



WELCOME TO BIBLE HOUSE OF GRACE

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

The Resurrection of the Dead in the New Testament.

(2019)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



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 perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

The Resurrection of the Dead in the New Testament.

Topics.

- Many will come and recline at the table with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.
- On the day of judgment some will be justified others will be condemned.
- Those counted worthy are equal to the angels.
- Whoever believes on Christ has passed from death to life.
- Jesus words will judge whoever rejects him on the last day.
- Jesus returns to earth as an eternal glorified immortal man.
- The resurrection of David and the resurrection of the Lord.
- The return of Jesus, begins the time of restoring all things
- The resurrection of the just and the unjust.
- Creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay.
- Every knee will bow to Christ and every tongue will confess to God.
- Sleeping in Christ.
- Jesus will be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels.
- Jesus will return and be glorified in his saints.
- The judge of the living and the dead.
- There is laid up a crown of righteousness for all the faithful.
- A city that has foundations whose designer and builder is God.
- The faithful of the Old and New Testament will be raised together.
- The faithful will receive a crown of glory when the Chief Shepherd appears.
- The world will continue as it always has until the Lord returns.
- One day with the Lord is as a thousand years.
- The Day of the Lord will come like a thief.
- When Christ appears, we will be like him.

INTRODUCTION

There is a resurrection of all those who belong to the Lord Jesus Christ when he returns to gather the faithful to himself and to establish God's Kingdom of righteousness, justice, joy and peace on earth. Then and at the end of Christ's glorious millennial reign as King of kings and Lord of lords God Himself descend to earth and there is a great White Throne Judgment. Death the grave and the sea give up all the dead and they stand before God and are judged according to what is written in certain

heavenly books according to what they had done. Those counted unworthy are cast into the Lake of Fire a symbol of eternal death (i.e., total extinction) then ETERNITY begins in all its majestic royal fullness. For the sake of clarity in this study the resurrection of Jesus return is referred to as the first resurrection (Rev. 20:5-6).

RESURRECTION IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

THE DEAD WILL BE RESURRECTED

Though the word resurrection is not found in the Old Testament the following verses show that the Old Testament prophets were aware of it and the Old Testament Scriptures referred to it. Job said:

- I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last he will stand upon the earth and after my skin has been thus destroyed, yet in my flesh I shall see God, whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another (Job 19:25-27).

David wrote:

- As for me, I shall behold your face in righteousness; when I awake, I shall be satisfied with your likeness (Psalm 17:15).

Isaiah prophesied:

- Your dead shall live; their bodies shall rise. You who dwell in the dust, awake and sing for joy! For the earth will give birth to the dead (Isaiah 26:19).

Daniel wrote:

- Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt and those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky above; and those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever (Daniel. 12:2-3).

These verses clearly show that Job, David, Isaiah and Daniel understood that the dead who died in the faith would be resurrected. Though the faithful of the Old Testament understood that they would rise from the dead the primary focus of the nation was upon the promised seed of the woman spoken of in (Genesis 3:15); the prophet and deliverer Moses said would come like him; the promised seed of Abraham; the promised seed of David and the Messiah the Christ who the prophets and the Scriptures proclaim was to come and lead their nation to prosperity and victory so that they would perpetually be the head of all nations from generation to generation.

RESURRECTION IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Unlike the Old Testament the resurrection is the primary focus of the apostles and of Paul and is mentioned in almost every book of the New Testament. This study shines a spotlight on those verses that speak of the resurrection, the Scriptures that refer to it and the events leading up to it and surrounding it and the glorious events that take place after it.

MATTHEW 8:11-12

Many will come and Recline at the Table with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

- **Matthew 8:11-12:** Jesus said, “I tell you, many will come from east and west and recline at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven ¹²while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

The title the Kingdom of heaven does not mean that the Kingdom is in heaven, Mark and Luke in their letters use the title the Kingdom of God for the same Scriptures. It refers to the present spiritual Kingdom established in the heart and mind of those who are devoted to Christ by faith and to the future literal Kingdom to be established on earth when Christ returns to gather the faithful to himself and rule and reign as King of kings and Lord of lords to establish God’s Kingdom of righteousness, justice joy and peace on earth. At the end of this glorious age God Himself descends to earth and the sea, hades (the grave) and death give up the dead and they stand before God and the great White Throne Judgement takes Place. After this there is no more death and God is ALL in ALL and ETERNITY begins in all its majestic royal fullness. The sons of the Kingdom in this context are the unbelieving Jews they will be cast into outer darkness because of their rejection of Christ. These words of Jesus show that only the faithful who believe in Christ’ will be raised and gathered to the Lord in the first resurrection (Rev. 20:4-6).

MATTHEW 12:34-37

On the Day of Judgment some will be justified others will be Condemned.

- **Matthew 12:34-37:** Jesus said, “You brood of vipers! How can you speak good, when you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. ³⁵The good person out of his good treasure brings forth good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure brings forth evil. ³⁶I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak, ³⁷for by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.”

3

Jesus is talking to the religious rulers of his generation (the chief priests, Pharisees and scribes) who showed no mercy, compassion or love toward those seeking God, but instead were using those under their authority to build their own religious kingdom. This is why Jesus is telling them that they will be condemned because of their lack of love, compassion and mercy and because of their rejection of the Lord and the wicked way they were treating their followers for their own gain. By extension this condemnation applies to anyone who rejects Christ and treats those seeking God in the same selfish evil manner.

MATTHEW 16:24-26

Jesus is Coming to Repay each Person According to what they have Done.

- **Matthew 16:24-26:** Jesus told his disciples, ²⁴ “If 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?

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 twenty-first 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 eternal 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, thus there is no profit in gaining the entire world if it means forfeiting eternal life when the Lord Jesus Christ returns 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-self and taking up the 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.

MATTHEW 16:27-28

Jesus comes with all the angels

- **Matthew 16:27-28:** Jesus said, "For 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"

Jesus said:

- When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne" (Matt. 25:31).
- Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory (Luke 21:27).

Angels: from Strong's Concordance comes from the Greek word (*aggelos*) which carries the idea of a messenger bringing good news, the messenger can refer to a human messenger, or a heavenly angel. Since the word angel can refer to humans (especially those that are close to God) or to heavenly angels those coming with the Lord can refer to God's angels or to the resurrected sons and daughters of God descending with the Lord to establish God's Kingdom of righteousness, justice, joy and peace on earth during Jesus millennial reign as King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev. 19:11-16).

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).

NOTE: Jesus words, "Some standing with him will not taste death until they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom" (v28) do not refer to the Lord returning in glory as King of kings and Lord of lords, but to the following six days when 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), or to the disciples who witnessed Jesus in his glorified eternal body after his death and resurrection.

For further information see titles:

- Kingdom of God (ON WEBSITE MENU).

MATTHEW 22:23-32

God is not the God of the Dead, but the God of the Living.

- **Matthew 22:23-32:** The same day Sadducees came to him, who say that there is no resurrection and they asked him a question, ²⁴saying, "Teacher, Moses said, 'If a man dies having no children, his brother must marry the widow and raise up children for his brother.' ²⁵Now there were seven brothers among us. The first married and died, and having no children left his wife to his brother. ²⁶So too the second and third, down to the seventh. ²⁷After them all, the woman died. ²⁸In the resurrection therefore, of the seven, whose wife will she be? For they all had her." ²⁹But Jesus answered them, "You are wrong, because you know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God. ³⁰For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven. ³¹And as for the resurrection of the dead have you not read what was said to you by God: ³²'I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? He is not God of the dead, but of the living" (Mark 12:18-27) (Luke 20:38).

It was from the burning bush the LORD said, "I Am the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Exod. 3:6, 14-15)." These three were buried with their fathers and are sleeping, waiting for the first resurrection that's why the LORD from the burning bush said, "He is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob." God knows that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob will be resurrected at the first resurrection (Rev. 20:4-6) when Christ returns in glory. Jesus is pointing out to the Sadducees whose entire faith was built upon Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, but who did not believe that there would be a resurrection that if Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were not going to be resurrected that would mean that God is the God of the dead and not the God of the living. These verses also show that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are not alive in heaven at this present time (as some believe). The entire focus of this conversation Jesus is having with the Sadducees is upon the resurrection. Jesus is using Abraham, Isaac and Jacob to prove to the Sadducees that there will be a resurrection because God is the God of the living and not the God of the dead.

NOTICE: in the resurrection the mighty and awesome power of God will transform those who are resurrected to be like the angels in heaven, meaning they will be eternal and so much more, what an amazing and glorious future for those who belong to the Lord Jesus Christ.

MATTHEW 24:29-31

Signs of the Lord's Return

- **Matthew 24:29-31:** Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. ³⁰Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. ³¹And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

Within Christianity there are two common teachings regarding the words, "The sun and the moon will be darkened, the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken."

1. The return of the Lord Jesus Christ will be such a majestic, awesome and supernatural event that the sun and moon will be literally darkened and the stars will literally fall from heaven causing the entire galaxies of the heavens to be moved out of their place.
2. The sun moon and stars are symbolic of governments and political powers, while the heavens speak of the world's system of money, banking and trade on earth, so when Christ returns rulers of nations, political authorities and governments along with the world system of finance will crumble.

My personal understanding of the sun and the moon being darkened etc. is that Christ's return will be a combination of both the first and second interpretations.

Immediately after the tribulation of those days: (v29) means immediately after everything Jesus has been saying since the disciples asked him the question, "What will be the sign of your coming and of the close of the age?" (v3) which means that immediately after refers to the things immediately after:

- The temple is destroyed.
- Nations have gone to war against each other.
- Extreme famines and earthquakes have happened in various countries.
- The disciples have been persecuted and put to death.
- Nations are in a state of hating those who confess Christ.
- Brothers and sisters in Christ have started hating and betraying each other.
- The rise of many false prophets and teachers who lead multitudes astray.
- Lawlessness has increased and the love many had for God has grown cold.
- The Gospel of the kingdom has been proclaimed throughout the whole world.
- The abomination of desolation is standing in the holy place.
- Tribulation is so great it is beyond anything the world has seen.

Immediately after all these events Christ will return, those who have died in Christ will be resurrected and those who are alive and belong to him will be gathered together with those resurrected and they will be forever with Christ.

Concerning this theme Paul wrote:

- The Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17).

All the tribes of the earth will mourn: (v30) can refer to all the nations of the earth mourning because the global system of mammon (money) has collapsed, but most likely refers to the twelve tribes of Israel as the language immediately takes the ardent Bible student to Zechariah chapter twelve which has Zechariah prophesying that a day will come in which all the armies of the nations will gather against

Jerusalem to destroy it, but the Lord will rise up to protect the city and destroy all who come against it. When this event reaches its climax the following prophetic words of Zechariah regarding the tribes of Israel will be fulfilled. The LORD through the prophet Zechariah said:

- I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, so that, when they look on me, on him whom they have pierced, all the families of Israel will mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a firstborn (Zechariah 12:10-14).

John cites the prophetic words of Zechariah:

- The Scripture says, "They will look on him whom they have pierced (John 19:37).

The book of Revelation picks up on the prophetic words of Zechariah:

- Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him. Even so. Amen (Revelations 1:7).

A word of comfort: for those who feel they do not have enough biblical knowledge to understand the exact detail of the events or the scenario that leads up to Christ's return there is no need to fear. This is because Jesus said, "It will be as lightening is from the East to the West, meaning it will be so spectacular that for those who belong to Christ there will be no mistaking that it is their Lord, their Saviour and their King who is dramatically and majestically returning in glory (Matthew 8:11) (Luke 13:29).

Besides this Jesus said:

- My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand (John 10:27-29).

7

How comforting are these words of Jesus, we do not have to be walking Bible encyclopaedia's because Jesus knows we love him. Jesus will save us not because of our knowledge, but because of our love and devotion toward him. Added to this he says we are held in the hand of God the Father and no-one is able to take anything out of God's hand. If these fantastic words are not enough to convince us we will not be left behind when the Lord returns, he also promises he will never allow the faithful to perish (eternally), but will grant them eternal life.

MATTHEW 27

Many Bodies of the Saints who had Fallen Asleep were Raised.

- **Matthew 27:50-53:** 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.

When Jesus rose from the tomb, many of the faithful rose also. This is a small glimpse of the first resurrection (Rev. 20:4-6) to take place when Christ returns to resurrect the faithful who have fallen asleep and gather together those who are alive to eternal glory.

SLEEPING IN CHRIST

When a person who belongs to Christ dies, the Bible says, that they have no knowledge and know nothing, they are totally unaware of it and are therefore in a perfect state of peace, this state is called sleeping in Christ and because they have no consciousness there, is no time. It is very similar to someone in a deep sleep there is no awareness of time, when the person wakes, they have no idea of whether four, seven or twelve hours have passed. Likewise, because there is no time in death the moment a Christian dies is the moment they are in the Kingdom of God and with the LORD, for them it is instant, even though many years may have passed by in our world's time. David died thousands of years ago, but the moment he is resurrected will be like the moment he breathed his last breath, because for him there is no awareness of time, so it is for every Christian from death to Christ is instant.

Death to the Christian is similar to a person in a coma: a person in a coma has no consciousness of time, time does not exist to them, when they wake, they often think only a day or so has gone by, when in actual fact several years may have passed yet they think they are waking up, the same day, or next day after they went to sleep. The person in the coma or in death is totally unaware of any time that they have spent in the coma or being dead. Death to those who belong to Christ is much the same as the person in the coma, the dead or those who are sleeping in Christ have absolutely no consciousness of time so for them, the moment they die, is the moment they are instantly with the Lord, even though many years may have passed during the time they have been dead (i.e., sleeping in Christ).

It is the same principal as a person who goes into hospital for an operation: the patient is given an anaesthetic and put to sleep, surgeons cut them up and take bits out, over the next few hours, yet the patient is totally unaware of it they wake up and have absolutely no idea of the time that has passed, therefore when Paul says:

- We are of good courage, and we would rather be away (absent in the KJV) from the body and at home with the Lord (2 Cor. 5:8).

It is a true statement, even though he may have spent years sleeping in Christ.

NOTE: a second reason a Christians death is called sleeping in Christ is because their death is only temporary, being asleep in Christ means everyone who dies in Christ is kept in the eternal mind and memory of God.

Jesus said:

- Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And not one of them falls to the ground without the father knowing it and even the hairs of our head are all numbered therefore we should not fear death because we are of more value than many sparrows (Matthew 10:29-31).

The entire person, (i.e., body, spirit, mind and consciousness) remains sleeping in Christ, until the first resurrection (Rev. 20:5) when all who are asleep in the Lord are woken up at the blast of the angels trumpet and raised from the dead to everlasting glory and clothed with an eternal and immortal body.

NOTE: some people find it difficult to comprehend God raising the dead, but think of it this way: we have super computers today that have in their memories literally trillions of bits of information and at the touch of a key any one of those bits is resurrected to us on a brightly coloured screen (soon it is most likely they will simply appear in the air), then with another touch of the key it all vanishes into the super memory and is gone, until we resurrect it again. Knowing that God has given his creation a mortal mind and finite memory to be able to build such amazing computers should make it very easy to understand how God keeps us all in His immortal mind and eternal memory waiting for the

right time to touch the supernatural keyboard of heaven and raise us once again to life. Added to this very few Christians have any trouble believing God created the universe that we live in so raising the dead in comparison is not such a difficult task for such an awesome, powerful and majestic God (Heb. 11:3).

LUKE 13:25-28

The references to the resurrection of the dead in Mark and Luke are mostly the same as spoken of in Matthew so we will only look at the following three topics mentioned in Luke:

1. Depart from me all you workers of evil.
2. The righteous will be resurrected.
3. Those counted worthy are equal to the angels.

Depart from me all you workers of evil!

- **Luke 13:25-28:** Jesus said, “When once the master of the house has risen and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and to knock at the door, saying, ‘Lord, open to us,’ then he will answer you, ‘I do not know where you come from.’”²⁶ Then you will begin to say, ‘We ate and drank in your presence and you taught in our streets.’”²⁷ But he will say, ‘I tell you, I do not know where you come from. depart from me all you workers of evil!’”²⁸ In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God but you yourselves cast out.”

These verses literally apply to the people of Israel. We know this because it says they ate and drank in Jesus presence and he taught in their streets and Jesus tells them even though they will see Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and all their prophets many of them will be cast out, but the principal of the parable is not limited to Israel only. By extension it can apply to anyone who seeks the Lord, has heard the Gospel, fellowshiped with other believers and eaten the Lord's Supper. Even though this group were seeking to enter the Kingdom and thought they deserved to be accepted Jesus says, “I don’t know you” (v25). Workers of evil carries the idea of those who like the religious leaders of Jesus generation, appear righteous on the outside but are serving Christ for their own selfish gain, they are full of hypocrisy on the inside, they are pretend servants of Christ who put on a display of godliness to appear righteous to others, but live adulterous and sinful lifestyles without any sense of repentance.

They are those who use their ministry for their own glory (i.e., to make themselves famous, important or rich) and who show no mercy or compassion toward the needy and the poor. The title, “Workers of evil” can also embrace those who believe they are saved because they have been born into a religious organisation, they attend a religious meeting every week, keep all the church traditions, ceremonial rites and even partake of the communion bread and wine, they are (in their eyes at least) righteous, but they are trusting in what they do to be saved rather than in Christ and God’s grace, because they are self-righteous.

Weeping and gnashing of teeth: Jesus words, “Once the master of the house has risen and shut the door” (v25) refers to the resurrection. Once Jesus returns it will be too late for those who are not ready, they will not be able to negotiate or talk their way into the Kingdom. This is why there will be great sorrow, (weeping and gnashing of teeth) they believed they were righteous and deserved to be given entry only to find to their horror that they are cast out.

LUKE 14:13-14

The righteous will be resurrected.

- **Luke 14:13-14:** Jesus said, “When you give a feast, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind ¹⁴and you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you. You will be repaid at the resurrection of the just.

The word, righteous in this context does not mean without sin, if anyone of us could attain to that perfect standard the law demands and the perfect standard of Holiness Christ died for no reason. John in his letter wrote:

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

The word, righteous in this context is not about salvation, but reward at the resurrection. It applies to the faithful in Christ who have helped the poor, the less fortunate and the needy. Paul wrote:

- No one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 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. 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).

When people help others, who cannot repay them in anyway it shows that the heart of those who are offering the help is totally unselfish and full of true compassion and kindness (this is why they are deserving of rewards). My personal belief is that those who are saved and attain to the first resurrection (Rev. 20:4-6) will not be judged and rewarded according to doctrine, but according to the fruits of the Spirit and how they have treated other humans especially their brothers and sisters in Christ.

LUKE 20:35-36

Those Counted Worthy are Equal to the Angels.

- **Luke 20:35-36:** Jesus said, “Those who are considered worthy to attain to that age and to the resurrection from the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage, ³⁶for they cannot die anymore, because they are equal to angels and are Sons of God, being sons of the resurrection.

Here is the glory, splendour and wonder of the Christian faith and the glorious promised eternal inheritance. Whoever is counted worthy at the first resurrection (Rev. 20:4-6) will receive a body that cannot die, is it any wonder God has to test the genuineness of our faith like gold tried in a fire (1 Peter 1:6-7) because once God resurrects a person to eternal life that life cannot be destroyed. This is the reason why tested faith is more precious than gold because if it endures the test it leads to eternal life and everlasting glory. (Luke 20:35-36 is similar to Matthew twenty-two and Mark twelve).

Consider the following 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 the world would sell everything they had to purchase one. This is the high value the apostles placed on the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. For Paul and the apostles 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 the gift of eternal life for all who would humbly accept by faith the Good News of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

JOHN 5:21-23

God the Father and Jesus give eternal life

- **John 5:21-23:** Jesus said, “For as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom he will. ²²The Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son, ²³that all may honor the Son, just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him.”
- Jesus said, as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself. ²⁷And he has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man (John 5:25-27).

God is the Almighty creator of all creation, the source of all life and the Father of all mankind. At Jesus water baptism God poured out His Spirit on Christ without any limitation and after raising him to his right-hand side in glory exalted him above every authority, principality and power and gave him all judgment to grant eternal life to whom he will. The following verses show that God is able to pour out His Spirit in varying portions on whoever he chooses:

- Moses went out and told the people the words of the LORD and he gathered seventy men of the elders and placed them around the tent then the LORD came down in the cloud and took some of the Spirit that was on him and put it on the seventy elders as soon as the Spirit rested on them they prophesied (Numbers 11:24-26).

During the time of Moses God took a portion of His Spirit from Moses and placed it on seventy prophets. Likewise God poured out His Spirit on the apostles, on Paul, on Christ’s disciples and on those who believe in Christ, but always with limitations (i.e., the apostles and Paul could not turn water to wine or calm the sea with a spoken word), in contrast to Moses, the apostles and Paul God poured His Spirit upon Christ without any limitations and has also given him all authority and all judgment to grant eternal life to whoever he chooses.

Now here is the good news Jesus said:

- All who the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out (John 6:37).

Endeavouring to fulfil God’s six commandments concerning mankind is the way to honour God and honour Christ. Jesus summed this up in the words, “Love your neighbour as yourself” (Matt. 22:37-40) (Mark 12:28-31) meaning treat people with respect, compassion and kindness and do-good, this is how Jesus honoured the Father. James calls it the royal law (James 2:8).

JOHN 5:24-29

Whoever believes on Christ has passed from death to life.

- **John 5:24-29:** Jesus said, “Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.” ²⁵“Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live.” ²⁶For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself. ²⁷And he has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son

of Man. ²⁸Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice ²⁹and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment (resurrection of damnation in KJV).

NOTICE: Jesus does not say whoever understands the Bible from Genesis to Revelation has eternal life, but whoever believes the words he has spoken therefore a person reading the Bible can be saved by simply reading the red print in the New Testament (i.e., Jesus words), applying them to their life and believing in God who sent him, added to this they will not even be judged.

No-one has to be a walking Bible encyclopaedia
to be saved to eternal life

All who are in tombs will hear his voice and come out: these words of Jesus can be applied to that moment when Jesus on the cross cried out with a loud voice and yielded up his Spirit and many of the faithful were raised to mortal life after the Lord's resurrection and went into the holy city Jerusalem and appeared to many (Matt. 27:50-53), but the ultimate application of Jesus words refers to Christs return as King of kings and Lord of lords to establish God's Kingdom of righteousness, justice, joy and peace on earth at which time those who are sleeping in Christ and those who are alive will be resurrected to be with him in glory.

The resurrection of life and the resurrection of judgment: the words, "Those who have done good will rise to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment and damnation" can be understood in the following two ways:

1. In the first resurrection (Rev. 20:4-6) there will be two groups that are raised to stand before the Lord, those who confess to believe in the Lord and who have done-good and those who confess to believe in the Lord and have done evil. The group that has done-good will be immediately welcomed into the eternal Kingdom of Christ without any judgment while those who have done evil will be judged. Those who have done evil most likely refers to those who have confessed to believe in Christ, but lived hypocritical lifestyles without any care to how their life reflects on God and the Lord Jesus Christ and to false teachers and leaders, who come in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves that use their privileged position for their own selfish gain and ambition. 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. 7:15-23).

In this context doing the will of God refers to the following two commandments God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ gave:

- You shall love God with all your heart, soul, strength and mind (Matt. 22:37-38).
- You shall love your neighbour as yourself (Matt. 22:39).

Jesus command to love your neighbour as yourself means do not deliberately do harm to other humans. No sane person deliberately does things to inflict pain on themselves, loving others as you love yourself is not about feeling some warm and fuzzy emotion towards others, it is about not hurting others as you would not hurt yourself. The thing God hates the most is when we do harm to another person, physically, financially, verbally, sexually, emotionally or spiritually and the thing God loves the most is when we do-good to others. It is interesting to notice that the major crime that God points out in Noah's time and one of the main reasons for the flood was because of all the violence in the land.

- 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.

Jesus famous sermon on the Mount: the constant theme throughout Jesus famous Sermon on the Mount is doing what is right before God by seeking the way of peace in all situations. Jesus calls Christians to treat people fairly and with respect, dignity, decency grace compassion, kindness, mercy and to be quick to forgive. This means living a life that honours God and the Lord Jesus Christ is about doing all we can do to protect people from harm and being dominated by the thought, “What action can I take or do that will help and encourage this person.” It is all about doing right to others. This is the reason the message Jesus spoke on the mountain is referred to as, “The Famous Sermon” because the principals if followed not only by Christians but all humanity are the only way to peace (Matt 5). A wicked person is primarily one who deliberately and consciously denies the existence of God and does harm to other humans. For further information on Jesus Famous Sermon see:

- Matthew 5 in Commentary New Testament (ON WEBSITE MENU).

2. The words, “All who are in the graves will hear his voice and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of judgment and damnation (John 5:28-29) could refer to the first resurrection, and the second death since it could be reasoned that only the faithful who have endured in their faith and are sleeping in Christ will hear the voice of the Lord and therefore only those who belong to Christ would be resurrected in the first resurrection to eternal life. The book of Revelations states:

- The faithful who have died in Christ come to life and reign with the Lord for a thousand years. The rest of the dead do not come to life until the thousand years are ended. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and will reign with him for a thousand years (Rev. 20:5-6).

The resurrection to life eternal refers to the first resurrection, only those who belong to Jesus and hear his voice will be resurrected to eternal life, while those who do not hear the voice of Christ do not come to life until Jesus reign on earth as King of kings and Lord of lords has ended. At the end of Christ’s glorious reign, the book of Revelations says:

- God descends on a great white throne and the sea, death and hades (the grave) give up the dead and the great and small, stand before the throne of God. Then the book of life is opened and some others books. Whoever name is not found in the book of life is cast into the lake of fire a symbol of eternal death (i.e., total extinction). If a person’s name is found in the book of life then the other books are opened and the dead who remain standing before the throne of God are judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done (Rev 20:11-15).

Whoever attains to the first resurrection the second death will have no power over. The second death is also called the Lake of Fire which means that the resurrection of judgment and of damnation refers to

the Lake of Fire a symbol of eternal death (i.e., total and utter extinction) (Rev. 20:4-6) (Rev. 20:11-15). The first resurrection, takes place when the Lord Jesus Christ returns in glory while the second resurrection takes place at the end of Jesus glorious millennial reign on earth which means there is at least a thousand-year gap between the resurrection to life and the resurrection to damnation.

NOTE: though it may be exciting and spiritually rewarding for some to reason together in a spirit of peace concerning which of these two scenario's might be the one that applies to, "The resurrection of life, and the resurrection of judgment and damnation" it should always be kept in mind that it is not important to a person's salvation to have an exact understanding.

Since both these scenarios clearly show that the faithful will be welcomed into God's eternal glory and that the wicked, the hypocritical and those who have used the Gospel for their own selfish gain will be judged to damnation. Therefore, to argue or even worse to divide over which of the two scenarios is correct could only be judged as an exercise of vanity and pride.

JOHN 6:44

Jesus will resurrect those who accept Him

- **John 6:44:** Jesus said, No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day.

Jesus after listening to the Jews grumbling about him (v41) said, "No-one can come to him unless the Father draws them." In the Old Testament Hanani the prophet when rebuking Asa the king of Judah made the following statement to the king:

- The eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to give strong support to those whose heart is blameless toward him (2 Chron. 16:7-9).

Blameless in this context does not mean without sin, but without malice, it refers to those who are humble and have a compassionate and kind heart in contrast to those who give no thought to the well-being of others. God eyes are always roaming throughout the populations of the world seeking for those who have a right heart attitude meaning those who seek after peace and have a heart that mourns over the suffering of others in the world and desires what is right and good for all mankind not just themselves. God the Father by his Spirit draws those who have a heart filled with good soil toward Himself. Jesus in the parable of the sower said:

- Those who have a heart filled with good soil are those who hear the word, understand it, accept it, hold it fast in an honest heart and bear fruit with patience (Matt. 13:23) (Mark 4:20) (Luke 8:15).

The last day in this context refers to the last day of this world as we know it and to the return of the Lord Jesus Christ which is the beginning of a new day. It refers to the end of our age and the beginning of Christ's glorious millennial Kingdom age.

JOHN 11:17-23

Jesus Resurrects Lazarus.

- **John 11:17-23:** Now when Jesus came, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days. ¹⁸Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles off, ¹⁹and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them concerning their brother. ²⁰So when Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, but Mary remained

seated in the house. ²¹Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. ²²But even now I know that whatever you ask from God, God will give you." ²³Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again."

Here we see the great faith of Martha she not only had total faith Jesus could have healed her brother from a sickness that lead to death, but even after Lazarus has been dead for four-days her faith was such that she said to Jesus, "I know that whatever you ask from God, God will give you." Clearly showing that she had total faith God would give to Jesus whatever he asked. These words of Martha show that she knew that Jesus power came from God and understood that it was Gods Spirit flowing through Jesus that gave him the miraculous power to heal and perform the many wonders he did.

Jesus resurrected Lazarus to mortal life (not to eternal life) he rose from the tomb, but went on to die again later in life.

JOHN 11:24-27

I am the resurrection and the life.

- **John 11:24-27:** Martha said to him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." ²⁵Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, ²⁶and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?" ²⁷She said to him, "Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world."

The words, "Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die" appear to contradict each other, but it means that whoever believes in Jesus will never die eternally and those who are raised to eternal life will never again die. Martha had tremendous insight and great faith she believed Jesus was the Christ and the Son of God who had been promised by Moses and the prophets to come into the world and even before Jesus had been crucified and raised from the dead she believed in the resurrection of the dead and that her brother would be raised on that glorious day when the great resurrection of the dead took place.

Prior to the stone being removed from the tomb Jesus told Martha, "If she believed she would see the glory of God (v4)." Then the stone is removed and Jesus prays to the Father and then says, "Lazarus, come out." And Lazarus miraculously came out and Martha no-doubt in overwhelming joy and wonder sees the glory of God. The fact Jesus prayed and thanked his Father for the miracle clearly shows that Jesus was dependent on God for his miraculous power and shows that God's Spirit was flowing through Christ every time he performed a miracle, we know this because Jesus said to his Father, "I know that you always hear me" (John 11:42) meaning he knows God would always answer his prayer.

NOTE: Jesus did not need to always pray before a miracle because God was always with him and would always do whatever he wanted, but he prayed the prayer not for himself but for the benefit of those watching so that they would believe that God sent him (John 11:42).

Lazarus walks out of the tomb: Lazarus with his hands, feet and face bound with linen walks out of the tomb and Jesus said to Mary, Martha and their Jewish friends, "Unbind him, and let him go" and many of the Jews believed in Jesus. The Spiritual message within this miracle is that Jesus word has the power to set free those who are spiritually dead and bound by the bondage of the law (symbolised by the linen strips). In this context linen is a perfect symbol of the law since linen normally symbolises righteousness and the law is perfect. The law puts people in bondage not because there is a fault in the law, but because there is a

fault in us (i.e. self, ego, pride, lust, greed and such like things). Jesus said, "This miracle is for the glory of God" (v4), the glory of God in this context was the resurrection of Lazarus. Here is the heart of the Christian faith, Jesus said:

- I am the resurrection and the life whoever believes in me will live (eternally). (John 11:25).

This shows that salvation to eternal life does not come by strictly adhering to ceremonial rites, holy days and religious customs and traditions etc., but by faith in Christ.

JOHN 12:48

Jesus Words will Judge Whoever Rejects Jesus on the Last Day

- **John 12:48:** The one who rejects me and does not receive my words has a judge; the word that I have spoken will judge him on the last day.

These words of Jesus not only show that he did not come into the world to judge the world, but also that he did not come into the world to judge those who reject him. Jesus simply spoke the words of God that lead to eternal life and allowed those who heard them to freely respond in whatever manner they freely chose. Since it is the words that Jesus spoke that determine a person's eternal standing and not Jesus himself, he could continue to show love, compassion and mercy regardless of how a person chose to respond to what he spoke because he wasn't judging anyone.

He simply left the messages he spoke to do the judging for him. Jesus sole ministry and purpose until the end of this age is to save to eternal life those who do not know God's love and God's grace. He did not come to judge anyone.

Those who hear the words of Jesus and do not do them and those who reject him and his words are already judged by the words he has spoken. Many religious people's concept of God's judgment is of everyone lining up in a queue before God and waiting their turn to be judged, but Christ in these verses is saying everyone who hears his words and rejects them is already judged according the words they have heard and rejected.

NOTE: doing the words of Jesus is not about adhering to ceremonial rites and holy days or keeping religious customs and traditions. The words of Jesus that we are called to do are about walking in the fruits to the spirit (i.e., showing mercy, compassion, kindness and love to others and helping those in need when able) contrasted to those who deliberately harm people physically, financially, verbally, sexually, emotionally or spiritually and using or oppressing others for one's own selfish gain. Those that hear the words of Christ and reject them are judged by their own actions and by the words they themselves chose to reject.

ACTS 1:11

Jesus Returns to Earth as an Eternal Glorified Immortal Man.

- **Acts 1:11:** Two men in white robes said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven."

This event is after Jesus death and resurrection and at the end of the forty-days he appeared to his disciples speaking about the Kingdom of God (v3). Jesus was standing with his disciples and has just told them that it was not for them to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority to restore the Kingdom of Israel (v7). During

this conversation the Lord was lifted up and a cloud took him out of their sight (v9). While the disciples were gazing at Jesus ascending into heaven (no-doubt in stunned wonder) the two men standing by them in white robes ask the disciples:

- Why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven (Acts 1:10-11).

Ponder for a moment: the emotional wonder and amazement the disciples would have felt as they watched the one, they had known for three years ascend to his heavenly Father. All who faithfully follow Christ will one-day experience that same overwhelming wonder and splendour when the Lord they have known and loved returns, but this time not as a Lamb to be slaughtered, but as the mighty and all-powerful King of kings and Lord of lords.

- Even though God has set a fixed time for Christ's return (v7) it is given to no-one to know the exact dates or time when this glorious event will be.

The Kingdom of God has existed throughout history in different shapes and different forms. In the Old Testament it existed under Moses and the Judges in one form and under David and Solomon in another. Prior to Christ's death and resurrection, the Jews focus was the promised literal and physical Kingdom of Israel to be restored on earth rather than the resurrection of Jesus and all those (Jews and Gentiles) who trust in his name being resurrected to eternal life. After Christ's resurrection the focus of the writers changed from the literal Kingdom to salvation in Jesus name and resurrection to everlasting life and eternal glory.

Christ's resurrection ushered in a spiritual Kingdom that exists in the heart, mind and conscience of all who confess to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. At the end of this age when Christ returns as King of kings and Lord of lords he will separate out of this existing spiritual Kingdom, the foolish and wicked servants from the faithful and wise servants and with the faithful and the RESURRECTED who died in Christ majestically establish God's literal Kingdom of righteousness, justice, joy and peace on earth, then the righteous will shine like the sun in the Kingdom of their Father (Matt. 13:36-43) which means that the Kingdom will take on another form that is different again, but this is not the final shape of the Kingdom since at the end of this glorious age God Himself will descend to earth and be ALL in ALL then the Kingdom will take on its final and eternal form and ETERNITY will begin in all its majestic royal fullness.

NOTE: it is the context that determines which Kingdom the writer is referring too. In the New Testament the Kingdom of God in Paul's mind is mostly the invisible spiritual Kingdom existing in the heart and mind of those who belong to Christ which is manifested in righteousness, peace and joy (Rom 14:17).

For further information see the title:

- Kingdom of God (ON WEBSITE MENU).

ACTS 1:22

To be an Apostle One had to Have Witnessed the Resurrection.

- **Acts 1:22:** beginning from the baptism of John until the day when he was taken up from us—one of these men must become with us a witness to his resurrection."

The man to replace Judas had to have accompanied Peter and the other ten apostles from the time that Jesus was baptised by John up until the day when he ascended to heaven and he had to have witnessed Christ's resurrection.

The Resurrection of David and the Resurrection of the Lord.

- **Acts 2:29-34:** Paul said, "Brothers, I may say to you with confidence about the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. ³⁰Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would set one of his descendants on his throne, ³¹he foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to hades nor did his (Christ's) flesh see corruption. ³²This Jesus God raised up and of that we all are witnesses. ³³Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing. ³⁴For David did not ascend into the heavens.

David understood God's eternal plan of salvation was to establish an everlasting Kingdom with a holy one as King reigning over it. Though David could not have known the name of the future King being a prophet he foresaw that this king called the holy one would be killed, but before his body could decay in the grave God would raise him to eternal glory. David trusted in God's promise that He would raise up from one of his descendants a king to reign in God's eternal Kingdom forever and had no-doubt that God would not forget his body in the grave but also resurrect him to eternal life and everlasting glory. He held these promises ever before him, meaning he kept them as the central and dominant thought of his mind and it was this hope that strengthened him and kept him joyful (Acts 2:25-32).

NOTICE: David has not ascended to heaven (v34) in fact no-one has. If David or any other Old Testament prophet had ascended to heaven the following statement of Paul, "Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep" (1 Cor. 15:20) would be a false statement since if anyone ascended to heaven prior to Christ he could not be referred to as the firstfruits of dead. For further information see the title:

- Heaven in, Death (ON WEBSITE MENU).

It was not possible for death to hold Jesus (Acts 2:24) this is because death is a result of the, law of sin and death which states that the wages of sin is death (Rom. 6:23) and since Christ was without sin (Heb. 4:15) death had no legal right to hold him in the grave. The Good News of the Gospel for all who trust in Christ is that God has granted to them as a pure and free gift, righteousness the leads to 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). This is why the law of sin and death has no power over those who believe in Christ and faithfully follow him (this is the Good News of the Gospel in a nutshell).

Acts 3:20-21

The Return of Jesus Begins the Time of Restoring all Things.

- **Acts 3:20-21:** Peter said to the men of Israel, "Repent therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out, ²⁰that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send the Christ appointed for you, Jesus, ²¹whom heaven must receive until the time for restoring all the things about which God spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets long ago."

Christ will remain in heaven at God's right hand side until he returns to restore the earth to its former glory. This is the purpose of Christ's glorious millennial reign when he returns in glory 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).

ACTS 4:33

The Apostle's Message was the Resurrection.

- **Acts 4:33:** with great power the apostles were giving their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all.

God gave the apostles the ability to perform amazing miracles and wonders that no man on earth could perform without God's SPIRIT being abundantly poured out upon them. God did this to give credence and weight to their message concerning the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ and to evidence that the God of creation and of heaven was with them. Certainly there are testimonies of people being healed by the power of God today, but the great difference between these miracles and the wonders of the apostles is that it did not matter where the apostles were, it did not matter whether those they healed had faith not, often their miracles were simply acts of compassion regardless of whether a person was a believer or not, neither did they need soothing mood music or a church atmosphere to heal the sick. Added to this it did

not matter if the sickness was mental or physical, a disease or terminal virus whoever they prayed for was healed. Even more than this if the healed person walked away in unbelief and still refused to accept Christ as their Saviour and King, they remained healed. Their miracles were not placebo healings as some are today nor did God take the healing miracle away simply because of doubt or a lack in their faith.

ACTS 17:18

Paul Preached Jesus and the Resurrection.

- **Acts 17:18:** Some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers also conversed with him. And some said, "What does this babblers wish to say?" Others said, "He seems to be a preacher of foreign divinities"—because he was preaching Jesus and the resurrection.

Paul's central message was the resurrection of Jesus; clearly it is very difficult for an intellectual mind to accept that a human man could be raised from the grave. Since no-one alive today has seen Christ rise from the dead or anyone else physically ascend to heaven no-one can prove it. This is why God in His eternal wisdom-based salvation to eternal life on faith and not intellectual head knowledge. Here is the glory of the Gospel it matters not if a person has been awarded the highest degree a Bible College can give or has never been to a Bible school or struggles with learning all can understand the message of the Gospel and be equally saved to eternal life.

NOTE: one of the great faults of the global Christian church has been to make every teaching and doctrine of the Bible important to salvation. Much of traditional Christianity has taught that whatever doctrines their particular church hold too must all be understood for a sinner to be saved to eternal life and strictly kept to maintain salvation, but this is a wrong mindset since it is not true and also closes the door to any form of questioning and any form of further spiritual adventure and discovery. Certainly the Bible contains much wisdom that can help us all in this life and many stunning and beautiful prophecies, (especially those concerning the return of the Lord), but not every teaching should be linked to salvation since much of what the Bible teaches is not important to know to be in a devoted relationship to the Lord Jesus Christ and saved to eternal life.

ACTS 23:6

Paul is on Trial for the Hope and Resurrection of the Dead.

- **Acts 23:6:** Now when Paul perceived that one part were Sadducees and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, "Brothers, I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees. It is with respect to the HOPE and the resurrection of the dead that I am on trial."

When salvation to eternal life is spoken of as the hope of the faithful in Christ, it is not called hope because it might or might not happen, but because it is unseen and yet future. The hope itself is guaranteed because it is based on God's promise and he cannot lie. The apostle Paul wrote; "In hope of eternal life, which God, who never lies, promised before the ages began" (Titus 1:2). The Christian hopes to be resurrected from the grave to be raised up to eternal life and everlasting glory to be made perfectly free from sin; to be everlastingly happy, but it is faith that gives these things a mental reality in the mind and it is under this influence of faith that those in Christ allow these unseen and yet future events to control their mind as if they were a reality now.

ACTS 24:14-16

The Resurrection of the Just and the Unjust.

- **Acts 24:14-16:** Paul said, “This I confess to you (Felix) that according to the Way, which they (the Pharisees) call a sect (heresy in the KJV), I worship the God of our fathers, believing everything laid down by the Law and written in the Prophets, ¹⁵having a hope in God, which these men themselves accept, that there will be a resurrection of both the just and the unjust.” ¹⁶So I always take pains to have a clear conscience toward both God and man.

The Kingdom parables (Matt. 13) teach that within God’s present Kingdom there are both wise and foolish servants, good and wicked servants. The final Kingdom parable shows us that when Christ returns, he will separate the wise from the foolish out of his present Kingdom.

The Resurrection of the Just: applies to those who show honest justice and compassion, mercy and love toward others, it embraces everyone who aims to fulfill the royal law (James 2:8) love your neighbor as yourself (Matt. 22:37-40) (Mark 12:28-31) and have dealt honestly and fairly with others.

The Resurrection of the Unjust: applies to those who deliberately do harm to others, physically, financially, verbally, sexually, emotionally or spiritually and who have cheated and oppressed or used others for their own selfish gain. The resurrection of the just and the resurrection of the unjust can apply to the first resurrection (Rev. 20:4-6) when Christ returns in glory. We know this because Jesus tells us that there will be those who say to him, “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 he will declare to them, “I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness” (Matt. 7:22-23) or it could apply to the great White Throne Judgment (Rev 20:11-15) at the end of Christ’s glorious millennial reign on earth since in this judgment there are those who are counted unworthy and cast into the Lake of Fire a symbol of eternal death (i.e., total and utter extinction).

ROMANS 1:4

Jesus was Declared to be the Son of God by his Resurrection.

- **Romans 1:4:** Paul states, “Jesus was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord.

The Scriptures state that:

- All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23).
- The wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom. 6:23).

These verses show that there is a universal law of decay that works through our bodies to bring about death because of sin. This universal law is called the law of sin and death, the curse of sin is death, but the good news is that there is a higher law that supersedes the law of sin and death.” This higher law is called the law of the Spirit of life which states that:

- God will set free whoever believes in the Lord Jesus Christ from the law of sin and death (Rom. 8:2)

This means that the following are the only two ways any of us can attain to eternal life:

1. To believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.
2. To never sin.

This is why Paul was able to state, "Jesus was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of Holiness by his resurrection from the dead. God was able to raise Jesus from the grave because unlike us he had never sinned (Heb. 4:15) and therefore death had no legal right to keep him imprisoned in the kingdom of death and darkness. Jesus has been the only human man to live a life without sin, if anyone of us could attain to such a glorious state of sinlessness Jesus died from no reason. This is why Christ is worshipped by believers all over the world as their Redeemer and Saviour. They know without the righteousness that God imputes to them as a pure and free gift because of their faith and devotion in His Son the Lord Jesus Christ they would have no hope of ever attaining to eternal life.

ROMANS 2:6-11

Seeking Glory, Honor, Immortality and Eternal Life.

- **Romans 2:6-11:** He will render to each one according to his works ⁷to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life, ⁸but for those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury. ⁹There will be tribulation and distress for every human being who does evil, the Jew first and also the Greek, ¹⁰but glory and honor and peace for everyone who does good, the Jew first and also the Greek. ¹¹For God shows no partiality.

The focus of these verses is not upon those already saved (though the principle would apply), but upon those seeking eternal life and immortality, it is upon those who are in the process of seeking glory, honour, immortality, eternal life and upon God's in-partiality and the day when God's judgment will be revealed. Paul is telling the Jews and the Gentiles that it will make no difference to God on the day of judgment whether a person has been born a Jew or a Gentile because God's judgment will not be based upon a person's nationality, but upon a person's deeds of doing-good to others and not harm. Paul is shining a spotlight on the truth that the Jews are not superior to the Gentiles in regards to God's judgment and highlighting the truth that everyone will be judged according to how they have treated other humans. He is showing that God does not favour Jews over Gentiles, but blesses those of either nation who are obedient in well-doing.

ROMANS 6:3-6

Being united with Christ in Death and united with him in Resurrection.

- **Romans 6:3-6:** Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. ⁵For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. ⁶We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin.

This is a letter Paul is writing to the Christian brothers in Rome. In the previous chapter Paul's entire focus was on those in Christ who had been justified by grace, now his focus shifts to how those who have been justified by grace should live. True baptism involves repentance from wrong-doing and anything that has offended God this kind of repentance brings a change of desire in the heart and mind which births a desire in the heart to honour God and an equally strong passion to avoid anything that offends Him. This is what Paul means when he says, those who are baptised into Christ have died to sin the new nature hates sin and loves righteousness. Paul is basically saying, "How can a person who has had

this change take place in their heart continue to live in a lifestyle of sin?" What's more those that are baptised in Christ are identifying with Christ's death and resurrection they are acknowledging that they also will die and be resurrected to a new and eternal life as Christ was which means that Paul is saying to those who have been baptised, don't wait until they are resurrected to live the new life rather live it now and don't live in the old sinful and godless lifestyle they have repented from especially since all who have been united with Christ in death will be resurrected to eternal glory as Christ was (v4).

Our old-self was crucified: the old-self (lower nature) was crucified, means that there is a new desire and passion in the heart of those baptised into Christ. The desire of this new higher nature (often called the spirit) is to honour God, nevertheless even though it is now the dominant desire of the heart, the lower nature (often called the flesh) is still pulled toward sin, in spite of the higher natures desire to honour God, because of this there is conflict between the lower nature (the flesh) and the higher nature (the Spirit) which desires to do those things that honour God whereas the old nature (self, ego and pride etc.) is indifferent or does not even consider God it's only thought is self-gratification and self-glory whereas the new nature is always considering or desiring God's best interest it may not always succeed, but there is sorrow toward God when the lower nature does get the victory. This is what Paul means by the term:

- We would be no longer slaves to sin (v6).

Though the very powerful voice of sin tempts us to wrong-doing to satisfy self, ego, pride or greed etc., this is not the new nature of the Spirit that has given birth to the desire to honour the Lord, nevertheless because of our human limitations (v19) (i.e., the sinful aberrations and dysfunctions that dwell within all mankind) the voice of temptation is often far more powerful than the sweet and quiet voice of the Spirit this is why we are saved by faith and not by works of the law, because not one of us can attain to the perfect Holiness or the perfect Holiness of God, if we could attain to the glorious state of sinlessness Christ died for no purpose.

ROMANS 8:21-23

Creation itself will be set Free from its Bondage to Decay.

- **Romans 8:21-23:** that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. ²²For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. ²³And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons the redemption of our bodies.

How marvellous and awe-inspiring is this, not only will we receive immortality and eternal life, but all of creation which at the moment is like our mortal bodies on a path of decay, will itself be restored to its former glory. Based on (Isaiah 65:25) I expect it will again be populated with all kinds of harmless animals and an abundance of brilliantly coloured flowers, trees and birds wherever one looks with fresh flowing streams running where there once were desert places. Eternal glory will be a feast for the eyes, an ongoing delight to the taste buds and a place where weapons of war will be replaced by farming equipment and sorrow and pain replaced with joy and laughter.

The revealing of the Sons of God: (v19) Paul personifies God's entire creation (from the fall of Adam) as a pregnant woman groaning in pain waiting to give birth to the sons and daughters of God and those who are the sons and daughters of God also groaning within themselves with excitement as they wait for the adoption and redemption of their bodies (v22-23) which will with awe-inspiring power take place at the

resurrection when the Lord Jesus Christ returns in glory 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 millennial reign.

For further information: concerning Christ's glorious millennial reign and the events following it see the notes following (Acts 3:20-21) under the title; "The Return of Jesus Begins the Time of Restoring all Things."

ROMANS 14:10-12

Every Knee will Bow to Christ and every Tongue will Confess to God.

- **Romans 14:10-12:** Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God ¹¹for it is written, "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me and every tongue shall confess to God." ¹²So then each of us will give an account of himself to God.

Paul's focus so far is brothers and sisters in Christ judging each other which means the phrase, "Every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God" (v11) applies to those in Christ and not the unsaved (see previous verse). Paul is saying that everyone in the family of Christ will give their own account to God and since this is the case why concern ourselves with judging another brother or sisters standing and eternal salvation. Paul is telling us that this kind of judgment should be left to each brother and sisters own master and High Priest the Lord Jesus Christ and that instead of concerning ourselves with the standing of another before the Lord a better focus for us to have and one that is far more pleasing to the Lord is to concern ourselves with making sure we don't cause others to stumble.

24

1 CORINTHIANS 15

Since this chapter is commonly known as the resurrection chapter it has been done as a separate topic titled:

- The Resurrection in (1 Corinthians 15).
- In Resurrection (ON WEBSITE MENU).

2 CORINTHIANS 5

This chapter is done under the title:

- Our Earthy Home and Our Eternal House (2 Corinthians. 5).
- In Resurrection (ON WEBSITE MENU).

GALATIANS 6:8

Those that Sow to the Spirit will Reap Eternal Life.

- **Galatians 6:8:** For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.

Corruption: in this context refers to death in contrast to eternal life.

Sowing to the flesh: in this context refers to:

- Living to satisfy self, ego, pride and greed.

- Living to gratify sexual lusts (i.e. orgies, incest, rape, adultery, and paedophilia) and using others for one's own sexual gratification.
- Following religious teachings because they appeal to self, pride and ego.

Whenever we act from pride, arrogance, envy, jealousy, anger and cause strife, rivalries and divisions or indulge in drunkenness and worldly partying we can be spoken of as a person who is acting and living from the flesh (Gal. 5:19-21). Notice these are all things that will do some form of physical, emotional, sexual or spiritual harm not only to self, but also to others. In this context sowing to the Spirit is living in love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (Gal. 5:22-24), and manifesting these good attitudes toward others. Notice; in contrast to living in the flesh these are all things that will benefit self and benefit others, this is why Paul says:

- Whoever sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.

Whenever we do something to gratify self, pride, ego and greed at the expense of someone else's happiness or well-being we are acting from the flesh whereas whenever we do something for the happiness and well-being of other especially if it means loss to us in some manner we are acting from the Spirit. The Spirit is love so whatever is motivated by love is flowing from the Spirit. In contrast to this the flesh is self so whatever we do for self especially if it is at another person's loss we are sowing to the flesh.

PHILIPPIANS 3:9-12

Attaining to the Resurrection from the Dead.

- **Philippians 3:9-12:** and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith — ¹⁰that I may know him and the power of his resurrection and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, ¹¹that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead. ¹²Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own.

Here Paul shines a spotlight on the truth that it is not by our own righteousness that we attain to the resurrection of life. The following majestic words of Paul are the heart and the Good News of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ:

- Not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith (v9).

There was absolutely no-doubt in Paul's mind that to be found in Christ and to attain to the resurrection had nothing to do with law keeping or self-effort to attain to righteousness that leads to eternal life nor did it have anything to do with strictly adhering to ceremonial rites, holy days and keeping religious customs and traditions, but is solely dependent on the righteousness that comes from God and through faith in Christ. This is because righteousness that is attained by the law and religious works only deals with outward actions and not the inward nature. The Pharisees, chief priest and scribes outwardly kept the law and religious practises in the smallest detail, so in that sense under the law they were righteous, but inwardly Jesus said of them:

- Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness. You blind guides, straining out a gnat and swallowing a camel! "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and the plate, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within are full of dead people's bones and all uncleanness (Matt. 23:23-27).

Though most brothers and sisters in the Christian faith are not like the scribes and Pharisees nevertheless we do all live in a corrupted fallen body that is not only tainted with self, ego and pride but infected with sinful dysfunction and aberrations such as jealousies, anger, coveting, lustful thoughts, greed and selfish desires etc., which means not one of us can stand before the holiness of God and boast we are without sin and pure before him. In fact, John in his letter tells us:

- 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, but if we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us (1 John 1:8-10).

Paul was very aware of the fallen nature he had inherited from our earthly father Adam. This is the reason he is so passionate and zealous for the Gospel since it proclaims everyone can be righteous before God and saved to eternal life despite the inward sinful and corrupt nature, we have all inherited from our earthly father Adam. This is why Paul so strongly states that he was not trusting in the righteous he might outwardly attain to by self-effort in adhering to ceremonial rites and holy days and keeping religious customs and traditions, but rather by being fully dependent on God's righteous that comes by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

That I may know Christ and the power of his resurrection: (v10) these words link back to Paul's statement that he was trusting in Christ for righteousness in contrast to trusting in law keeping and adhering to ceremonial rites, holy days and keeping religious customs and traditions. These words of Paul shine a brilliant spotlight on the following two majestic truths:

1. That the only way for any brother or sister in Christ to know the Lord is not through trusting in their own self-effort to attain to the perfection of the laws standard of Holiness, but by being surrendered to God's eternal plan of salvation and fully trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ to be counted as righteous by God.
2. That the only way anyone is going to attain to the resurrection from the dead is to fully trust in Christ for righteousness that leads to eternal life and is acceptable to God in contrast to trusting in self-effort and ceremonial rites, holy days and keeping religious customs and traditions etc.

Sharing in Christ's suffering: the sufferings in the following words of Paul, "That I may share his sufferings" (v10) embrace any persecution or hardship a brother or sister in Christ may suffer because of their faith in the Lord, for some it maybe physical pain or prison, for others it maybe, financial loss or rejection by family members and friends. Whenever a brother or sister in Christ witnesses or does-good in Christ's name and it brings any form of suffering or hurt physically, financially, emotionally or mentally they are by their suffering sharing in the sufferings of Christ. This is because their suffering is a result of their faith in Christ and should they deny the Lord all their suffering would instantly vanish like a vapour in the wind.

Becoming like Christ in his death: Paul's earnest desire was to, "Become like Christ in his death" (v10) this carries two thoughts:

1. That it was Paul's inward and earnest passion to live a lifestyle that honoured Christ's heavenly Father. Paul knowing that he could not attain to the perfection he desired beautifully expresses the heartfelt inward passion of his mind and heart and his attitude toward life in the following words:
 - Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, I do not consider that I have made perfection my own, but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus (v12-14).

2. That Paul desired to be raised as Christ was (i.e., to be clothed with an immortal body and raised to eternal life and everlasting glory).

By any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead: (v11) these words of Paul do not mean that Paul has doubts about being accepted by Christ. If this was the case everything he has taught about faith and God's grace would be nullified and worse still if Paul the author of most of the New Testament and who suffered far more for Christ than most in the Christian faith are ever called to do had doubts about being saved how can any of us ever be expected to trust in the Lord and in God's grace. The verse carries the following two dominant thoughts:

- 1 That Paul was going to do whatever he had to no-matter what it cost or how much suffering it meant to attain to the resurrection. Meaning no-matter what hardships and troubles came his way he was not going to give up his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.
- 2 Paul had taught the Corinthian brothers and sisters that:
 - If anyone builds on the foundation (the Lord Jesus Christ) 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. 3:12-15)

These verse show that he was very aware that not everyone was going to be counted as a worthy and honourable servant. This means that the statement, "That by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead" also carries the idea that Paul will not only do everything possible to honour God, but will also willing suffer loss so that he will be found by Christ to have been a worthy servant of the Lord's at the resurrection of the dead as opposed to feeling ashamed.

To be found in Christ: Paul desire and passion were, "To be found in Christ" (v9) this carries the following two ideas:

1. That Paul's sole focus and heart felt passion was to be accepted by the Lord when he returns in glory at the last trumpet of God as King of kings and Lord of lords to establish God's Kingdom of righteousness, justice, joy and peace on earth.
2. That Paul not only fully belonged to Christ and was together and in union with Christ, but was also in full agreement with Christ and sharing in his divine nature.

This is what the expression to be in Christ means, it carries the idea that Christ is the head of a new race and we are in this new race by faith in Christ. In contrast to this Adam was the head of the old race that we were in prior to our conversion into the Kingdom of God, so it would be right and proper to say that we were in Adam's race (or in Adam), but we are now in Christ's race (or in Christ). But being in Christ also means that our heart and mind is full of love, compassion, mercy, kindness and forgiveness etc., not only toward our brothers and sisters in the Lord, but also toward those who do not yet know the love and grace of God in Christ and that God's will, God's eternal plan, God's love, His purposes and promise are engraved in our hearts and in our minds and that the Lord Jesus Christ is our greatest love, our greatest thought and our greatest desire. This is what it means to be in Christ.

NOTE: any person we deeply love and worship can be formed in us. Every married person who has ever experienced self-sacrificing, compassionate and supporting love will have experienced the one they loved being formed in their heart their mind and their emotions. When someone loses a spouse, family member or friend they have been close

to for many years and loved deeply the presence of that person will remain as a real entity in their mind and heart. For some it will be to the end of their lives while for others it will dissipate over time (depending on the depth of love and the length of time they have loved) for others though the memory will remain the spiritual presence will pass when new love blossoms.

Christ in you and a young girl: the following is a true story and a good example of, a person being in the heart of another. An eight-year old disabled girl, whose best friend was her mother was doing her first live stage show. The mother loved her daughter, but could not be at the opening show as she was in hospital with terminal cancer. A television reporter asked the young girl if she would be sad and miss her mother at the opening of the show. The small girl with tears in her eyes said, "Yes I will miss her, but she will be in my heart where she belongs." Love for a person creates the reality and presence of that person in the human heart. This presence is in direct proportion to the love (i.e., the greater the love the greater the presence).

NOTE: some in the Christian faith tend to determine whether God loves them by their good or bad circumstances. They feel if life is charmed and blessed God loves them, but if it suddenly takes a turn for the worse and trouble comes, they feel God has withdrawn his love, but this is superstition and judging God according to the fickle circumstances of this world. When anyone who believes in Christ doubts God's love all they have to do is look back to the bloodstained cross and see what it cost the heart of the Father to save us and how much his Son suffered to redeem us and spiritually crown and cloth us with a royal and majestic robe of righteous so that we could be justified and granted eternal life in everlasting glory apart from self-effort and strictly adhering to ceremonial rites and holy days or keeping religious customs and traditions.

Added to this the following words of Paul should never be forgotten "God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us (Romans 5:8). Paul's statement that he was determined to make perfection his own (v12) does not mean that he was determined to attain to perfection in his mortal life and fallen corrupted body (if Paul or anyone us could do this Christ died for no reason), but that he would do everything in his power to honour God and the name of the Lord Jesus Christ so that he would be resurrected to perfection and receive honour from the Lord in contrast to shame. If it was possible for anyone of us to attain to a perfect life free of sin Christ died for no purpose.

Christ Jesus has made me his own: what awe-inspiring, stunning and comforting words, "Christ Jesus has made me his own" (v12) especially when one stops to consider that these words of Paul do not only apply to him alone, but to every faithful brother and sister in Christ. It means that Jesus has made whoever accepts the Gospel his own.

Philippians 3:20-21

In the Resurrection Our Body will be like Jesus Body.

- **Philippians 3:20-21:** Our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.

Our citizenship is in heaven means we belong to God and not to this world it means our minds are set on the things that honour God and the name of the Lord Jesus Christ it carries the idea of being humble and filled with the fruits of the Spirit in contrast to being driven by pride and ego and having our minds set on earthly and worldly things that would offend God and bring a bad testimony to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

We await a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: refers to the return of the Lord Jesus Christ as, King of kings and Lord of lords to establish God's Kingdom of righteousness, justice, joy and peace on earth.

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).

The glory of the resurrection and the glory of the body: here is the majestic royal inheritance of every faithful brother and sister in Christ. The Lord by the power of God will at the resurrection transform our fallen, corrupted, dying body to be like his glorious immortal eternal body. Paul in his letter to the brothers and sisters in Rome wrote, "We know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him" (Rom. 6:9). Our resurrected body can never die, never feel pain and will never lack energy. The mind will continually be full of brightness, joy and happiness and laughter will be its true nature can there be anything more glorious than this? Certainly not in this world.

COLOSSIANS 3:4

You also will Appear with Christ in Glory.

- **Colossians 3:4:** When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

The words, "When Christ who is your life," carry the following two ideas:

1. Though every brother and sister in Christ now lives on earth surrounded and affected by the trials, cares and anxieties of this life and their own inward life is full of sinful dysfunctions and aberrations their true and authentic life is the Spirit of Christ dwelling within. It is from this hidden life that they are motivated to behave according to the principles Jesus has taught meaning they aim to do-good, what is right and live to reflect the hidden life of Christ dwelling within and to honour God.
2. The words, "Your life in Christ" means those in Christ do not trust in their natural life (i.e., their own self-effort in keeping religious rites, customs and traditions) to be justified, but rather they trust in their spiritual life of faith and on the righteousness of Christ.

They know that in Christ they are dead to the Law in the sense that it has no power over them to condemn them to eternal death so they walk in the newness of life that they have in the Lord fully trusting in him for salvation to eternal life in contrast to trusting in their own self-efforts to attain to it. Jesus said, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life (John 3:16). Faith fastens upon this love; "Christ gave himself for me" And those who have true faith live by this love and by this faith. The magnificent, wonderful and awe-inspiring words "You will appear with Christ in glory," refer to the following glorious words Paul wrote to the brothers and sisters at Corinth:

- We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed, because this perishable (corruptible in KJV) body must put on the imperishable (incorruption in KJV), and this mortal body must put on immortality. When the perishable (corruptible in KJV) puts on the imperishable (incorruption in KJV), and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory" (1 Cor. 15:51-54).

And also, to the following celebrated, awesome and humbling words he wrote to the brothers and sisters in Thessalonica:

- The Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God and the dead in Christ will rise first then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord (1 Thessalonians 4:15-18).

It is when this breathtaking and world changing event takes place that those whose life is hidden in Christ will appear with him in glory (Col. 3:3-4).

1 THESSALONIANS 4:13-18

30

The Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

- **1 Thessalonians. 4:13-18:** We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep that you may not grieve as others (non-believers) do who have no hope. ¹⁴For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁵For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁶For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. ¹⁸Therefore encourage one another with these words.

Asleep: from Strong's Concordance means to put to sleep, to slumber or to lie outstretched, figuratively it means to de cease or to be dead. The words, "Those who have fallen asleep" (v13) refers to those who have died with faith in Christ. Scripture refers to them as being asleep in Christ because for them death is only temporary. From God's perspective they are simply taking a long peaceful nap until the Angel of the Lord comes and wakes them up. For further information see the notes following (Matthew 27:50-53) (above) and the title, "Sleeping in Christ."

NOTE: being asleep in Christ means everyone who dies in Christ is kept in the eternal mind and memory of God. Jesus said:

- Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And not one of them falls to the ground without the father knowing it and even the hairs of our head are all numbered therefore we should not fear death because we are of more value than many sparrows" (Matthew 10:29-31).

The entire person (i.e., body, spirit, mind and consciousness) remains sleeping in Christ until the first resurrection (Rev 20:5). Then, like those who were raised to mortal life after Jesus crucifixion and went to the Holy city of God to testify (Matt. 27:50-53) all who are asleep in the Lord are woken up at the blast of the angels' trumpet and raised from the dead to immortal life and everlasting glory.

For further information see the title:

- Sleeping in the Grave and Sleeping in Christ.
- Death (What happens when we Die).

Both titles are in, Death (ON WEBSITE MENU).

Paul tells those who have faith in Christ "Not to grieve over their dead as non-believers do" (v13). Paul is teaching the Thessalonians and by extension every brother and sister in Christ to live in the mindset that their loved ones who have died are in fact peacefully sleeping until the Lord returns in contrast to unbelievers who have not hope of being resurrected to eternal life and everlasting glory.

Caught up to meet the Lord in the air: notice Paul's statement: the living and the dead will be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air (v17) does not actually say that they will be caught up to heaven. Air; from Strong's Concordance comes from the Greek word 'aer' and means to breathe or blow (i.e., air as surrounding) there is no implication that it means heaven. Throughout the history of Christianity there has always been the following two main theories regarding the glorious return of the Lord Jesus Christ return.

1. The dead and those who are alive will be caught up to heaven and forever be with the Lord in heaven. Most who believe this do not think they are going to be sitting on clouds playing harps with the angels, but rather that they will be in an eternal world of glory full of joy and peace and free of suffering and sorrow a place that by far supersedes any beauty and bliss our finite mortal and corrupted minds can comprehend.
- 2 The Lord will return 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 millennial reign. 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.

For further information see the notes following (Acts 3:20-21) and the title, "The Return of Jesus Begins the Time of Restoring all Things (above).

NOTE: it should be mentioned that if the theory any faithful brother or sister holds regarding Christ return proves to be wrong, they will not be cast away from the Lord when he returns. This is because the focus, joy and excitement of both groups, is the return of the Lord himself. It is also interesting to notice that prior to Christ's death and resurrection the focus is the Kingdom of God whereas after his resurrection the focus of the writers shifts to the King of the Kingdom and simply state that all who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ will be resurrected to eternal glory they don't go into detail of where that glory will be other than saying we will have an immortal body, be full of glorious happiness and never again suffer or experience sorrow added this awe-inspiring wonder we will be with the Lord and for those who know his love this is enough. Those who live with this promised and eternal hope of Christ return as the anchor

of their mind will never be emotionally or mentally crushed and the hidden glory of this belief will radiate streams of calm and deep joy throughout their nervous system which will result in a feeling of happiness which will continue to increase as they grow in the love of the Lord. This no-doubt is one of the reasons Paul says, "Encourage one another with this hope" (v18) in contrast to trusting in success, prosperity, riches, material possessions or fame which are all temporary and will eventually fail.

The judgement of the Lord: when we stand before the Lord no-one will be told to sit down and do a doctrinal exam to see if we are deserving of eternal life, rather we will be judged by God's two greatest commandments in the entire Bible which state:

1. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind (Matt. 22:37-38).
2. You shall love your neighbour as yourself (Matt. 22:39-40).

It is not doctrine that we will be judged by, but these two commandments. The command, "Love your neighbour as yourself," means do not deliberately do harm to other humans and treat everyone with decency, honest justice and respect. For further information concerning Jesus command to love our neighbour see the notes following (John 5:24-29) (above). It is not how correct or perfect our doctrines are (outside of the message of the cross and the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ) that we will be judged by, but our actions and behaviour toward others especially our brothers and sisters in Christ these are the things that will determine whether we will suffer loss or gain at the judgment seat of Christ. Paul states:

- No one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ 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 and if their work 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 Corinthians 3:11-15).

The hope of the Christian faith: the return of the Lord Jesus Christ is the hope and encouragement of all Christians. It should be noted that it is not called hope because it might or might not happen, but because it is unseen and yet future, but the hope itself is guaranteed because it is based on God's promise and He cannot lie. Paul wrote, "In hope of eternal life, which God, who never lies, promised before the ages began" (Titus 1:2). Is there any other religion or faith that promises such an awe-inspiring and glorious eternal hope (this author has not found one).

Finally: regarding heaven and the Kingdom of God on earth it should be pointed out that at the end of Christ millennial reign God Himself descends to earth and is ALL in ALL after this breathe taking event the Bible says very little so to make the question of heaven or the Kingdom of God on earth a matter of salvation is most likely being far too dogmatic since none of us can fully understand what ETERNITY will look like at the end of Christ's glorious millennial reign as King of kings and Lord of lords and God descends to earth and is ALL In ALL and ETERNITY begins in all its perfect royal and majestic fullness.

2 THESSALONIANS 1:5-9

Jesus will be Revealed from Heaven with His Mighty Angels.

- **Thessalonians 1:5-9:** This is evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be considered worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are also suffering—⁶since indeed God considers it just to repay with affliction those who afflict you ⁷and to grant relief to you who are afflicted as well as to us, when the Lord Jesus is revealed from

heaven with his mighty angels. ⁸in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the Gospel of our Lord Jesus. ⁹They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might,

Because of the Thessalonians strong stand for Jesus Christ they are under great persecutions and afflictions from those who deny the Lord Jesus Christ. The primary focus of those who are to be punished in the context of these verses is upon those who do not believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and who are inflicting, great suffering upon those who do believe. Not obeying the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ in this context is an action not a belief it is deliberately inflicting harm on others in contrast to Jesus Gospel of love and compassion. Jesus summed up the six commandments concerning mankind with the words, love your neighbour as yourself (Matt. 22:37-40) (Mark 12:28-31), in the New Testament this is called the royal law (James 2:8), this is the commandment of Christ and his Gospel in action. At the first resurrection when Jesus returns, he will punish all who deny God and have caused His people great suffering. Notice Jesus does not promise relief from this kind of suffering until the Lord Jesus Christ returns. The righteous judgment of God has the following two aspects: -

1. God will repay those who afflict or persecute whoever stands for the Lord Jesus Christ.
2. Those that stand firm in the Lord (especially under affliction and persecution will be counted worthy of the Kingdom of God and resurrected to everlasting glory.

God's ultimate judgement on mankind will come when the Lord returns with his mighty angels in flaming fire inflicting vengeance on those who do deny God and who do not obey the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and upon the wicked (especially those who persecute God's people and who oppress or cause harm to others for their own selfish gain).

The punishment of eternal destruction: the wrath of God is eternal destruction meaning eternal death (i.e., total and utter extinction), this is the wonder and glory of God's love, those who humble themselves and live their lives in faith in God and the Lord Jesus Christ will receive eternal life, whereas the wicked and those who deny God and live to please self are destined to eternal death. Those who are judged unworthy of eternal life do not go to a place of fiery flames called hell where they are not only cruelly and brutally tortured by evil eternal creatures called demons, but their bodies are also burned by fiery flames so that they suffer the worst of all agonies for all eternity. This doctrine is not only a gross misunderstanding of Scripture but is also a gross misrepresentation of God's character, since it portrays Him as an extremely sadistic God since not even the secular world would inflict such brutal and cruel torture on a human for their entire life let alone for all eternity. Added to this John tells us that God is love (1 John 4:8) (1 John 4:16). This horrific doctrine of hell was no-doubt perpetuated in the early years of the church by religious leaders to scare the naïve into the church and has been adopted and perpetuated by their followers from generation to generation through tradition and religious institutions and organisations.

For further information see the titles:

- Hell or the Grave (Final destination of Humans).
- The Lake of Fire.
- All titles are in, Death (ON WEBSITE MENU).

Jesus will return and be Glorified in His Saints.

- **Thessalonians 1:10:** when he comes on that day to be glorified in his saints, and to be marvelled at among all who have believed, because our testimony to you was believed.

The following awe-inspiring words of Paul are absolutely fabulous: "When Christ comes to be glorified in his saints" everyone who faithfully follows the Lord Jesus Christ by faith has his spirit dwelling deep within their inner being. Even though Christ's Spirit is unseen in the human heart and trapped in a corrupted and fallen body controlled by self, ego and pride the glory and majesty of it will be revealed for all to see when the Lord Jesus Christ returns in glory and our corruptible body puts on incorruption and our mortal body puts on immortality (1 Cor. 15:42-54). When this majestic world changing event takes place the Spirit of Christ dwelling in the heart of the faithful who love him will be manifest outwardly for all to see in brilliant light.

Brothers and sisters in Christ will marvel at Christ's coming: even though every faithful and devoted brother and sister in Christ has within their heart a glorious excitement of the Lord's return and a tremendous joy of being gathered together with the Lord to eternal life in everlasting glory. Paul states; "All those who have believed in him will marvel" (v10). Christ's return will be so spectacular that no-matter what expectations we have of this world changing and awesome event we will all be amazed and overwhelmed as we gaze in breathtaking awe upon this event that will by far surpass everything that has happened in the history of mankind.

2 TIMOTHY 4:1

The Judge of the Living and the Dead.

- **Timothy 4:1:** I (Paul) charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead (the quick and the dead in KJV) and by his appearing and his Kingdom.

The word quick in this context refers to those who are alive when Christ returns. When Christ appears in glory and in his Kingdom at the last day those who are raised to life out of the grave and those who are found alive whether they are ministers preachers or hearers will all stand before the judgment seat of Christ and give and account to the final judge the Lord Jesus Christ.

NOTE: this is one of the reasons why brothers and sisters in Christ should not judge the heart or the salvation of another since we will all have to give an account for ourselves to the Lord. It is true that some maybe a master in the art of deception and living a life of hypocrisy and pretence, not one of us can deceive the Lord.

By his appearing and his Kingdom: (v1) refers to that glorious moment when Christ returns in glory as, King of kings and Lord of lords to rule and reign from God's Holy city Jerusalem (on Mount Zion God's Holy Mountain) to establish God's Kingdom of righteousness, justice, joy and peace on earth during his glorious millennial reign.

2 TIMOTHY 4:7-9

There is Laid up a Crown of Righteousness for all the Faithful.

- **Timothy 4:7-8:** I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. ⁸Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing.

Enduring in the faith and proclaiming the Gospel is called the good fight because it is not fought with fist or weapons of war, but with love, mercy and grace and the end result of those who surrender is joy, peace, contentment and eternal life in everlasting glory.

The glory and beauty of the Christian race: at the Grecian games, only one could obtain the highest prize all the rest who contended in those games, no matter how numerous they were, or how skilfully they contended, or how much effort they made would of course miss out on the highest reward, but this is not so in the Christian faith. Here is the excitement the joy the thrill and the glory of running in the Christian race, no matter how numerous the competitors, or how worthy, talented and skilled any one of them may be all may obtain the highest prize; all may be crowned with a diadem of life of equal brilliancy. No-one is excluded because another is successful; no one fails of the highest reward because another obtains it. This is the wonder and splendour of God's love, grace and mercy in Christ and the joy of running alongside our brothers and sisters having the knowledge that all who reach the finish-line receive the highest prize and the greatest reward and not just the first to cross over it.

All who have loved the Lords appearing: some have wondered if the words, "To all who have loved his appearing" are referring to Christ birth or his return. In the context of what Paul is saying they clearly apply to the return of the Lord Jesus Christ. But it would not be wrong to embrace the Lords birth since it was the most majestic and glorious event to take place amongst mankind and changed the entire religious world forever, had Christ never been born there would be no Christian faith which undoubtedly means that all who do look forward to the Lords return have clearly loved his birth. Nevertheless, the focus and context is looking forward to Christ return. This spectacular moment will not only change the world forever, but will manifest the awe-inspiring and mind-blowing energy of God in a manner that will cause the entire world to stand in awe of God's breath-taking power. This is because when Christ returns God will not be resurrecting one man to eternal glory as he did with Jesus, but all who have died and all who are alive and who have trusted in the promised seed of Abraham and of David, Israel's Messiah the Christ and with anticipated excitement looked forward to his return. To believe in the return of Christ to judge the world and to desire with joy his return became one of the standards by which Christians were known since no others but faithful Christians believed in the return of the Lord Jesus Christ and no others truly desired it. This has not changed it is the same even today the return of the Lord is one of the characteristics of a true Christian. All who know the love of Christ and God's grace not only sincerely desire the return of their Saviour but the cry of their heart says, "Come Lord Jesus come" (Rev. 22:20). The book of Revelation says: -

- Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him (Rev. 1:7).

NOTICE: Paul has absolute confidence and assurance the Lord will grant a crown of righteousness to him and to all the faithful who are looking forward to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, he does not in any manner doubt his salvation added to this he also has full assurance that all those who are in Christ will be saved to eternal life.

Running to obtain the eternal crown of glory: (2 Tim 4:8) in this race every brother and sister who runs may obtain the crown. The struggle is not between each other as a competitor in such a sense that, if one obtains the crown, all others must be excluded; but it is a crown that all can obtain. As many as run - as many as fight the good fight - as many as keep the faith - as many as love his appearing, may all win the crown. Such is the beauty and glory in which the highest prize of this race differs from all other races. The reward is great, but it is a reward not of debt, but of grace for it is only by the grace of God that the apostle and the lowest of sinners are fitted for glory. No one is exempt from attaining this crown it is common to every faithful brother

and sister; it is given, not only to apostles, but to all those who love his appearing. This crown is laid up it is in view, but not in possession. (author unknown). The happiness of the future state of every brother and sister in Christ is signified by this crown on account of the glory and excellency of it; and in perfect agreement with the character of the those in Christ as kings who are raised to sit among princes and to inherit the throne of glory and have a Kingdom prepared for them. This is called a crown of righteousness, because it comes through the righteousness of Christ; it is his righteousness that gives those in the Lord the right to it. Without Christ's righteousness that is obtained and possessed by faith and not by works and self-effort it cannot be enjoyed. This crown can only be possessed by faith and God's grace it cannot be usurped (as crowns sometimes are) by self-righteousness or self-effort in trusting in ceremonial rites, holy days and religious customs or traditions etc.

It is God the Father's pure and free gift to His children, it is what they are spiritually born heirs into, and have an anticipated excitement for through their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and God's grace they have the legal title to it. This happiness, signified by a crown, is laid up in the covenant of grace for every faithful brother and sister in Christ, which is promised with God's oath and therefore guaranteed in Christ in whose hands their life of glory is hidden and secure laid up in heaven and reserved there for that glorious day of their Saviours return. The crown of every brother and sister is a crown of righteousness, purchased by the righteousness of Christ they have not yet attained this state it is sure (except by faith and God's grace), but it is laid up in glory for those who endure through poverty, pain, sickness, and the agonies of death to the finish line. No brother or sister in Christ should despair since their crown is not like the perishing wreath of olive, laurel, pine, or parsley which could be presented on only one victor, but is an eternal crown that will be bestowed on all who endure in faith to the finish line. Such is the honour and glory, the splendour and beauty of the Christian faith.

HEBREWS 6:8-10

God will Not Forget Your Work and Labour of Love.

- **Hebrews 6:8-10:** But that which bears thorns and thistles, is worthless and near to being cursed, and its end is to be burned. ⁹Though we speak in this way, yet in your case, beloved, we feel sure of better things—things that belong to salvation. ¹⁰For God is not so unjust as to overlook your work and the love that you showed for his sake in serving the saints, as you still do.

Paul is speaking to Hebrews that still value and trust in Moses Law and Jewish religious customs and traditions. The better things that belong to salvation is in contrast to the Hebrews producing worthless fruit and being burned up (v8). Here the author is saying that he is confident there are better things in store for the Hebrews he is writing to than this.

NOTICE: he addresses them as beloved these Hebrews did not have wicked hearts quite the contrast since we are not only told that God will not overlook the work they did in love for God but also that they did good to their brothers and sisters in the faith so it is clear they were faithful to God under the Old Covenant. This is why the author comforts them by saying that God will take their love and faithfulness under the Old Covenant and the kindness and caring they showed to their fellow Hebrews into account when they forsake the Levitical Law and the Old Covenant and stop trusting in religious works to be counted as righteous by God and embrace by faith the New Covenant and the Lord Jesus Christ and trust in God's grace.

When it comes to reward the heavenly Father of the Christian faith is not bound to doctrine, but rather judges according to the motivations and intent of the heart. Since one of the greatest sorrows of forsaking false Christian teaching that a person has believed to be true (especially if they have been born into it) is the feeling of extreme loss. It is that deep despair in the heart and mind that all that they have done unto the Lord under that teaching (howbeit much of it wrong) is wasted, all the tears, the prays, the worship, the suffering, the sorrow and the good they believed they were doing for the Lord counts for nothing. But here is the glory and the comfort this is not the case in regards to reward because God sees the goodness of the heart and the faith toward Him (despite the errors in teaching) and will not only take all the tears, the prayers, the worship, the suffering, the sorrow into account, but also all the good that has been done in faith. This is the glory and splendour of God. The heavenly Father sees the motives and intents of the heart and perceives that much error of teaching is embraced in innocence and naivety. This principal of course changes once a person has been enlightened to the error of their belief and instead of turning from it continues in it. Anything that is done in the spirit of love especially to those who belong to God is noticed and remembered in the eternal mind of God.

HEBREWS 11:8-10

A City that has Foundations whose Designer and Builder is God.

- **Hebrews 11:8-10:** By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place that he was to receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. ⁹By faith he went to live in the land of promise as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. ¹⁰For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations whose designer and builder is God.

Here is the amazing faith of Abraham, God called him out from everything he had known and even though he did not know where he was going his faith was such that he believed he was going to a city that has foundations whose designer and builder is God. This immediately takes the mind of the ardent Bible student to the following majestic vision the Lord, thousands of years later gave to a godly man named John on the Isle of Patmos:

- I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband and I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.” And he who was seated on the throne said, “Behold, I am making all things new” (Rev. 21:2-5).

It is most likely the city Abraham had in mind was a city in the Promised Land, how stunned he will be when he sees this most glorious eternal and Holy City descending from God to earth.

HEBREWS 11:39-40

The Faithful of the Old and New Testament will be Raised Together.

- **Hebrews 11:39-40:** And all these (the OT faithful) though commended through their faith, did not receive what was promised ⁴⁰since God had provided something better for us (the NT faithful) that apart from us they should not be made perfect.

The, context that these verses are in is of the faithful of the Old Testament suffering torture and death at the hands of their persecutors rather than denying their faith and thereby immediately receive deliverance from their

suffering because they knew they would obtain a better and eternal deliverance from death when their Messiah the Christ returned. They knew that faith that endures to the end not only gives victory over mortal death, but delivers one into eternal life and everlasting glory. The things promised refers to:

- The promised seed of the woman spoken of in (Genesis chapter 3:15).
- The promised seed of Abraham and the promised seed of David.
- The promised prophet to come like Moses (a deliver and saviour).
- The promised Messiah, the Christ and promised King and his Kingdom.
- The promised heavenly homeland, the better country and the eternal city that God has prepared for them.

Though the faithful of the Old Testament never received the promise (as yet) they lived their life by faith always seeing before them the glory, the wonder and majestic beauty of the eternal things they were seeking and that God had promised (Heb. 11:13-16).

Something better: the something better that God had provided for us that apart from us the faithful of the Old Testament could not be made perfect refers to Christ's death and resurrection which brought into being the New Covenant of grace in contrast to the Old Covenant of law. Without Christ's death and resurrection no-one could be raised from the dead to eternal life, but now that Christ has been raised the Old Testament faithful will be raised with the faithful of the New Testament.

When the last trumpet sounds and the Lord returns in glory both the faithful of the Old Testament and the faithful of the New Testament will be resurrected together to eternal life and everlasting glory. In this climatic event faith will be rewarded and together every brother and sister of the Old and the New Testament will be made perfect in thought, motive, passion, mind, body and heart and in every other way.

1 PETER 1:3-5

Born Again through the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

- **1 Peter 1:3-5:** Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, ⁵who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

The declaration of every faithful believer is, "Blessed by God" because they know that God set His love upon them long before they did anything to earn such love (Rom. 5:8) and because it is only by His mercy and grace that anyone is saved to eternal life and everlasting glory. The words, "To be born again" (v3) in this context refer to sinners being: -

- Delivered from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of God's beloved Son (Col. 1:13)

To be born again means to have a complete change of mind, thoughts, passions and lifestyle to live a new life in Christ. A worldly example (howbeit limited) is when a person wins the lottery and they shout in abundant excitement, "I feel like I have been born again" and their entire life changes. Such is the change of a sinner's life who comes in honest repentance before God and accepts the Lord Jesus Christ as their Saviour, this is the reason Christian salvation is referred to as being born again it is life changing.

Being born again to a living hope: all faithful brothers and sisters in Christ are said to be born again to a living hope this is because Christ their resurrected Saviour is alive and it is in him that they are saved and their hope is set upon. It should be noted that when salvation to eternal life is spoken of as the hope of the faithful in Christ, it is not called hope because it might or might not happen, but because it is unseen and yet future. The hope itself is guaranteed because it is based on God's promise and he cannot lie. The apostle Paul wrote:

- In hope of eternal life, which God, who never lies, promised before the ages began (Titus 1:2).

Every Christian hopes to be resurrected from the grave to be raised up to eternal life and everlasting glory to be made perfectly free from sin; to be everlastingly happy, but it is faith that gives these things a mental reality in the mind and it is under this influence of faith that those in Christ allow these unseen and yet future events to control their mind as if they were a reality now.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead: we are saved through the death of Jesus, but our hope is set upon the resurrection since God's resurrection of Jesus to eternal glory is testimony to every brother and sister in Christ that they also will be resurrected from the grave to eternal life and everlasting glory as Jesus was.

To an inheritance kept in heaven: the words, "To an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you (v4) refer to the promise God made to Abraham of which Paul when being tried said to his accusers, "I stand here on trial because of my hope in the promise made by God to our fathers" (Acts 26:6) referring to the following promises:

- The LORD promised Abraham that He would make of him a great nation and that he would be the father of a multitude of nations.
- God swore He would make Abrahams name great, bless him, nations, and kings would come from him and He would give to him and to his offspring after him all the land of Canaan/Israel for an everlasting possession.
- God promised Abraham that his offspring would be as the dust of the earth and the stars of heaven so that they cannot be numbered and God will be their God. The LORD confirmed this promise to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and their offspring after them throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant promising Abraham that in his offspring all the nations of the earth would be blessed.

(Gen. 12:1-3) (Gen. 13:14-17) (Gen. 15:4-7) (Gen. 17:1-8)
(Gen. 22:15-18) (Deut. 9:5).

Now the majestic wonder and beauty of God's promise is revealed in the Lord Jesus Christ: Paul states that the promise to Abraham and his offspring, that he would be heir of the world did not come through the law but through the righteousness of faith. that is why it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all Abrahams offspring—not only to the adherents of the law (referring to the Jews) but also to the one who shares the faith of Abraham (referring to the Gentiles), who is the father of us all (Jews and Gentiles), as it is written:

- I have made you (Abraham) the father of many nations—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist" (creation and the resurrection).

In hope Abraham believed against hope, that he should become the father of many nations, as he had been told, "So shall your offspring be." Paul tells us that "The twelve tribes of Israel earnestly worshipped night and day hoping to attain to this promise (Acts 26:7). And then gloriously points out that the Scripture does not say, "And to offspring's,"

referring to many, but referring to one, "And to your offspring," who is Christ. Some may think the promises made to Abraham was for the Jews only, but Paul magnificently explains in the book of Ephesians that the promises of God have been extended to all nations through being baptised into the Lord Jesus Christ and clearly shows that the promises made to Abraham and to his offspring the Lord Jesus Christ are not limited to the Jews only, but embraces whoever will come to God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ

(Rom. 4:13) (Rom. 4:16-18) (Gal. 3:16) (Gal. 3:27) (Eph. 2:11-22).

For further information see the title:

- The Commonwealth of Israel (at the end of this document).

Now notice the inheritance is not in heaven, but being kept in heaven. All who trust in the Lord Jesus Christ will receive this promised inheritance when Jesus 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.

You are being guarded through faith for salvation in the last time: the following words, "Who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" (v5) are some of the most comforting words of the Bible since they clearly show that it is not our own self-effort, works or strict adherence to ceremonial rites and holy days or keeping religious customs or traditions that is keeping us, but our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

All the promises of God and eternal life are in Christ whoever is in Christ is a brother and sister of Christ and therefore a child of God. Every child of an earthly family is legally entitled to the inheritance likewise every child of God will receive the promised eternal inheritance not because of their own righteousness which falls far short of God perfect Holiness, but because by their faith they are brothers and sisters of God's Son the Lord Jesus Christ.

- The eternal inheritance applies to every faithful brother and sister in Christ of every generation. They are protected by God (meaning kept for eternal life) because of their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and it is this faith that will be rewarded and revealed to them at the end of this age.

1 PETER 5

The Faithful will Receive a Crown of Glory when the Chief Shepherd Appears.

- **1 Peter 5:1:** So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed.
- **1 Peter 5:4:** when the chief Shepherd appears you will receive the unfading crown of glory.

The glory that is going to be revealed is the resurrection and the gathering up to eternal life and everlasting joy of all those who belong to Christ. Peter witnessed Christ's suffering on the cross, and the glory of Christ's immortal and eternal body after his resurrection. God showed His awesome power in that he resurrected a human man from the grave to eternal life, but God's majestic and mighty power will be manifested on that day when Christ returns in such breathtaking wonder that all who witness it will stand in breathtaking awe. This is because it is not just one man God by his creative power will be raising from the dead, but all the faithful of the Old Testament who have died in faith in the promised seed of the woman spoken of in (Genesis 3:15) the promised

seed of Abraham and the promised seed of David God's promised Messiah the Christ to come and all the faithful of the New Testament who have died with the same faith in Christ. All will be raised in one glorious, awe-inspiring and breathtaking act of God's almighty power.

NOTE: some people find it difficult to comprehend God raising the dead, but think of it this way: we have super computers today that have in their memories literally trillions of bits of information and at the touch of a key any one of those bits is resurrected to us on a brightly coloured screen (soon it is most likely they will simply appear in the air), then with another touch of the key it all vanishes into the super memory and is gone, until we resurrect it again. Knowing that God has given his creation a mortal mind and finite memory to be able to build such amazing computers should make it very easy to understand how God keeps us all in His immortal mind and eternal memory waiting for the right time to touch the supernatural keyboard of heaven and raise us once again to life. Added to this very few Christians have any trouble believing God created the universe that we live in so raising the dead in comparison is not such a difficult task for such an awesome, powerful and majestic God (Heb. 11:3).

2 PETER 3:3-8

The World will Continue as it Always has Until the Lord Returns.

- **Peter 3:3-8:** knowing this first of all, that scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing, following their own sinful desires. ⁴They will say, "Where is the promise of his coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep all things are continuing as they were from the beginning of creation." ⁵For they deliberately overlook this fact, that the heavens existed long ago, and the earth was formed out of water and through water by the word of God ⁶and that by means of these the world that then existed was deluged with water and perished. ⁷But by the same word the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly. ⁸But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day.

41

Peter warns that there will be scoffers in the last days, who mock at the majestic hope of the Christian faith the return of Christ. This is another reason Peter said, "Remember the prophecies of the holy prophets" (v2). The prophets of the Old Testament prophesied of the Messiah the Christ returning to establish God's Kingdom on earth and the apostles proclaimed Jesus would return in glory to gather his elect to himself.

Jesus said:

- I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also (John 14:3).

The angels, at Jesus ascension, said:

- Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven (Acts 1:11)

Throughout Scripture it is clear that in all ages those who denied the promises regarding Christ have always mocked and persecuted those who believed. Peter is highlighting the fact that these scoffers will increase in number as we draw nearer to Christ's return. The words, "Where is the promise of his coming? Can carry two thoughts, firstly where is the fulfilment of the promise that Christ will return and secondly, where are the indications or signs that Christ will return.

The scoffers are implying that:

- The promise had utterly failed.

- There was not the slightest evidence that the promise would be accomplished.
- Those who had believed this promise were entirely deluded.

The object of their scorn, derision, contempt and sneering is, "What has become of the promise of Christ coming, where is the accomplishment of it?" They reason that the laws of nature are uniform, as they always have been, and the promise had failed. They believed in the stability of our planet and are convinced that the world will continue as it always has. Their mindset is on mankind saving the world and not any intervention of God. They look around and see that from the foundation of the world all things continue as they always have. This of course is true, but what they don't consider is that God can flick His fingers and sudden destruction is upon us as in the days of Noah and Sodom and Gomorrah.

Consider for a moment: the majesty and glory of the Bible is the awe-inspiring wonder that it is written in such a manner that every generation has been able to live with the hope of the Lord's appearing when he returns in glory. From God's perspective every human has been given a limited amount of time to live therefore it really does not matter whether Christ returns in one year or ten thousand years because every human only has one life-span and if they by faith in Christ and God's grace are in the eternal Kingdom of God then it is guaranteed that sometime within that life-span, (howbeit for most through the eternal doors of death) they will be with the Lord clothed in an immortal body and dwelling in everlasting glory. The longest any of us are ever going to have to wait for the Lord is not thousands of years, but one lifespan and at the end of only one lifespan we are with Lord in eternal glory. When a mortal human lifespan is measured against eternity the time, we spend in this world is a very short time indeed, even as a blink of the eye.

The heavens and earth existed long ago: those who scoff and mock the return of Christ saying all things continue as they always have, overlook that fact that the earth was once destroyed in a matter of forty-days, the rain didn't start with a few drops over a few days and slowly increase over a few months, rather it was instant deluge, the only warning the people had was that of Noah and his family proclaiming for one-hundred and twenty years that destruction was coming. These mockers choose to overlook this fact and rather choose to trust in the laws of nature claiming they have always remained the same and that they always will. Peter reminds us that though the laws of nature at this present time do remain as they have, it is God who implemented and who controls these laws. If God rises up in judgment and intervenes in our history as he did in the days of Noah not one of the laws of nature will have any power to resist the will of God but rather will do exactly as he commands since it was God who established them.

All things are controlled by the word of God: the following verses show that that it is God who controls the laws of nature and therefore to trust in these laws for our security is foolishness.

- God said, "Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters" (Gen. 1:6).
- God said, "Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear." And it was so (Gen. 1:9).
- Let all the earth fear the LORD let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him! For God spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm" (Psalm 33:8-9).

The idea here is that everything depends on God's word and on God's will. As the heavens and the earth were originally made by his command, so by the same command they can be destroyed. Peter is shining a brilliant floodlight on the truth that the heavens (the sky, sun, moon, and stars etc.) the earth and the flood were formed by the word of God and by this same word the heavens and the earth are being kept for judgement (2 Peter 3:6-7).

One day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day (v8) this expression is common in Jewish writings. Moses wrote, "For a thousand years in your sight are but as yesterday when it is past" (Psalm 90:4) here Moses is saying eternity knows no distinction between a thousand years and a day. Peter in his reply to the scoffers who sneeringly mock those who believe Jesus will return in glory applies this principal to the last day, to show the scoffers that God's essence and eternity exceed all measure of time. Therefore, an interval of time with the Lord cannot be measured by the idea of long or short because eternity exceeds all measures of time it cannot be measure by our concept of time.

There is a vast difference between "One day and a thousand years" yet, in the account of God, there is no difference all things past, present, and future, are ever before him. If people have no knowledge or belief of the eternal God, they will naturally think of God in the same way as they think of themselves. We have but a very short time to live, and if we do not accomplish our dreams and goals in this very brief period of time we never will. But this clearly is not so with God since God always lives and therefore we cannot think of God as we think of ourselves, nor can the scoffers claim that the execution of God's eternal purposes are abandoned and Christ's return is a false promises simply because it seems to them to be a long time coming.

The mockers argument was that much time had passed away, and still all things remain as they always have. Peter is basically saying to the scoffers, their argument means little in the face of eternity since what may seem to be a long time to us is a brief period with God. In the infinity of God's own existence there is abundant time to accomplish his eternal plans and purposes. Those who believe God's promise should never think of time when thinking of God who always lives since our concept of time in this mortal body and temporary world has no-existence in God or in eternity. Neither should those who deny God and act corruptly think they will escape judgment simply because it is delayed.

Peter in these verses is highlighting the concept of eternal time (howbeit eternal time cannot exist), but the idea is to give our mortal mind bound to time as we know it a concept of eternity. Peter is saying for those who are resurrected to eternal life one day is as a thousand years and a thousand years is as one day. This is an interesting formula since the two statements cancels each other out, which means the idea behind what Peter is saying is that in eternity time does not exist. Peter is responding to the mockers and scoffers who are judging time by their mortal life span and as they understand time to be with their mortal finite human mind, but compared to eternity time as we understand it to be is like a single grain of sand on a beach or as Peter so aptly states, "One day is as a thousand years and a thousand years is as one day." Peter in these verses is shining a spotlight on the fact that those who scoffingly say "All things are continuing as they were from the beginning of creation" (2 Peter 3:4) have a very small perspective of eternity and eternal life or don't understand it at all. To the Lord time on earth is but nothing when compared to eternal life especially when you consider that each of us only has a maximum of one hundred years (give or take a few) of life on earth in contrast to God who is forever existing.

2 PETER 3:9-10

The Day of the Lord will come Like a Thief.

- **Peter 3:9-10:** The Lord is not slow to fulfil his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. ¹⁰But the day of the Lord will come like a thief and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.

A thousand years are as one day to the eternal Lord therefore he is longsuffering in delaying the Day of Judgment giving mankind a space of time for repentance. This present age we live in is called the age of grace this is not simply because we are saved by grace but also because it is by God's grace that the Lord is patiently delaying judgment and the day of wrath upon the wickedness of earth-dwellers. The Lord does not desire that mankind would perish, but that all should reach repentance.

This is one of the reasons God through much longsuffering is withholding judgment since it will come unexpectedly, suddenly and with fury as it did in the days of Noah and of Sodom and Gomorrah. To have a heart like God is to have a heart that is patient toward those in Christ and a desire that those outside of Christ well come to repentance. This shows the great love of God He is patient desiring that all should reach repentance, but when cruelty and violence to the innocent reaches its peak and He does act, it will be spectacular and come swiftly

1 JOHN 2:28

Some will have Confidence and some Shame at the Lord's Coming.

- **1 John 2:28:** now, little children, abide in him, so that when he appears we may have confidence and not shrink from him in shame at his coming.

John is warning those in Christ of the following two things: -

1. Not to forsake their faith and be rejected when the Lord returns in glory.
2. To endeavour to live a lifestyle that honours God and brings a good testimony to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

44

Paul wrote:

- No one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ, 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 words of Paul show that there will be rewards for certain brothers and sisters while others may suffer loss, but both groups will be saved, because of this John's words of warning could be seen as encouraging us all to endeavour to attain to the group that will be rewarded so that we don't feel shame when we stand before the Lord at his coming.

1 JOHN 3:2

When Christ appears we will be Like Him.

- **1 John 3:2:** Beloved, we are God's children now and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is.

No-one knows exactly what type of body those in Christ will have in eternity, except that it will be immortal and eternal anything else is simply speculations since even John Christ's beloved disciple says, "What we will be has not yet appeared" which implies that that the body that Christ appeared to the apostles in after his resurrection is not necessarily the final form of the eternal, immortal and glorified body. When Paul was asked what kind of body the dead will be raised with, he said:

- There is one kind of body for humans, another for animals, another for birds, and another for fish, there are heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is of one kind, and the glory of the earthly is of another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for star differs from star in glory. So it is with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable is raised is imperishable; what is sown in dishonour is raised in glory; what is sown in weakness is raised in power; what is sown a natural body is raised a spiritual body (1 Cor. 15:39-44).

To imagine what our eternal body will look like maybe fun, but we can only speculate, nevertheless knowing that it will be immortal and eternal clearly means that we will never feel pain, sorrow, sickness of any kind or any form of tiredness, but rather be in a perpetual state of happiness and joy, energy and vitality and peace and calm is there any other religion on earth that promises such eternal glory (this author has not found one).

When Christ appears; refers to that spectacular moment when the last trumpet of God sounds and the Lord himself descends from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel and in the twinkling of an eye the dead in Christ are raised and then those who are alive are caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air and their perishable mortal body is changed and clothed with immortality to always be with the Lord (1 Thess. 4:13-18) (1 Cor. 15:51-54).

NOTE: some have used the words, "Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is" (v2) to support the mistaken theory that Jesus is God, but it should be remembered that John is writing to new converts, sons and fathers in Christ (see previous chapter) so they are Christians who have received the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ therefore they understand that Jesus is the most beloved and most highly exalted Son of God the Father and that Jesus is returning to gather to himself all who have died in faith and all who are alive. They clearly understand that:

- God (the Father) so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life (John 3:16)

So, it would not even enter their mind that John's words:

- We know that when he appears, we shall be like him.

Would be referring to God the Father, but rather they would naturally read them as applying to Christ the Father's most beloved Son who is returning in majestic glory to gather to himself those who by faith and God's grace belong to his Kingdom. Since the teaching that Jesus is God has such a strong hold on much of traditional Christianity the following will encourage and comfort faithful brothers and sisters in Christ who maybe in some doubt and unsure of what to believe concerning the Father and the Son. The Bible very clearly shows that even if Jesus was God no one has to know this to be saved to eternal life since there is not one verse in the entire Bible that states:

- We must believe that Jesus is God to be saved.

Nor is there one verse from Genesis to Revelations that says:

- Whoever believes that Jesus is God the Son will be saved.

In total contrast to this silence there are literally multitudes of Scriptures throughout the pages of the New Testament that very clearly proclaim:

- We must believe that Jesus is the Son of God to be saved.

And that say:

- Whoever believes that Jesus is the Son of God will be saved.

Surely if it was important to believe that Jesus was actually God to be saved to eternal life Jesus, the apostles and Paul would have told us at least once in all their teaching concerning salvation, but all we hear from Paul, the apostles and Jesus himself is them saying that we must believe that Jesus is the Son of God to be saved to eternal life. Jesus himself said, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God 'and' Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent" (John 17:3).

For further information see the title:

- Trinity (The Doctrine of the Trinity) in Various Topics (ON WEBSITE MENU).

John wrote:

- Even though those who belong to Christ do not outwardly appear any different to others they are the sons and daughters of God, and will be changed to be like Christ when he appears (1 John 3:2).
-

As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.

Bible House of Grace