

Welcome to: - Bible House of Grace.



God, through His Son Jesus, provides eternal grace for our failures and human limitations.

Salvation In the Book of **Matthew, Mark and Luke.** (2013)

The Bible not only reveals God's eternal plans purposes and promises
But also shows how you can know God for yourself.

Teach it, don't demand it.

Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man. As to such I neither claim special knowledge or perfect understanding.

If you think items presented on this site to be in error, please let me know and I will gladly reconsider the content.

Salvation in the Book of Matthew, Mark and Luke.

INTRODUCTION: since the primary focus of this study is upon Scriptures (in most chapters of the book of Matthew) that relate to salvation and are relevant to eternal life there are far too many different topics and titles to make a topics list, but I have faith that most who travel through each chapter will by the time they arrive at the end not only be enriched in their knowledge of salvation, but also enriched in God's love and God's grace in Christ.

Matthew 1

The Birth of Jesus.

Matthew 1:1-16 ----- ¹The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. ---- NOW GO TO ---- ¹⁶and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ.

Matthew 1:21 ----- ²¹The angel Gabriel tells Mary; "She will bear a son, and call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins."

From these verses we learn that: -

- Jesus is the promised seed of Abraham and the promised seed of David.
 - The foster Son of Joseph and the Son of Mary.
 - Jesus is the promised Messiah the Christ of God and will save sinners from their sin.
-

Matthew 3

John the Baptist, Water Baptism and Jesus.

Matthew 3:2 ----- ²Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Matthew 3:6 ----- ⁶they were baptized by him (John the Baptist) in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

Matthew 3:11-13 ----- ¹¹I (John the Baptist) baptize you with water for repentance, but he who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. ¹²His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and gather his wheat into the barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire." ¹³Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him.

Matthew 3:17 ----- ¹⁷behold, a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."

From these verses we learn that: -

- John the Baptist's whole mission was to shine a spotlight on Jesus and to prepare the way for him.
- Jesus was water baptised by John and is God's most beloved Son.
- People must repent and acknowledge their sin before God
- Those seeking God and turning to the LORD were water baptised.
- Jesus will baptize those in his Kingdom with the Holy Spirit and with fire (meaning he will judge them according to righteousness and in this way purge the wicked and corrupt servants out of his Kingdom.

NOTE; being judged according to righteousness means being judged worthy or unworthy by a person's right behaviour in contrast to being judged worthy or unworthy by how well a person adheres to ceremonial rites and holy days and keeping religious customs and traditions.

Matthew 4

The Kingdom of Heaven and the Kingdom of God.

Matthew 4:17 ----- ¹⁷From that time Jesus began to preach, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Matthew 4:23 ----- ²³Jesus went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction among the people.

From these verses we learn that Jesus proclaimed that the kingdom of heaven is near and the Gospel of the Kingdom. The title the Kingdom of heaven does not mean that the Kingdom is in heaven. The following Scriptures are just a few of the many that show that the title the Kingdom of heaven is the same as the Kingdom of God.

Matthew wrote: -

- Jesus answered them, "To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given (Matt. 13:11).

Mark wrote: -

- Jesus said to them, "To you has been given the secret of the kingdom of God, but for those outside everything is in parables (Mark 4:11).

Luke wrote: -

- Jesus said, "To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of God, but for others they are in parables (Luke 8:10).

Matthew wrote: -

- Jesus told them another parable. "The kingdom of heaven is like leaven that a woman took and hid in three measures of flour" (Matt. 13:33).

Luke wrote: -

- Jesus said, "Whereunto shall I liken the kingdom of God? It is like leaven which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal" (Luke 13:20-21).

The titles the Kingdom of heaven and the Kingdom of God both refer to the present Kingdom of God on earth. The Gospel of the Kingdom is the message of salvation from eternal death to eternal life it is about salvation by faith and grace through believing in the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Gospel of the Kingdom begins with the universal law of sin and death which states, "The wages of sin is death" (Rom 6:23) meaning whoever sins is already judged and condemned to eternal death and since not one of us is without sin we all stand guilty before this universal Law.

Whereas the Gospel of the Kingdom states, "All who trust in Christ have been granted the free gift of God which is, "Eternal life in the Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 6:23), because, "The law of the Spirit of life has set them free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death (Rom 8:2). These verses shine a brilliant spotlight on the truth that the Gospel of the Kingdom states that the universal law of sin and death has no power over those who believe in Christ and faithfully follow him they like Christ will be raised to eternal life and everlasting glory. The core and heart of the Gospel of the Kingdom is salvation from eternal death to eternal life by faith and grace it is about, believing in the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ and recognising that one falls short of God's Glory and absolute Holiness. It is about repentance, baptism and abiding in the faith.

Throughout the entire history of mankind there has only been one man who has ever been able to attain to God's perfect standard of Holiness. The Gospel of the Kingdom is about recognising this reality, repenting before God and accepting His foreordained plan of salvation. It is about trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ for one's own righteousness, looking forward to his return and being raised to eternal glory.

The majestic Good News of the Gospel of the Kingdom states that whoever comes to God through repentance and faith in His Son the Lord Jesus Christ is not only approved of and accepted by God the Father but all their sins are forgiven, not because they are deserving of it, by any self-effort or religious good works, but because through faith in Christ, righteousness is imputed from God to them as a pure and free gift, but this is not the end of the Gospel of the Kingdom since it also states that the faithful in Christ will inherit the future glorious Kingdom of God and eternal life when the Lord Jesus Christ returns as King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev 19:11-16) to establish God's Kingdom of righteousness, justice, joy and peace on earth. This is the reason the glorious message of salvation is called, The Gospel of the Kingdom.

The Kingdom is not the path to salvation, but the inheritance of those who are already saved. There is only one path to God's eternal and glorious Kingdom and to walk on that path one must have faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, Jesus is the royal and golden path to the eternal Kingdom of God and eternal life in everlasting glory.

Consider for a moment: if our world's top scientist and medical practitioners could invent a pill that would give people eternal life, the billionaires of this world would write out a cheque no matter what the cost to buy them for all their family and friends, and almost all people of the world would sell everything they had to purchase one. This is the high value the apostles and Paul placed on the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. To the apostles, Paul and the faithful brothers and sisters who supported them there was nothing in this world more valuable for any man or woman to possess than the gift of eternal life.

How sad it is that in some modern churches today this high value of eternal life has been lost and replaced by a Gospel that focuses on a blessed, prosperous and successful life now in this mortal and corrupt world and messages that appeal to self, ego and pride. Especially when one considers what it cost God the Father and the high price his Son paid to purchase this gift of eternal life for all who would humbly accept by faith the Good News of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Matthew 5

The Least and the Greatest in the Kingdom of God.

Matthew 5:19-20 ----- ¹⁹Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. ²⁰For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

From these verses we learn that no one can enter the Kingdom of heaven (i.e., the Kingdom of God) unless their righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees. The scribes and Pharisees were the religious leaders of Jesus generation and the only ones in the New Testament that Jesus vehemently rebuked. The Pharisee were rulers of the Jews who professed to be more religious than the rest, they explained the laws of Moses more precisely with the goal of bringing the people to a similar conformity. During their religious rule over the nation of Israel they made the following three contributions to Judaism so that ultimately Pharisaism and Judaism became almost synonymous.

1. The first was Jewish legalism.
2. The second was that they formalised the religion of the Jewish scribes and placed it into practice.
3. The third was the development and organisation of the Jewish religion itself.

The Pharisee and scribes based their righteousness upon keeping ceremonial rites, holy days, Moses laws of purifications and religious customs and traditions. They believed they were right with God because they were descendants of Abraham and because they strictly adhered to religious rules and customs and because of this mindset they were, not only self-righteous and full of pride and hypocrisy, but also lacked compassion and mercy toward those seeking God (especially the Gentiles) who they considered inferior to themselves. This is why Jesus made the statement; "No one can enter the Kingdom of God unless their righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees."

Matthew 6

Seek the Kingdom of God and his Righteousness.

Matthew 6:33 ----- ³³Jesus said; "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things will be added to you."

Seeking first the Kingdom of God means two things, firstly seeking to make God and the Lord Jesus Christ the King of our heart and of our mind and our highest thought and supreme desire and secondly seeking to do what is right before God. Seeking God's righteousness also carries two ideas, firstly seeking to live a life of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and trusting in God's grace for righteousness that leads to eternal life in contrast to trusting in self-effort and religious works for righteousness. Secondly it means living a lifestyle that reflects Christ's compassion, mercy, kindness and forgiveness and that honours God and bring a good testimony to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and the Christian faith.

All these things will be added to you: does not mean we will become abundantly wealthy, successful and prosperous in worldly goods in all that we do, but that God will provide the things that are needful for life for those that belong to Him (i.e. food and clothing, not dainties, but necessities) and all things needful for salvation to eternal life. Riches of this world and fine clothing is what all those that are without God live for and constantly need to feel alive or happy this should not be the way of Christians. Life is more than excessive money, dressing to look good to others and opulent material possessions. Those who know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, and are filled with all the fullness of God understand that true life is in knowing God in the inner being and having Christ dwelling in the heart through faith and by love (Ephes. 3:15-20)

Matthew 7

Enter by the Narrow Gate.

Matthew 7:13-14 ----- ¹²So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the law and the prophets. ¹³ "Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. ¹⁴For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.

Matthew 7:21 ----- ²¹Not everyone who says to me 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.

Jesus statement, "Enter by the narrow way" is in the context of doing to others as you would want them to do for you. This is the fulfilment of the six commandments concerning mankind and of Jesus command, "Love your neighbour as yourself." The narrow way embraces the following three things: -

1. Following the Lord Jesus Christ and not going our own way and seeking our own pleasure.
2. Endeavouring to live a life that honours God and brings a good testimony to the name of Jesus and the Christian faith.
3. Helping those who are oppressed, the poor and those in need.

It is called the narrow way because to help someone in need requires some kind of self-sacrifice (i.e. money, time, labour, lack of privacy etc.). Doing to others as you would want them to do for you is fulfilling Jesus command, "Love your neighbour as yourself" (Lev. 19:18) (Matt. 19:19). James the brother of Jesus calls this the royal law (James 2:8). Jesus told his disciples the two most important commandments are: -

1. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength (Mark 12:29-30).
2. You shall love your neighbour as yourself (Mark 12:31).

After shining a spotlight on these two commandments Jesus said, "There is no other commandment greater than these two" (Mark 12:31). This means that the narrow way is loving God and treating other humans with respect and decency, the apostle James says if we do this we are doing-well (James 2:8) and Paul reiterated Jesus command saying, "The commandments, "You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet," and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: "You shall love your neighbour as yourself" (Rom. 13:9) (Gal. 5:14).

Not everyone who says:

- Lord, Lord, will enter the Kingdom of heaven (Matt. 7:21).

This statement is in the context of love your neighbour as yourself. Those that the Lord calls workers of lawlessness are those who think godliness is great gain, they are serving God, but not for Him but their own ego and pride, for money, importance fame and power. These people use God's people as merchandise to achieve their own goals. They are like the religious leaders of Jesus day the chief priests, Pharisees and scribes who looked very religious on the outside, had large followings, knew the Scriptures very well, kept all the religious holy days etc., but it was all about fulfilling their own ambition and not about shepherding and caring for the Lord's people.

NOTICE: these so called godly people did great things for the Lord, they prophesied, cast out demons, and did many mighty works all in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and yet he says he never knew them, how tragic, doing great religious acts means nothing to the Lord if it is done for one's own glory and at the expense of shepherding and caring for the flock. This group is the foolish people Jesus speaks about in (Matt. 7:26).

Matthew 9

Jesus came Not to Call the Righteous, but Sinners.

Matthew 9:2 ----- ²behold, some people brought (down through the roof) to him a paralytic, lying on a bed. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Take heart, my son; your sins are forgiven." ---- NOW GO TO ---- ⁶But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"—he then said to the paralytic—"Rise, pick up your bed and go home."

Jesus said: -

Matthew 9:13 ----- ¹³Jesus said, "Go and learn what this means, 'I (God) desire mercy, and not sacrifice.' For I (Jesus) came not to call the righteous, but sinners."

From these verses we learn that: -

- Jesus has God's amazing and mind-blowing power flowing through him to not only do mighty wonders and miracles, but also to forgive sins.
- It is not adhering to ceremonial rites, holy days and religious customs and traditions that God desires, but His people showing mercy compassion and kindness to others.

- The entire purpose Jesus came was not to save the self-righteous who deny they are sinners (especially the religious self-righteous), but to save sinners who acknowledge they are sinners.

The following verses shine brilliant light upon the things God desires: -

- Micah wrote: "What the LORD requires of mankind is to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with their God" (Micah 6:5-10).
- Isaiah says: "The LORD loves justice, hates robbery and wrong doing" (Isaiah 61:8).
- Jeremiah said: "Those who know God practise steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth, because it is in these things that God delights" (Jer. 9:24).

The great prophets Micah, Isaiah and Jeremiah clearly show us that the people the LORD loves are not only those who acknowledge God, but who also uphold justice, do not lie, deceive or make promises they do not intend to keep, but speak the truth, do what is right, show respect and give help to others when able and make choices that lead to peace. These are the things the LORD delights in and that bring His favour. Biblically a wicked person is primarily one who deliberately and consciously denies the existence of God and does harm to other humans.

Matthew 10

Go rather to the Lost Sheep of the House of Israel.

Matthew 10:5-7 ----- ⁵These twelve Jesus sent out, instructing them, "Go nowhere among the Gentiles and enter no town of the Samaritans, ⁶but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. ⁷And proclaim as you go, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.'

The lost sheep of the house of Israel refers to the Jews in the city of Jerusalem and the land of Judah, they were lost because the religious leaders (the chief priests, Pharisees and Scribes) were not only extremely dogmatic and legalistic and had added many extra laws to the laws of Moses, but also lacked love and mercy toward those they were called to shepherd and because of their dogma and legalism and lack of love they had made it impossible for the faithful and those seeking God to find Him.

The Kingdom of heaven is at hand: these words of Jesus do not refer to his return in glory as King of kings and Lord of lords to establish God's literal and glorious Kingdom of righteousness, justice, joy and peace on earth, but to his death and resurrection which abolished the need for the Levitical priesthood, the temple and the need to adhere to ceremonial rites, holy days and religious customs and traditions etc., and the need for a human high priest and ushered in a New Covenant of God's grace and an entirely new spiritual age.

Whoever Acknowledges Me I will Acknowledge.

Matthew 10:32 ----- ³²Everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven,

The King James Bible says: -

- Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven (Matt. 10:32).

Though many have been saved by responding to a church altar call and accepting Christ as their Saviour and then continuing to faithfully follow the Lord these words of Jesus do not refer to a man or woman responding to an altar call and making a once of confession before a church congregation. Confessing Christ before men in this context carries the idea of not denying Christ in our daily lives, it means not hiding the fact we are Christians. This does not mean a brother or sister in Christ has to be imposing their faith onto others who have no interest in God, but that they do not hide the fact that they do believe in God and do believe in Jesus, it means they do not keep their faith secret.

Whoever Denies Me I will Deny.

Matthew 10:33 ----- ³³Whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven.

from this statement of Jesus we learn that if we have witnessed the message of the cross and the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ to a man or woman and they have absolutely no interest in it and therefore deny the Lord it is pointless to continually share the Good News of Gospel with them, it is far better to move on and spend the time and effort upon those who have never heard the Good News of Gospel and present to them God's invitation into His Kingdom so they have the opportunity to be saved to eternal life and everlasting glory by faith and grace rather than spend the time on those who have heard it and though being made fully aware of God's love and grace deliberately and consciously choose to deny the Lord.

Whoever Loves Father or Mother more than Me is Not Worthy of Me.

Matthew 10:37-39 ----- ³⁷Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.

Jesus statement, "Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me," does not mean we are not to love our family members. Jesus is simply saying, if we deny him because our acceptance of him will cause some form of strife with a family member then we are not worthy of him. Obviously in this situation we are called to do all we can to heal the contention in the family, but if it ultimately becomes a choice of choosing the family or choosing Jesus and we choose the family then we are not worthy of receiving Christ. To be a disciple of Jesus he must be pre-eminent in our life and our hearts.

God the Creator and His Son must always come before the creation meaning that if a believer is forced to make a choice between Jesus, their family or a family member, Christ must always come first. Following Christ will at times result in prison, persecution or even the loss of friends and family, Jesus is saying if anyone is put in any of these positions they must be prepared to suffer the loss to follow him. A good example of this principal is Moslem men and women who live in radical Moslem countries who become a Christian they are not only rejected by their families, but treated as enemies because of their acceptance of Jesus.

Whoever does Not Take up their Cross is Not Worthy of Me.

Matthew 10:38 ----- ³⁸Whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me.

The cross in this context refers to any obstacle that comes into the life of a believer because of their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, obstacles could be, prison, persecution, loss of family members or friends etc., or any worldly dream, ambition, pleasure or goal we may have to forsake to follow Christ.

Whoever loses their Life for my Sake will Find It.

Matthew 10:39 ----- ³⁹Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.

These words of Jesus mean: whoever forsakes Christ to gain the things of this world to enhance their worldly and materialistic mortal life will lose eternal life, but whoever forsakes the things of this world and receives Christ and thereby misses out on much of what this world has will gain eternal life. To find eternal life requires putting God and the Lord Jesus Christ at the centre of one's life and heart. This does not mean that a Christian cannot enjoy the good things of the world, the focus is upon who sits as King of the heart, is it Christ or the things of this world.

Matthew 11

The Blind receive their Sight and the Lame Walk.

Matthew 11:2-6 ----- ²Now when John heard in prison about the deeds of the Christ, he sent word by his disciples ³and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?" ⁴And

Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: ⁵the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them. ⁶And blessed is the one who is not offended by me."

John being a prophet and knowing the Old Testament Scriptures as they had been recorded on scrolls upon hearing the words of Jesus: -

- The blind receive their sight.
- The lame walk.
- Lepers are cleansed.
- The deaf hear.
- The dead are raised up.
- The poor have good news preached to them (v5).

Would have immediately thought of the many Old Testament Scriptures that echo the coming Messiah the Holy One of Israel the Christ similar to the following verses: -

- The LORD opens the eyes of the *blind*. The LORD lifts up those who are bowed down. (Psalm 146:8).
- In that day the *deaf* shall hear the words of a book and out of their gloom and darkness the eyes of the *blind* shall see. The meek shall obtain *fresh joy* in the LORD, and the *poor* among mankind shall exult in the Holy One of Israel (Isaiah 29:18-19).
- The eyes of the *blind* shall be opened, and the ears of the *deaf* unstopped; then shall the *lame* man leap like a deer, and the tongue of the *mute* sing for joy. For waters break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert (Isaiah 35:5-6).
- Behold my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my Spirit upon him to *open the eyes* that are *blind*, to bring out the *prisoners* from the dungeon, from the *prison those who sit in darkness* (Isaiah 42:1, 7).
- The Spirit of the LORD God is upon me (echoing Jesus) because the LORD has anointed me to bring *good news to the poor*, he has sent me to *bind up the brokenhearted*, to *proclaim liberty* to the captives, and the *opening* of the *prison* to those who are bound; ²to proclaim the *year of the LORD'S favour* and the day of *vengeance* of our God; to comfort all who mourn (Isaiah 61:1-2) (Jesus cites this in Luke 4:18-20).
- In that day, declares the LORD, I will assemble the *lame* and gather those who have been driven away and those whom I have *afflicted* and the *lame* I will make the remnant, and those who were *cast off* a strong nation; and the LORD will reign over them in Mount Zion from this time forth and forevermore (Micah 4:6-7).
- Behold, at that time I will deal with all your *oppressors*. And I will save the *lame* and gather the *outcast* and I will change their shame into praise and renown in all the earth (Zeph. 3:19).

Though some of these verses apply to Israel's deliverance from their seventy year captivity in Babylonian and their triumphant return to Jerusalem and the perfect fulfilment of some will be not be fulfilled until Christ returns in glory as King of kings and Lord of lords to establish God's Kingdom of righteousness, justice, joy and peace on earth they all echo Christ's appearing on earth. This is clear because Jesus is the Holy One of God and he did open the eyes of the blind, healed the deaf and the lame and brought joy and rejoicing to those who were oppressed by the religious leaders and set them free from the bondage of their religious and legalistic rule and from the bondage of strictly adhering to ceremonial rites, holy days and keeping religious customs and traditions.

All of these Old Testament writings had been preserved on scrolls, it is certain John the Baptist would have read them many times and also known that Isaiah predicted that the Lord: -

- Would become a sanctuary and a stone of offense and a rock of stumbling to both houses of Israel, a trap and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and many would stumble on it and fall and be broken and snared and taken (Isaiah 8:14-15).

Jesus by saying, "The blind receive their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news preached to them and the one who is not offended by Jesus is blessed" (Matt. 11:6) is assuring John that he is the: -

- The promised seed of the woman spoken of in (Genesis 3:15).
- The prophet and deliver Moses said was to come like him.
- The promised seed of Abraham.
- The Promised seed of David.
- The holy one the prophets said was to come.
- The holy one the Old Testament Scriptures speak of.

Added to all this John would have clearly known that only a man with God's favour and full of God's Spirit without any limitation could raise the dead and do the miracles and wonders Jesus did especially since the wonders and amazing healing miracles of Jesus were to authenticate that he was the Messiah the Christ the Old Testament Scriptures spoke of and the Son of God loved by God and filled with God's Spirit.

Matthew 12

The Family of Jesus.

Matthew 12:50 ----- 50 Whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother.

Jesus said, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me" (John 10:27) this means that Jesus brother and sisters are those who follow him and do the will of his heavenly Father. The will of God in this context embraces the following four things: -

1. Endeavouring and aiming to live a life that brings honour to God and bring a good testimony to the name of Jesus and the Christian faith.
2. To love our neighbour as ourselves (i.e., to treat others with respect and decency).
3. To trust in God's grace for righteousness that leads to eternal life and not on our own self-effort and religious works.
4. To treat each other with mercy and grace in contrast to being dogmatic and legalistic.

This last one is important especially amongst God's family because treating others by the letter of the law in certain situations can be cruel and hinder people from entering into God's love and grace. This is because in life there are many situations that are not black and white, but have many shades of grey in these circumstances the acceptable and perfect will of God is not to follow the condemning letter of the law but instead follow the Law and spirit of Love. When we are not sure what the will of God might in a given circumstance a good starting point to find the will of God is to ask ourselves the following three questions: -

1. In these circumstances what is the loving thing to do?

2. What can I do, that will help everyone involved?

3. What would be the best action I can take that will benefit the people in this difficult and mixed up situation?

Everyone who lives their life this way belongs to the family of the Lord Jesus Christ and is his friends and his brothers and sisters in his global Kingdom.

Matthew 13

The Good Soil Bears Fruit.

Matthew 13:23 ----- ²³As for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it. He indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty."

Good soil refers to a right heart attitude, from these verses we learn that for a sinner to be saved to eternal life they need to have a right heart attitude and not only hear the Gospel, but understand it and that those who surrender their hearts and minds to Christ with a right heart attitude will produce much fruit. The fruit in this context is not limited to sharing the message of the cross and the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and our faith and thereby delivering sinners from the domain of darkness and transferring them into the Kingdom of God's beloved Son (Col. 1:13), but also embrace the fruits of the Spirit such as love, compassion, mercy, grace, kindness, forgiveness and such like things.

Matthew 14

Truly you are the Son of God

Matthew 14:33 ----- ³³those in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

From these words, "Truly you are the Son of God," we clearly see that Jesus is the Son of God and not God Himself as many influenced by traditional Christianity believe. It is interesting to notice that there is not one verse in the entire Bible that states we must believe that Jesus is God to be saved whereas in contrast to this silence there are literally multitudes of Scriptures that clearly state, "Whoever believes that Jesus is the Son of God will be saved," whereas there is not one verse that says, "whoever believes that Jesus is God will be saved."

Surely if it was important to believe that Jesus was actually God, Christ would have told the apostles at least once in his discourses with them and in his messages of salvation, but all we find in the Scriptures is Jesus and the apostles proclaiming that people must believe that Jesus is the Son of God to be saved. Jesus himself said, "This is eternal life that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent" (John 17:3). For further information see the title: "Trinity (The Doctrine of the Trinity)," in Various Topics (ON WEBSITE MENU).

Matthew 15

This people Honours Me with their Lips, but their Heart is Far from Me.

Matthew 15:7-9 ----- ⁷You hypocrites! (The Pharisees and scribes) well did Isaiah prophesy of you, when he said: ⁸"This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; ⁹in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men."

From these verses we learn that the only worship acceptable to God is worship that comes from an honest heart. It matters not how strictly we adhere to ceremonial rites and holy days or faithfully keep religious customs and traditions or how beautiful the music and the songs sung in praise are if the worshipper's hearts are not worshipping from their true authentic self and from a true passion for God and a true heart of thankfulness and gratitude toward the Lord Jesus Christ.

If our worship is not flowing from these Jesus says, "It is vain" meaning it counts for nothing before God.

Matthew 16

Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God.

Matthew 16:13-20 ----- ¹³Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" ¹⁴And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." ¹⁵He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" ¹⁶Simon Peter replied, "You are the Christ, the son of the living God." ¹⁷And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. ¹⁸And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. ¹⁹I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." ²⁰Then he strictly charged the disciples to tell no one that he was the Christ.

Many during the time Jesus was on the earth thought of him as a great prophet similar to Elijah or Jeremiah etc., but very few understood that he was the Son of God even today people accept that Jesus was an exceptionally good man but deny the fact he is the Son of God. Even the apostles did not fully understand what Jesus meant when he said, "The Son of Man must die and rise on the third day," until they witnessed his death and resurrection and until the Lord appeared to them in his resurrected eternal body. After Christ's death and resurrection to glory the primary focus of the apostles message shifts from the Kingdom of God to the resurrection. The resurrection becomes the central theme of the Gospel message of Salvation and of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The first glimpse of the Resurrection: this is the first glimpse the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal salvation and everlasting glory. Jesus begins to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed and on the third day be raised (Matt. 16:21).

On this rock I will build my church: some believe this statement of Jesus means that Christ will build his church on the apostle Peter, but the Rock Jesus is referring to is the revelation that Peter had and not Peter himself, it is Jesus Christ the Son of the living God that Jesus will build his church on, it is Jesus who is the Rock and the chief cornerstone of the church.

The gates of hell will not prevail against the rock: the word gate in this context carries the idea of an entrance and the word hell is translated from the Greek word *hades* which simply means the grave which means that the expression, "The gates of hell" implies death. Jesus statement "The gates of hell will not prevail against it," means eternal death will not prevail against those who are building their life on the Lord Jesus Christ (the Rock), the verse could read, "The power of death will not have victory over those who belong to Christ (the Rock).

The keys of the Kingdom of heaven: the keys to the Kingdom of heaven that Jesus gave to Peter, is the teachings of the New Testament as opposed those of the Old Testament. Since there is only one way to God and into His Kingdom and that is through repentance and trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ and God's grace. Jesus and his Gospel are the keys. Jesus statement, "I will give you the keys of the Kingdom of heaven," simply means Jesus will give Peter the Gospel that leads sinners to forgiveness of sin, deliverance from death and entry into God's eternal Kingdom.

Binding and loosing: this expression does not mean Christians are to go into some form of spiritual warfare attempting in prayer to cast down evil entities called demons as some teach today, there is no-where in the Bible that God's people are seen in this form of prayer. Binding and loosing is simply another way of saying do not permit in the church what would not be permitted by God or accepted in heaven.

Jesus gave Peter the authority to teach the New Covenant of grace which involved binding a lot of the Old Testament ceremonial laws and religious holy days etc., and loosing others (i.e. all foods were now clean to eat and everyone could come to God without the need for a human high priest etc.), so Peter was establishing the new church by binding, (ending some things) and loosing (allowing other practises once forbidden).

The expression, "Binding and loosing" can also be applied to church behaviour, meaning don't allow (i.e., don't bind) behaviour in the church that would not be accepted in heaven, but enjoy (i.e., loose) every form of outward expression that would be accepted by God and the angels in heaven. The expression, "Binding and loosing" simply means whatever Peter restrains or forbids in the church will be what is forbidden in heaven and whatever Peter allows in the church will be what is accepted in heaven.

Tell know one Jesus is the Christ: Jesus strictly charged the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Christ this is most likely because it was not yet his time to lay his life down and to protect the disciples from the wrath and fury the religious leaders of his generation (the chief priests, Pharisees and scribes) poured out on him. It was after Jesus resurrection that he gave them the Great Commission to proclaim the Gospel to the every nation worldwide. From these verses we learn that: -

- Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God.
- God is Jesus heavenly Father.
- God, will build His church upon the truth that Jesus is the Son of the living God.
- Nothing will destroy God's church it will prevail until the Lord returns in glory.

Denying-Self, taking up the Cross and Following the Lord.

Matthew 16:24-27 ----- ²⁴If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. ²⁵For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. ²⁶For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his life? Or what shall a man give in return for his life? ²⁷For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done. ²⁸Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom."

These verses are in the context of eternal death and eternal life. Jesus is saying, what is the point of being the most successful, famous and wealthiest person on the planet if at the end of it you do not have eternal life. When you are lying in your coffin and being lowered into your grave to be buried everything you have gained is worthless. In the language of the 21st century Jesus is telling his disciples, if it is a choice between the things of this world or following Christ, it is a no-brainer one choice leads to death the other to eternal life.

It is far better to deny yourself now and sacrifice whatever is needed to have communion with God and with Christ now and gain eternal life at the end of your mortal life, since there is no profit in gaining the entire world if it means forfeiting eternal life when the Lord Jesus Christ returns in glory to repay each person according to whether they have accepted God's plan of salvation and followed Christ or chosen to follow self, ego and pride and chase after the things of this world.

Denying yourself and taking up your cross means putting the things of Christ before self, ego and pride and sacrificing if required the things of this world (v26) to follow the Lord means that when you are put in a position of choosing Christ or something you desire you will always choose the Lord regardless of the loss or cost to yourself even if it means death. To follow Christ is going to involve a cost to self, ego and pride, but whoever puts Christ before self will save their life for all eternity, but whoever is not prepared to put Christ before self, will lose their life to eternal death.

The Son of Man coming in His Kingdom.

Jesus tells his listeners that there is some standing amongst them that will not die before they see Christ coming in his Kingdom (v28), this could refer to either of the following two events: -

1. Six days after saying this Jesus takes Peter, James and John up a high mountain and Jesus is transfigured before their very eyes and his face shines like the sun and his clothes become white as light and Moses and Elijah, appear, then a bright cloud overshadows them, and a voice from the cloud is heard saying, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him" (Matt. 17:1-5).
2. After Jesus death and resurrection he appeared to the disciples and certain women and they saw him in his eternal immortal glorified and resurrected body.

From these verses we learn that: -

- There is going to be a cost to self, ego and pride to follow Christ.
- Following the Lord will at times mean denying self, ego and pride.
- To save our life for eternity means being willing to surrender our mind, heart and desires to the Lord.
- It is pointless to gain everything in this world just to be buried in a wooden box and rot in the grave.
- There is nothing in this world that we have that we can repay God with for what it cost Him to Sacrifice His Son so that we could be saved to eternal life by grace and nothing we have can repay Jesus for the brutal, bloody and cruel death he suffered so that we could be redeemed.

Matthew 17

The Second and Third Glimpse of the Resurrection.

Matthew 17:5 ----- ⁵He (Peter) was still speaking when, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my beloved son with whom I am well pleased; listen to him."

Matthew 17:9 ----- ⁹And as they were coming down the mountain, Jesus commanded them, "Tell no one the vision, until the Son of Man is raised from the dead."

Matthew 17:22-23 ---- ²²As they were gathering in Galilee, Jesus said to them, "The Son of Man is about to be delivered into the hands of men, ²³and they will kill him, and he will be raised on the third day." And they were greatly distressed.

This is the second and third glimpse the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal salvation and everlasting glory. From these verses we learn that: -

- Jesus is God's beloved Son who God was pleased with.
- Jesus knew he would be killed and had faith that God his heavenly Father would raise him from the dead on the third day.

There is another enormously humbling truth revealed in these verses, "What is that some might ask?" Simply this: all during Jesus ministry on earth and all the time he was humbly showing kindness, compassion, mercy, grace and forgiveness to others he was fully aware that a brutal, bloody and cruel death was awaiting him. This shines a spotlight on the truth that Jesus didn't just show us how much he loves us upon the bloodstained cross, but also during his life of ministry since all the while he was ministering to the sons and daughters of Adam he was aware of the horror that awaited him.

Who is the Greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven?

Matthew 18:1-4 ----- ¹At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" ²And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them ³and said, "Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. ⁴Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

Jesus takes a humble child from the crowd and uses the child to show the disciples that to be great before God a person should be like the child he is holding. This is because children: -

- Are unassuming in attitude and behaviour.
- Show respect towards people regardless of their status in society.
- Speak and behave without pretensions.
- Are not ego driven desiring to be the dominant one amongst the group.

Clearly there are exceptions to this rule, but the children Jesus had in mind are little and not rebellious, but the innocent. Jesus, to show how much he and God values children tells the crowds it would be better for a person to drown themselves than cause a child who believes in Christ to sin. No-doubt the synagogues were casting children out of their meetings because they would not conform to the exact protocol of the Jewish meetings and the religious leaders most likely considered children of no-value to the Kingdom of God because of their young age.

Jesus is turning this upside-down by saying children are more important to God than formal official rules or strictly adhering to religious ceremonial rites and regulations. From these verses we learn to be great in the Kingdom of God: -

- We have to become like little children and humble ourselves like them.
- Protect children and accept them into God's Kingdom.
- Never causes a child to sin.

Matthew 19

What Good Deed must I Do to have Eternal Life?

Matthew 19:16-21 --- ¹⁶behold, a man came up to him, saying, "Teacher, what good deed must I do to have eternal life?" ¹⁷And he said to him, "Why do you ask me about what is good? There is only one who is good. If you would enter life, keep the commandments." ¹⁸He said to him, "Which ones?" And Jesus said, "You shall not murder, You shall not commit adultery, You shall not steal, You shall not bear false witness, ¹⁹honor your father and mother, and, You shall love your neighbor as yourself." ²⁰The young man said to him, "All these I have kept. What do I still lack?" ²¹Jesus said to him, "If you would be perfect, go, sell what you possess and give to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven and come, follow me."

A rich man asks Jesus what good deed can he do to enter eternal life and Jesus tells him the good deeds he can do are: -

- Not to murder or commit adultery.
- Not to steal or bear false witness.
- Honour his father and his mother and not covet anything that is his neighbour's.
- Love his neighbour as he loves himself.

The rich man is asking Jesus what good thing can he do to receive eternal life so Jesus responding to his question tells the rich man the good thing he can do is to keep the commandments and he will receive eternal life. It appears at first glance that Jesus is saying salvation can be earned by keeping the law, in a sense this is true, but there has only ever been one man who has been able to keep the entire law and his name is the Lord Jesus Christ the Son of God. James Jesus brother tells us, "Whoever fails in one point of the law has become accountable for all of it" (James 2:10). Not one of use can live to this perfect standard if any of us could attain to this glorious state Christ died for no reason. John wrote: -

- If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us, but if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us (1 John 1:8-10).

Jesus in his answer to the rich man has the following two parts: -

1. The first part is about being saved to eternal life, here Jesus is not saying that salvation can be earned by keeping the law we know this because it goes against all other teaching concerning salvation by faith and by God's grace and if it was possible for anyone of us to be saved by attaining to the perfection of the law there would be no need for Christ to have laid his life down to a brutal and bloody death that we might be saved. Jesus is telling the man that those who are saved should be endeavouring to keep God's holy commandments so that they bring honour to God and the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- The second part is about being perfect Jesus tells the man if he desires to be perfect before God he should sell what he has, help the poor and the less fortunate and follow Christ. James the brother of Jesus wrote, "Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction and to keep oneself unstained from the world (James 1:27). James shows us that pure and undefiled religion before God is to help the poor and the less fortunate and not to be corrupted by the ways of the world. This is what Jesus is saying to the rich man.

Paul when writing to the brothers and sisters in Corinth said: -

- No one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw each one's work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, they will receive a reward, but if anyone's work is burned up, they will suffer loss, though they themselves will be saved, but only as through fire (1 Cor. 3:11-15)

These verses show that within Christ's Kingdom, at this present time, there are some who though they may not have lived the perfect and ideal Christian life will still be saved. Jesus answer to the rich man is in response to his question concerning being perfect and living the ideal Christian lifestyle. Though a brother or sister in Christ maybe building, their Christian life on wood, hay and straw and are therefore far from living the perfect and ideal Christian lifestyle they according to the apostle Paul can still be saved to eternal life.

Jesus is basically telling the rich man if he wants to live a perfect life before God use his abundant wealth to help the poor and the less fortunate in contrast to storing it up for himself. The idea here is that even though we are saved by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and by God's grace we should still endeavour to keep God's Commandments and if we desire to be perfect before God help the poor and less fortunate when we are able.

NOTE: some may say they have never murdered, committed adultery, stolen, lied against others and have always respected their mother and father and this is probably true of most, but the two commandments that bring us all undone is the commandment, "Thou shalt not covet anything that is his neighbour's" and God's and the Lord Jesus Christ's command, "Love your neighbour as you love yourself. It is futile to attempt to attain to righteousness by keeping the law for the following reasons: -

The law states: -

- You shall not covet your neighbour's house; you shall not covet your neighbour's wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbour's (Exod. 20:17).

Jesus command and the royal law states:

- You shall love your neighbour as yourself (Rom. 13:9).

Jesus says all the commandments regarding mankind are summed up in the words of the royal law because the spirit underpinning the royal law, desires the best for others contrasted to the spirit underlying coveting which is craving the best for self.

Covet: (covetousness) means; to set the heart upon, to desire, long for or lust after (rightfully or otherwise) it carries the idea of holding onto or desiring more than one has or needs (the practice of greediness) and embraces those who live a lifestyle of unlawful sex, orgies adulteries and sexual immorality to fulfil their own lust and to anyone whose heart is craving after and worshipping and exalting another person as a god (an Idolater).

By implication covet: can refer to those who are not honest and true and who use pressure or coercion to force or entice others to fulfil their own selfish need or ambition and to anyone who intentionally deprives somebody of money or property by dishonest means because they are greedy and eager for gain. The commandment, "You shall not covet" exposes human selfishness, pride, ego, lust, and greed etc. It reveals the dysfunctions and aberrations that are imbedded within our fallen corrupted human nature that hinder us from attaining to the perfection of God's Holy law. It exposes our self-centredness in our desires for more than we need, our excessive avariciousness toward materialism, our overeating of tasty foods the craving to be important or esteemed, our sensual and lustful thoughts, the desire to be rich and have abundantly more than we need etc.

The commandments, "You shall not covet" and "Love your neighbour as yourself," shines a spotlight on our self-interest, they highlight our lack of willingness to give to those less fortunate and those in need, they expose our degrading, resentful, bitter and jealous thoughts of others and the list goes on. In summary the command, "You shall not covet" embraces all those attitudes and thoughts that dwell within our members that are contrary to the law of love and the Holiness of God which means the entire human race is held guilty before the law and therefore it legally has the right and the power to condemn us all to death which it does without hesitation, compassion or mercy the law shows no mercy or compassion its demand on those that are under it is strictly official, formal and legal and enforced without compassion or any sense of sorrow toward its condemned victims.

The universal demand of the law states; "For the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23) meaning if anyone fails to keep the law in any aspect they are guilty of breaking the law. It then without mercy rightfully and legally judges and sentences its guilty victims (all mankind) to death. The law is splendid as a guide to an understanding of God's will, but as a means of reunion with God, the God we have sinned against, it is a hopeless failure, but God always knew it would be, not because of a fault in the law but because a flaw in us.

The royal and majestic wonder and the glory of the Good News of the Gospel is that it not only proclaims that, "God through Christ has cancelled the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands" (the debt being all our trespasses and sins) (Col. 2:13-14), but also tells us that God set aside the laws legal demands, nailing it to the cross, this of course refers to the fact that Christ fulfilled all the legal demands of the law throughout his life on earth and to his brutal, bloody and cruel death on the cross. Jesus, before the eyes of men went to the cross as a common criminal, but before the eyes of God he was innocent and without sin and therefore through his life and his death all the legal demands of the law were fulfilled. Christ took all the legal demands of the law to the grave with him and because he was without sin the law had no power to hold him in the grave and therefore God had full and legal right not only to raise him from the grave, but to raise him to eternal life and everlasting glory.

Jesus through his death and resurrection has become the royal robe of grace and the majestic crown of righteousness that God clothes all who by faith trust in the Lord for their righteousness and eternal salvation and in this manner, "The legal demands of the law have been nailed to the cross" (Col. 2:14)) since Christ through his death broke the power of the universal law that states, "The wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23) and superseded and overruled it with a far higher law that proclaims, "The free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Rom. 6:23). This is the humbling, awe-inspiring Good News of the Gospel.

In the New World, the Son of Man will Sit on His Glorious Throne.

Matthew 19:28-29 ----- ²⁸Jesus said to them, "Truly, I say to you, in the new world, when the Son of Man will sit on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. ²⁹And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands, for my name's sake, will receive a hundredfold and will inherit eternal life. ²⁹But many who are first will be last, and the last first.

The New world refers to when the Lord Jesus Christ returns as, King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev. 19:11-16) to rule and reign from God's Holy City Jerusalem (on Mount Zion God's Holy Mountain) to establish God's Kingdom on earth during his glorious millennial reign. In the first resurrection (Rev. 20:4-6) the dead in Christ and the faithful, who are alive, will be gathered together to rule and reign as kings and priests with the Lord over those nations who are left outside the Holy City of God. Christ the King united with his people will not only bring peace to the Middle East, but establish God's Kingdom of steadfast love, faithfulness, righteousness, joy and peace throughout the world and the glory of God will cover the earth.

Jesus will do justice to the poor and oppressed, he will be a faithful and compassionate King forever. He will not allow anyone to strike terror in the earth or use lies and deception to enlarge their own wealth and power. The land will abundantly produce and even the deserts will flourish. The animals will not feed on each other and even the lamb will be able to lie down with the wolf and everyone will eat of their own hands because all that they plant will produce. All nations the LORD has made will come and worship before the Lord Jesus Christ. They will glorify God's Name, proclaiming the LORD is great and does wondrous things and that He alone is God.

The book of Revelation states: -

- Jesus Christ, the faithful witness who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood has made us kings and priests unto God and his Father is coming in glory and every eye shall see him, and they also who pierced him and all kindreds of the earth (Revelation 1:5-7).

And in Revelation chapter five we are told that: -

- Christ was slain, and by his blood he redeemed a people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation and made them a kingdom and priests to God and they shall reign on the earth (Revelation 5:9-10).

At the end of this glorious Kingdom age God descends to earth on a Great White Throne the sea, death and hades (the grave) give up the dead. They stand before God and are judged according to what is written in certain heavenly books according to what they have done.

Death and those counted unworthy are cast into the Lake of Fire a symbol of eternal destruction (i.e., total extinction) (also called the, Second Death) (Rev. 20:11-15). Christ hands the Kingdom over to his heavenly Father and God is ALL in ALL and ETERNITY begins in all its fullness and majestic royal glory. For further information see titles: -

- Kingdom of God (ON WEBSITE MENU).
- The Second Resurrection or Great White Throne Judgment.

In, Resurrection (ON WEBSITE MENU).

Everyone who has Left Houses or Family members will Receive Eternal Life.

The expression, "Everyone who has left houses, brothers, sisters, fathers, mother, children, or lands, for my name's sake, will receive a hundredfold does not mean that they will receive riches and wealth in this world as some prosperity ministers teach. These words of Jesus can mean the following two things: -

1. It follows on from the verse before it, so it can apply to the glorious new world to come when Jesus returns in glory as King of kings and Lord of lords to establish God's Kingdom of righteousness, justice joy and peace on earth.
2. In, an earthly family brothers and sisters rally together when they see a member of their family suffering a crisis and do all they can to comfort and help that suffering member. This is how Paul views the church of Christ it is in this sense that whoever enters the global Kingdom of Christ inherits a spiritual global family who are all called to help each other in whatever way they are able and share their homes with those who are destitute. It is in this sense whoever has left houses, brothers, sisters, fathers, mother, children, or lands, for Jesus name's sake, will receive a hundredfold meaning they inherit a local and spiritual global family in Christ.

NOTE: this does not mean when a person accepts Christ they must leave their families, the only time this situation would arise is when the family forces the Christian to choose between their faith in Christ or their family. In this scenario if the Christian wants to continue following the Lord Jesus Christ they are left with only one choice which is to deny their family (this happens even today especially in some radical Moslem countries).

Many who are first will be last and the last first: (v29) since the first in this context can mean first in time or first in importance this verse can have the following two applications: -

- 1 During the Old Testament Israel was God's chosen nation, but when Jesus came they were grafted out and the Gentiles grafted in. In this sense the first ones chosen were the Jews and the last were the Gentiles, but the Jews who were first chosen will now be last to enter the Kingdom of God while the Gentiles who were last chosen will be first, this especially applies to the time of Christ's ministry on earth, the majority of the Jewish nation rejected Christ while multitudes of Gentiles embraced him.
- 2 First can carry the idea of the most important while the last can carry the idea of the least important. The Jewish religious leaders of Jesus era (the chief priests, Pharisees and scribes) were considered the most important, but in Jesus Kingdom and before God they are considered the least important while the common people and the Gentiles in Christ who were looked upon as being the least important are by Jesus and by his heavenly Father considered the most important,

It would be pointless to spend time debating over which of these two interpretations is correct since they can both apply to the expression, "Many who are first will be last, and the last first."

Matthew 20

The Fourth Glimpse of the Resurrection.

Matthew 20:18-19 ----- ¹⁸See, we are going up to Jerusalem. And the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn him to death ¹⁹and deliver him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified and he will be raised on the third day.

Here we get the fourth glimpse of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal Salvation and everlasting glory. How amazing is this and how horrific! Jesus knows that before being resurrected and glorified he is going to be mocked, flogged and cruelly crucified as a common criminal. The disciples never fully understood what Jesus meant when he said, "He must die and be raised on the third day" until they saw him after his death and resurrection.

NOTE: sometimes when life is not going smoothly for a Christian or they are facing a crisis situation there is a danger of thinking God does not love them, this idea comes from distorted teaching that presents God as a kind of Santa Claus who has a bag of good gifts to constantly give out, but this is not real life or the way the Bible presents God. If a Christian is ever in doubt about God's love for them they should take a moment and ponder the enormous price God paid in sacrificing His most beloved Son so that we could be saved to eternal life by faith and grace and the horrific suffering and cruel death Christ endured on the bloodstained cross to redeem us to God.

The Son of Man came Not to be Served but to Serve.

Matthew 20:28 ----- ²⁸even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Here is the true heart of a shepherd Jesus came not to have others serve him, but to serve those who came to him even to giving his life over to his enemies to a brutal and cruel death so that even the lowliest of sinners could be saved to eternal life and everlasting glory.

Matthew 21

Sinners enter the Kingdom before certain Religious Leaders.

Matthew 21:28-32 ----- ²⁸Jesus asks the chief priests and the elders, "What do you think? A man had two sons. And he went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today. ²⁹And he answered, 'I will not,' but afterward he changed his mind and went. ³⁰And he went to the other son and said the same. And he answered, 'I go, sir,' but did not go. ³¹Which of the two did the will of his father?" They said, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Truly, I say to you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes go into the kingdom of God before you. ³²For John came to you (the chief priests and the elders) in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him. And even when you saw it, you did not afterward change your minds and believe him.

- The father is a symbol of God.
- The first son is a symbol of the tax collectors and the prostitutes (Gentiles).
- The second son is a symbol Israel.
- The vineyard is a symbol of the Kingdom of God.

In this parable the first son (the tax collectors and the prostitutes) (symbolising the Gentiles) are asked to work in the fathers vineyard (God's Kingdom) but they refuse while the second son (Israel) is asked to work in the same vineyard and they agree, but the second son (Israel) changes his mind and did his own thing, while the first son (the tax collectors and the prostitutes) changed their mind and went and worked in the vineyard.

The parable explained: prior to the flood God through Noah called the Gentiles (the first son), but they refused the call, so the LORD at Mount Sinai then called the entire Nation of Israel (the second son) and they at Mount Sinai covenanted to follow God, but they refused John's message of repentance that leads to salvation, while the Gentiles repented and changed their minds to follow Christ.

Jesus in this parable is saying the Gentiles did the will of the Father and will enter the Kingdom of God before the Jews of John the Baptist and Jesus era.

From this parable we learn that even if a person strictly adheres to ceremonial rites, holy days and faithfully keeps religious customs and traditions or is the head ruler and priest of a religious organization it matters not how holy they may look or how big their church or their religious empire is without trust and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and in god's grace it all counts for nothing before God.

This is because religious works no matter how well they are adhered to have absolutely no power to save anyone to eternal life. The only way to enter God's eternal Kingdom is by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and by God's grace.

The Stone the Builders Rejected.

Matthew 21:42 ----- ⁴²Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures: " 'The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone this was the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes'?"

The stone refers to the Lord Jesus Christ while the builders refer to the religious leaders of Jesus generation (the chief priests, Pharisees and the scribes). The religious leaders of God should have been building God's Kingdom, but because of their pride, selfish ambition and greed for power and control they denied the very cornerstone of God's Kingdom. From this verse we learn that the Lord Jesus Christ is the cornerstone of God's entire global Kingdom. The temple of God is not bricks and mortar, but a spiritual temple God is at this present time establishing in the hearts and minds of every faithful brother and sister in Christ amongst every nation of the world. When the Lord returns in glory as King of kings and Lord of lords this spiritual temple will be literally manifested to all creation when those sleeping in Christ and the faithful who are alive are caught up to be with the Lord and the sons and daughters of God are revealed in majestic and eternal glory.

In a natural building the cornerstone is the starting point, this stone had to be exact in every way otherwise the structure built from it would not rise in a straight plumb line and the taller it became the more noticeable the flaws in its structure would appear and the more dangerous the building became. This is why Jesus is referred to as the cornerstone of the temple God is at this present time building in Christ. Not only is Jesus the perfect example of God's Spirit of love, compassion, kindness, justice, mercy grace, forgiveness and such like things, but he also perfectly followed the royal law, "Love your neighbour as yourself" even unto death. If everyone who confesses to believe in God and all the citizens dwelling on planet earth followed the Spirit of Christ our world would look vastly different, it would be a world of happiness since religious leaders, governments, rulers, authorities and the common people would all be looking out for the well-being of each other.

Matthew 24

The One who Endures to the End will be Saved.

Matthew 24:11-14 --- ¹¹Jesus warns, "Many false prophets will arise and lead many astray. ¹²And because lawlessness will be increased, the love of many will grow cold. ¹³But the one who endures to the end will be saved. ¹⁴And this Gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

Jesus tells us that false prophets and teachers will continue to arise and corrupt and distort the Gospel for their own personal gain and selfish ambition and that as the secular world moves further away from God and the ethics and standards He has laid out in the Bible and the laws guiding mankind in the way of right living and the path to dwelling in harmony with each other, which are summed up in Jesus command and the royal law, love your neighbour as yourself (meaning do not deliberately harm other humans physically, financially, sexually, verbally, emotionally or spiritually) not only will the world decline into chaos, but the church will also be corrupted and because of this corruption the love of many for God will grow cold.

The Gospel will be proclaimed to the world: certainly in our day and age of global technology this is possible, but it does not mean that everyone will accept or embrace it. To some the Gospel will bring life eternal while to others it will bring death. It is interesting to notice that it does not say that every individual on planet earth will hear the Gospel, but that it will go out to all nations. Obviously if the heads of a nation reject the Gospel the nation as a collective whole will suffer loss, (i.e. in Communist or radical Muslim countries the government vehemently bans all forms of Christianity) nevertheless even in extreme darkness if a person's heart is humble and honestly seeking God, He will respond accordingly.

The one who endures to the end: implies that being a Christian does not always mean that a believer will have a charmed life, enduring to the end not only implies hardship and difficulties but that some who are in the faith will fall away. Today; because of distorted teaching of the Gospel there is a danger in some circles of Christianity of people being misled into thinking that because they are a child of God their life should be relatively free of trouble.

This is because the underlying thought lying behind some present day modern teaching presents God as a kind of Santa Claus that has a bag full of worldly gifts (i.e., prosperity, wealth, riches, success etc.) to give to His children. Under this kind of teaching some can be led to believe that God's love toward them is determined by their circumstances, (i.e. if life is going well God loves them, but if life has taken a downward spiral into difficulty God has withdrawn His love, but if the apostles who went hungry and were persecuted thought of God's love in this way they would certainly not have endured the beatings and imprisonments they suffered. If we ever feel God has withdrawn His love all we have to do is look at the bloodstained cross and see what it cost God to redeem us and the enormous suffering Christ endured to save us.

Matthew 25

When the Son of Man comes in Glory then He will Sit on his Glorious Throne.

Matthew 25:31-34 ----- ³¹When the Son of Man comes in his glory and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. ³²Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. ³³And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left. ³⁴Then the King will say to those on his right, "Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

When Christ comes as King of kings and Lord of lords there will be two groups of people sheep and goats that will be judged by the Lord. Since Jesus said: -

- Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness (Matt 7:21-23).

It is difficult to determine whether Jesus words, "He will gather all the nations and separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats" (Matt. 25:v32) applies to the faithful in God's Kingdom being separated from the unbelieving nations of the world or to the judgment seat of Christ.

It is very clear that there will be a separation of the righteous (the sheep) from the wicked (the goats) at the judgment seat of Christ, but it is also certain when Christ is ruling over the nations as King of kings and Lord of lords with the faithful who have been gathered to him to establish God's Kingdom of righteousness, justice joy and peace on earth during his glorious millennial reign that the Lord will separate the wicked (the goats) from the just (the sheep), because of this uncertainty I personally feel that rather than try to discern which of the two scenario's the Lord had in mind when he said he will gather all the nations and separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats (Matt. 25:32) it is better to apply the verse to both scenario's since the principle underlying what Jesus is saying fits both the judgment of Christ and the judgment of the nations.

The book of Revelation states: -

- Jesus Christ, the faithful witness who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood has made us kings and priests unto God and his Father is coming in glory and every eye shall see him, and they also who pierced him and all kindreds of the earth (Revelation 1:5-7).

And in Revelation chapter five we are told that: -

- Christ was slain, and by his blood he redeemed a people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation and made them a kingdom and priests to God and they shall reign on the earth (Revelation 5:9-10).

It is interesting to notice that the verses following the ones we are looking at highlight two things: -

1. Those who the Lord commends (the sheep) are not even aware that what they are doing is pleasing the Lord. These servants of the Lord are not doing-good deeds to earn salvation or to maintain it. They are caring for others because they have the fruits of the Spirit dwelling in their hearts and therefore have a natural desire to help the poor and the less fortunate which manifest the life and love of God and of Christ in their heart.
2. The wicked servants (the goats) in this context are not those who have incorrect doctrine, but those who have no compassion and show no mercy toward those in the body of Christ, they obviously have a knowledge of the Gospel and of God's Kingdom because they are servants of God, but they are most likely in the Kingdom for their own selfish ambition and financial gain, power and for the sense of being important and esteemed by others.

The principal thought underlying this parable is when those who belong to Christ do something good for a brother or sister in Christ or for those outside of his Kingdom it is the same as if they are doing it for the Lord himself.

Matthew 26

The Fifth, the Sixth and the Seventh Glimpse of the Resurrection.

Matthew 26:1-2 ----- ¹When Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said to his disciples, ²"You know that after two days the Passover is coming, and the Son of Man will be delivered up to be crucified."

Matthew 26:26-28 ---- ²⁶Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body." ²⁷And he took a cup and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink of it, all of you, ²⁸for this is my blood of the covenant which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

Matthew 26:31-32 ----- ³¹Then Jesus said to them, "You will all fall away because of me this night. For it is written, 'I will strike the shepherd and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.' ³²But after I am raised up I will go before you to Galilee."

This is the fifth, the sixth and the seventh glimpse the disciples had of the glorious resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. From these verses we learn the following four things: -

1. Jesus knew he would be given over to the chief priest Pharisees and scribes to be falsely condemned as a common criminal and sentenced to a brutal, bloody and cruel death. This is why at the Garden of Gethsemane Jesus prayed in great agony, "Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done" (Luke 22:42-44).

Jesus fully aware of the horrific suffering he is about to face is basically praying, "Father if there is any other way to save mankind, please remove the horror I am about to face from me," but knowing there was no other way ends his prayer with the words, "Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done."

If any one doubts God and the Lord Jesus Christ love them all they have to do is look at the bloodstained cross and see what it cost the heart of the Father to sacrifice His most beloved Son to save us to eternal life and look at what it cost Christ to redeem us so that we could be clothed with righteousness by faith and grace apart from self-effort and works.

2. The cup of wine Christians drink is a symbol of Christ's shed blood and the bread they eat is a symbol of his broken body (the wine does not turn into the real blood of Jesus nor does the bread turn into the real body of Jesus as some believe). They are simply symbols of the life Christ gave up on the cross of Calvary so that sinners might be forgiven and redeemed by God's grace to eternal life and everlasting glory.
3. Jesus is the perfect Shepherd who laid his life down for his sheep.
4. Jesus had faith his heavenly Father would raise him up from the dead.

For further information concerning the Lord's Supper, see the title: "The Lord's Supper" (1 Corinthians 11:20-33) in, NT Commentary (ON WEBSITE MENU). Some may get a surprise to discover how the early church took the Lord's Supper and how it has evolved to what is the common practise today amongst traditional Christianity.

Matthew 27

Jesus breathed His last Breath and Yielded up his Spirit.

Matthew 27:50-54 ---- ⁵⁰And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice and yielded up his Spirit. ⁵¹And behold, the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. And the earth shook, and the rocks were split. ⁵²The tombs also were opened. And many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised ⁵³and coming out of the tombs after his resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many. ⁵⁴When the centurion and those who were with him, keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were filled with awe and said, "Truly this was the Son of God!"

From these verses we learn the following five things: -

1. Jesus upon his last breath yielded up his Spirit meaning his life to his heavenly Father.
2. The curtain of the temple was supernaturally torn from top to bottom. This symbolised that the way into the Most Holy Place (the presence of God) was now open to Jews and Gentiles alike, the high priest, the regular priests and every individual citizen male or female of every nation, the noble and the lowly, the rich and the poor could now enter into the holy presence of God. This is because Jesus has replaced the temple of bricks and mortar and the entire structure of the Levitical priesthood. God has exalted Jesus to His right hand and made him the perfect High Priest of us all.

The only priest any man or woman needs to go through to be in communion with God and saved to eternal life is the Lord Jesus Christ.

3. After Christ's resurrection many of the faithful rose out of their tombs and went to Jerusalem. This is a small glimpse of the resurrection of us all when Christ returns in glory only there is one great difference. Those who were raised in this resurrection were raised to mortal life whereas those who will be raised in the great resurrection will be raised to eternal life and everlasting glory to taste death no more.
4. The faithful who are dead in their graves are referred to as sleeping in Christ because their death is only temporary.
5. Christ death brought about such dramatic events and changes in the natural laws of nature (darkness descended in daytime) that even the Roman soldiers were struck with awe and declared, "Truly Jesus was the Son of God!"

Ponder for a moment: if Christ death had such a dramatic effect on the laws of nature that the Roman centurion and those who were with him were so struck with awe they proclaimed, "Truly this was the Son of God!" imagine what the effect on the laws of nature and the populations of the world will be when Jesus returns in

glory and all who are sleeping in Christ and the faithful who are alive are raised to eternal life and the immortal sons and daughters of God are manifested in majestic glory for all creation to see.

Matthew 28

Jesus Appears to Certain Women and the Apostles.

Matthew 28:5-17 ----- ⁵the angel said to the women (Mary Magdalene and the other Woman) "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified ---- NOW GO TO VERSE ---- ¹⁰So they departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. ⁹And behold, Jesus met them and said, "Greetings!" And they came up and took hold of his feet and worshiped him. ¹⁰Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me" ---- NOW GO TO VERSE ---- ¹⁶Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. ¹⁷And when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted.

Matthew 28:18-20 ----- ¹⁸And Jesus came and said to them (the apostles), "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

From these verses we learn the following four things: -

1. An angel told Mary Magdalene and the other Woman that Jesus has risen.
2. Jesus appears to the women and they with great joy and humbleness fall and worship at his feet.
3. God has given Jesus all authority in heaven and on earth. No-one needs to go to any human priest (no matter how religious they might appear), to be in communion, prayer and fellowship with God.
4. Jesus told the eleven apostles to go and make disciples of men and women from all nations (i.e., Jews and Gentiles alike) baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to observe all that he has taught them. The word observe in this context carries the idea of studying and examining, celebrating and following Christ's teachings and conforming to them.
5. Christ by his Spirit and by love dwells in the heart and mind of every faithful brother and sister and always will until the end of this age as we know it.

The great commission: it should be mentioned though the great commission to go and make disciples of men and women from all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit was given to the eleven apostles, by extension it applies to every faithful follower of Christ. But making disciples of men and women does not mean making them full time ministers or servants of a church (unless they are specifically called for this purpose) so what does it mean some might wonder?

Simply this, make them faithful followers of Jesus and teach them how to walk in his Spirit, meaning in the fruits of the Spirit such as love, kindness, compassion, mercy, grace and forgiveness etc. It means teach them to live a lifestyle that honours God and brings a good testimony to the name of Jesus and the Christian faith so that when they do share their faith or the message of the cross they will be a good testimony before God and before those they are sharing it with.

Jesus ends the great commission with the words, "Teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you" (v20) the things Jesus commanded them and by extension all of us to do was to feed his sheep and to love our neighbour as ourself. This means we are to teach the message of the cross, the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, how to live a godly life and treat all men and women whether

they are in the Kingdom of God or outside of it with decency, honest justice and respect. When we do these things Jesus says he will be with us always, to the end of the age.

Water baptism: another important truth we can learn from this is that no one needs a professional minister or priest to baptise a repentant sinner into Christ, this is a joyful spiritual privilege that any faithful brother or sister in the global body of Christ is able to do. For further information concerning water baptism see the title: "Water Baptism" (ON WEBSITE MENU).

SUMMARY; Salvation in Matthew.

The book of Matthew is about revealing who Jesus is and the purpose of his life it begins with the birth of Christ and slowly leads up to his death and resurrection. Matthew's primary focus is not upon the Gospel of Christ, because Jesus was not yet crucified and no one understood the resurrection prior to it happening. The bulk of the book centers on the conflict between Jesus the chief priests, the Pharisees and scribes and Jesus revealing the hypocrisy of the religious leaders and proving he is the promised Messiah the Christ and the Son of God. Matthew records Jesus miracles of healing and casting out demons because they are evidence that Jesus is from God and filled with God's Spirit and focuses upon Jesus teaching concerning the nature of man and how brothers and sisters in Christ should live.

Prior to Jesus death there are seven glimpses of the resurrection and then the resurrection itself. After the resurrection Jesus appears to the apostles and tells them to go into all the world and make disciples of people from all nations (i.e., Jews and Gentles alike) baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit teaching them all he has taught them and how to live a life that honours God and brings a good name to the Lord Jesus Christ. After Jesus gloriously ascended to heaven the death and resurrection became the central focus of the apostles teaching, it is called the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, because it leads to eternal salvation and everlasting life in glory.

Christ the King and the Kingdom: there are certain religions today whose primary focus is upon the Kingdom of God, but after Christ's death and resurrection this is not what the apostles, Paul and others primary focus is upon. Certainly it is true there is a Kingdom of God, but the Kingdom is not the entry to eternal salvation. The entry into God's Kingdom is the Lord Jesus Christ he is the royal and golden door that we all have to go through to enter into the Kingdom. The eternal Kingdom is real, but it is not a path to salvation, but the inheritance of the faithful who are saved in Christ.

This is why the spotlight of the apostles, Paul and others after Jesus death and resurrection shifts from shining the light on the Kingdom to shining it on the King of the Kingdom, because whoever belongs to the King will naturally inherit the Kingdom.

SUMMARY; Salvation in Mark.

The following is only a brief overview of the book of Mark because much of Marks writings repeat what we have already done in Matthew. The New Covenant of grace and the Gospel of Lord Jesus Christ do not yet exist, because Christ is not yet been crucified and no-one fully understands the resurrection. The book of Mark begins with John the Baptist introducing the beginning of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ the Son of God and slowly and progressively leads us to understand that a human man named Jesus Christ the Son of God will be resurrected from the dead to eternal glory.

We read that Peter is the first to realise Jesus is the Christ the Son of God and see that Jesus foretold of his death and resurrection to his disciples seven times before the resurrection itself. The death and resurrection of Christ abolished the old covenant of law and introduced the new covenant of grace. The primary focus of the book of Mark is upon Jesus miracles, his healings, casting out demons, his

fame spreading throughout the region; his time equipping the twelve apostles for their ministry and foretelling of his death and resurrection. Mark tells us Jesus came for those that acknowledge their sin and not for the self-righteous and that salvation to eternal life involves: -

- Belief that Jesus is the sinless Son of God, who suffered, died and rose again.
- Faith in Jesus Christ and his death and resurrection.
- Repentance toward God and being baptised into the name of Jesus.
- A recognition and acknowledgment that we are sinners.
- An inward change and not just an outward show.
- Following Jesus and being willing to sacrifice our will to his will.
- Belief that Jesus was a human man who died and rose from the dead.
- Faith that the dead in Christ will be resurrected and the faithful who are alive will be gathered together with them when Jesus returns in glory.

SUMMARY: Salvation in Luke.

The following notes are only the key points concerning salvation in the book of Luke because much of Luke's writings repeat what we have already done in Matthew. Luke states that John the Baptist was the prophet of the Most High his ministry was to give light to those who sit in darkness and to make ready a people prepared for the way of the Lord through repentance and the waters of baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

Luke shines a spotlight on the truth Jesus is the horn of salvation who God raised up for the redemption of Jews and Gentiles alike and who came to set free those who the religious leaders of Israel oppressed by their formal and legalistic strict adherence to ceremonial laws, holy days and religious customs and traditions. Jesus was filled with Gods Spirit; spoke the words of God; has authority to forgive sins and proclaimed the year of the Lord's favour; the Good News to the poor; preached liberty to the captives; called sinners to repentance; restored sight to the spiritually blind and will gather the faithful into his eternal Kingdom when he returns in glory.

Luke highlights the truth that all Scripture points to Jesus Christ the Lord, the Son of God, who is the Saviour, the LORD'S Christ and God's Salvation and shows that the expression, "Baptised with the Holy Spirit and with fire" carries the idea that Christ and his Gospel brings sinners to a crisis of decision (i.e., choosing life or choosing death). Those that hear the word of the Lord with an honest and good heart and chose life and endeavour to live a lifestyle according to God's word and according to the fruits of the Spirit (i.e., love, compassion, mercy, grace, kindness forgiveness and such like things) Jesus calls his brothers and sisters and as such they are to believe they are forgiven, God loves them and they will be raised to eternal life and everlasting glory.

The central focus of salvation in Luke is upon the truth Jesus Christ was a human man who would suffer and be killed at the hands of sinners and on the third day rise from the dead. Luke shows that the message that should be proclaimed in the name of Jesus to all nations (Jews and Gentiles) beginning from Jerusalem is the death and resurrection of Christ and repentance and forgiveness of sins through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ because this is the Gospel message that delivers a sinner from the domain of darkness and transfers them into the Kingdom of God's beloved Son (Col. 1:13).

End.