

APOSTOLIC INSTITUTE OF MINISTRY

MINISTERIAL TRAINING COURSE

Basic Christian Doctrine

Lesson One

READ: God in Christ Jesus (stop when you reach Appendix A); Deut. 6:4

THINK: "Which is the first commandment of all? Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is: Hear, O Israel, the LORD our God is one LORD... (better translation: The LORD is our God, the LORD is one) Mark 12:28,29. This, according to Jesus, the first of all the commandments, is known to Jewish people the world over as the *Sh'ma*, that being the Hebrew word for *Hear*. Every Jew, if he knows no other part of his religion, knows that his God is one.

It was the Jewish people who first taught the world monotheism, that is, the worship of one God. Considering the importance accorded to this doctrine in both testaments, it is astounding how few Christians know or believe it. Some, to justify their teaching of multiple persons in the Godhead, try to twist things. For example, there are those who would try to twist the Hebrew words in the *Sh'ma*, saying that the Hebrew word *echad* doesn't really mean *one*. But it **does** mean *one*, and cannot mean anything else.

The pages you've read in God in Christ Jesus give a basic understanding of the Oneness doctrine in relation to the trinitarian view. This is by no means exhaustive: One could search the scriptures from now till the second coming, and still be finding verses that proclaim Oneness. Here are just a few of the verses with which you should be familiar:

Deut. 6:4; Is. 44:8; I Tim. 2:5; James 2:19; Jn. 4:24; I Tim. 3:16; Jn. 1:14; Col. 2:9; II Cor. 5:19; Is. 45:5,6,18,21,22; Is. 46:9; Is. 54:5; Jn. 1:1-5; Jn. 8:19,56-59; Jn. 12:44-45; Jn. 14:7-14,18; Col. 1:19; Gal. 3:20; Is. 9:6; Rev. 22:16 (Root and Offspring = Father and Son). Is. 43:11 compare with Mt. 1:21. Is. 44:6 compare with Rev. 1:17-18. Is. 44:24 compare with Rev. 4:11. Is. 43:25 compare with Mk. 2:5-7. Is. 45:23 compare with Philipp. 2:9-10.

WRITE: A simple explanation of the Oneness doctrine. Use scripture references to back up your explanation.

APOSTOLIC INSTITUTE OF MINISTRY

MINISTERIAL TRAINING COURSE

Basic Christian Doctrine

Lesson Two

READ: God in Christ Jesus, from Appendix A to the end

THINK: It is amazing to see the effect that the truth of Oneness can have on people who have rejected it. What is it that can make some orthodox trinitarian Christians turn venomous when approached on the issue of Oneness? Can it be the knowledge that the scripture simply will not support their three person belief?

Luther, Calvin, and other leaders of the Protestant Reformation openly assailed Oneness as heresy. Even today, many great Pentecostal and Charismatic leaders decry Oneness as heresy, without ever bothering to compare the doctrine with their Bibles. Granted, it would be much easier for us simply to join the ranks of the trinitarians, and just try to "forget" that the Bible teaches one God. But what would be the price we'd have to pay for compromising even one portion of truth? The answer: If we compromise one part of truth, we will lose it all. See Mt. 13:11-17.

God will not leave Himself without a witness. (Acts 14:17) If we will not be witnesses for His truth, He will give it to others who will. It is not easy to take a stand for the truth. The prophets did, and were stoned to death. The Apostles did, and were martyred. Michael Servetus did, and was burned at the stake. One third of the ministers of the Assemblies of God did in 1916, and were cast out. (Mt. 10:22; Mt. 24:9; Lk. 21:12-13)

Yes, we could compromise, we could give up, we could accept half-truths. But Jesus never gave up on us. He didn't compromise. He was willing to die for us. Can we do less for Him?

WRITE: Give at least three scripture references that disprove the doctrine of the trinity.

APOSTOLIC INSTITUTE OF MINISTRY

MINISTERIAL TRAINING COURSE

Basic Christian Doctrine Supplement to Lesson Two

READ:

THINK: Are trinitarian Christians our brothers and sisters? I Cor. 12:13 teaches us that it is the Spirit which puts us into the Body of Christ, and therefore makes us brothers and sisters. Therefore, any person who has the Spirit of God, whether Oneness or trinitarian, is a member of this Family.

The scripture gives us no authority to judge one another. Thus we do not have the right to judge our trinitarian brothers and sisters. All of God's children should be loved and respected equally, whether they agree with us doctrinally or not.

In the past, the doctrine of Oneness has been a bone of contention between the Assemblies of God and the Oneness organizations. Such strife and disunity is not of God. While we may not believe in trinitarianism, we should respect those who do believe it, simply because that is how the Lord expects us to treat other.

Always be ready to explain your beliefs if asked, and to prove your beliefs if asked, but do not use truth to taunt others of different belief. To do so would be like shining a flashlight into someone's eyes: They'll never see where they're going until you shine the light on the path. Be careful how you use the truth that has been entrusted to us. Do not provoke or engage in arguments over doctrine. If others do not see things as we do, then we will have to agree to disagree, and do so in love and respect for each other. To respond in any less Christian a manner may destroy any future chance of sharing the truth with them.

WRITE:

APOSTOLIC INSTITUTE OF MINISTRY

MINISTERIAL TRAINING COURSE

Basic Christian Doctrine

Lesson Three

READ: John 4:24; Luke 24:39; Is. 59:1,16; Is. 53:1; Jn. 14:6-9; Is. 54:5

THINK: Who was this Jesus, this Messiah? And why was it necessary for Him to die? Couldn't we have been saved another way? We know from the Law of Moses and from the Book of Hebrews that sin had to be paid for with blood. This is one of the oldest laws in existence. When God made coats of animal skins for Adam and Eve, it was not just for the purpose of covering them: Blood (the animals') had to be shed. There was no other way. God had pronounced the penalty for sin: Death (Gen. 2:17). Now, His sense of justice demanded payment. But the blood of animals could not pay the penalty; it could only postpone the debt (Hebrews 10:4). A more perfect sacrifice was necessary. It had to be a human, because it was humans who had sinned. But it had to be a human who had never sinned, because God insisted that a sacrifice be perfect, without spot or blemish (Lev. 1:3; 3:1; 4:3).

Isaiah told us that God looked for someone to bring salvation to Him, to be an intercessor (Is. 59:16). Now God doesn't need salvation for Himself; He was looking for someone to save *us*. He found no one, so His own arm brought salvation. But John's Gospel tells us that God is a Spirit, and Luke's says that a spirit has no flesh and bones. So where did God get an arm?

Isaiah 53, a chapter about the sufferings of the Messiah, asks to whom the arm of the LORD has been revealed. We can see that God does have an arm, and that it was revealed to somebody, that is, it has been seen by people. Since God found no one who could bring salvation, He chose to bring it Himself. He met half of the requirements: He was without sin. But the other requirement, that He be human, had to be met as well. Therefore, He, the Spirit, the only God, Jehovah, caused a body to grow in the womb of Mary, and He, Himself, inhabited it. This explains the words of Jesus to Philip in John 14: They had, indeed, seen the Father, or rather, the only part of the Father that was visible to the human eye: His flesh, the "arm" of the LORD, which is called the Son. The Father literally was "in" the Son (Jn. 14:10).

We know that the Church is the Bride of Christ. Is. 54:5 proves that Jesus was our Creator, and therefore the Father, because it tells us that our Maker is our Husband.

WRITE: Offer a verse of Scripture to prove:

1. Blood is necessary for forgiveness of sin
2. The blood of Jesus paid the penalty
3. No further blood sacrifices are needed

(Hint: Hebrews, chapter 10)

APOSTOLIC INSTITUTE OF MINISTRY

MINISTERIAL TRAINING COURSE

Basic Christian Doctrine

Lesson Four

READ: Gen. 6:5; I Kings 8:46; Ps. 53:3; Prov. 20:9; Is. 53:6; 64:6; Rom. 3:23; I Jn. 1:8-10; 3:4; 5:17; Job 40:9-14; Ps. 53:1; Prov. 16:25; Jn. 8:21; Jer. 25:31; Is. 13:11

THINK: What is sin? Sin is disobedience to the laws of God. The first sins committed by humans were:

1. **Doubting God's word** – The serpent planted the seed of doubt in Eve's mind, assuring her that she would not surely die. She began to doubt.
2. **Changing God's word** – Eve told the serpent that God had told them not to eat of the fruit of the tree in the center of the garden, and not to touch it. But God never said not to touch it, only not to eat it. Eve added to God's word.
3. **Rebelling against God's word** – Eve ate from the tree, and Adam did, too.

Within one generation, murder and lying had been added, and by the time of Noah, all the world was immersed in sin so great, that God was sorry He'd ever made us (Gen. 6:5,6). But the author of sin was the devil, known as Satan (Hebrew- adversary/accuser) and Lucifer (Latin- lightbearer). The next lesson will be about him.

There are many who say, "I don't sin," or "I've never sinned," or "I'm not a sinner." The verses of scripture in the READ section of this lesson show these statements to be incorrect. The inescapable truth is that all of us have sinned. All of us, at some point in our lives, have transgressed God's laws, most of us too many times to count.

Who is held accountable for sin? Those who know what it is. In other words, those who have reached the age of reason, and who know right from wrong. Who is not held accountable? Those who have not reached the age of reason, for example, young children. There are also people who, by reason of mental retardation or illness, never reach an "age of reason." Also not held accountable are those who have had no opportunity to hear truth, those to whom the Bible was unavailable or forbidden. These cannot be held accountable for what they had no opportunity to know.

They can only be judged by what they knew. If they lived under a set of moral principles or laws, then they will be judged by those laws (Lk. 12:47-48; James 4:17).

At the judgment, there will be three main groups of people: The holy, or saints, who lived in all the light given in their time; the righteous, who walked in all the light they knew, but not all there was; and the wicked, who refused to walk in the light. We know that the wicked will be sent to the Lake of Fire (Rev. 21:8). The holy will live in the Holy City, New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:10-27). The righteous will live on the new earth (II Peter 3:13).

WRITE: Offer three scriptures to prove that we cannot save ourselves. Can we be saved just by living a "good" life, or just by going to church or paying tithes? Why or why not?

APOSTOLIC INSTITUTE OF MINISTRY

MINISTERIAL TRAINING COURSE

Basic Christian Doctrine

Lesson Five

READ: Gen. 3:1-15; Job 1:6-12; 2:1-7; Is. 14:12-17; Ez. 28:12-19; Mt. 4:1-11; Lk. 22:31; Eph. 6:11-18; I Pet. 5:8; Rev. 12:7-9; 20:1-3,10

THINK: We have three enemies. In this lesson, we will look at our oldest enemy: The devil. In Ezekiel 28, we have his origins. Although he is addressed in the person of the King of Tyrus (Tyre), the passage is clearly speaking of Satan. Verse 14 tells us he was an angel or cherub. A cherub is not the little naked baby on a greeting card or in a medieval painting. A cherub is a high order of angel (Hebrew: *k'ruv*).

Satan's name was *Heylel*, which is Hebrew for *Daystar*. This was translated into the Latin *Lucifer*, that is, *Lightbearer* (Is. 14:12). Ezekiel goes on to tell us that this Daystar was created perfect in every way. He had great beauty and wisdom. The mention of pipes and tabrets (tambourines) in Ez. 28:13 indicates that he was a musician. He walked on God's holy mountain and also in the Garden of Eden. (In 2 Peter 1:19, the term daystar is used to refer to God, suggesting that when he fell, Satan lost his original title.)

Isaiah 14 tells us in verses 13 and 14 what the sin of Daystar was: Notice that all of his statements begin with "I will." "I will" ascend, "I will" exalt, "I will" sit, "I will" ascend, "I will" be like . . .

Jewish tradition teaches us a fascinating story about this: At the moment that Daystar said, "I will be like the Most High," another cherub challenged him by asking, "Who is like God?" This question became that cherub's name: In Hebrew, "Mi cha'El?" In English, Michael, known to us as the archangel.

Notice God's response to Daystar's future tense ambitions (I will, etc.): Thou shalt (also future tense) be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit (verse 15). Actually, this prophecy has not yet been completely fulfilled. Is. 14:12 asks 'How art thou fallen . . .' And he *has* fallen from heaven, but not to hell. Satan is NOT in

hell. He has only reached his first stop along the way. Eph. 2:2 calls him "the prince of the power of the air." His domain right now is in the air above us, between earth and heaven. This can have an effect on things here, because he interferes with messages from God. (See Daniel 10:5-21. In this chapter, the word "prince" [Hebrew: *sar* - prince or chief] is used to mean "angel." The prince of the kingdom of Persia [verse 13] is the devil or fallen angel that Satan has put in charge of Persia.)

The next step of Satan's fall from heaven will be the earth. This takes place during the time we call the Great Tribulation, just after the Rapture of the Church (Rev. 12:12) After that, he will be bound for a thousand years. When released, he will immediately tempt the inhabitants of the earth to revolt against Jesus, who, with His saints, will be ruling the world from Israel, the old city of Jerusalem. Afterward, Satan will be thrown down even further, into the Lake of Fire (Rev. 20:1-3,7-10).

WRITE: The most effective weapon we have against a direct attack by Satan is the same weapon Jesus used when He was tempted by Satan in the wilderness. What is it?

APOSTOLIC INSTITUTE OF MINISTRY

MINISTERIAL TRAINING COURSE

Basic Christian Doctrine

Lesson Six

READ: I Jn. 2:15-17; Jn. 17:9-18; 15:18-19; 16:33; Rom. 12:2; II Cor. 4:3-4; II Tim. 4:10; James 1:27; 4:4; II Pet. 1:4; 2:20-22; I Jn. 3:1,13; 4:4-5; 5:4-5,19

THINK: We have a second enemy, and that is the world. By the world, we don't mean the people of the world, whom we should love, even as Jesus loved them (Jn. 3:16). Rather, we are speaking of the world system: The kingdoms, cares and pleasures that make up this planet upon which we live.

Most important for the Christian to understand is that we are NOT a part of this world. Rather, we are citizens of another. Therefore, we are IN the world, but not OF the world. We should not allow ourselves to become too attached to this world. We must remember that we are only passing through, and may be called to leave and go to our new world on a second's notice.

We can see from II Tim. 4:10 what happens to the Christian who loves this world too much: He or she goes back to the world. Do not deceive yourself: If you are truly living for God, this world does NOT love you. It cannot, because it does not love our Father. And if this world crucified Him when He walked in the flesh, how much more will they do to us?

Our Bible is rich in types. A type is a person, place or thing that is used as a symbol of another. Two important types to know in connection with this lesson are Sodom, which is a type of sin, and Egypt, which is a type of the world. A good example of these types being used is Rev. 11:8. The city is spiritually called Sodom and Egypt, meaning that it is full of sin and is a part of this world system. The only way we know which city it is, is by the clue at the end of the verse: where also our Lord was crucified. Obviously, it's Jerusalem. So any time the name Sodom is brought up, you will know the topic is sin, and likewise, Egypt signifies the world.

In the wilderness, the children of Israel murmured against Moses, saying that it would have been better if they had stayed in Egypt. In fact, there were some who did return to Egypt, and were never heard from again. Those who murmured and returned to Egypt were a type of the Christian who has left his heart in the world. He is never truly happy in the church, because his heart is in the world. Eventually, he may return there and be lost.

WRITE: In your own words, explain the danger represented by our enemy, the world.

APOSTOLIC INSTITUTE OF MINISTRY

MINISTERIAL TRAINING COURSE

Basic Christian Doctrine

Lesson Seven

READ: Mt. 26:41; Jn. 6:63; Rom. 7:18-25; 8:1-13; 13:14; II Cor. 10:2-5; Gal. 5:13-25; 6:7-9; Eph. 2:2-3; I Jn. 2:16; Col. 3:5-6; James 4:1-3

THINK: Our third great enemy is our own flesh. This powerful enemy is often overlooked. We tend to blame things on the devil, when in fact, the flesh is often to blame. There is a scene from a play which demonstrates this point well:

In the play, the devil is sitting in the back pew of a Pentecostal church, trying to convince a visitor that the church service is just a game. A woman, Sister Sicker-than-thou, stands to testify, and begins by declaring, "The devil's just been chasing me around all day!" Upon hearing this, the devil jumps to his feet and protests, "I have not!" And in fact, he hadn't. The woman's problem was not the devil, but her own flesh. She was so bound by her flesh, that Satan had no need to bother her.

The scriptures teach us that the flesh and the Spirit war against each other. If we are to be led by the Spirit, we must take a hand in this battle by mortifying the flesh. How? Fasting is an excellent way. Regular prayer, Bible reading, worship services, etc., all help to keep the flesh in subjection to the Spirit.

You can be 100% certain that if the Spirit wants you to do something, the flesh will oppose it. It will give you lots of reasons why you shouldn't do it: You're tired. You're hungry. You'd rather go someplace else. You did it last time; it's someone else's turn. The list of excuses goes on. And if your flesh is in control, you'll be easy prey to these excuses. But if your flesh is in subjection to the Spirit, it may say, I'm hungry, or I'm tired, but you will have the strength to do God's will anyway, knowing that the flesh will survive without all its wants and desires. (Most of us eat more than we need to anyway!)

WRITE: What are some good reasons for fasting? Use scripture to show that the practice of fasting is Biblical and beneficial.

Midterm exam (BCD-1) follows this lesson.

APOSTOLIC INSTITUTE OF MINISTRY

MINISTERIAL TRAINING COURSE

Basic Christian Doctrine

Examination BCD-1

1. (T or F) - The teaching that there are three persons in one God is Apostolic.
2. What is the *sh'ma*?
3. (T or F) - Monotheism means the worship of many gods.
4. For what teaching(s) was Michael Servetus martyred?
5. One third of what church's ministers were given the revelation of Oneness in the early 20th century?
6. Why did God kill animals when Adam and Eve sinned?
7. Is blood necessary for salvation?
8. If so, will an animal's blood suffice?
9. What is sin?

10. Who can not be held accountable for sin?

11. Adam and Eve committed three sins. What were they?

12. What three groups of people will stand at the judgment?

13. We have three enemies. Name them.

14. What is a cherub?

15. Who is Michael, and what does his name mean?

16. Who was Daystar?

17. What is our most effective weapon against Satan?

18. What is Sodom a type of? What is Egypt a type of?

19. What can fasting do for us?

20. What does this verse mean: Friendship of the world is enmity with God?
(James 4:4)

Student's name

Date

APOSTOLIC INSTITUTE OF MINISTRY

MINISTERIAL TRAINING COURSE

Basic Christian Doctrine

Lesson Eight

READ: Deut. 17:6; Num. 35:30; Mt. 18:16; Jn. 8:17; II Cor. 13:1; I Tim. 5:19; Heb. 10:28

THINK: There are two questions we wish to answer in this lesson: First, how do we establish a doctrine? And second, where in the Bible should we look to find the plan of salvation?

From the above scriptures, we see that it was an accepted principle in the Law that two or three witnesses were needed to establish a judgment against anyone. Nobody could be condemned on the word of just one witness. This is the reason that the High Priest went to such pains to find witnesses against Jesus at His trial. They needed at least two witnesses in agreement in order to condemn Him. Of course, the witnesses didn't agree. In desperation, the High Priest pinned Jesus down to get Him to admit to being the Messiah and the Son of God. Once Jesus had done so, they could condemn Him on His own word, without further need of witnesses (Mt. 26:65-66).

We see also from the above scriptures that the concept of establishing every word at the mouth of two or three witnesses was continued in the New Testament. Since the church is not in the business of condemning people to death (its history notwithstanding), what is the significance of this law to us? Paul showed the significance in II Cor. 13:1. His point here was that they could accept his word as binding, and teach it as doctrine binding upon others, because it had been spoken to them three times (three "witnesses").

Our lesson is this: In order to establish anything as doctrine, that is, in order to teach anything as binding, we must have two or three witnesses to back it up. In other words, we must have two or three separate passages of scripture that agree. For example, we can establish baptism as necessary for salvation because we have enough witnesses to do so: Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38; 1 Pet. 3:20-21, etc.

On the other hand, even though 1 Cor. 11 teaches that women should not cut their hair, we have no other witnesses in agreement, and cannot teach that as doctrine. Why is it there, if we aren't supposed to teach it? Paul wrote this because he was having a problem with the Corinthian church in relation to their behavior. Prior to their conversion to Christianity, the people in the Corinth church had been worshipers of the Ephesian goddess Diana. As part of the worship of Diana, the people, particularly the women, would grow their hair long, and then cut it off as an offering to Diana.

The Corinthians apparently tried to adapt this practice to Christianity, offering their hair to Jesus. In order to stop this practice, Paul attempted to replace the custom with another. He taught them a custom that would keep them out of trouble: The ancient Jewish custom of hair length. This meant that men kept their hair short, and women never cut theirs. (This varies from modern Jewish practice.) Just as a point of information, this custom also proves that Jesus and His Apostles did not have long hair, regardless of what the paintings and movies show. The only Jewish men who wore their hair long were those who had taken a Nazarite vow, such as Samson and John the Baptist. Jesus took no such vow. The Jewish hair custom was taught to no church other than Corinth. It was taught for the purpose of stopping an idolatrous custom. There is no legitimate reason to teach it today. Lack of other "witnesses" in scripture indicates that we may not teach it as a doctrine. Any teaching, of any church, that cannot be backed up with two or three witnesses of scripture can **NOT** be imposed on the church as a doctrine, no matter how good or righteous it may seem.

We know that there is only one way to salvation. (Mt. 7:13-14; Jn. 10:7-9; 14:6; Prov. 14:12) But what is that way? There are so many churches, each teaching its own salvation doctrine. Which is right? Of course, the answer is in the Bible, but where? Can we take just any verse out of the Bible and use it by itself? No! The rule for interpretation of scripture must always be this: **All scripture must be interpreted in the light of other scripture.** We must never take an isolated verse as doctrine without comparing it with other verses. We can find many verses that contain part of the salvation doctrine taught by the apostles, but part of the doctrine cannot save us. We must have all of it. But how do we find it?

Here is a way to pinpoint the salvation doctrine in the Bible: Take your Bible in your hand. Open to Genesis, chapter 1. Keeping your hand in Genesis, turn to the very end of the book of Malachi. Between your hands, you hold the Old Testament. This contains the Law of Moses, the history of Israel and Judah, the poetic writings, and the words of the prophets. It is impossible for us to find our salvation in the Old Testament. Why? Because our salvation is in Jesus the Messiah. He had not yet been born when the Old Testament was written. In fact, it was about 400 years from the time that the Old Testament was finished until the Messiah came. We can find glimpses, or shadows, of our salvation doctrine in the Old Testament, but they are incomplete and vague, because the prophets could not see the things of the church age clearly.

An example of an Old Testament shadow of salvation is Isaiah 30:15. But the doctrine is disguised. (Hint: returning = repentance; rest = the Baptism of the Holy Ghost. Compare Is. 28:11-12, where the rest is clearly identified with the Holy Ghost Baptism.) But these things were only shadows. We can't find our salvation doctrine here.

Take your hand out of Genesis now. Putting your left hand at the end of Malachi, or more precisely, at the beginning of Matthew, put your right hand at the end of the Gospel of John. You hold between your hands the four Gospels. These contain the accounts of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus the Messiah, as well as some prophecy concerning the coming church age and the end of the world. Surely we can take our salvation doctrine from the Gospels, because now Jesus had come. Or can we?

The vehicle by which God chose to save us was the Church. But the Church was not founded in the Gospels. Jesus always spoke of the Church in the future tense (Mt. 16:18 I will build . . .) Nobody in the Gospels was admitted to the Church, because it did not yet exist. The church was purchased by His blood, which was not shed until the end of the Gospels. (Acts 20:28) We cannot find our complete salvation doctrine in the Gospels. It had not yet been given. We find shadows, again, vague and incomplete (Mt. 28:18-20; Mk. 16:15-18; Lk. 24:47; Jn. 3:3-8,16).

In Mt. 16, Jesus gave Peter the keys to the Kingdom. This meant that when it came time to open the doors of the Kingdom to the people, Peter would have to do it. This is not talking about the erroneous doctrine that Peter guards the gates of heaven. The Kingdom to which Jesus referred was the Kingdom of God, that is, the Church, not the Kingdom of heaven. It was up to Peter to show everyone the way into the

Church. And until he used those keys, no one was going to get into the Church. He did not use those keys anywhere in the four Gospels.

Take your hands out of the Gospels now, and turn to Revelation, chapter 1. Put your left hand in there, and put your right hand at the end of that book. This is a book of prophecy and exhortation, written to the churches that were already established. Because it was written to established churches, there was no need for it to contain the salvation doctrine. The people in those churches already knew how to be saved.

Now put your right hand at the beginning of Revelation, and put your left hand at the beginning of the book of Romans. The books between your hands are called epistles, that is, letters. Without exception, every one of these letters was written to people who were already saved, and therefore did not need to have the salvation doctrine taught to them. The doctrine was expounded upon in the epistles to some extent, but never stated completely. The main purpose of the epistles was not to get lost people saved, but to help saved people stay that way, that is, to live a Christian life.

This leaves only the book of Acts, or the Acts of the Apostles. This is the history book of the first century Church. It was in this book that Peter used the keys to the Kingdom three times: First, to open the Church to the Jews on the day of Pentecost. Second, to open the doors to the Samaritans, who were half Jewish, and therefore had the right to be admitted before the Gentiles. Finally, Peter opened the Church to the Gentiles.

The first chapter of the book of Acts is still prior to the beginning of the Church, so we will find no salvation doctrine there. If we start at the end of the book, and work toward the beginning, the first place we can find the keys used is Acts 10:43-48. But the account, which shows the Gentiles being admitted to the Church, makes reference to an earlier incident (Compare Acts 11:15). Going toward the beginning of the book again, we see the keys used in Acts 8:12-17, where the Samaritans were admitted. But the fact that Philip had a message to preach to them indicates that there was an earlier use of the keys. (Note that the Samaritans did not receive the Holy Ghost until Peter arrived. It was not possible for the Samaritans to enter the Kingdom of God until Peter opened the door. Philip preached to them, they repented and were baptized in water in Jesus' Name, but the final step, that last key, could not take place until Peter arrived. Only then did they receive the Holy Ghost.)

We must look earlier in the book of Acts to find the first use of the keys. Acts 2:38, to be precise. It's interesting to note that the previous verse, Acts 2:37, contains the question that the entire Bible was written to answer: What must we do? (to restore fellowship with God, to get back to God, to be saved) Peter's answer in verse 38 is the first time that the whole plan of salvation for the Church age is laid out completely. It agrees with Acts 8, Acts 10, and many, many other verses. We shall examine this verse in greater detail in the next few lessons.

WRITE: Offer two or three scriptures to prove that repentance is necessary for salvation.

APOSTOLIC INSTITUTE OF MINISTRY

MINISTERIAL TRAINING COURSE

Basic Christian Doctrine

Lesson Nine

READ: Ps. 32:5; 51:1-17; Is. 1:18; 30:15; Jer. 3:1,7,10,12-14,22; 4:1; 14:20; Lam. 3:40; Ez. 18:21-23; Hos. 14:1-4; Joel 2:12-13; Hag. 1:5,7; Mt. 3:2; Mk. 1:15; Lk. 13:1-5; Acts 2:38; 17:30; 26:20; Rev. 2:5,16; 3:3,19

THINK: The first step in our salvation, the first step anyone who would be a Christian must take, is repentance. The concept of repentance, as the above scriptures show, is very ancient. In reading the book of Genesis, we can see that repentance, or rather, the lack of it, was evident as early as the Garden of Eden, when, rather than repent, Adam and Eve chose to blame others for their sin: Adam blamed Eve, Eve blamed the serpent.

In Hebrew, the verb used for *repent* is *shav*. It is also translated as *turn around* and *return*. The cry of God to Israel is echoed all through the Old Testament: *Shuvi!* (an imperative form of *shav*) Return! Repent! Turn around!

Repentance is an act often misunderstood in the Christian church. It is essential that we realize that confession of sin, by itself, does not constitute repentance. Nor is asking for forgiveness the sole element of repentance. The most important part of repentance can be seen in the alternate translations of the verb *shav*: Turn around and return. These words imply an action. In this case, it is the act of turning away from sin (Go and sin no more . . . Jn. 8:11), turning toward God, and making the choice to walk toward Him. These actions, when coupled with acknowledgment of sin (Ps. 51:3) and the plea for forgiveness (Ps. 51:1,2,7,9), constitute repentance.

Without genuine repentance, nothing else in Christianity is valid. Without it, baptism is useless, receiving the Holy Ghost impossible. Without repentance, tithing is a waste of time, sacrifice meaningless, fasting without merit.

Jesus said that we must enter the sheepfold by the door. There is only one door. Peter was given the keys to this door. There are three keys needed to open it. Repentance is the first key, without which the other two will not function.

An altar call in church should always be preceded by teaching on repentance, and sinners responding to the call should be helped to find a place of repentance (Heb.12:16-17). A place of repentance is not speaking of a physical place, like the altar steps or a 'sinners' bench,' but rather of a spiritual condition in which the sinner is able to repent and pour out his/her heart before God. The saints of the church can be of great assistance to the visitor in this area by praying with him/her. Finding a place of repentance can be very difficult for one who has never before repented. Only after a genuine repentance should a new convert be baptized.

WRITE: Give two verses of scripture in which God called on someone to repent.

APOSTOLIC INSTITUTE OF MINISTRY

MINISTERIAL TRAINING COURSE

Basic Christian Doctrine

Lesson Ten

READ: Mt. 3:13-16; 28:19; Mk. 1:9; 16:16; Lk. 3:21; Jn. 3:5; Acts 2:37-38,41; 8:13,16,36-38; 10:47-48; 16:33; 19:1-5; 22:16; Rom. 6:3-5; Gal. 3:27; Eph. 4:4; James 2:14,17-22,26; I Pet. 3:20-21; I John 5:6

THINK: The doctrine of water baptism is one of the most misunderstood teachings of the Bible. In this lesson, we will concentrate mainly on the purpose of water baptism. Various churches have many different ideas on the purpose and necessity of baptism. Most protestant denominations do not consider baptism to be a part of salvation, but instead teach that it is an ordinance to be observed by those already saved. The Roman Catholic Church, as well as some protestant and Pentecostal bodies, teach that water baptism is an essential part of the salvation doctrine. Some narrow it down further, teaching that baptism is for the forgiveness of sins.

What does the Bible teach? Jesus included baptism in the great commission (Mt. 28:19, Mk. 16:16). He included it as part of the criteria for salvation (Mk. 16:16). In our central salvation verse, Acts 2:38, baptism is said to be "for the remission of sins." (King James Version) Let's examine that phrase more closely: The Greek phrase is "is afesin ton hamartion." A literal translation is "into forgiveness of the sins." So "for the remission of sins" is more properly rendered "into the forgiveness of sins." This makes the function of baptism very clear: It is for the forgiveness of sins.

Peter further emphasized this in his first epistle. In speaking of Noah and the flood, he mentioned that eight souls were saved by water. "Oh, no," many are quick to point out. "They weren't saved by *water*, they were saved by the *ark*!" But the scripture (I Pet. 3:20) did say they were saved by water. It is true, the ark did save them from the water, but the water saved them from the sin of the world! Peter goes on to say "The like figure whereunto (that is, in the very same way that) even baptism doth also now save us." What was he saying? Just the same thing that he said in Acts 2:38, that is, that baptism saves us from sin. No wonder Jesus included it in the criteria for salvation! (Mk. 16:16)

Many object to the teaching that baptism saves us by pointing out that baptism is a work, and we are saved by faith, not by works. Yes, baptism is a work. Yes, we are saved by faith. But James, who was the head of the Jerusalem church, pointed out that faith without works is dead. Faith alone cannot save. Even the devils have faith, but they are not saved. We have faith that we can be saved, but that faith is useless without obedience to the commands of the One who saves us. Let me give an example: It does no good for you to believe that I can help you to escape a burning building, if you are unwilling to obey my instructions to open the window and climb out on the fire escape. All the faith in the world won't save you if you are unwilling to follow the instructions given. (Read again James 2:14-26)

How can baptism save us? What merit is there in water? Aren't we saved through the blood of Jesus? Yes, we are saved by the blood of Jesus. But where is that blood? Is it preserved in some bottle somewhere? Or does it still flow down Mount Calvary in Israel, the way it did 2,000 years ago? No, we must be honest and admit that the blood of Jesus dried up and decomposed back on Calvary. This is a simple rule of nature: Blood that is spilled will dry up and will decompose.

God is not ignorant of the laws He made. He knew the blood would not continue to exist. He knew that within a short time of the crucifixion, the blood would be gone. Therefore, He made a way for us to receive the benefit of the blood. In John 19:34, a soldier pierced the dead body of Jesus with a spear. Did just blood come out? No! Blood and water came out! Why? A mere medical phenomenon? Or was there some significance? Why did John choose to point this out to us? God knew we would not always have the blood of Jesus. But He also knew we would always have water. That is the significance: Right there on Calvary, the blood of Jesus, the only acceptable payment for sin, was mingled with water. Now, when used properly in baptism as taught by the apostles, water would have the same effect as the blood. It could take the place of the blood to atone for sins and achieve forgiveness. This agrees with the teaching of Peter that baptism saves us and is for the forgiveness of sins. It explains why Jesus included baptism as part of salvation.

Baptism is the second step in the process of salvation. It is the second key to the door of the Kingdom.

WRITE: Is baptism essential for salvation? Why or why not?

APOSTOLIC INSTITUTE OF MINISTRY

MINISTERIAL TRAINING COURSE

Basic Christian Doctrine

Lesson Eleven

READ: Mt. 3:16; Mk. 1:10; Jn. 3:5,23; Acts 8:38,39

THINK: Understanding the importance of water baptism, we can easily see why it is equally important that it be done correctly. The scriptures clearly teach that there is a right way to do things, as well as many wrong ways (Prov. 14:12; Mt. 7:13-14; Gal. 1:8-9). In this lesson, we shall deal with the mode of baptism.

The word baptize comes from the Greek word *vaptizo* (modern Greek pronunciation), which means to make fully wet, or to immerse. *Vaptizo* can be traced further back to the word *vapto*, which means to cover wholly with a fluid.

The scripture references given above bear witness to the practice of John the Baptist and the early church of immersing candidates totally in baptism. History, also, will support this practice: "At first, all baptism was by complete immersion" (World Book Encyclopedia, Vol. 1, Page 651). "In the early centuries, all were baptized by immersion in streams, pools, and baptistries" (Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. 2, Page 263). Baptism by sprinkling or pouring was not instituted until the Catholic church introduced infant baptism. (See Encyclopedia Britannica, 11th Edition, Vol. 3, Pages 365-366) (Infant baptism is invalid because an infant cannot repent, nor does an infant have any sin for which to repent.)

Romans 6:4 tells us that we are buried with Jesus in our baptism. A burial in which only a handful of dirt is sprinkled is not a burial at all. (Our three step salvation parallels the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus: We die to sin [repent], are buried [in the waters of baptism], and are resurrected to walk in newness of life [born again of the Spirit, Jn. 3:3-5; Rom. 6:4])

The Greek word for sprinkle is *rantizo*. If sprinkling were the proper form of baptism, it would not be called baptism at all, but rather *rantism*. By very definition, then, we see that baptism must be a total immersion in water. Some may choose to

contest this, but when the salvation of a soul is at stake, to risk using an unbiblical form of baptism would be foolish indeed.

WRITE: In your opinion, why would baptism by sprinkling not satisfy the requirements of John 3:5? (Hint: Born means *brought forth*.)

APOSTOLIC INSTITUTE OF MINISTRY

MINISTERIAL TRAINING COURSE

Basic Christian Doctrine

Lesson Twelve

READ: The Real Truth About Baptism in Jesus' Name; Gal. 1:8-9; Jude 3

THINK: In Hebrew, the language of the Jewish people, God's Name is considered so sacred that it may not be uttered aloud. So holy is the Name, that the Hebrew term for 'the Name' (*Hashem*) is itself considered holy, and is used to mean God. If the Jewish people, knowing only God's Old Testament Name (YHVH - Jehovah or Yahweh), have such great respect for it, how much more should we, who know His new Name, Jesus, have respect for it?! (The Name *Jesus* is from the Hebrew *Yehoshua*. This is a contraction of God's Name, YHVH, and the word for *salvation*. The resulting Name asserts that YHVH has become Salvation. The Name itself teaches Oneness! See Isaiah 12:2.)

We are commanded to do all things in the Name of Jesus (Col. 3:17). Surely this includes baptism!

If you have not been baptized by immersion in the Name of Jesus (fewer than 1% of Christian churches baptize in Jesus' Name), you are strongly urged to seek out a man or woman of God who will baptize you the Apostolic way: In Jesus' Name. (Among the few churches which practice baptism in the Name of Jesus are the United Pentecostal Church International, the Pentecostal Assemblies of the World, the Assemblies of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Affirming Pentecostal Church. In addition, many independent Pentecostal churches baptize in Jesus' Name, particularly those which use the word "Apostolic" as part of their name.)

WRITE: A short paragraph tying in the following thoughts: We take on the Name of Jesus in baptism; The Church is the Bride of Christ; a bride takes on the name of her husband.

APOSTOLIC INSTITUTE OF MINISTRY

MINISTERIAL TRAINING COURSE

Basic Christian Doctrine

Lesson Thirteen

READ: Is. 30:15; Mt. 3:11; Jn. 3:3-8; Acts 1:5,8; 2:1-4,38,39; 8:15-17; 10:44-46; 19:6; Rom. 8:9-16; Eph. 5:18

THINK: Salvation is an ongoing process which does not end until we reach our final destination. The three steps of Acts 2:38, those three keys, are not the end of the salvation process, but merely the keys to the door by which we must enter.

The final key to the door is the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Referred to in the Old Testament as the "rest" and the "refreshing," it was included by Isaiah in his brief view of New Testament salvation (Is. 30:15 - returning = repentance; rest = Holy Ghost). (Please note that the terms Holy Ghost and Holy Spirit are synonymous and interchangeable.)

The baptism of the Holy Ghost was prophesied by John the Baptist (Mt. 3:11; Mk. 1:8; Lk. 3:16; Jn. 1:33; Acts 1:5). The fact that there is a baptism of the Holy Ghost as well as a water baptism does not contradict Eph. 4:5, which says that there is only one baptism. If the "New Birth" of John 3:3 can consist of two parts (born of water and born of the Spirit, vs. 5), why cannot the one baptism of Eph. 4:5 consist of the same two parts (baptism of water and baptism of the Spirit)?

This Spirit baptism does not automatically happen when a person repents, or "accepts Jesus," as some would teach. Each time it occurred in the scriptures, it was a clearly definable event. Some, too, teach that this event is not part of salvation, but rather, an 'added blessing.' This teaching is refuted by the words of Jesus in Jn. 3:5 'Except a man be born of water **and** of the Spirit . . .'. Such a teaching also contradicts the words of Paul in Rom 8:9. (Is the Spirit of Christ the Holy Ghost? Yes, because there is only one Spirit, and that Spirit is God. Eph. 4:4; Jn. 4:24)

Therefore, every person needs the baptism of the Holy Ghost, the third key to the door, in order to be saved.

WRITE: Why is the baptism of the Holy Ghost part of salvation, and not just an "added blessing?"

APOSTOLIC INSTITUTE OF MINISTRY

MINISTERIAL TRAINING COURSE

Basic Christian Doctrine

Lesson Fourteen

READ: Is. 28:10-13; Mk. 16:17; Jn. 3:8; Acts 2:1-4; 10:44-47; 11:15; 19:6; I Cor. 12:4-7; 14:18

THINK: How do we know that a person has been baptized in the Spirit? Are they baptized when they repent? Or when the preacher says they are? Or is there some specific evidence we are told to look for?

I Cor. 12:7 tells us that there is a manifestation of the Spirit that everyone receives to profit withal. *Manifestation* means proof, evidence, demonstration, or showing. The fact that the word manifestation is singular tells us further that only one manifestation is acceptable. The words *to profit withal* mean *for the common good*. Summarized, each person who receives the Spirit will exhibit the evidence of it for the common good. This evidence is the only acceptable criteria for deciding who has and who has not received the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

What is this evidence? Some would say it is the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23). We might wish that were true. But we see even in the scriptures that Spirit-filled believers did not always manifest the fruit of the Spirit. The fruit of the Spirit is something that must be cultivated and grown. In time, all believers should manifest the fruit, but since it only comes with maturity, it would hardly make a practical initial evidence for the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

Remember from Lesson 8 that we need two or three scriptures in agreement in order to formulate a doctrine. Let us then take the examples of people in the scriptures receiving the Spirit, and look at the signs accompanying their baptisms.

The first time in history that the baptism was given was on the day of Pentecost. The account is found in Acts 2:1-4. The signs that accompanied the baptism were Wind, Fire, and Speaking in Tongues.

The next account is in Acts 8:17-18. (Note that Acts 4:31 is a refilling, rather than an example of the baptism.) In Acts 8, no signs are specifically mentioned. But I Cor. 12:7 assures us that there had to be one. In addition, Acts 8:18 strongly implies that there was some sign, because Simon the sorcerer, a man accustomed to seeing miraculous illusions, offered money for the ability to cause others to receive the Spirit. He obviously witnessed something quite impressive.

The next example is in Acts 10:45-46. This is where the Gentiles received the Holy Ghost. The signs that were manifested were Speaking in Tongues and Magnifying God.

Finally, we turn to Acts 19:6. This is where the disciples of John the Baptist, knowing only John's baptism, were re-baptized in Jesus' Name and received the Holy Ghost. The signs in evidence were Speaking in Tongues and Prophesying.

In only one place did we see Wind and Fire, so they cannot be the evidence. In only one place was Prophesying mentioned, and in only one place Magnifying God. They cannot be the evidence, either. The only consistent sign, manifested in Acts 2, Acts 10, and Acts 19, was Speaking in Tongues. We have three witnesses. They confirm the words of Jesus in Mk. 16:17.

(The student should note that this type of speaking in tongues is not the 'gift of tongues.' The two types of tongues are entirely separate, and different rules apply to each. This topic will be dealt with in the class Gifts of the Spirit. That class will clear up any confusion in relation to I Cor. 12:10,28-31 and I Cor. 14:1-40.)

The prophet Isaiah foresaw speaking in tongues, associated it with the Holy Ghost (rest and refreshing), and even attempted to imitate it. Read through Isaiah 28:10-13. Verses 10 and 13, in Hebrew, are repetitive, and sound like someone stammering, or attempting to speak a foreign language. Try reading this aloud:

Ki tzav latzav, tzav latzav, kav lakav, kav lakav, z'er sham, z'er sham. (verse 10)

Now try this:

tzav latzav, tzav latzav, kav lakav, kav lakav, z'er sham, z'er sham, l'ma'an yelchu, v'chashlu achor, v'nishbru, v'nokshu, v'nilkadu. (verse 13)

In summary, speaking in tongues is the only acceptable evidence that someone has received the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

WRITE: Final exam for Basic Christian Doctrine follows this lesson.

APOSTOLIC INSTITUTE OF MINISTRY

MINISTERIAL TRAINING COURSE

Basic Christian Doctrine

Examination BCD-2

1. (T or F) - We need five or six scriptures in agreement in order to formulate a doctrine.
2. According to the scriptures, how many ways are there to salvation?
3. Do we look for our salvation doctrine in any book of the Bible, or a specific book? If specific, which book?
4. Jesus gave Peter the keys to the Kingdom. What does this mean?
5. What is the first step toward salvation?
6. (T or F) The apostles baptized using the formula 'in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.
7. (T or F) "Accepting Jesus as personal Savior" is all that is required for salvation.
8. What is involved in repentance?
9. Did Jesus say baptism is necessary?

10. (T or F) Sprinkling is an acceptable form of baptism.
11. What does the Name Jesus mean?
12. Does salvation end with Acts 2:38, or merely begin there?
13. Which prophet predicted speaking in tongues and tried to imitate it? Was it Hosea, Joel, Isaiah or Micah?
14. Is the baptism of the Holy Ghost necessary for salvation?
15. Is there an initial evidence to prove that the baptism of the Holy Ghost has taken place? If so, what is it?
16. How can the water of baptism have the power to atone for sin, when the scripture says that blood is the only acceptable price?
17. How many persons are there in the Godhead?
18. Who is Daystar? By what name would we more readily know him?
19. Name our three enemies:

20. How did Michael Servetus die, and why?

Student's name

Date