

PRAYING AND LIVING THE LORD'S PRAYER

By Pastor Bien Llobrera

Who is a real Christian?

Some non-Christians seem to behave more like Christians, while some Christians act worse than non-Christians. The Lord Jesus warned us that only at the Last Judgment will the true and false Christians be exposed (Matt. 7:21-23).

²¹ “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. ²² Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ ²³ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’

Never mind other people, how can I know if I am a real Christian?

The Lord Jesus gives us one sure standard by which we can test ourselves: the Lord’s Prayer (Matt. 6:9-13). The Lord’s Prayer is a model prayer. It also gives a picture of the true Christian. Every statement of the Lord’s Prayer suggests a mark of a true Christian.

I.

OUR FATHER, WHO ART IN HEAVEN

- FATHER-CHILD RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD.

(1) A true Christian is born again into God’s family by faith in Christ as Savior and Lord. He/she has received a new spiritual nature from God and has received the right to be called a child of God.

John 1:12-13: ¹² But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: ¹³ who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

John 3:3, 5, 6: ³ Jesus answered and said to him, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” . . . ⁵ Jesus answered, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. ⁶ That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.”

Romans 10:9, 10: ⁹ that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

SELF-EVALUATION:

QUESTION 1: Are you sure you have sincerely received the Lord Jesus Christ as your personal Savior and Lord?

(2) A true Christian has the witness of the Spirit of adoption, who enables him/her to call God as his/her heavenly Father.

Rom. 8:15, 16: ¹⁵ For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father." ¹⁶ The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,

SELF-EVALUATION:

QUESTION 2: Do you have the witness of the Holy Spirit assuring your heart that you are now a child of God? Do you feel the Holy Spirit motivating you to pray and to call God your heavenly Father?

(3) A true Christian proves he/she is God's child by a changed life.

2 Corinthians 5:17: Therefore, if anyone *is* in Christ, *he is* a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

1 Pet. 1:14-17: ¹⁴ as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, *as* in your ignorance; ¹⁵ but as He who called you *is* holy, you also be holy in all *your* conduct, ¹⁶ because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy." ¹⁷ And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay *here* in fear.

2 Peter 3:18: But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him *be* the glory both now and forever. Amen.

2 Peter 1:5-7: ⁵ But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, ⁶ to knowledge self-control, to self-control [\[d\]](#)perseverance, to perseverance godliness, ⁷ to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love.

Colossians 1:27, 28: ²⁷ To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: [\[i\]](#)which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. ²⁸ Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.

SELF-EVALUATION:

QUESTION 3: Are you experiencing the power of the Holy Spirit changing you to become more and more like Christ?

This doesn't mean that a Christian becomes instantly perfect. At the beginning he/she experiences regeneration, the new birth by which God imparts to him/her new spiritual life. At regeneration, a believer begins as a spiritual baby, who will go through the life-long process called sanctification, which involves the progressive transformation of the believer into Christ-likeness.

II.

HALLOWED BE THY NAME

- TRUE WORSHIPER

(1) A true Christian worships God in spirit and truth.

Worship in spirit means it is enabled by the Holy Spirit; and it is the redeemed human spirit connecting directly to God as Spirit, not dependent on time, place, or religious ritual or paraphernalia.

Worship in truth means it is enlightened, controlled and guided by the Word of truth, the Bible.

John 4:23, 24: ²³ But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. ²⁴ God *is* Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”

Philippians 3:3: ³ For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh,

SELF-EVALUATION:

QUESTION 4: Are you learning to worship God more in spirit (enabled by the Holy Spirit) and in truth (guided by the Word of God)?

(2) A true Christian is growing in knowledge of God, intellectually and experientially.

John 17:3: ³ And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.

Believers have always expressed passion for knowing God.

Example in the Old Testament: the Psalmist.

“One *thing* I have desired of the LORD,
That will I seek:
That I may dwell in the house of the LORD
All the days of my life,

To behold the [\[b\]](#)beauty of the LORD,
And to inquire in His temple.” (Psalm 27:4).

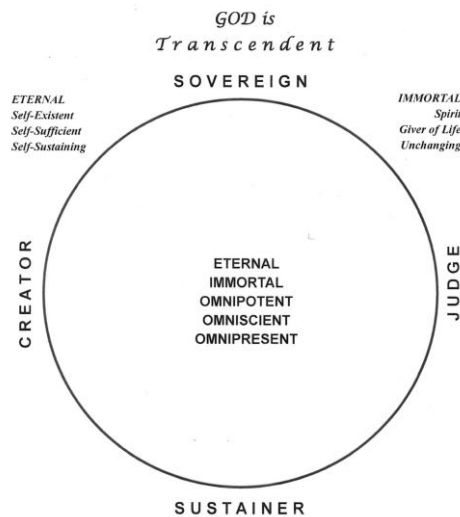
Example in the New Testament: the apostle Paul:
“That I may know Him” (Phil. 3:10).

SELF-EVALUATION:

QUESTION 5: Do you have a growing hunger, motivated by the Holy Spirit, to know God more and more and to have a closer relationship with Him?

NOTE: The attributes of God enumerated and briefly described below are intended to provide foundational truths to guide you to get to know God step by step as you read your Bible everyday. As you read and meditate on a portion of scripture (at least, once chapter a day), regularly ask, “What attribute/s of God does this verse or chapter teach or demonstrate?” Write your insights and discoveries in your spiritual notebook. Use the truth you discover in your prayer of worship to God.

(3) GOD IS TRANSCENDENT.



(a) God is beyond us, outside of us; He is at the boundaries of our life.

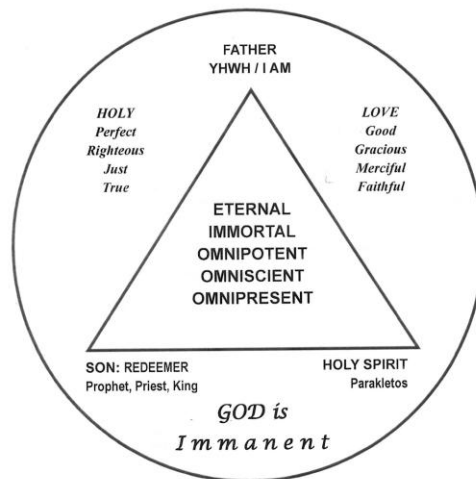
- CREATOR (left of circle): God is at the beginning and source of everything.
- JUDGE (right): God is at the end of all things; avoid Him all you want, you'll have to face Him at the end on judgment day.
- SOVEREIGN (top): God rules over all things; He controls everything and all events to accomplish His eternal purpose for His glory and for the good of His people.

- SUSTAINER (below): God's power (not the laws of nature, such as gravity) holds all creation together so that the planets and stars and galaxies do not implode on themselves or explode away from one another. All the so-called laws of nature have been designed and finely tuned by God to work together as a united whole. His providence preserves all creation and specifically cares for His children.

(b) God's INCOMMUNICABLE attributes, characteristics that He alone possesses and does not share with His creation.

- ETERNAL:
Self-Existent,
Self-Sufficient,
Self-Sustaining
- IMMORTAL:
Spirit,
Giver of Life,
Unchanging
- OMNIPOTENT
- OMNISCIENT
- OMNIPRESENT

(4) GOD IS IMMANENT.



- (a) God is TRANSCENDENT (outside His creation) but He is also IMMANENT (deeply involved in His creation). God did not create the universe, wound it like a clock, and left it to run on its own, without His further involvement. No; God stayed involved in His universe, specially with humanity, in order to have a personal relationship with people. He established a unique relationship with people whom He had chosen as instruments in accomplishing His purpose in the world.

- (b) In the Old Testament He revealed Himself as YHWH/I AM, the covenant God of His chosen people Israel. The Old Testament gives partial revelations of God as Father.
- (c) The New Testament gives the fullest revelation of God; meaning, He revealed all that we need to know about Himself in order that we may have a true and saving relationship with Him, and how we may have a life-enhancing relationship with people and with the rest of creation. There are countless mysteries that God chose not to reveal to humans in the Bible (Deuteronomy 29:29).

- (1) The Bible reveals that God is Triune: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- (2) The New Testament reveals God's Plan of Redemption and the part played by each Person of the Trinity in that plan.

God the Father AUTHORED the Plan of Salvation.

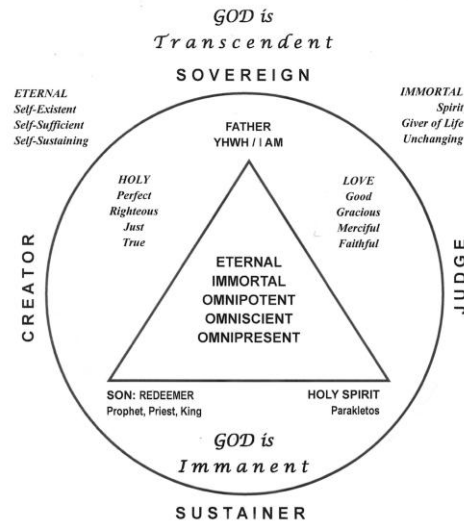
God the Son ACCOMPLISHED the Plan of Salvation as the Promised Redeemer, in His three-fold office as Prophet, Priest and King.

God the Holy Spirit APPLIES the Plan of Salvation, as the Parakletos who indwells the church and each individual believer.

- (3) The New Testament fully reveals God as the heavenly Father of the family of believers who have put their faith in His Son Jesus Christ.
- (d) The COMMUNICABLE attributes of God are His characteristics which He graciously shares with His creatures.

- (1) HOLY:
Perfect (for God this means absolute perfection; for believers, this means perfect conformity to the image of Christ),
Righteous,
Just,
True.

- (2) LOVE:
Good,
Gracious,
Merciful,
Faithful.



NOTE:

As you grow in your knowledge of the Bible you will also discover many other attributes of God. But the attributes listed above will help you to get started in your life-long journey of knowing God more and more and so that you become a more worthy worshiper and a more fruitful servant of God.

SELF-EVALUATION:

QUESTION 6: Have you begun the discipline of recording in your spiritual journal insights and discoveries regarding the attributes of God gathered from your daily Bible reading and meditation? If not yet, start today.

III.

THY KINGDOM COME.

- **GOD’S KINGDOM: ETERNAL, PRESENT, FUTURE.**
- (1) A true Christian is a citizen of God’s kingdom in its three manifestations.
 - (a) God’s ETERNAL Kingdom.
 - (b) God’s PRESENT Kingdom.
 - (c) God’s FUTURE Kingdom.

ETERNAL KINGDOM

God has always reigned from eternity before all creation, and within time and creation. God reigns supreme and sovereign over all (Psalm 103:19; Daniel 4:34, 35).

PRESENT KINGDOM

However, the entry of sin into the world contested God's reign in the world. In the beginning of creation, God entrusted dominion over the earth to humans, represented by their first Head, Adam (Genesis 1:26; Psalm 8:6-8).

But when Satan succeeded in causing Adam and Eve to sin, he also succeeded in usurping the dominion originally entrusted to humans. He was able to boast to the Son of God Himself, who did not contradict his claim.

Luke 4:5-7:

⁵ Then the devil, taking Him up on a high mountain, showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. ⁶ And the devil said to Him, "All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for *this* has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish. ⁷ Therefore, if You will worship before me, all will be Yours."

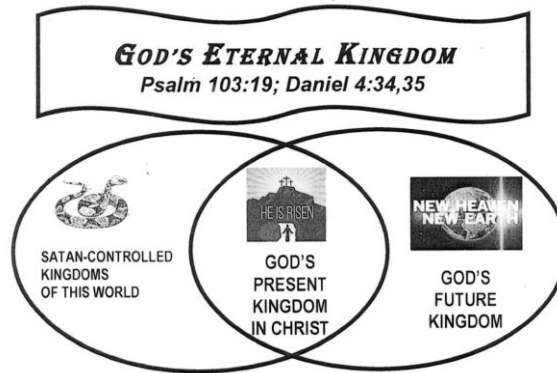
In fact, Christ called Satan "ruler of this world" (John 12:31; 14:30).

The reason Christ came into the world was to become the Second Representative Head of humanity. By His life, death and resurrection, He would defeat Satan and regain for humans their original dominion over the earth (Hebrews 2:5-15). As a result of His life, death and resurrection, Christ received from God all power in heaven and on earth, and He holds this power as the Second Head of humanity (Matthew 28:18; Philippians 2:9-11; Ephesians 1:19-23).

When Christ began His ministry, He announced the arrival of God's kingdom into the world that was under the unlawful dominion of Satan (Mark 1:14, 15). At His resurrection, ascension and session at the right hand of God the Father, God's kingdom was established on the earth with Christ as the King and Lord who now truly reigns over the earth (Matthew 28:18).

This is now the new reality: At the PRESENT time, God's kingdom is now reigning on the earth through Christ. However, God's present reign is SPIRITUAL and not yet physically and materially visible. God's kingdom in Christ is being established spiritually in the hearts of people who respond to the Gospel and who put their faith in Christ as their Savior and Lord. And the reign of God is being demonstrated within the Church, the Body of Christ.

Please study the figure below.



At the PRESENT time, there are two kingdoms in conflict on the earth (represented by the two overlapping ovals).

- The RIGHT OVAL represents that God’s kingdom has arrived and has been established in the world as a SPIRITUAL REALITY.
 - The LEFT OVAL represents Satan’s continued presence and activity in the world. Satan’s reign continues to be a VISIBLE REALITY. It is true that through Christ’s life, death and resurrection, Satan and his hosts have been completely defeated (Luke 10:18; John 12:31; Colossians 2:15). However, Satan and his hosts have been allowed to continue operating in the world, to serve as instruments to build Christ-like maturity in God’s people and to train them in spiritual warfare. This is the same reason God did not immediately eradicate all the enemy inhabitants in Canaan, so that the people of Israel would have the opportunity to develop strength and to learn valuable skills, strategies and tactics for war (Judges 3:1-4; Ephesians 6:10-18; 1 Peter 5:8-10).
- (2) At the moment a person is born again by faith in Christ as Savior and Lord, at that moment he/she is transferred from Satan’s KINGDOM OF DARKNESS (left oval) and established inside the PRESENT KINGDOM OF GOD IN CHRIST (overlap of the two ovals) (Colossians 1:13, 14).

This transfer is also described as the cutting off of connection to the OLD HUMANITY IN ADAM and the incorporation into the NEW HUMANITY IN CHRIST, symbolized in baptism (Romans 6:1-4). As a kingdom citizen, whose life is hid with Christ in God, the true Christian lives the “exchanged life” described in Galatians 2:20.

- (3) As a kingdom citizen, the true Christian experiences continual spiritual warfare:
- (a) Between the backward pull of the KINGDOM OF DARKNESS versus the forward pull of the KINGDOM OF LIGHT (Ephesians 5:8-13; 1 John 1:5-9);
 - (b) Between the downward pull of the OLD SINFUL NATURE in Adam versus the upward pull of the NEW HOLY NATURE in Christ (Ephesians 4:20-24);
 - (c) Between the FLESH versus the SPIRIT (Galatians 5:19-25).

By gaining victory over the kingdom of darkness, victory over the old sinful nature, victory over the flesh through progressive, step-by-step obedience to God's kingdom laws in the power of the Holy Spirit, the believer progressively becomes transformed into the image of Christ, so that it becomes progressively manifested in his/her daily life that in truth it is no longer he/she that lives but Christ who lives in him/her.

SELF-EVALUATION:

QUESTION 7: Are you sure you have been transferred from SATAN'S KINGDOM OF DARKNESS into CHRIST'S KINGDOM OF LIGHT? Are you living as a true citizen of God's kingdom by practicing the "exchanged life" of "not I but Christ lives in me"? Are you consistently PUTTING OFF the old sinful nature and PUTTING ON the new holy nature?

FUTURE KINGDOM

Someday, at the Second Coming of Christ, He will establish the visible Kingdom of God on the earth in three stages.

- STAGE #1: First, immediately after the Second Coming, Christ will establish His visible kingdom of 1000 years on earth called His MILLENNIAL REIGN. During this 1000 years, Satan will be bound and there will be global justice, peace, prosperity and happiness under the righteous and gracious rule of the Prince of Peace (Revelation 19:11-21; 20:1-6).

After the 1000 years of perfect human flourishing under the Prince of Peace, Satan will be released and he will succeed in deceiving countless multitudes to join him in launching his final revolt against God and His Messiah. Christ will totally defeat Satan and his rebel hosts. The Evil Trinity of the Devil, the Beast and False Prophet will be cast into the lake of fire to be tormented forever and ever (Revelation 20:7-10).

- STAGE #2: Immediately after the final defeat of Satan, the Last Judgment will be held and the final destiny of all unsaved peoples will be determined (Revelation 20:11-15).
- STAGE #3: Then the New Heaven and New Earth will be established. This is the FUTURE KINGDOM OF GOD made visible and which will continue forever and ever (Revelation 21-22).

MEANING OF "THY KINGDOM COME"

What then do we mean when we pray "Thy kingdom come"?

- First, we acknowledge that God's ETERNAL kingdom has always ruled from eternity to eternity and throughout human history. We trust in and submit to His sovereign will and

purpose to be done, and never our desires or plans (Psalm 90:1, 2; Matthew 26:39, 42, 44, 52-56).

- Second, we ask that the invisible spiritual PRESENT rule of God's kingdom in Christ will become real in our experience and manifested through our testimony to the watching world (John 19:10, 11; 2 Peter 2:23; 3:15).
- Third, we hope and long for the visible FUTURE rule of God's kingdom to come soon at the Second Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ (Titus 2:13; Revelation 22:20).

SELF-EVALUATION:

QUESTION 8: Have you learned to rest your faith in God's ETERNAL kingdom, so that you experience God's peace no matter what's going on in the world (Psalm 46:10)? Have you learned to trust in God's PRESENT kingdom, so that no matter what's happening in your personal life you have assurance that God will work out all things for His glory and for your good (Romans 8:28)? Do you maintain vibrant hope and expectation for God's FUTURE kingdom in the Second Coming of Christ (2 Timothy 4:8)?

IV.

THY WILL BE DONE ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN

- LIVING FOR THE WILL OF GOD.

(1) TEN COMMANDMENTS.

A true Christians lives for the will of God, as revealed in God's Word, the Bible. God has revealed His commandments most clearly in His laws.

In the Old Testament, the Ten Commandments summarized God's will specifically for God's chosen people, Israel. But the Ten Commands reveals God's nature and express His standards and requirements not only in the Old Testament but for all time, and not only for Israel but for all peoples. On close examination, the Ten Commandments address the most vital areas of human life and relationships. In truth, the Ten Commandments may be called "God's User's Manual" for the life of His creatures, most specifically for humanity.

- Commandments #1-#3 address the most important issue of all, our relationship to God our Creator.
- Commandment #4 addresses the issues of essential human activities: worship, work, and rest.
- Commandments #5-#9 address the issues of human worth and relationships.
 - #5 – Honoring Parents as Source, Protector & Authority of family.
 - #6: No Murder – Sanctity of Life.
 - #7: No Adultery – Sanctity of Sex & Marriage.
 - #8: No Stealing – Sanctity of Ownership.

#9: No False Witness – Sanctity of Words & Promises.

- Commandment #10 addresses the issue of heart attitude toward others in regard to position and possessions, as well as our value system, what we keep in and what we keep out of our lives.

SELF-EVALUATION:

QUESTION 7: Take some time to use the Ten Commandments as a “flashlight” to examine and then write down your attitudes and convictions regarding the areas and values emphasized in each commandment.

(2) TWO GREAT COMMANDMENTS.

In the New Testament, Jesus summarized the Ten Commandments into two:
Matthew 22:35-40:

35 Then one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, and saying, 36 “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?”

37 Jesus said to him, “‘You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ 38 This is the first and great commandment. 39 And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ 40 On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.”

- LOVE GOD with all your heart, soul, mind and strength.

Some specific ways that we show our love for God:

(1) Put God first in everything (Matthew 6:33).

(2) Glorify God in everything we do (1 Corinthians 10:31; Colossians 3:17; 3:23-24).

(3) Thank God in everything and for everything (1 Thessalonians 5:18; Ephesians 5:20; Psalm 103:1-5).

(4) Trust God in all situations (Proverbs 3:5-6; Psalm 37:3-5).

SELF-EVALUATION:

QUESTION 8: Are you showing your love for God in the four ways described above?

- LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR as yourself.

Some ways that we show our love for our neighbor:

(1) Matthew 7:12: GOLDEN RULE. Do unto others what you would have them do to you.

(2) Matthew 5:43-48: GOD'S SUNSHINE LOVE. Love as God the Father loves, loving not only your family and friends but your enemies as well.

(3) John 13:34-35: CHRIST'S CALVARY LOVE. Love others like Christ loved you, specially those within the family of faith.

(4) 1 John 3:16-18: PRACTICAL LOVE. Love not only in word but in deed.

(5) Galatians 5:22, 23; FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT. 1 Corinthians 13: Let the fruit of the Holy Spirit flow from you to others.

SELF-EVALUATION:

QUESTION 9: Are you learning to show love to your neighbor more and more according to the actions described above?

• GREAT COMMISSION.

On top of the Ten Commandments and the Two Great Commandments, there is another command which emphasizes one important aspect of God's Will. This is usually called Great Commission.

Matthes 28:18-20:

18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 Go therefore[c] and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,20 teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen

The Great Commission contains two important tasks that God wants us to accomplish.

(1) EVANGELISM:

A true Christian is a faithful witness of Christ by LIFE and by LIPS (Matthew 5:16; Acts 1:8).

(2) DISCIPLESHIP:

A true Christian is growing more and more in Christ-likeness, and is also helping others to do the same (2 Peter 3:18; 2 Timothy 2:2).

SELF-EVALUATION:

QUESTION 10: Are you growing in your personal spiritual life? Are you learning how to help others grow spiritually as well?

One effective way to fulfill the two tasks of the Great Commission is to study a course on evangelism and discipleship. You may request a FREE E-COPY of the NEWLIFE SERIES ON

EVANGELISM, DISCIPLESHIP & MISSIONS (Books 1-14) from pastorbien@gmail.com, or download the series from the website <https://pastorbiendiscipleship-resources.com/>. After completing each book in the NEWLIFE SERIES, go ahead and teach that book to someone else, and train that someone else to teach someone else, etc.

V.

GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD

- FULL DEPENDENCE ON GOD FOR ALL NEEDS.
 - (1) A true Christian fully depends on the heavenly Father for all his/her needs; he/she regularly makes petitions in prayer to the heavenly Father for these needs (Matthew 6:9-13, 25-34)
 - (2) A true Christian obtains his/her daily needs through the means ordained by God.
 - (a) God supplies our needs through personal work and labor (Genesis 3:19; Galatians 6:5; 2 Thessalonians 3:10-12; Ephesians 4:28).
 - (b) God holds each family responsible for supporting its own members (1 Timothy 5:4, 8).
 - (c) In difficult times, God will use other people (specially other believers) as His instruments to supply our needs (Acts 11:27-30; Galatians 6:2, 10; 1 Timothy 5:3, 5, 9, 10).
 - (d) In times of personal prosperity, a true Christian will seek to help others in need (1 Timothy 6:17-19; 2 Corinthians 8:13-15; 1 John 3:16, 17).
 - (e) God can and may use miraculous means to supply our needs (1 Kings 17:1-16; John 6:1-14).
 - (3) A true Christian seeks not only material bread but also spiritual bread (Matthew 4:4; 6:19-21, 33; John 6:27).
 - (4) A true Christian has peace and contentment in all circumstances (Philippians 4:6-7, 11-13; 1 Timothy 6:6-8).

SELF-EVALUATION:

QUESTION 12: Do you depend fully on God for all your needs? Do you regularly make known your needs to God in prayer? Do you consistently seek after spiritual bread for your soul? Do share your material blessings with others in need?

VI.

FORGIVE US OUR DEBTS

- MAINTAINING UNBROKEN RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD.

(1) A true Christian has received forgiveness of sins as God's free gift of grace through faith in Christ as his/her personal Savior and Lord.

Many hold this picture of SALVATION BY GOOD WORKS.

(FIG. 1.)

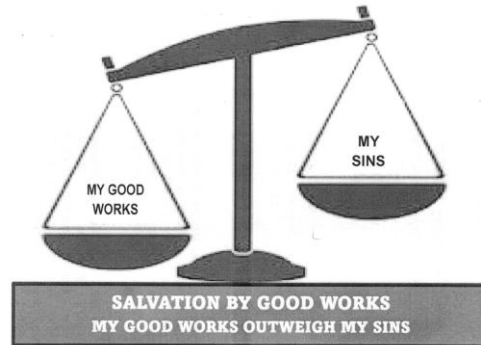


FIG. 1

The WORKS idea of salvation says that on judgment day, God will put my good works on one side of the scale and put my sins on the other side of the scale. If my works weigh more than my sins, then God will let me enter heaven.

The WORKS idea of salvation totally misunderstands the DOUBLE PROBLEM OF SIN (please see Fig. 00). Please note carefully the two downward arrows, representing the DOUBLE PROBLEM of sin.

The problem of sin is inseparably connected to our UNION WITH ADAM, as the First Representative Head of humanity. (Adam is also called FIRST MAN.) When Adam fell into sin, all humanity fell with him and together with him all humanity received the curses resulting from his sin. Not only were we involved in Adam's fall; but we ourselves have gone on to commit sins of our own.

Romans 5:12:

¹² Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned.

- PROBLEM #1: I have committed sins and I deserve God's wrath.

(See Fig. 00. The lower downward arrow pointing to the level of **-100%**: totally rejected by God and deserving of His wrath)

God's justice demands that sins must be paid for. But I have no way of paying for my sins. God does not accept good works as payment for sins. The payment demanded is the offering of a blood sacrifice. Unless my sins are paid for by a blood sacrifice, the wrath of God's justice must be poured out upon me as punishment for my sins.

Hebrews 9:22:

²² And according to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission.

- **PROBLEM #2:** I have no righteousness to offer God in order to be accepted by Him. (See Fig. 00. The top downward arrow pointing to the level of **+/-0%**: absolutely no good works to present to God.)

In order to be accepted on the basis of **GOOD WORKS**, I must offer to God **100%** good works both in quantity and quality. I must prove that I obeyed **+100%** God's commands completely. I must also prove that my obedience have all been **+100%** motivated by love for God and never mixed with selfish motives.

BAD NEWS!

But what does the Bible say about the **QUANTITY** of human good works? No human person will be able to obey **ALL** of God's commandments perfectly.

Ecclesiastes 7:20:

For *there is* not a just man on earth who does good and does not sin.

Regarding the **QUALITY** of human good works, this is the Bible's evaluation. No human person will be able to obey God's commandments with **100% PURE** motives.

Isaiah 64:6:

But we are all like an unclean *thing*, and all our righteousnesses *are* like filthy rags.

GOOD NEWS!

But the Bible proclaims **GOOD NEWS!** This is the meaning of the **GOSPEL**. The good news is that God sent His own Son, Christ Jesus, to become the **SECOND REPRESENTATIVE HEAD** of humanity. Through **UNION WITH CHRIST** salvation is given by God as a free gift (Please see Fig. 2.) When I believe in Christ as my Savior and Lord, God terminates my **UNION WITH ADAM** and incorporates me into **UNION WITH CHRIST** (symbolized by the arrow connecting **ME**, the Christian, to **CHRIST**). Once united with Christ, God applies to me the **DOUBLE SOLUTION** to the problem of sin which was accomplished by Christ by His death on the cross and by His resurrection (please note the two upward arrows). Christ is called **LAST ADAM**

because He would end the history of the old sinful humanity. He is also called SECOND MAN because He would begin the history of the new holy humanity.

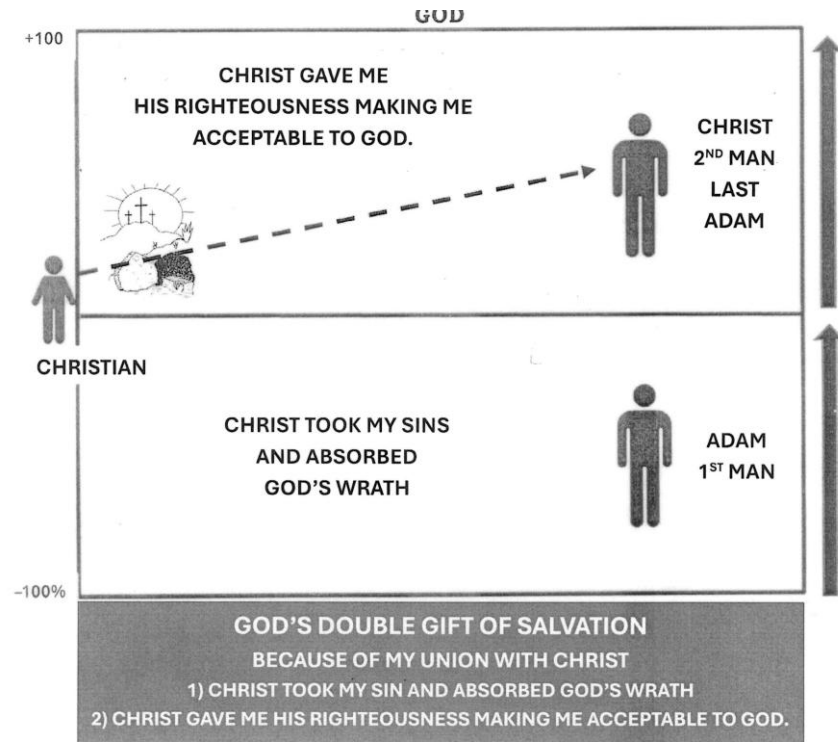


FIG. 2

Through Christ, God provided the DOUBLE SOLUTION to the problem of sin.

- SOLUTION #1: Christ took on Himself all my sins and absorbed the full measure of God's wrath that my sins deserved. On the cross, Christ offered Himself as the Lamb of God, whose blood was offered as the redeeming sacrifice to pay for my sins. (The lower upward arrow means Christ's death paid for all my sins and wiped away my **-100%** demerit and brought me to +/- **0** ground level, no longer rejected yet still without any merit to present to God; hence, I need SOLUTION #2.)

John 1:29:

The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"

1 Peter 1:18, 19:

¹⁸ Knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, *like* silver or gold, from your aimless conduct *received* by tradition from your fathers, ¹⁹ but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.

- SOLUTION #2: In the same way that my UNION WITH ADAM resulted in his unrighteousness being wrapped around me resulting in God's condemnation and rejection

toward me, even so in UNION WITH CHRIST the perfect righteousness of Christ is wrapped around me as a pure white robe, which makes me completely acceptable before God. (The top upward arrow means that I received the gift of Christ's perfect righteousness wrapped around me, bringing me to the +100% level of full acceptance before God, not because of any good works on my part but because I put my faith in Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

1 Corinthians 1:30:

But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption.

2 Corinthians 5:21:

For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

FREE GIFT OF JUSTIFICATION

This DOUBLE SOLUTION is described as JUSTIFICATION, whereby (a) Christ took our sin and punishment, and (b) we received Christ's perfect righteousness that makes us acceptable to God. Christ's perfect righteousness refers to His perfect life of obedience when He lived as a human being on the earth (Luke 2:52; 1 Peter 2:21, 22; Hebrews 4:15).

This gift comes IN UNION WITH CHRIST.

1 Corinthians 12:13:

For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink [\[g\]](#) into one Spirit.

Romans 6:3-6:

³ Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? ⁴ Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. ⁵ For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be *in the likeness* of His resurrection, ⁶ knowing this, that our old man was crucified with *Him*, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.

Colossians 2:11-14:

¹¹ In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, ¹² buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with *Him* through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. ¹³ And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, ¹⁴ having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.

Justification is God's GIFT to be received by faith. God gives justification not as a payment for any good works (we have absolutely no good works worthy of God's acceptance). Rather, we receive FORGIVENESS (JUSTIFICATION) as God's gift of grace to be received by simple in Christ as our personal Savior and Lord.

Romans 3:24-26:

²⁴ Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵ whom God set forth *as* a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, ²⁶ to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

Romans 5:15, 16:

¹⁵ But the free gift *is* not like the offense. For if by the one man's offense many died, much more the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many.

¹⁶ And the gift *is* not like *that which came* through the one who sinned. For the judgment *which came* from one *offense resulted* in condemnation, but the free gift *which came* from many offenses *resulted* in justification.

Ephesians 2:8, 9:

⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God, ⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast.

THE EXAMPLE OF CORNELIUS

The example of Cornelius illustrates the truth of God's free gift of salvation (forgiveness, justification) to be received by faith alone.

The story of Cornelius is recorded in Acts 10. One day, while he was praying God sent an angel to instruct Cornelius to fetch the apostle Peter from another city because Peter would proclaim to him the message of the Gospel. When Peter arrived he shared the simple message about Christ's life, death and resurrection. Peter concluded his message with these words:

“⁴² And He commanded us to preach to the people, and to testify that it is He who was ordained by God *to be* Judge of the living and the dead. ⁴³ To Him all the prophets witness that, through His name, whoever believes in Him will receive remission of sins” (Acts 10:42, 43).

Please note what Peter said, “Whoever believes in Him (Christ) will receive remission of sins.” Faith is all that was required to receive forgiveness in Christ.

Please note further what happened as a result of the simple proclamation of the Gospel.

Acts 10:44-46:

⁴⁴ While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word. ⁴⁵ And those of the circumcision who believed were astonished, as many as came with

Peter, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also. ⁴⁶ For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God.

The Holy Spirit fell on Cornelius and the other listeners with him. God had seen the faith on the part of the hearers and as a result God gave them the Holy Spirit as a sign that He had given them salvation (forgiveness, justification), apart from works of any kind, including a religious sacrament such as baptism. Baptism followed after the hearers had already received the Holy Spirit.

Later on, when making a report about this event in front of people who insisted on requiring certain good religious works as a requirement for salvation, the apostle Peter said:

Acts 15:7-11:

⁷ And when there had been much dispute, Peter rose up *and* said to them: “Men *and* brethren, you know that a good while ago God chose among us, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe. ⁸ So God, who knows the heart, ^[a]acknowledged them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as *He did* to us, ⁹ and made no distinction between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. ¹⁰ Now therefore, why do you test God by putting a yoke on the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? ¹¹ But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus ^[b]Christ we shall be saved in the same manner as they.”

WE REPEAT:

A true Christian is someone who has received forgiveness of sins as God’s gift of grace, received by faith alone in Christ alone, apart from any good works or religious sacraments or rituals.

SELF-EVALUATION:

QUESTION 13: Have you trusted in Christ alone for forgiveness of sins and salvation, apart from any good works or religious performances on your part?

(2) A true Christian needs regular forgiveness and cleansing from sins.

A true Christian receives the free gift of salvation (justification) on the very day that he/she believes in Christ and receives Him as his/her personal Savior and Lord. On that same day, the Christian is sealed by the Holy Spirit, guaranteeing his/her salvation (Ephesians 1:13, 14). But on that same day he/she begins new life in Christ as a newborn spiritual baby. As a spiritual baby, he/she needs to grow toward maturity. As the spiritual baby learns to walk toward maturity, he/she will still commit sins and make mistakes, just as a physical baby will often fall and stumble in the process of learning to walk. Therefore, the Christian needs to receive forgiveness and cleansing from sins on a regular basis. This forgiveness and cleansing happen in a three-fold process:

(a) CONTINUAL FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD.

The Christian must learn to maintain fellowship with God through scheduled devotional times of prayer and Bible reading and meditation, undergirded by moment by moment connection to God while engaged in the normal activities of daily life. This habit is often described as “practicing the presence of God” or maintaining a continual awareness that you are in God’s presence all the time. In Latin, CORAM DEO. This is how Christ maintained His conscious fellowship with the God the Father.

John 8:28, 29:

²⁸ Then Jesus said to them, “When you lift^[m] up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am *He*, and *that* I do nothing of Myself; but as My Father taught Me, I speak these things. ²⁹ And He who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone, for I always do those things that please Him.”

(b) EXPOSURE TO THE LIGHT.

As you maintain fellowship with God, He provides two lights along the way.

First, the light of God’s Word, the Bible. A Christian must regularly receive God’s Word through the avenues of hearing, reading, study, memorization, and meditation.

Second, the light of the Holy Spirit comes as the Holy Spirit uses God’s Word like a flashlight to shine into the dark corners of the Christian’s life, exposing sins, sinful habits, sinful attitudes, and sinful relationships that must be removed.

(c) CONFESSION OF SIN.

When a sin, sinful habit, sinful attitude or sinful relationship is exposed, the Christian must immediately confess that thing to God, To confess means to admit the thing and call it by its real name, and then to ask for forgiveness and cleansing, and forsake or stop that thing once and for all. One helpful discipline is to take time at the end of the day, before going to bed, to pray and meditate and review the events of the day and to examine your heart for any sins or failings that you need to confess before God.

1 John 1:5-9:

⁵ This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. ⁶ If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. ⁷ But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

⁸ If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. ⁹ If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰ If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.

SELF-EVALUATION:

QUESTION 14: During the day, when you become aware that you have committed a sin, no matter how small, in your heart or action, do you immediately ask God's forgiveness and cleansing? At the end of the day, before going to bed, do you take time to review your day and ask God's forgiveness for any sin of omission or sin of commission that you may have committed? Do not go to sleep with an unconfessed sin in your heart.

VII.

AS WE FORGIVE OUR DEBTORS.

- (1) A true Christian maintains a life of peace and harmony with others (Matthew 5:9; Romans 12:18).
- (2) A true Christian does not start or entertain or spread gossip (Ephesians 4:29, 31, 32; James 3:10-12).
- (3) A true Christian promptly seeks reconciliation whenever a misunderstanding or break in relationship happens (Matthew 6:14, 15).
- (4) A true Christian forgives others as God has forgiven him/her; and he/she forgets offenses, once reconciliation is achieved (Luke 6:32; Ephesians 4:32; Colossians 3:13; 1 Corinthians 13:6; 1 Peter 4:8).
- (5) A true Christian follows Christ's 3 Steps in Reconciliation (Matthew 18:15-17).

3 STEPS TO RECONCILIATION

Matthew 18:15-17:

- ***Step 1:*** One-on-One Meeting. The member who becomes aware of the problem should talk directly to the person involved in a sin, without letting anybody else know about the problem between the two of them. If the problem is solved by the two of them, the matter is closed, and nobody else should know anything about it.
- ***Step 2:*** Small Group Meeting. If the problem is not resolved in Step 1, proceed to Step 2. The member who took Step 1 should take one or two mature Christians, to serve as witnesses; these mature Christians may also help in clarifying and counseling regarding the problem. If the problem is solved by the small group meeting, then the matter is closed. Nobody else needs to know about it.
- ***Step 3:*** Church Meeting. Only if Steps 1 and 2 fail to resolve the problem will you resort to Step 3. At this stage, the whole Body of Christ, the church, must be made aware of the problem. The people involved in Step 2 must make a report to the pastor and leaders (elders, deacons), who will then call a special meeting of the church members. The

purpose of the meeting is to seek the mind of the Lord from the Scriptures and through the leading of the Holy Spirit as to what action to take. This action will include calling the offending member to repent and to ask forgiveness from the Lord and from the church. with a promise to forsake his/her sin completely.

The Lord makes it clear, if a person refuses to repent, that person must be removed from the membership of the church. But after removal, he/she must be treated lovingly as a sinner needing the Lord's salvation.

The ministry of RECONCILIATION will always be difficult and fraught with pitfalls (Galatians 6:1; Jude 22, 23). But let's remember: if we faithfully do the "one another" ministries (John 13:34, 35; Romans 15:7; Ephesians 6:18; 1 John 3:16, 17; Colossians 3:16, etc.), the process of restoration will most often result in healing, instead of cutting off.

SELF-EVALUATION:

QUESTION 16: Are you a peacemaker? Do you make sure that you have no unresolved relationship problems with other people? The moment you become aware that there is a break in your relationship with someone, do you try to take steps as soon as possible to fix the broken relationship, as the scriptures above command you to do? Have you asked God's forgiveness and cleansing for any bitterness or spirit of unforgiveness toward anybody, and have you released these negative feelings? Have you made a firm stand not to be a source or transmitter or entertainer of gossip?

VIII.

AND LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION, BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL

- SPIRITUAL WARFARE.

(1) A true Christian is engaged in a continuous, life-long spiritual warfare. While on earth we are the Church Militant; after death we join the Church Triumphant.

1 Peter 5:8-10:

⁸ Be sober, be vigilant; because^[e] your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. ⁹ Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world. ¹⁰ But may^[d] the God of all grace, who called us^[e] to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle *you*.

2 Timothy 4:6-8:

⁶ For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. ⁷ I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. ⁸ Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.

(2) A true Christian always wears the full armor of God (Ephesians 6:10-18).

SELF-EVALUATION:

QUESTION 17: Do you know how to put on your armor properly, based on the checklist below?

CHECKLIST FOR PUTTING ON THE ARMOR

- *PUT ON THE BELT OF TRUTH.*

1. Do you have a personal relationship with Christ, the LIVING TRUTH?
2. Are you growing in your knowledge of the WRITTEN TRUTH, the Bible, by faithfully exercising the six ways to receive the Word: hear, read, study, memorize, obey?
3. Do you consistently practice TRUTH IN DAILY LIFE -- truthful in speech, faithful in promises and commitments, honest in business practices?

- *PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.*

1. Do you trust solely on the RIGHTEOUSNESS OF CHRIST, as your basis of acceptance before God, and as your own confidence before people? (See Philippians 3:9.)
2. Do you always strive to live a RIGHTEOUS LIFE by prompt and complete obedience to God's Will as you understand it?
3. Do you always strive to maintain a CLEAR CONSCIENCE? Do you immediately confess your sin to God, and forsake it?

- *PUT ON THE SHOES OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE*

1. Have you mastered the skill of sharing your PERSONAL TESTIMONY and the skill of presenting the GOSPEL HAND (or an equivalent Gospel presentation)?
2. Do you regularly pray for -- and take advantage of -- WITNESSING OPPORTUNITIES? Are you presently active in a specific task that helps to fulfill the Great Commission?
3. Do you always seek to LIVE IN PEACE with everyone? Do you take steps to reconcile a broken relationship as soon as possible? (See Romans 12:17-21; Matthew 5:23-26.)

- *TAKE THE SHIELD OF FAITH.*

1. Do you consistently live by the principle of GRACE THROUGH FAITH? (See Romans 5:1; Ephesians 2:8,9.) God always relates to us on the basis of His grace. We should always respond

to Him in faith. In other words, we will never come to a time in our Christian life when we will think that God is obligated to do something for us because of our works or our righteousness.

2. When faced with a choice, do you always choose to BELIEVE GOD'S WORD even when your senses, your human reason, other people, and Satan say something contrary to God's Word?

3. Do you know how to claim GOD'S PROMISES for your life and ministry?

- *PUT ON THE HELMET OF SALVATION.*

1. Do you believe in Christ as your ALL-SUFFICIENT SAVIOR AND ALL-CONQUERING LORD?

2. Do you have ASSURANCE OF SALVATION from God's Word and from the inner witness of the Holy Spirit? (See 1 John 5:11-13; Romans 8:15,16; John 10:27-29.)

3. Do you consistently experience VICTORY OVER SELF, THE FLESH, THE WORLD, AND THE DEVIL?

- *TAKE THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT.*

1. Do you consistently OBEY GOD'S WORD in your life, ministry, and warfare?

2. Are you regularly and seriously studying the DOCTRINES OF GOD'S WORD?

3. Are you developing skills in TEACHING GOD'S WORD to others?

IX.

***FOR THINE IS THE KINGDOM AND THE POWER AND THE GLORY FOREVER.
AMEN.***

- ALL TO THE GLORY OF GOD.

Modern New Testament scholars agree that this concluding doxology, "For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever" is not found in the earliest Greek manuscripts. The phrase seems to have first appeared in the DIDACHE (a 1st century church manual) as a liturgical ending to the Lord's Prayer; afterwards this phrase became incorporated into later Byzantine manuscripts. However, the phrase reflects the heart of biblical worship practiced in the Old Testament, specially in the Book of Psalms. Significantly this phrase practically summarizes King David's prayer of worship in 1 Chronicles 29:10-12:

¹⁰ Therefore David blessed the LORD before all the assembly; and David said:

“Blessed are You, LORD God of Israel, our Father, forever and ever.

¹¹ Yours, O LORD, *is* the greatness,
The power and the glory,
The victory and the majesty;
For all *that is* in heaven and in earth *is Yours*;
Yours *is* the kingdom, O LORD,
And You are exalted as head over all.
¹² Both riches and honor *come* from You,
And You reign over all.
In Your hand *is* power and might;
In Your hand *it is* to make great
And to give strength to all.

The doxology has three parts and each part has a special meaning:

- “Thine is the kingdom”: This means that God is the Creator, Owner and Lord of all creation.
- “Thine is the power”: This means that all creation is supported and sustained by God’s might, and that everything in the universe is guided by divine sovereign will to fulfill God’s eternal purpose.
- “Thine is the glory”: This means that all creation and all events in the universe and in human history will all culminate in manifesting the glory of God.

This Lord’s Prayer doxology parallels the doxology in Romans 11:36:

- For of Him and through Him and to Him *are* all things, to whom *be* glory forever. Amen.

One translation renders this verse as follows: He is the Source, Guide and Goal of all that is, to Him be glory forever. Amen.

For from Him: For Thine is the kingdom: God is the SOURCE of all things;
And through Him: Thine is the power: God is the GUIDE of all things;
And to Him are all things: Thine is the glory: God is the GOAL of all things.

THEREFORE, the final, over-all mark of the true Christian is that he/she lives, loves, and labors for the glory of God alone.

The impact on the world will be that when others see a true Christian, they are led to see God and to praise God.

Matthew 5:16:

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

SELF-EVALUATION:

QUESTION 18: Which kind of person are you? Are you a person who calls attention to yourself? Or are you a person whose life testimony points people to God?



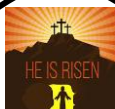
To prove that you are a true Christian, ALWAYS PRAY AND LIVE THE LORD'S PRAYER.

GOD'S ETERNAL KINGDOM

Psalm 103:19; Daniel 4:34,35



SATAN-CONTROLLED
KINGDOMS
OF THIS WORLD



GOD'S
PRESENT
KINGDOM
IN CHRIST



GOD'S
FUTURE
KINGDOM

