_\_\_
3. What should be our attitude towards our words and actions? (Matt. 12:36-37; 1Cor. 4:2-5) \_\_\_\_\_
4. What one word might well sum up man's correct response to God's act of imputation? \_\_\_\_\_





5. List three synonyms for “impute.” (Rom. 4:3-6) \_\_\_\_\_

### **An Illustration of Imputation**

John Doe, Sr. knows his sick son is bankrupt. Love moves him to pay his son’s debt in full. Bur Junior has to have money to live on or he will go into debt again. Therefore his father signs a blank check and tells the banker: “If any more debts arise charge them to my account.” The banker stamps Junior’s account: “Paid...in...full,” and transfers it to a new name: “John Doe, Sr.” When we believe in Jesus our sin account is marked “Paid...in...full,” and a heavenly business account is opened to deal with our future sins.

### **Key Word # 6: Sanctification**

**Sanctification is the gracious work of God in cooperation with the believer in setting the believer apart (purifying him) for God and for His service.**

The word translated “sanctify” is sometimes translated: “holy,” “saint,” “consecrated,” “hallowed,” and “dedicated.” Sanctification sets us apart from sin to holiness in order that we may serve God. There are three aspects to sanctification: 1) positional, 2) practical, 3) perfect.

1) Positional sanctification is that righteousness that every believer has in Christ in heaven (1 Cor. 1:30). Believers have been

placed into the one body of Christ and His holy obedience covers them (1 Cor. 12:13; Heb. 10:10, 14).

2) Practical sanctification is the continual, progressive infilling of righteousness accomplished by the Holy Spirit in cooperation with the believer (Rom. 8:4; Phil. 2:12). In view of God's mercy, we as Christians are to glorify God by the way we live, cleansing "ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." Rom. 12:1; 2 Cor. 7:1 (Cf. 1 John 3:3). Filthiness of the flesh refers to sins we commit; Filthiness of the spirit refers to sins of the heart such as our thoughts and attitudes.

3) Perfect sanctification is that final vivifying work of the Holy Spirit at glorification when our corruptible natures are changed into incorruption (Rom. 8:17-18; 1 Cor. 15:53; 1 Thes. 5:23).

Primarily we speak of sanctification in the practical sense. This is because positional sanctification is usually referred to as ongoing justification and perfect sanctification is referred to as glorification. With Jesus we place the emphasis on what is going on in the life of the believer in this world: "I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil... Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." John 17:15-17. "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Phil. 1:6.

God desires to set apart as holy every sinner that comes to Him for redemption (Ex. 31:13). It is written, "Be ye holy; for I am holy." 1 Pet. 1:16. Christians are set apart from the world, the flesh, and the devil and are continually being separated more and more from these three enemies of holiness. Sanctification climaxes in being eternally separated from the world, the flesh, and the devil.

### **Questions for Contemplation:**

1. What aspect of sanctification do believers have in Christ? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What aspect of sanctification do believers have in themselves?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What aspect of sanctification do believers look forward to experiencing in the future? \_\_\_\_\_
4. What responsibilities do believers have in regard to their sanctification?  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. What is the primary means of sanctification used by the Holy Spirit?  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. What two aspects of sanctified holiness are mentioned in 2 Corinthians 7:1? \_\_\_\_\_



### **An Illustration of Sanctification**

The native woman sat cross-legged on the dirt floor while her hands nimbly moved the colorful thread from side to side in front of her. Around her back was a strap that held her loom in place while the far end of her weaving was attached to the opposite wall. One thread at a time was taken from the spindle and woven into the pattern. As she separated the yarn it was becoming a beautiful tapestry while yet unfinished.

God is taking the threads of our experience and weaving a holy piece of art for His kingdom. When the last thread is squeezed into its place the tapestry can be taken from the loom and hung in His heavenly home. Like the woman with her loom God is sanctifying His children fitting them for heaven.

### **Key Word # 7: Reconciliation**

**Reconciliation is an act of God that brings together that which was separated.**

The Bible begins with a record of perfect harmony – man in God’s image, united with God in mutual love and in daily communion. But sin set us at enmity, at war, against God. We were separated both in nature and in our actions. Sinful propensities and original guilt became ours (1 Cor. 15:22; Rom. 8:7). In Adam “sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for [in]



that [sin of his] all have sinned.” Rom. 5:12. If the sinner stays at war with God he will die and be eternally separated from God. Therefore humanity needs to be brought together with God, reconciled.

Jesus Christ has removed every obstacle that separated God from humanity. When Adam fell Jesus stepped in as “the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.” God desired to reconcile humanity with Himself but His holy nature could not be changed. With Jesus as a ransom for the fallen race God was reconciled to humanity and humanity could be reconciled to God in Christ. “God... hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation... Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God.” 2 Cor. 5:18-20. Through the merits of the blood of Christ we can be reconciled to God and go forth inviting others to also be reconciled to Him.

### **Questions for Contemplation:**

1. Besides separating man from God who else was separated by sin?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What two things did Adam’s sin bring to all of us?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. According to Romans 5:11 when do we receive the reconciliation?  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. What position do the reconciled have to God? \_\_\_\_\_

### **An Illustration of Reconciliation**

Maybe you have known a married couple that got into a fight – not just an exchange of words. Oh, yes, there were words, strong ones, louder and louder ones. But it didn’t end there. Plates were thrown across the kitchen, fists went through the walls and both parties said “I’ve had it with you!” Estrangement and separation was the result.

After moving to their separate worlds the husband began thinking that he should seek reconciliation. He would forgive his wife and ask her to forgive him – but how could he tell his wife? She had cut off all communication with him and also secured a “Restraining Order” against him. Even though he had forgiven her all those spiteful words, all those broken plates he needed an ambassador who would go tell her and ask her to forgive him.

Maybe you took on the task of carrying the message to the estranged wife. You went to her and told her that her husband wanted to ask her forgiveness for all the damage he had caused to their home and



to their marriage and that he forgave her all her part in the separation and wanted to reunite their marriage and home.

Some estranged spouses resist reconciliation. All we can do is tell them the good news that their former partner is reconciled to them and wants to restore their marriage. Others embrace the good news and are reconciled.

### **Key Word # 8: Redemption**

**Redemption is the costly act of God in buying back humanity by paying the price that justice required.**

It is because of God's loving mercies that we are redeemed (Psa. 44:26; Titus 3:4). Redemption is a divine mystery that will continue to unfold throughout eternity (Isa. 55:8-9; Rom. 11:33) but taking a brief look at some Old Testament examples may help us grasp some of the beauty of this word.

In the Old Testament redemption is usually associated with freeing bondservants, sacrificial animals, or forfeited real estate.

Adam sold his possession. It was humanity's real estate that was mortgaged. Jesus became our brother so He could redeem that possession for it is written "If thy brother... hath sold away some of his possession, and if any of his kin come to redeem it, then shall he redeem that which his brother sold." Lev. 25:25.

Abraham bound Isaac his son on the altar for a sacrifice as God had asked him to do. The boy's life was spared, redeemed, when the angel of the LORD called unto Abraham and said, "Lay not thine hand upon the lad." God had provided a substitute sacrifice – a ram caught in a thicket. "And Abraham... offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son." Gen. 22:9-14.

In Egypt the children of Israel became bondservants. God through Moses took drastic measures to redeem them. He went to redeem his own people by driving out nations from before them (1 Chron. 17:20-21).

It was God's own children who sold themselves into slavery. By their iniquities they sold themselves. In order "to bring Jacob again to him." God sends His "Servant." "And all flesh shall know that I the LORD am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob." "Therefore the redeemed of the LORD shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head... For thus saith the LORD, Ye have sold yourselves for nought; and ye shall be redeemed without money. Isa. 50:1-5; 49:3-52:3. By pouring out his soul unto death God's Servant became our Redeemer (Rom. 3:24; 1 Pet. 1:18-19). It was not by force that God took back the human race. Rather it was through Christ's holy life and painful death that mercy and justice could embrace at His cross.

### **Questions for Contemplation:**

1. What could God not do in order to redeem fallen humanity?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. When Adam sold the race into slavery who paid the price for our freedom? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What was the price for the redemption of humanity? \_\_\_\_\_
4. What part does a purchased slave play in his redemption? \_\_\_\_\_
5. According to Titus 2:14 what was God's ultimate purpose in redeeming mankind? \_\_\_\_\_

### **An Illustration of Redemption**

With the help of his father a small boy built a very nice boat for him to sail on a nearby pond. Day after day he enjoyed his boat. One day a strong wind blew the lovely craft to the far side of the pond where a current carried it downstream. The boy chased around the pond but when he came to the stream the boat was not there. For many days he searched the stream bank hoping to locate his vessel caught in some branches or washed up on a sand bar – all to no avail.

That fall his father took him to the county fair. All year he had been saving his money for this special day when there would be plenty of chances to spend it. Wandering from booth to booth he selected the food and items he wished to purchase before paying out any of his cash. He also planned to go the Ferris wheel and other rides once he had his food. Then in one of the booths he saw it: a beautiful little boat on display. To his dismay it was just like the one



he and his father had built – why it was that very same boat. Taking all his hard earned money that he had been saving for food, rides, games, and trinkets at the fair he purchased back his lost vessel. With rejoicing he showed his father and told him he was ready to go home.

### **Key Word # 9: Predestination**

**Predestination is God’s eternal plan to make His children like the Lord Jesus Christ.**

The first step in God’s plan of predestination was “election.” Election means to choose. Knowing the end from the beginning God foresaw the fall of man. Before the foundation of the world He chose Christ as His Elect , the Substitute and Surety of the race. Having chosen us IN Christ he predestinated us to be conformed to the image of His Son (Rom. 8:29). No where does the Bible say we are “predestined” to be saved; it always says we are predestined to become like Jesus. In Christ we are elected to be saved and all who enter Him by faith are predestined to be like Him. Jesus said: “...this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.” John 6:40.

There was a tax collector in Israel, despised for his fraud yet loved of God. Light from heaven penetrated his heart. Instead of coving his sin and hiding from the light he accepted it and desired to see Jesus. By faith he became a true Israelite, a child of Abraham. Jesus said of him, “This day is salvation come to this house, forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of man is come to seek and



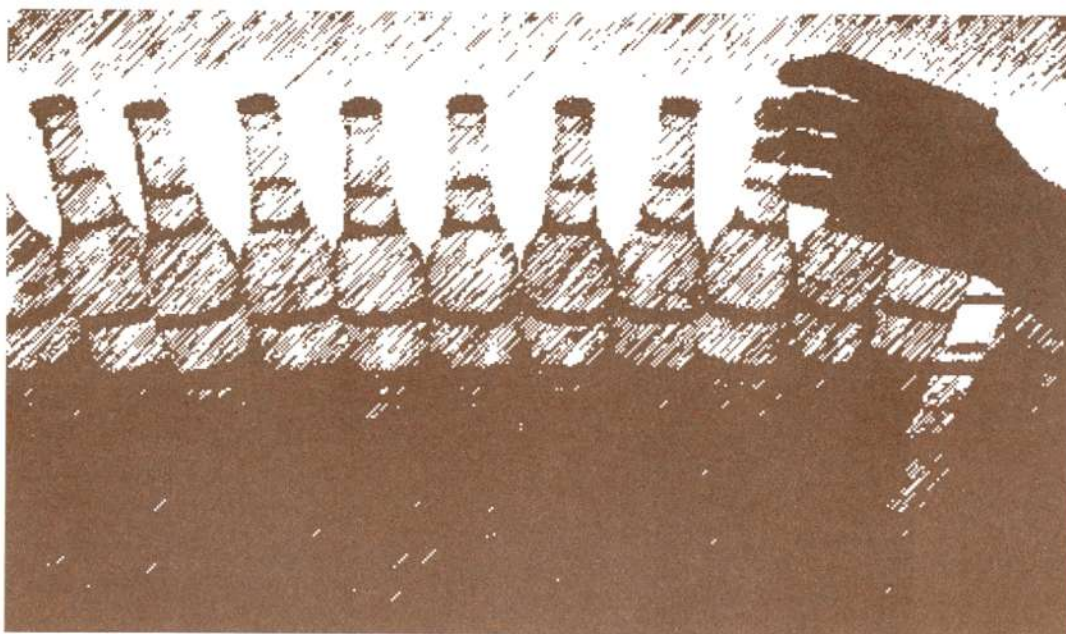
to save that which was lost.” Luke 19:9-10. Upon entering Christ Zaccheus was predestined to be transformed into His image.

### Questions for Contemplation:

1. According to Romans 10:13 to whom is election limited? \_\_\_\_\_
2. According to John 12:36 what means does God use to bring people into Christ? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Which of the following does predestination do?
  - \_\_\_ a. determines some to be saved
  - \_\_\_ b. determines some to be lost
  - \_\_\_ c. determines believers to be made like Jesus
4. What is the ultimate end of predestination? \_\_\_\_\_

### An Illustration of Predestination

Have you ever watched an automated assembly line? Maybe it was bottles being filled with fruit juice. As each bottle was placed onto the assembly belt it was predestined to be filled with juice. Many bottles might have remained on the shelf waiting their turn but for those attached to the belt their destiny was fixed – they would be filled with juice. The decision to be filled with juice took place long before the finished product was sealed.





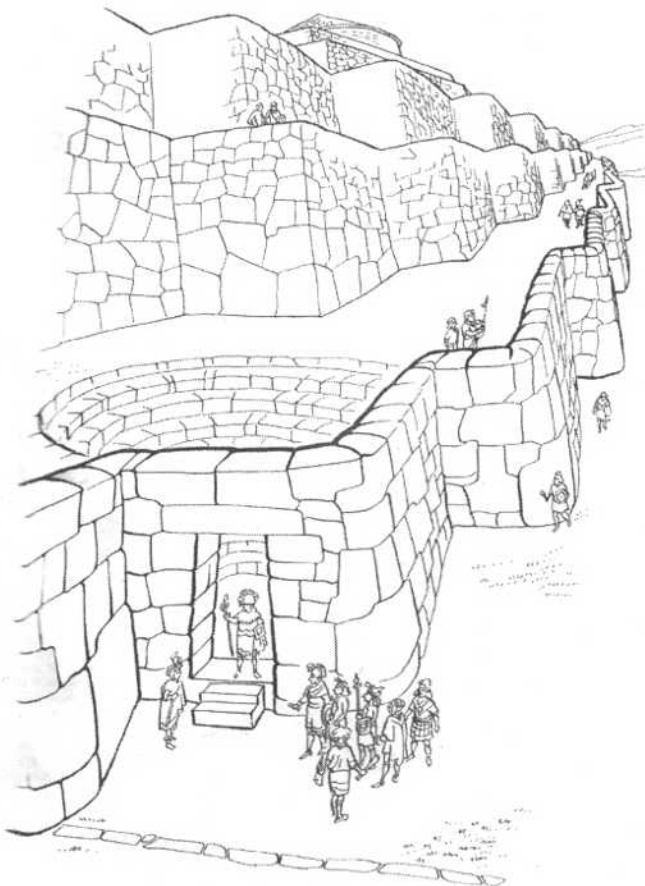
## Key Word # 10: Glorification

**Glorification is the completion of God's eternal plan to make His children like Him in character.**

God's glory is His character. When Moses asked to see His glory He showed him His goodness, proclaiming His holy name (Ex. 33:18-19): "The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty." Ex. 34:6-7.

Only God has ultimate glory and only God truly deserves glory but Christians have the wonderful privilege of sharing in the glory of God (Rom. 8:30; 1 Pet. 1:24). There is the glory that Jesus had before coming to earth and the glory of His earthly fulfillment of the work His Father gave Him to do (John 17:4-5). We might call the former "eternal glory" and the latter "acquired glory." In His High Priestly prayer Jesus refers to the first as God's own essence, "the glory which I had with thee before the world was." About the second He says: "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." We will never experience the total essence of God's being; such glory belongs only to God. We will, however, be like Jesus as "the Son of man" in that we build holy characters, spiritual life that glorifies God.

Originally man was created in God's glory but sin marred our glory; we fell short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23). Therefore our glory ends at the grave unless we enter into His salvation, share God's glory, and become the praise of His glory (Eph. 1:12). In His request to His Father, Jesus continued: "And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they





may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.” John 17:22-23.

Sanctification culminates in glorification. Both are primarily the work of the Holy Spirit (2 Thes. 2:13; 2 Cor. 3:18). When that which is perfect is come then God will have made His people “perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.” Heb. 13:21.

“And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever... Amen.” Rev. 5:13-14.

### **Questions for Contemplation (True or False):**

\_\_\_ 1. Believers will be glorified with the glory which Jesus had before the foundation of the world.

\_\_\_ 2. Jesus paid the supreme price so that we could be with Him and share in His glory.

\_\_\_ 3. Jesus is glorified in the lives of His people.

\_\_\_ 4. Our glorification is preceded by God’s calling, His justification, His regeneration, and His sanctification.

\_\_\_ 5. Our glorification is completed at “the day of Jesus Christ” according to Phil. 1:6.

### **An Illustration of Glorification**

In Peru it is possible to observe Inca stonework so closely fit together that no mortar is needed. Solomon built a temple of hewn stones. Each stone cut out of the mountains was chiseled, fitted and polished for its place in the temple before ever being brought to the site. When they were brought to Jerusalem they were united, becoming God’s house. Without the sound of axe or hammer they fit perfectly together. When God has completed fitting us for the new Jerusalem and all our rough edges are removed He will fill His temple with His glory. Like a master builder today God is polishing the living stones. Each one must be as perfectly fitted as an Inca wall. The chiseling is the work of sanctifying His children, fitting them for heaven. Finally the temple is filled with God’s glory.

### Comprehensive Questions:

1. When a person hears the message of Christ Jesus and believes, God declares that person acceptable in His sight – what word describes that declaration?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. When a person enters Christ by faith, God and the believer cooperate in a purifying work which progressively sets the believer more and more apart for God and His service – what word describes that work?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. God bought back humanity that had sold themselves into the hands of Satan – what word describes that transaction? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Entrance into God's family with all the rights of an eternal inheritance comes to those who enter Christ by faith – what word describes that inclusion? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Everyone who trusts in Jesus as their personal Saviour is born again and receives the very life and nature of God – what word describes that new birth? \_\_\_\_\_
6. On the cross Jesus satisfied God's holiness making the extension of grace and mercy to undeserving sinners possible – what word describes that act?  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. Jesus volunteered to step between an offended God and sinful humanity to bring the two estranged parties back together – what word describes that reunification? \_\_\_\_\_
8. The righteousness that Jesus developed on earth is legally credited to the heavenly account of a sinner who believes – what word describes that accrediting? \_\_\_\_\_
9. God's eternal purpose is to make all who by faith enter His Elect Son just like Him in character – what word describes that purpose? \_\_\_\_\_
10. God by His Holy Spirit will complete His eternal plan of making all His children like him in character – what word describes that final cleansing act? \_\_\_\_\_

### Answer Key:

*Questions on "justification:"* 1. faith, believe the Word of God; 2. by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ; 3. His rich grace and His great love; 4. become flesh; and live a sinless life; 5. suffer and die, give His life, let His blood be shed.

*Questions on "adoption:"* 1. (a); 2. (b); 3. (a); 4. (d)

*Questions on "regeneration:"* 1. (b); 2. (b); 3. (a)

*Questions on "propitiation:"* 1. a) gift; b) sacrificial Lamb; c) substitute sacrifice; d) the price of redemption. 2. (d). 3. (b). 4. a) False, (God has always hated sin and loved righteousness); b) True. c) False, (God merely set His preordained plan into action); d) False, (God paid for all sin but this atonement is effective only for those who accept it).

*Questions on "imputation:"* 1. Count oneself dead to them and put them behind; 2. Forgive them; 3. Remember that a day of final accounts lies ahead; 4. Gratefulness, thankfulness, or obedience; 5. Count, reckon, account, credit.

*Questions on "sanctification:"* 1. Positional sanctification; 2. Practical sanctification; 3. Perfect sanctification; 4. Cooperation with God's Spirit in cleansing ourselves of sin and perfecting holiness; 5. The Word of truth; 6. Flesh and spirit.

*Questions on "reconciliation:"* 1. Man was separated from man; 2. Condemnation (guilt) and corruption (a propensity to sin); 3. Now, when we believe; 4. Closeness ("made nigh" Eph. 2:13).

*Questions on "redemption:"* 1. Change His Law, His nature; 2. God did; 3. The life and the death of Christ; 4. Accept it (to believe); 5. To have a special, purified people.

*Questions on "predestination:"* 1. To those who believe (anyone who enters Christ, the Elect, by faith); 2. Light; 3. (c); 4. To be conformed to Christ's image (glorification [Rom. 8:30]).

*Questions on "glorification:"* 1. F; 2. T; 3. T; 4. T; 5. T.

*Answers to the "Comprehensive Questions" are listed here using the "Key Word" numbers from the preceding text: (1), (6), (8), (2), (3), (4), (7), (5), (9), (10).*

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# Lamb of God

Robert D. Brinsmead

L. Shaw



1. With - in the tab - er - na - cle court the lit-tle Lamb was led,
2. Now - ev - rytime I see a Lamb up - on the gras - sy plain
3. Then make me like the gent - le Lamb with white and wool - ly fleece:



To of - fer up its gent - le life with sins up - on its head.  
I know that ev' - ry time I sin, I pierce His heart a - gain.  
Come live with - in my will - ing heart, and make all sin to cease.



O Je - sus was the Lamb of God who died up - on the cru - el tree:



He took the blame for all my sin; His heart did break in a - gon - y.

