

TITLE: Good News For Challenging & Changing Times

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Preface:

Paul tells Timothy, *“But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come”* (2 Timothy 3:15). Paul wanted Timothy to know and understand that the disciple and the church were going to go through challenges. Near the end times, things would begin to change dramatically around them. Paul wanted Timothy to remember what he had learned and to know that the Scripture and the doctrines that line up within them and that they were as David proclaimed, *“your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path”* (Psalm 119:105). He was also exhorted to *“study to show thyself approved unto God ... rightly dividing the word of truth”* (2 Timothy 2:15), why, so that he *“may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work”* 2 Timothy 3:17.

Jesus proclaimed that He was and is the Word and the Light (John 1:1-5; 8:12). His life was the Good news. He is the true and living Gospel of God and His kingdom and all our hope, grace and mercy can only come through Him. Jesus is the answer for our Challenging and Changing Times.

The Old Testament prophecy about the coming of the Messiah and the Gospel present to us the truth of who God is and what His purpose would be for mankind. Plus, the rest of the books of the New Testament teach us how Christ the living God comes into our hearts to teach us and prepare us for the kingdom of heaven if we will first trust in Him as our personal Saviour and Lord

In the last days there will be many types of antichrist who will proclaim things that are contrary to the Word of God. They will also take away the truth concerning the inherency of the Word. They will water down the Gospel truth to the place that its power and of its meaning will be gone. Preachers and teachers will be full of lies and deceptions. The disciples will soon become people who are followers of other men, rather than followers of Jesus and

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His teachings. Soon people will become illiterate when it comes to the Word of God. Some will be hearers but not believers because if they were true believers they be doing things that are different from those of the world (James 1:22-25).

There is a great need in our world to get back to the basic truth of what the Gospel of Christ Jesus is. Many have not heard this truth and even those who have heard do not understand that it is the foundational walk to the Christian faith. Without it the disciples of Christ and the Church of Christ will not stand. It is this truth of the Bible that sets the captive free. The Gospel is what we are commanded to go out and preach and teach to a lost world.

In this booklet we will see the clear teaching from Scripture what this Good News message is all about and why it is so important to every true believer. The Gospel is also the key area that the antichrist, false teacher and every kind of cult will attack. We cannot just accept some parts and deny other parts. Every cult denies some truth of the gospel and we hope to show where they move away from what is God's truth to man's truth. They now believe man's truth is correct and biblical. We are told that in the last days these truths will be attacked and diluted down to such a place where many in the church will follow after these false teachers.

It is amazing how many believers cannot tell you where in the Bible the Gospel of Christ is written, and if they can tell you where it is (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John) they are not able to explain to others what the Good News is all about. Because of this lack of understanding, this will become the battle ground where the antichrist will deceive many people in the last days. We need to understand that the Gospel is central both to fulfilling the Old Testament and the climax to what we are told will take place in the last days in the New Testament.

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The Gospel is made up of at least ten key doctrines that are clearly proclaimed in the Bible and we as disciples must confess to believe. We have placed within each main point a Disciple Teaching Principle that will help us to understand the truth and apply it to our personal lives.

The purpose and goal of this teaching is to help people to get back on track to what the Bible proclaims about Jesus Christ. Any deviation of this truth becomes heresy and false doctrine and we as disciples of Christ cannot support or have anything to do with these false teachers and preachers.

Christ came to bring us good news; a way that we could escape the bondage and death of this world. His life is the bridge that makes the way of escape possible. The enemy of our soul is going to attack and water down the various truths that make up the Rock and foundation which we are to believe in and stand upon as a disciple of Christ. There are already many antichrists and cult churches in the world. We must take time to study the word and especially the life teaching of Christ if we hope to make it through these challenging and changing times.

After one finishes reading this booklet one will be challenged to look at the truth of Christ's life for what it means and teaches. It is at that point where one will have to decide if one can sign the document of the "Gospel Creed." The "Gospel Creed" sets out the ten main truths of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The document in the appendix is there to challenge us to make a decision on whether we will believe and accept the whole truth about Christ or deny who He is as the Son of God. If we are not able to agree, we cannot pick and choose, it must be all or nothing. It is something that we all have to do personally and our decision will affect our eternity.

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Introduction:

*Then the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you **good tidings** of great joy which will be to all people.” Luke 2:10*

One may ask, what is thing called the “good news”? To put it another way, what is this thing called the Gospel and why are these words used interchangeably? Why do people sometimes say, “Well that is just the gospel truth?” It seems that these words have at least a 2000-year-old history to them, because they came into being around the time of Christ. They became part of the Greek thinking and language throughout the Roman world.

The words “good news” can be defined as, “glad tidings”. The old English was spelled “godspel” from “god” meaning “good” and “spel” meaning “news or a story.” From the Latin and Greek we get our word evangelism; the word gospel means, to announce or declare good news in advance. Theologically it is “the teaching or revelation of Christ” plus it can also refer to the first four books of the New Testament and the saying “gospel truth” implies something that is “absolutely true.”

The first time this word appears is in Matthew 4:23 “*And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the **gospel** of the kingdom and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people.*” Matthew records for us what kind of things that Christ was doing. He was travelling and wherever He went He shared the good news about the Kingdom of heaven, plus He was demonstrating the power of this good news by healing the multitudes. Historically we see it being used in Mark 1:1-2, “*The beginning of the **Gospel** of Jesus Christ, the son of God; as it is written in the prophets, behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare the way before thee.*” It is thought that the Gospel of Mark is the oldest of the four Gospel books.

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The challenges that we as men and women face are 1), “Is there really a living God who created all things in creation including mankind? and 2) “Where has He been all these years? 3) Why does He still care about us? 4) Why did God want to reach out to man anyway?

Well, one reason may be because He created us and we are His children. Secondly, He loves His creation and deeply loves His family for He desires to be our Father. But there have been problems throughout history that have constantly built a wall between God and Mankind. Much of the root problem started in the Garden of Eden when man and woman took their free will and decided to disobey God. Throughout time the human race has continue to spiral down a road of eternal sinfulness and damnation.

To get a better understanding we need to go further back in history and see that it seems that God had a plan from the beginning of time so that we could be brought into a deep and personal relation with Him again. Disobedience is sin and because of Adam and Eve’s sin, all that came after them was infected with the DNA of a sin nature. We didn’t need to do anything; it was already in our blood, mind and spirit. But because of God’s great love, mercy and grace He had conceived from the beginning of time a redemptive plan. A step-by-step way that, once it all came together in the fullness of time, would again making it possible for man to enter into a personal relationship with God.

The plan was to send a Son who would put things in motion that mankind could again use their free choice to decide that through faith we could receive back again eternal life or to continue down the pathway of death and destruction.

The Bible has become a record and testimony to what God has done for mankind and what He will yet do through mankind into the future. The Bible is full of prophecies that foretell what

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God had in mind and how things would change if we only had faith in Him.

There is I believe at least one key Scripture that sums up this whole Gospel plan that God had in mind right from the day of creation until He comes again to set up a new heaven and earth. It is found in Matthew 24:14 “And this **gospel** of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations and then the end will come.” This is authored by Jesus Christ.

I believe these five words, “The Gospel of the Kingdom,” sum up for us the big picture that all mankind needs to know. We are told that we are to preach and to be a witness of the Gospel of the kingdom to all the nations. It is the message that has been proclaimed from the beginning of time and we are entering into the place where the last few pieces of the puzzle are about to be put in place.

It would come to us through the life of Jesus Christ which has been record for us in the Gospel of the Bible. Matthew, Mark, Luke and John do give testimony to this unique gift that was sent to us, so that we could be restored back to a personal relationship with God. These four books of the New Testament, which is also known as the “Good News” paint for us a unique picture of who Jesus Christ is, what His nature and character is and what He was going to give to us through His life.

The key was that God wanted to take away the belief in self-righteousness and to have man put into his heart God’s righteousness. To extend to us once and for all an amazing grace. To give to us a way, a truth and a life that is full and unique, one with purpose and value. We are called to test the spirits and we should also be like the Berean church, searching the Scriptures to make sure that was is being taught is truthful.

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The gospel pictures for us ten unique events of Christ life that would change the direction of all mankind. They can be titled as followed:

1. Living Word
2. Birth
3. Life
4. Death
5. Resurrection
6. Ascension
7. Holy Spirit
8. Church
9. Second Coming
10. Heaven

Now let's begin our journey through the Gospel of Jesus Christ which the heavenly Father sent to us so that we may have eternal life and to help us understand what the Kingdom of Heaven is all about.

1. Living Word

Prophecy:

*“The grass withers, the flowers fades, but the **Word of God** stands forever. O Zion, you will bring **good tidings** (good news), get up into the high mountains; O Jerusalem, you who bring **good tidings** (good news), lift up your voice with strength, lift it up, be not afraid; say to the cities of Judah, behold your God! Behold, the LORD God shall come with a strong hand, and His arms shall rule for Him; behold, His reward is with Him, and His work before Him. He will feed His flock like a shepherd; He will gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and gently lead those who are with young.”* Isaiah 40:8-11

Key Scripture:

*“In the beginning was the **Word**, and the **Word** was with God, and the **Word** was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. ... And the **Word** became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.”* John 1:1-3, 14

From the very beginning it was the Living Word that spoke everything into being, all that was created was created by God Almighty. When God spoke, dramatic things took place. Even man and woman was created by God, He said, *“Let us make man in our image according to our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth. So God created man in His own image; and in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.”* (Gen 1:26-27)

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Right from the beginning of time God walked with man as the Living Word. A word that could be spoken to nations but also personalized to His individual children. It is important for all disciples to understand that the Gospel of the Good News reaches right back to the creation of the world and that His crowning event and the most exciting good news was God speaking into being, a man and a woman, who was made in His image. Our God is the one who speaks life giving words to that which He has created.

Abraham himself new this important truth We are told in Genesis 15:1 and verse, 4-6 this, *“After these things the **word** of the LORD came to Abram in a vision, saying, do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward. ... And behold, the **word** of the LORD came to him, saying, this one shall not be heir, but the one who will come from your body shall be your heir. Then he brought him outside and said, look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them. And He said to him, so shall your descendants be. And he believed in the LORD, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.”*

God’s Living Word spoke faith into his heart where he trusted God for the present, but God revealing to him what the future would be. He would take him from being Abram to being Abraham. Plus He would make with him a covenant, a spoken agreement made between each other, that would bless all nations. From his seed the “good news” was told to Abram of one would come as a Redeemer and Deliverer to all people. A person who would be a descendants of his line.

We see it over and over throughout the Old Testament and especially highlighted many times in the book of Psalms where we can read these beautiful verses concerning the Living Word.

Psalms 33:4, 6 – *“For the **word** of the LORD is right, and all His work is done in truth. ... By the **word** of the LORD the*

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heavens were made, and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth.”

Psalm 107:19-20 – *“Then they cried out to the LORD in their trouble, and He saved them out of their distresses. He sent His **word** and healed them, and deliver them from their destructions.”*

Psalm 138:2 – *“I will worship toward Your holy temple, and praise Your name for Your loving kindness in Your truth; for You have magnified Your **word** above all Your name.”*

I am hoping that we are beginning to see the bigger picture that God is speaking forth His “good news” throughout all times and that we need to be willing to hear what the Spirit is saying to us and to His churches. For the Word of God in Jesus Christ is righteous and truthful in all that He says and does. But what we need to do as people is to accept Him as the true Gospel and to believe that He knows what is best for us as we sojourned here on earth.

Psalm 119 gives us more insight concerning the Good News of the word which again is both written and living.

Verse 11 – *“Your **word** I have hidden in my heart, that I may not sin against You.”*

Verse 81 – *“My soul faints for Your salvation, but I hope in your **word**.”*

Verse 89 – *“Forever, O LORD, your **word** is settled in heaven.”*

Verse 103 – *“How sweet are your **words** to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth!”*

Verse 105 – *“Your **word** is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.”*

Verse 114 – *“You are my hiding place and my shield; I hope in Your **word**.”*

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Verse 160 – *“The entirety of Your **word** is truth, and every one of Your righteous judgments endures forever.”*

What I want to share here is just some observation that we can glean from these verses. First, we need to place the Living Word into our hearts which can only happen through confessing our sins and being obedient to His will. Secondly, we must put our trust and hope for our lives into His hands. Thirdly, we must believe and understand that He is an Eternal Living Word. Where there is no beginning or end to His existence. Fourthly, because He is a living Word He is the One and only One that can light our pathway, so we do not need to stumble or fall. Fifthly, He is a Living Word who is our shield and protector, One that we can hide behind and feel secure that all things are safe in Him. Lastly as the Living Word He is sweet tasting, not sour or bitter, because He is the truthful Word to everyone who calls upon Him with a heart of faith. Why, because His righteous judgments do endure forever.

Christ is the only Living Word who is the way, truth and life. (John 14:6) The Living Word is there to be a light unto our path in all areas of our life when it come to the physical, emotional and most of all in our spiritual walk here on earth.

Then as we move into the New Testament the apostle John spoke as he was anointed by the Holy Spirit, to proclaim that Jesus Christ was sent by the Father to be a Living Word and testimony amongst the people here on earth. The Gospel of John is one of the four books that proclaims the good news of Jesus Christ and the first thing that he wanted to bear testimony was that this “good news” is Jesus Himself, the Living Word. This thought becomes the foundation stone for all the other nine points concerning the Good News of Jesus Christ. It is He and only He who is full of all grace, mercy and truth.

Another Scripture proclaims this fact, *“For the **word** of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged*

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sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of thoughts and intents of the heart.” (Heb 4:12) The author of the book of Hebrews expresses to the Hebrew church these words, telling them that the word is like a two-edged sword and that it is so sharp it can divide specifically two different things one from another. This is what the “good news” is all about. This is what Christ has come to do in our lives, to be the Living Word that can cut through anything that we face and take that which is real and gives life to it and that which is false will be cast away into total darkness and destruction.

His Son was sent into this world to be a light in the darkness. To bring freedom to those were in bondage, to give life to those who were facing eternal death. This first step of the Good News is so important that we obey Him and commit ourselves to the truth of the Scriptures, for it is through the Scriptures that Jesus Himself, by the power of the Holy Spirit, speak to us, delivers us and redeem use.

Paul tells Timothy a truth that he needed to remember and to continue to build his life upon. He reminds him by stating these words, *“and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.”* (2 Tim 3:15-17). This is such a profound word that Paul gives Timothy, to remind him that the written word can become the Living Word within his heart and that it would guide him into all righteousness. He would be his teacher, a Living Word that would reprove and corrected, He would train Timothy in righteousness and He would make him adequate and equipped for service while living out his life here on earth.

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Paul also tells the Ephesian church that they are involved in a daily battle, not so much when it comes to the flesh and blood, but a real battle when it comes to the spiritual realm. He exhorts the church to put on the full armour of God and this is just part of what he tells them, *“And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the **Word** of God;”* (Eph 6:17) I believe that the written word is the Living Word which is Jesus Christ, they are one in the same. Jesus is our righteousness and truth and the Father has sent the Spirit, not as a separate entity, but as part of the complete triune God who stands on behalf of those who call upon His name, the name that is above all other names, both here on earth and in all the heavenly kingdoms above.

Scripture reference:

2 Sam 22:23; Jer 23:28-29; Matthew 4:4; 24:35; John 10:35; 17:14; 1 Pet 1:20-21

Discipleship teaching principle:

Today as disciples we have this unique position, because of our faith in Jesus Christ, God Himself, through the power of the Holy Spirit speaks His Living Word into our hearts where He instructs us and walks with us each day as we surrender our lives to Him. Jesus states these words to His followers, *“Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, if you abide in My **word**, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”* (John 8:31-32) The exciting “good news” is that God Himself through our faith in Him makes us an eternal member of His family and part of the living church where He is the head and we are the body, His temple and light house to this lost world.

Finally, John tells the disciples this important truth, *“I have written to you, fathers, because you have known Him who is from the beginning. I have written to you, young men, because you are*

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*strong, and the **Word** of God abides in you, and you have overcome the wicked one.” (1 John 2:14)*

The Good News of the Living Word is the only way we can overcome the wicked ones of this world. We can not do it in our strength and ability, but through Christ Jesus, we are able to overcome the snares and traps of this world (Heb 12:1-2).

Antichrist’s lies and deceptions:

From the very beginning Satan has tried to destroy the Living Word. As a liar, he spoke deception and untruth to Adam and Eve. Then at the temptation of Jesus Christ he tried to take the written Word and twist it in such a way, with the hope of deceiving and destroying the Living Word who came to this earth to set people free from the bondages of Satan. Every day he tries to pretend to speak truth and life and unfortunately millions of people fall into the traps that he is set for them by using half-truths and lies.

Through books, music, TV and through a variety of other doors, these antichrists have tried fill people by many deceptive ways. (1 Cor 11:13-15; 1 John 2:18-22; 2 John 1:7) Satan is always speaking half truths concern Jesus Christ and His written words. He wants people to live in darkness and loneliness. He does not want anyone to see Jesus as the Living Word of light to all mankind, to all who would choice Christ as their Lord and Saviour. Satan wants us to join the many others who are on the broad road which leads to eternal death and destruction. (Mat 7:13-14)

Therefore, we need to be studiers of the Word of God so that its truths can be released into our heart as the Living Word, preparing us for an eternal life with Him in His Heavenly Kingdom.(2 Tim 2:2-9, 15)

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Gospel Creed statement:

Now this brings us to the question, can I say from my heart that, “I do believe and confess in the Living Word of God who, in the beginning was and is God, who created all things and without Him nothing was created, and as the Word He became flesh and dwelt amongst us, the only begotten of the Father who is full of grace and truth”.

2. Birth

Prophecy:

Isaiah 7:14 *“Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.*”

Key Scriptures:

Matthew 1:23 *“Behold the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,” which is translated, “God with us.”*

Luke 2:11-12 *“For there is **born** to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.”*

The second part was the coming of the “Good News” for all mankind. The way that God chose to deliver this Good News would be through a baby who would grow up and give His life for all mankind. Man had tried everything else and was not able even to keep the laws that God had given to them.

The Bible tells us that, by one man death entered into the world and it would be by one, the Son of Man that redemption and mercy would come to a lost world (Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:14; Hebrews 9:12). God would not destroy mankind again like happened during the flood, but He was going to make a way of escape for all those that would receive it.

God had a plan that would bring about restoration for all humans. It was birthed at the beginning of time and then was carried out in the fullness of God’s timing. This plan came to us through the sending of His Son Jesus Christ, who would also have the name, **Emmanuel** “God with us” (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23).

It would happen in a way that would fulfill all the Old Testament prophecies. It would be sending one, who would come as a servant and then at the right time, would come again as King

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of Kings. The goal was to bring to mankind a way that would allow us all to have a personal relationship with God Himself and to be able again to walk and live in His presence moment by moment.

The second step of the good news starts off by God the Father sending His Son who was conceived in a virgin woman by the Holy Spirit. He was born in Bethlehem and at His coming was heralded to the shepherds by a host of angels (Luke 2:18-20). It was known by the wise men that came and presented gifts (Matthew 2:1-2) and it also became known by the enemy who tried to have Him destroyed as a baby (Matthew 2:16-18).

Out of a deep love for a lost and sinful world, God the Father sent forth His Son to become a sacrificial lamb. Throughout the Old Testament the prophets prophesied that one day God would send a Messiah, one who would come as a servant, and that He would be born of a virgin and would be conceived by the Holy Spirit. (Isaiah 7:14; Luke 1:26-38)

After 400 hundred years of silence between the Testaments and at the fullness of time a child was conceived and born in a manger, at Bethlehem, the city of David. It was also known as the “House of Bread.” At the moment of His coming, while He was lying in a manger, angels came to shepherds to announce to them that Jesus was born in the city of Bethlehem (Luke 2:8-20).

After fulfilling the Jewish law, His family took Him to the temple where they met Anna, a prophetess, and Zacharias, both of whom proclaimed that this child was He who would fulfill the prophet’s prediction that a child would come from God and His name would be Emmanuel, which means “God with us” (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23).

As time passed He was meet by wise men from the East who knew from the stars that a King had been born. They came

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and presented Jesus with three gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh (Matthew 2:11). They knew that this child was the Messiah (Matthew 2:5), and so it seems, did King Herod.

Soon it was time to flee the country, for Herod was about to kill all male children two years and younger. Warned by an angel, Joseph and Mary, with the child Jesus, fled to Egypt where they stayed until after Herod was dead (Matthew 2:13-15). Here it is interesting to note that thousands of years earlier, the land of Egypt would be the place that the people of Israel would be birthed forth from under much stress and bondage. Now it would become the place where Jesus would come forth from.

When children are born they are often given names by the parents. Here the one parent is God the Father, Who commands that the child shall be called Jesus (Matthew 1:21; Luke 1:32). He was also called the Son of the Most High (Luke 1:32) and the Son of God (Luke 1:35) but His main name would be Jesus (Luke 2:21). In Greek this name has the same meaning as the name Joshua in Hebrew; it means saviour. He would be called in His latter life “Christ” which again is the same meaning as the Hebrew name Messiah, the anointed One. In the Gospel books we see a variety of names but the one that comes forth most of all is Lord Jesus Christ or Christ Jesus.

This child one day would be a servant who would lead people by example to the kingdom heaven. The Child Jesus would exemplify what kind of truth that people should live by and He would make for us a way. Through faith in Him, He would give to all eternal life. He showed that through one man, Adam, sin, death and destruction entered the world, but through His own shed blood on the cross, He opened a way for people to have abundant life with Him for all eternity (John 10:10).

For thousands of years especially with the Jewish people had been waiting for a Messiah to come. Now in the fullness of

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time the **good news** of God our Father was going to be sent to earth and to be birthed forth through a virgin. Through a woman named Mary who would be conceived by the Holy Spirit and would carry a child that would be both the Son of Man and the son of God. The Gospel was prophesied in the Old Testament. There would be a day coming that a redeemer and deliverer would come forth to set His people free. He begins as a child living here on earth and in the fullness of time would become the Lamb of God who shed His blood and redeemed us from our sins and from death.

Scripture Reference:

Matthew 1:18-2:23; Luke 1:26-38, 46-56, 67- 2:40

Discipleship Teaching Principle:

As disciples of Christ we must proclaim and hold to all the main doctrines of the Church, and one of the foundational truths we must hold onto is that He truly was conceived by the Spirit and born of a virgin. The good news started by Christ coming and fulfilling all prophecy. He came to the world as a God-man, a Redeemer - the One who save us and would pay for our sins.

Antichrist lies and deceptions:

Right from the very beginning of Christ's earthy walk, Satan has tried to use the high and mighty to try to kill God's Son, Jesus Christ. The enemy knew that this child was the anointed Messiah who would bring salvation to the world and would through His death set the captives free.

In our modern times there have come to the church many false teachers and preachers, both from the pulpit and from a variety of electronic ways of communication. There are already many antichrists and false churches (cults) all around the world

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proclaiming that Jesus was not born of a virgin, but just born in the way of human nature, a child that was conceived between a man and woman. They believe that Mary did not conceive her baby by the Holy Spirit and that her child was not the Son of God. They do often believe that He was a prophet and wise teacher but not the Messiah or God's Son.

Hear what John wrote to the young believers, *“Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God, And this is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world.”* (John 4:1-3).

Gospel Creed Statement: Now this brings us to the question, “Can I say from my heart that I do believe and confess in the **virgin birth** of God's Son Jesus Christ through the woman Mary and that she was endued from on high by the power of the Holy Spirit and conceived and gave birth to a Son whose name is "Emanuel, God with us."

3. Life

Prophecy:

Isaiah 11:1-2 “There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots. The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of fear of the Lord.”

Zachariah 9:9 “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, lowly and riding on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey.”

Malachi 3:1 “Behold, I send My messenger, and he will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple, even the Messenger of the covenant, whom you delight. Behold, He is coming, says the Lord of hosts.”

Key Scriptures:

“And Jesus said to them, I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst. But I said to you that you have seen Me and yet do not believe. All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out. For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent me. This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all he has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last days. And this is the will of Him who sent me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day. John 6:35-40

For the first thirty years of His life, Jesus lived as a carpenter’s son in Galilee until the fullness of time where He left

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home and was baptized by John the Baptist (Matthew 3:13-17). This began His earthly ministry and message of proclaiming the Kingdom of God and showing how we as a sinful people could come once again into a very personal relationship with God. He challenged the religious ways of His day and He showed that He was the light of the world. He showed that the Father had a plan of redemption and grace. He poured out His life as a drink offering so that man could see the love and mercy of the Father in heaven. The people wanted to make Him a king because of all His miracles, but Christ's life would be first one of being a servant, setting for us the example of how we could come into a deep relationship with God. It would be one of service and commitment to Him as Lord and Savior.

Here are some of the facts concerning His real live visitation as the Son of God, sent by the Father to dwell amongst us here on earth. We already stated how He was born by a virgin and had a natural birth like any other human being (Luke 2:1-7). He was dedicated and named as a child and was circumcised on the eighth day (Luke 2:21). He grew up as a child, had friends, lived and worked with His mom and dad and followed the ways of the Jewish cultures and traditions (Luke 2:22-38). We read about His youth –time experience in Jerusalem, (Luke 2:41-44). Throughout His childhood, as a youth and during His years as a young adult He lived amongst His people and had half-brothers who grew up with Him.

Jesus spent about three and a half years here on earth teaching and ministering to people. Many people thought that He would come to set up a kingdom, that He would reign as their Messiah, but Isaiah tells us that He came first to be a servant and to serve those around Him. In the time of Christ there were many people that witnessed His walk here on earth, people from His birth all the way through until His death and resurrection. The account of Jesus is mentioned by the historian Josephus who lived also during the time of Christ. Christ's ministry started at the age

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of 30 and the first thing that took place was His baptism by John the Baptist. John the Baptist was not eager to baptize Jesus, but to fulfil the Scripture John was willing to baptize Jesus. At Jesus's baptism we are given the account that as He was immersed in the water and came up out of the waters, the Spirit of God came upon Him like a dove and a voice spoke from heaven, speaking to all who could hear that "this is my beloved son in whom I well pleased" (Matthew 3:17).

The next thing that took place was His time of testing, when He was driven out into the wilderness to be tempted. He was in the wilderness for 40 days without food or water. In reality it was more like a desert, a barren ground full of rocks. It was at the end of this time of fasting that Satan came to tempt Him in three different ways. Each of these ways was the same that Satan used on Eve in the Garden. The difference with Jesus was that Satan in each case tried to use Scripture to cause Jesus to worship him, but Jesus rebuked him by using Scripture to show that Satan was a liar Matthew 4:1-11.

1. Body: Physical need (hunger)
2. Soul: Emotional need (security, self-will)
3. Spirit: Spiritual need (power, value, importance)

It was soon after the temptation of Jesus that He began to select 12 disciples who would be with Him for the next three and a half years of ministry. He was not only a teacher to the 12, but also He walked throughout the land visiting various towns and villages proclaiming the Kingdom of Heaven. His ministry was made up of a variety of things. He did many miracles amongst the people doing healings and delivering from all kinds of problems, but He also taught the people about His Father in heaven. The way He taught was often by using parables, which is an earthly story with a heavenly meaning. Many times the hearers of these parables,

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including the disciples themselves, did not understand what the meaning was. When Jesus was dealing with the Pharisees and the Sadducees, He often challenged them concerning the law. Jesus would share with them over and over again that He came not to destroy the law but to fulfil it. When it came to the religious leaders He rebuked them for putting burdens on others that they themselves did not keep.

Throughout His whole life the enemies of Jesus, plus Satan and his host of demons tried many times to kill Jesus. But each time Jesus was able to avoid what people were attempting to do to Him. It wasn't until He hung on the cross, and spoke the words to His Father, that He fulfilled all things. At that point gave up His spirit and died (Matthew 27:50).

Under this section, concerning the life of Jesus, we also need to make some statements concerning His death and His resurrection. We will be speaking more about this in the chapters to come but it should be stated here that even though Jesus was put on the cross and died and was in the grave for three days, the grave could not hold Him and He rose back to life. During His time in the grave He went down into the bowels of the earth and took back the keys of life and death (Revelation 1:18). He would become the first to overcome death and to open up the door to eternal life which in turn He would give to all those who would believe in Him. As we confess our sin and believe in our hearts, confessing Him as Lord and Saviour over our lives, He would give us eternal life.

Some other important teachings that Jesus gave to the disciples were:

1. The Sermon on the Mount which included in it the teaching concerning the Lord's Prayer. These three chapters in Matthew give us an example of the kind of attitude we are to have towards each other and towards God Himself. The various

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teachings in the section of Scripture show us how our heart should be in prayer daily, and how we are to have our personal relationships with those around us as we walk here on earth.

2. Another important part which we find in the Gospel of John is His high priestly prayer. In this He prays for the disciples, He prays for the people on the earth, He prays for Himself and He prays for the keeping power of His Heavenly Father in heaven.

3. One other aspect that stands out is His love that He had for the world and for the disciples individually. After Peter's denying Jesus three times, Jesus takes time (after His resurrection) to come to Peter on the beach. He exhorted him three times on how he should confess Jesus, and how he needed to minister to the lost sheep around about him (John 21:15-19).

1. Feed My lambs
2. Tend My sheep
3. Feed My sheep

He also told Peter that as he lived out his life for Jesus Christ what his life would be like. It was not going to be easy, but all he must remember is to "follow Me" (Jesus tells Peter).

The Gospel of John also points out another side concerning Jesus where He proclaims to us seven teachings about how He is the Great "I am."

I AM WHO I AM

Exodus 3:14

"**I AM** has sent me to You."

Exodus 3:14

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|-----|--|-----------------------------------|
| (1) | I AM the bread of Life
John 6:35 | <i>He feeds the hungry heart.</i> |
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| (2) | I AM the Light of the World
John 8:12 | <i>He lights our pathway.</i> |
| (3) | I AM the Gate
John 10:9 | <i>He guards and protects us.</i> |
| (4) | I AM the Good Shepherd
John 10:11 | <i>He nurtures us.</i> |
| (5) | I AM the Resurrection and the Life
John 11:25 | <i>He empowers us for life.</i> |
| (6) | I AM the Way, the Truth and the Life
John 14:6 | <i>He directs and gives understanding for our everyday walk.</i> |
| (7) | I AM the True Vine
John 15:1 | <i>He makes us a part of Himself.</i> |

“I tell you the truth,” Jesus answered “before Abraham was born” I AM
John 8:58

Another key thing that Jesus wanted to proclaim that He was the only way to the Father, truth, and life (John 14:6); He had come to bring salvation to a lost world. He had come to be the sacrificial lamb and to shed His blood for all those who would believe in Him. He instituted several main commandments. One was that we are to love God with all our heart body soul and spirit, and we are to love our neighbour as ourselves (Luke 10:27). Secondly He instituted the communion service that we are to continue to do in remembrance of Him until he returns (Matthew 26:26-28). Thirdly He gave to the disciples the great commission to go out and preach the gospel, baptizing, teaching as many as

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possible throughout the whole world (Matthew 28:18-20). Christ's plan for the disciples was to teach and exemplify for them how they would become His ambassadors of reconciliation here on earth and to be His ministers of His truth of the Gospel, about His kingdom both here on earth and in heaven and to show to all the way and truth about His Father who is in heaven.

In his last days of His life Jesus knew that He had to go back to Jerusalem. He told the disciples to go and prepare a room where they could celebrate the Passover. He also told some disciples that they needed to enter the city and find a colt and bring it to Him. It was on this colt that He would ride into Jerusalem triumphantly, where people shouted, "Hosanna" to Him waved palm branches and lay their garments down on the ground so that He might cross over (Matthew 21:7-9). During that one week of time He would be welcomed as a King, but within a few days He would be crucified like a thief and a murderer.

One other key thing that Jesus proclaimed and prophesied about was how the Holy Spirit would come fill people's hearts. He was going to burst forth a church that would be His body, hands and feet that would minister to a lost world. Jesus communicated many truths to His hearers from the Old Testament Scriptures and now He was going to prophesy many more truths concerning death and resurrection, His going back to heaven and how He one day would come back again to earth as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

This part of the good news is so important because during these three and half years Christ lived on earth and walked amongst us sets for us a pattern that if we trust in Him we should be able to live also. The Gospel of Jesus' life gives to us the important teaching, that when studied and made part of our daily lives, gives us the strength to walk in victory as He walked in victory. That doesn't mean that there will be no more challenges or heartaches, but together with Christ Jesus we can overcome just as

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He overcame. The disciples need to be ones who are Christ-like and through their lives can show the same kind of attitude that Christ showed us on how to live here on earth with others. As Jesus said, “*as many who believed on Him He gave them power to become the Sons of God*” (John 1:12).

Scripture Reference:

John 14:6, “Jesus said, I am the way, the truth and the life and no one comes unto the Father but by me.”

Matthew 18:11, “For the Son of Man has come to save that which was lost.”

Discipleship Teaching Principle:

Jesus’ earthly walk sets the example on how we are to live or walk here on earth. There will be many challenges and blessings and it will require us to carry our cross, not in our strength or ability, but in His strength and ability. We are called to do His will here on earth which means we must make Him Lord of our lives. He becomes our Lord and we give ourselves to serve and to be His stewards of the Gospel, of His fruit and of His spiritual gifts. We need to examine this truth about His life and allow this Gospel message to burn deep into our hearts.

Antichrist lies and deceptions:

The enemy of our soul desires to try to trick us into thinking that Christ never really lived here on earth or, if He did come, He was not God’s Son but just an ordinary man or maybe just a very wise prophet. Satan gets people to follow him and to believe his lies and deception. Today in our world there are many Antichrists, wolves in sheep’s clothing, taking the truth of God and twisting it into lies. The antichrists come to attempt to destroy the Gospel of Jesus Christ. And he tries to fill our hearts with doubt

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and confusion. We do not need to fear him but to turn our fear into faith in Jesus Christ who fills us and empowers us with the Holy Spirit. As His disciples we must respond that no matter how He calls us. We will commit to believing the truth of the gospel, and commit to living out the Gospel day by day here on this earth. We need to remember that Satan was rebuked and cast out of heaven and sent to the earth. He always wants to bind people but Christ came to set people free (Romans 8:2; Galatians 5:1).

Gospel Creed Statement:

Now this brings us to the question, “Can I say from my heart, “I do believe and confess in the **life of Christ** who lived and taught here on earth proclaiming the Father and the Kingdom of God, exemplifying to all that He was the only way, truth and life, and that one should take up the cross and follow Him?”

4. Death

Prophecy:

Psalm 22:16-18, For dogs have surrounded Me; the congregation of the wicked has exposed Me. They pierced My hands and My feet; I can count all My bones. They look and stare at Me. They divide My garments among them and for My clothing they cast lots.

Isaiah 50:6, I gave My back to those who struck Me, and My cheeks to those who plucked out the beard; I did not hide My face from shame and spitting.

Isaiah 53:5, But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed.

Zechariah 11:12-13, Then I said to them, if it is agreeable to you, give me my wages; and if not, refrain. So they weighed out for my wages thirty pieces of silver. And the LORD said to me, throw it to the potter - that princely price they set on me. So I took the thirty pieces of silver and threw them into the house of the Lord for the potter.

Key Scriptures:

And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Therefore, God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of the Father. Philippians 2:8-11

The enemy constantly wanted to destroy Him and in the fullness of time it seemed that he had won by having Christ taken

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away and beaten and then hanged on a cruel cross like a criminal. At the moment of shedding His blood and while hanging on the cross He then gave up His last breath and life into the hands of the Father in heaven. For three days He remained in the bowels of the earth where the keys of life and death were taken back from Satan, something that Satan had taken in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:1-24).

Jesus now had lived for 33 ½ years, and His time here on earth was drawing to a close. It was not long after His triumphant entry to the city of Jerusalem that the disciples gathered together in an upper room to celebrate Passover together. This Passover would be unique, because it would be at this point where the traditions of the Old Testament would take on new meaning by what Jesus was about to do. At that time the disciples did not realize that He was about to become the Passover lamb, where His body would be broken and were He would shed His blood on the cross of Calvary for us all (Matthew 27:32-56).

The evening started off with a Passover meal and it was during this meal that Jesus told the disciples that there was one amongst them who would betray Him. The Scripture teaches us that Judas Iscariot had made a deal with the Jewish leadership to betray Jesus Christ. He would betray Jesus for 30 pieces of silver and that he would betray Him with a kiss of friendship in the Garden of Gethsemane (Luke 22:47). It is important to note though that not long after Judas tried to give the money back to the Jewish leadership but they said they could not take it because it was blood money so Judas threw it on the ground and ran out. He knew that he had had betrayed Jesus Christ the Messiah. At that point he went out to a field found a tree and hanged himself (Matthew 27:3-10).

After they had finished the Passover meal and had sung a hymn Jesus and the disciples went out to the Garden of Gethsemane to pray (Matthew 26:30-46). This was an emotionally

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deep time of travail for Jesus. A time where He asked the Father if it was possible to take this cup from Him, but not that His will would be done, but the Father's will would be done for His life. He knew what lay ahead for Him. We are told from Scripture that during this time of prayer He sweat great drops of blood (Luke 22:44). The time for Him to die was now at hand. His darkest hour was now before Him. During this time Jesus came back to where the disciples were and each of the three times He found them asleep. He challenged them by asking, "Could you not watch at least one hour in prayer (Matthew 26:40).

It was after this time that the soldiers and mob came to the Mount of Olives and as Judas said he would do, he came up to Jesus and kissed Him on the cheek (Luke 22:48). At this point they grabbed Jesus to take Him. One of the disciples took out his knife and cut off the ear of the servant of the high priest (Luke 22:50), but Jesus told them not to fight and reminded them that He was here to fulfil the will of the Father who sent Him. He also asked the people, "Why have you come at night to take me like a criminal. He told them, wasn't I with you throughout the day (Luke 22:52-53).

So the people took Jesus back into Jerusalem before the Pharisees and Sadducees and the high priest. It was at this time that they were trying to find evidence that they could condemn Him to death and brought forth various witnesses to give testimony but none of the witnesses were consistent in what they shared concerning Jesus Christ. Finally, they confronted Christ Himself and asked Him outright, "Are you the Messiah?" He said yes and the high priest after hearing what He said, told the rest of the people that they have heard from His mouth and because of that they needed no more proof and condemned Him to death. It was from this point that the people began to condemn Him and ridicule Him demanding that He be put to death (Luke 22:66-71).

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The next thing that took place was the Jewish leadership brought Him before Pilate and told Pilate that this man was worthy of death because He had blasphemed against God and broken the laws of God, and for this He was worthy to be put to death. At first Pilate tried to get them to see that He was no criminal and that He had done nothing worthy of death. He even reminded them that during the Passover they freed one criminal. But instead of calling out the name of Christ to be set free, they called out the name of a murderer Barabbas (Luke 23:18). Because the people kept crying out for Jesus to be crucified, Pilate made the decision and condemned Him to death. Jesus was led away to be crucified.

It is at this point that He would begin to suffer terrible things for all mankind. They beat Him with a cat-o' nine-tails until His back was ripped open and blood poured forth. They stripped Him of His clothes and put a robe of purple on Him to mock Him as the king of the Jews. They made a crown of thorns and put it on His head causing drops of blood to flow from His scalp. They gambled for His clothing, they knelt down before Him and made fun of Him as a Jewish king. They even blindfolded Him and punched Him and mocked Him, telling Him to prophesy concerning who had hit Him. Soon after they led Him out to Golgotha to be crucified. Because He had been so battered and abused, He was unable to carry His cross. At that point they took a man from the crowd and made him to carry the cross for Jesus. When He got to the top of the mountain, He was nailed to the cross through His hands and feet and then they lifted up the cross between two others who were being crucified at the same time.

A sign was posted at the top of the cross, saying, "This is the King of the Jews." (Matthew 27:37). The Jewish leadership argued that it should be changed, saying he said he was the king of the Jews. But Pilate said I have written what I have written. It was also while Jesus was on the cross that one of the thieves that was being crucified beside Him asked whether he could be forgiven.

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Because of his faith in who Christ was, Jesus said to him, you will see me in Paradise today (Luke 23:32-33, 43).

It was during His time on the cross that several things took place. As He came closer to death the skies began to darken and He spoke a few words to those that were around Him at the cross and especially to His mother. The Bible tells us that at the fullness of time Jesus then gave up His spirit (Luke 23:46) and it was at that time that there was a great earthquake and the graves opened up people got up out of the graves and walked into the city (Matthew 27:51-53). It was also during that time that the veil in the temple was rent in two from the top to the bottom. Christ has given Himself as a Passover lamb and shed His blood so that whoever would believe in Him could have eternal life. His blood had now been sprinkled on the mercy seat in the Holy of Holies, a once and for all sacrifice that would never be needed to be done again. We could now through faith in Christ enter personally into the Holy of Holies.

It was not long after His death one of the Jews went before Pilate and asked for Jesus body. To make sure that He was dead they took a spear and speared Him in the side (Luke 19:34). The Bible tells us that out came both blood and water. Once they had determined that He was dead they took the body down from the cross and wrapped it in fine linen. From there He was taken to a grave that was not even His and His body was placed in there, at which point a large stone was rolled over the entrance (Matthew 27:60; John 20:38-42). The Jews were so concerned that someone might steal His body they asked Pilate to seal the tomb and place guards outside (Matthew 27:62-64).

There are many significant fulfilments of Scripture from the Old Testament, plus there are many things that took place during this time that gives hope to the believer and shows him how much grace and love that Christ will give to all of us who believe.

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One: was by His stripes we could be healed.

Two: was the shedding of His blood as a sacrificial lamb so that we could have life.

Three: that the veil in the temple was rent from the top to the bottom opening up a way for all who believe to be able to enter the holy of holies.

Four: that He fulfilled all the Old Testament prophecies concerning His birth, life and death.

Five: He fulfilled all the law which we ourselves could not do.

One may find it hard to say that this event is actually good news, but for us this terrible death opened the door so that we can have eternal life through Jesus Christ. This gospel event was foretold in the Old Testament and because of the sinfulness of man this became the only way that mankind could be redeemed from its sins. Christ's death became the bridge that we could cross over to have life and to have it more abundantly.

Scripture Reference:

Isaiah 53:12; 1 Peter 2:24; 1 Corinthians 11:26; Mark 16:24; Colossians 1:20; 1 Corinthians 1:28

Discipleship Teaching Principle:

At the time of Christ, the Romans used a cross as a method of execution of persons who were tried and deemed to be criminals worthy of death. Christ was hanged on the cross to pay the penalty of our sins. One perfect human had to die so that through Him others could have eternal life. The disciple needs to make a decision to take up the cross of Christ, denying himself, and

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following Christ and His teachings. The key to having an overcoming journey with Christ is to make sure that we die to our will and make a decision to live our life for Christ.

Antichrist lies and deceptions:

Many liberal teachers have tried to prove the Christ did not live here on earth and if He did live here on earth He surely did not die on a cross for the sins of the world. Many have taught that Jesus only fell asleep on the cross and it looked like that He had died, but in reality He was only sleeping. False teachers and preachers want to make Jesus look like any other man. They will say that He was a good prophet and teacher but that He did not die for the sins of mankind. They will try to deny the need for one man to shed His blood and that He only was a perfect sacrifice. They want people to believe that there are many ways to God. But the Word is quite clear concerning His death. There were many witnesses who had seen how He was hanged on the cross, how He died a cruel death and was placed in a grave. These false teachers want to make Jesus look like an ordinary man. They want to take away the concept that proclaims that Jesus was and is the Son of God and that He is the only way to heaven. They also want to remove the idea of someone shedding His blood as a sacrifice for others.

Gospel Creed Statement:

Now this brings us to the question: Can I say from my heart that I do believe and confess in the **physical death** of our Lord Jesus Christ on the cross? Do I believe He bore my sins and opened the way into the Holy of Holies where I can stand before the Father, clothed in Christ's grace and righteousness, proclaiming that I have died to myself and now live as a disciple of Jesus?

5. Resurrection

Prophecy: Psalm 16:10 *“For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.”*

Hosea 6:2 *“After two days He will revive us; on the third day He will raise us up, that we may live in His sight.”*

Key Scriptures: John 11:25-27 *“Jesus said to her, I am the Resurrection and the life. He who believes in me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this? She said to him, Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world.”*

The context of the Scripture is that Martha’s brother had breathed his last and had died. He had been in the grave for a number of days, and after several days Jesus and the disciples came to where Martha and Mary were. The Scripture verse above shares with us some of the conversation that Martha had with Jesus Christ concerning her brother’s death. Martha didn’t understand the power and the anointing of Jesus Christ. She thought that if Jesus would have come before Lazarus had died, maybe He could have healed him. But now Jesus was going to show her and Mary and others who were watching that He was the Resurrection and the life. All who would believe Him will not die but will live. Martha makes a powerful statement about Christ stating that truly He is the Son of God who has come into the world (John 11:1-44).

In the time of Christ this topic or subject concerning the resurrection was debated by the religious leaders of the day. A group called the Pharisees believed there was a heaven and that after people died they would be resurrected to that place. Another group called the Sadducees believe there was no such thing as

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heaven or resurrection. So often Jesus would challenge these two groups on how they would speak to Him because He believed in the resurrection of the dead. We see this taking place in Matthew chapter 22:23 (Mark 12:18) which says, *“the same day the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to him and asked him.”* The Sadducees had come to Jesus to try to trick Him concerning the resurrection. So they made up a hypothetical story concerning husband and wife, where the husband dies, but according to Moses the next brother in line was to take up his brother’s wife. They go on to state that there were seven brothers in total and that they had all died. They asked Jesus to whom this woman will belong when she goes to heaven. In Matthew 22:30 Jesus tells him that in the resurrection there is neither marriage nor is anyone given in marriage. Then Jesus gives to them the true answer concerning the resurrection in verse 32. *“I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.”* Jesus wanted to make clear to the Sadducees and to all that heard Him, that there is a real resurrection and that one day all will be resurrected and brought before the judgment seat of Jesus Christ.

If death was the end Christ would have been no different from any other ordinary man but on the third day, the tomb and grave could not hold Him. God’s resurrection power now filled His body and He was raised up from death victorious over its hold, breaking once and for all the chains of sin and death. The grave and the grave clothes could not hold or stop God’s resurrection power. Early that resurrection morning Mary and Martha went to the grave and it was there they saw that the stone had been rolled away from the tomb’s entrance. As they looked inside they saw the grave clothes folded and neatly placed. As Mary and Martha were looking into the grave two angels proclaimed to them that Christ rose from the dead. He had fulfilled exactly what He had told the disciples He would do, that on the third day He would rise up from the dead. Shortly after Peter and some of the disciples came to the

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tomb and they could not believe when they saw that it was empty, just like as Jesus had predicted.

Jesus gave the scribes and the Pharisees the illustration of Jonah . They were desiring a sign from Jesus to prove to them that He was the son of God. But Jesus told them what kind of sign had already been given through Jonah. Matthew 12:40 *“For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.”* Jesus was going to descend into the bowels of the earth, the place of darkness and death, but He would not remain there because He prophesied that after He was put to death, on the third day He would rise again from the grave. Death could not hold Him. The purpose of His coming as the Son of God to earth was to bring life, life eternal for all who would believe and receive Him as their personal Lord and Saviour.

We are not told much about what took place during the three days that Jesus was in the tomb but we are given a few glimpses that during that time He went into the bowels of the earth and took back from Satan the keys of life and death (Revelation 1:18). The resurrection was now going to make it possible for all who would believe in Jesus Christ, to have the hope that even though they may die physically they could have eternal life with Christ in His heavenly kingdom. Jesus had broken the chains of sin and death and because what He did on the cross for us so we could be redeemed from eternal death and destruction. We can now have a permanent and lasting hope in Him.

The first few days after Jesus’ resurrection He met with 11 disciples in various places. They were so amazed that He was truly alive and before them. It was at the second appearance of Jesus to the disciples Thomas said unless he could put his fingers in the holes in His hands and his hand into His side he would not believe. This is where the nickname of “Doubting Thomas” most likely came from (John 20:25). But it wasn’t long after this encounter

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with Jesus Christ it is thought that Thomas became a powerful evangelist and testimony for Jesus Christ throughout various parts of Asia, possibly reaching as far as India.

Jesus also met with several disciples on the road to Emmaus where He spoke to them and encouraged them not to lose faith but to continue to walk in believing that Jesus Christ is truly the Son of God (Luke 24:13-35).

Over the next 40 days He was seen several times by the disciples themselves and also by approximately 300 other people. These people became a testimony and a witness for Jesus Christ and they began to tell others that Jesus was not dead but that He had risen from the grave.

The bridge between God and mankind was being restored. That relationship would no longer be external but would now be internal. He appeared to the disciples and many other to bear testimony of that things had now changed.

Paul talks about the resurrection power. In Philippians 3:10 he says, *“that I may know him and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his sufferings, being conformed to his death, if, by any means, I may attain the resurrection from the dead.”*. Paul knew and understood the power that was behind the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the power that came from heaven to raise Christ from the dead back to life. Paul knew that all of us, through the death of Christ, and through faith in Him, can also have that same power in our own lives, but it means that we need to conform also to the death of Christ. To be willing to die to ourselves and to serve Christ with all our hearts. To be willing to go through the same sufferings as Christ went through. To become conformed and transformed into the fullness of whom Christ Jesus is. We are called to be “Christ like” that our lives reflect His grace, mercy and truth.

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Peter who witnessed firsthand the resurrection of Jesus Christ stated twice, *“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope to the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.”* (I Peter 1:3-5) Peter again states, *“Through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to him.”* (I Peter 3:21b-22) Peter had witnessed the resurrection of Jesus. He saw Him firsthand and met with Him several times. He knew deep in his heart the power of the resurrection and that the same Jesus is now sitting at the right hand of God the Father. Through salvation, the power of God would be poured out on the all those who have believed in Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord.

This part of the Gospel is so exciting because the enemy believed he had killed God’s Son and all we had to do was now take over and set up his Kingdom. But as Jesus prophesied that on the third day He would rise from the dead, the grave could not hold Him, the stone was rolled back, the grave clothes came off and victory had been won. This good news shows to us and tells us the same power that raised Jesus from the dead can now also dwell in us. From the day we believe we receive the same resurrection power which gives us the ability through Christ Jesus to overcome sin and death.

Scripture Reference:

Matthew 28:6-7; Luke 24:46; Acts 1:22; Acts 2:24; Romans 6:23; 1 Corinthians 15:21; 1 John 3:14

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Discipleship Teaching Principle:

This discipleship principle is closely linked to the last point concerning the death of Jesus Christ. Jesus was willing to suffer and die and be in the grave for three days and then, by the power of the Holy Spirit, was raised again to the newness of life. The grave cannot hold Him; the bonds of the world cannot chain Him. The picture of Christ's death and resurrection shows to us as disciples the importance of how we need to die to ourselves and live for Jesus Christ. Baptism shows us this picture that when we go down into the waters we die to the old man and we come up out of the waters celebrating the resurrected life of Jesus Christ. The resurrection is very important to the disciples of Christ because it's the same power that raised Jesus from the dead. It is the power that Jesus wants to fill our lives with so that while we walk here on earth we are able to overcome the things that would so easily bind us and ensnare us. We do what we do, not because of who we are but because of who He is. We do not do it in our strength but we do it in His strength. We do not overcome by our power but we overcome by His power flowing through us.

Antichrist's lies and deceptions:

Satan and his false teachers always desire to water down this truth or to make it that it is not true at all. He gets people to state that in reality the body was only stolen from the grave or that Jesus was never really in the grave or that He had just fallen into a deep sleep and then woke up three days later and just walked out. Sometimes he gets people to write that this truth concerning the resurrection was just a fable or a story. Satan desires that we do not believe in the supernatural and in the resurrection power of Jesus Christ because if we are able to comprehend the power that God gives us through the Holy Spirit we would be able to overcome any of the test and trials that Satan would try to throw our way. Christ has come to set the captive free!

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Gospel Creed Statement:

Now this brings us to the key question, “Do I as a disciple believe and commit myself to this fifth point of the Gospel Creed?” Can I state that I do believe and confess in the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ, that after being dead for three days He rose victorious from the grave, becoming the firstborn among many, putting to death the old man and making way for a new man, clothed and filled with His power and truth.

6. Ascension

Prophecy: Psalm 68:18 *“You have ascended on high, You have led captivity captive; You have received gifts among men, even from the rebellious, that the LORD God might dwell there.”*

Key Scriptures: Luke 24:50-51 *“And He led them out as far as Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them, now it came to pass, while He blessed them, that He was parted from them and carried up into heaven.”*

Acts 1:9-10 “Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly towards heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel...”

The journey of Jesus Christ still continued on. Not only was Christ resurrected from the dead, but then with many watching He ascended on high to prepare a place for us and to intercede before the Father on our behalf. Relationship was being restored on all levels. Death had been overcome in Christ; that had opened up the way for all of us to become new creations in Him. Now He was going to return to heaven to fulfil His promises to all those who believed.

Jesus had told the disciples in John 14:1-3 he needed to go to heaven and to get things ready for the coming of His people. *“Let not your heart be troubled; you believed in God, believe also in me. In my father’s house are many mansions, and if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to myself; that where I am, there you may be also.”* The kingdom

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of heaven or the kingdom of God which Jesus proclaimed was now the place that He would call home and rule His kingdom from.

Just before Jesus ascended into heaven, He gave to the disciples what is known to many as the Great Commission. Jesus' last-minute instruction to His followers that would challenge them and us is to go out and to preach the gospel plus to teach, train and to baptize all those who put their faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour.

Matthew 28:18-20 "And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, all authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 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."

Mark 16:15-18 "And he said to them, go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will follow those who believe: in my name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover."

Luke 24:46-49 "And He said to them, thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And you are witnesses of these things. Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you: but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high."

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John 20:21 *“So Jesus said to them again, Peace to you! As the Father has sent me I also send you.”*

Acts 1:8 *“But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”*

The angels also reminded the disciples that just as they had seen Jesus go up into the heaven that one day He is going to come back again by the same manner (Acts 1:11). The Gospel story was not finished yet. The angels were proclaiming that there is more to come. Jesus’ going into heaven wasn’t the end of the good news but it was just another chapter that would lead the believers towards what would become a place where we could spend all eternity with Jesus Christ.

Mark 16:19 states, *“So then, after the Lord had spoken to them, he was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God.”* And we know from this place that Jesus is interceding on our behalf before the Father. For we need to see that Jesus is our intermediary carrying our burdens and struggles before the Father which is in heaven.

The Gospel here presents to us a beautiful picture of Jesus ascending into heaven, going back not just for Himself, but also on behalf of us that He may set up a kingdom and prepare a place for us so that where He is we also may be. But while we are still here the good news is that Jesus is interceding on our behalf before the Father. We are one with Jesus and our hearts are joined together by faith. This gives us hope that we are not alone, but that we have a redeemer and a deliverer ministering on our behalf in heaven.

Scripture Reference:

Mark 16:19; Luke 24:50-51; John 14:28-29; Acts 1:9-10

Discipleship Teaching Principle:

The ascension of Jesus Christ is very important as a doctrine and teaching for the disciple of Christ it is part of the good news and it is also a part that bridges Christ's earthly walk with His heavenly kingdom. As Jesus told the disciples, He must return to heaven to fulfil all things that were spoken of concerning Him. He told them not to fear because, just as He has gone He will one day return to receive His bride, His church.

Antichrist lies and deceptions:

This is another area that Satan wants to destroy, because it is a key point of the good news of Jesus Christ, being sent by the Father and who is the only true Son of God. He was sent and came into this world to defeat the enemies of God. Satan desires to destroy the teaching of the ascension because he does not want people to know that Jesus Christ is sitting on His throne at the right hand of the Father. And because of this position He has sent to us the Holy Spirit who empowers us so that we may be able to overcome the snares of the devil and to overcome most of all, death itself. Satan's tactic is to get us to believe that there is no heaven, that there is no king, and that there will be no judgment. But we must realize and understand that Satan is a liar of liars and his goal is to destroy and to kill. Plus, he and his demons will be judged and sentenced to eternal damnation.

Gospel Creed Statement:

Now this brings us to the key question, Do I as a disciple believe and commit myself to this point of the Gospel Creed? Can I truly state I do believe and confess in the ascension of Jesus Christ, that from the time of the resurrection to the day He was taken up into the clouds, being seen by many, is now in paradise, preparing a place for the disciples, plus is now interceding before the Father on our behalf?

7. Holy Spirit

Prophecy:

Proverbs 1:23 *“Turn at my rebuke; surely I will pour out my spirit on you; I will make my words known to you.”*

Isaiah 32:15 *“until the Spirit is poured out upon us from on high, ...”*

Isaiah 42:1 *“Behold! My Servants whom I uphold, My Elect One whom My soul delights exclaim attention I have put My Spirit upon him; He will bring forth justice to the Gentiles.*

Ezekiel 36:27 *“I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them.”*

Joel 2:28 *“And it shall come to pass afterwards that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions.”*

Zechariah 4:6 *“... This is the Word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit, says the LORD of host”.*

Key Scriptures:

Luke 24:49 *“Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high.”*

Acts 1:4-5, 8 *“And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, which, He said, you have heard from Me; for John truly baptized with water, but you*

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shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now. ... But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all of Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

Acts 2:1-4 “When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.”

Eph 1:13-14 “In him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.”

After Jesus ascended into heaven these disciples were obedient and they went to an upper room to gather together in prayer and to wait for the promise that Jesus had made to them concerning the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:4-5). For the first time this was going to bring a change to the people of faith, to those who believe in God the Creator of heaven and earth. What was about to take place was Jesus’ indwelling power coming into the hearts of His disciples, empowering them for witness and service.

In the book of Acts, we read another command by Jesus to the disciples that they were not to leave Jerusalem but to wait upon the Lord for He was about to send to them the promise of the Father which would be the baptism of the Holy Spirit who would come upon them. Acts 1:4 *“And being assembled together with them, he commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to*

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wait for the Promise of the Father, which, he said, you have heard from me; for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”

Again we see the fulfillment of a promise that Christ had made to the disciples, which took place on the day of Pentecost, the sending and coming of the Holy Spirit. God’s very presence was now coming into the heart of every believer. The power that God gives to us to overcome the grip and strongholds of this sinful world would now be in man’s heart. It was also the day that the church, the body and bride of Christ was also birthed to be a light to all who would see and desire to give their lives to Christ; a place of refuge and safety for the pilgrim who was traveling through. He would also become our teacher and comforter. He would never leave us or forsake us. We would have life and have it more abundantly.

It is important to understand that the disciples must receive power from on high if they were to grow to be witnesses for Christ. Christ did not want them to go about doing things in their own strength or in their own ability, but He wanted them to walk in the fullness of His power and His ability, to be His witnesses to a lost world that was bound by Satan and his demonic forces.

The Holy Spirit’s coming was a fulfillment of the prophecy given in Joel 2:8, *“And it shall come to pass afterwards that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions.”* God was about to use all who would commit themselves to Him as their Lord and Saviour whether young or old or even concerning what kind a gift that they may have. God will take what has been given to Him and use it for His glory.

As Jesus had walked with the disciples over at least a couple years they began to hear in His teaching that one day He would die and that He would go back to heaven. This was

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beginning to cause the disciples to have anxiety and fear. They were concerned about how would they carry on the ministry of Jesus Christ if He himself was not with them. They even wondered how they would get from earth to heaven without Jesus personally taking them there. But in John 14:15-17, 26 Jesus states, *“If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that he may abide with you forever – the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him for He dwells with you and will be in you.”* And again in verse 26, Jesus says, *“but the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring you to your remembrance all things that I said to you.”*

The Holy Spirit was also coming as a seal and guarantee of Christ’s presence in our life. We would be permanently marked in our body, soul and spirit by the Holy Spirit that we belong to Jesus Christ and Him only. By this seal the enemy of our soul sees that we belong to Jesus Christ and that He is our Lord and Saviour. Christ is our King and we are His ambassadors representing His kingdom here on earth. As disciples we need the power of the Holy Spirit to overcome the grip and hold of the world to break the chords and the ropes that Satan tries to ensnare us with. Our goal should be to live for Christ with all of our hearts, to fulfil His will in our lives and not to give ourselves over to our own will.

It is also important to note that the moment of the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples in the upper room was also the exact moment when the church of Jesus Christ His body was birthed and became alive here on earth. At that moment His church became His hands and feet His voice to a lost world. The Holy Spirit became our encourager, teacher and comforter both to the individual disciple and to the church.

The Holy Spirit was also coming into our lives and filling us with His fruit so that we would have a different attitude and lifestyle towards those who lived around us. He was also going to

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give to us with a variety of gifts so that we would have the tools to be able to serve in the body of Christ and also to serve those around us in our communities and our world. The key is that we need to understand that the empowering of the Holy Spirit is, He is not there for our own personal blessing or desires but He has come to fill us with power so that we can serve others.

Also on the Day of the coming of the Holy Spirit was the day that the age of grace was birthed. A time that God was going to give to the world to show forth His grace to all nations and all peoples both Jews and Gentiles. And even right now we are still living in the age of grace, but the last days are upon us and there is a day coming when His grace will be being poured out upon us by the Holy Spirit. Because of this, we need to pray daily that the Holy Spirit will fill us so that we do not walk in our will but walk in the will of Jesus Christ. Paul exhorts the Ephesian church to be filled daily by the Holy Spirit, the Greek word tells us, that this is an ongoing event something that needs to take place each day (Ephesians 5:18).

Lastly, Paul exhorts the Roman Church that they need to understand that true hope in the Lord Jesus Christ comes to them by walking in the presence of the Holy Spirit in their lives. He states in Romans 15:13, *“now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.”* Hope is believing in that which is not yet seen, it’s believing in something that is yet to come, and God desires that we not be filled with despair but that the disciples be filled with hope and with all joy and peace. This can only take place by surrendering ourselves each day to the ministry of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

What great news the Gospel gives to us that our Lord Jesus Christ came as the Son of God to dwell in our hearts. And even before being crucified on the cross He told the disciples that He would send another comforter one who would teach them and

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show them all things. He would dwell within us and be a light unto our path, He would empower us so that we would be able to overcome the snares and temptations of the evil one. The Holy Spirit makes it possible for us to live a victorious life here on earth and this is part of the great gospel that Jesus has given to the world.

Scripture Reference:

Psalm 51:11; Matthew. 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; Luke 12:12; John 16:7, 13; Acts 2:38; Acts 8:19 Romans 15:13; Hebrews 6:4; 2 Peter 1:21; Jude 1:20

Discipleship Teaching Principle:

The Holy Spirit is God, the third Person of the Godhead (Trinity). In the New Testament He becomes known as the teacher, comforter, the guarantor, the one who empowers and fills us for service. The evidence of the filling of the Holy Spirit is seen by the “fruit of the Spirit” in our lives, as demonstrated by our service in the Body of Christ. The Holy Spirit gives us gifts as He pleases so that, together, we can minister to one another with different gifts in the church.

Antichrist lies and deceptions:

We need to know and understand that Satan comes to deceive and to destroy. He is our enemy, he has an army that lives in the spirit realm, and this is why Paul, in the book of Ephesians, commands us to put on the full armour of God. We fight not against flesh and blood but against principalities and powers (Ephesians 6:11-12). Satan loves to counterfeit that which is real and we are warned that in the last days there will be many signs and wonders and miracles that do not come by the power of the Holy Spirit sent by the Father in heaven, but come by the power of Satan working through his demonic host here on earth.

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There will be many false teachings concerning the work of the Holy Spirit in the last days and we must be diligently seeking the Scriptures to discern what is true and what is not. Satan does not want us to be filled with the power of the Holy Spirit because with that power we can stand and defeat his Satanic army.

There are many spirits in the world, in many false religions where people are possessed and bound to Satan. Throughout history people have sold their souls to the devil, so that they may obtain some type of wealth or prestige here on earth. We are in a real battle and we must daily take up the full armour of God if we hope to stand against him. (Ephesians 6:10-11)

Gospel Creed Statement:

Now this brings us to the key question, “Do I as a disciple believe and commit myself to the seventh point of the Gospel Creed?” It states, “I do believe and confess in the Holy Spirit who, as one of the three Persons of the triune God, is sent by the Father to regenerate, baptize into Christ Body (the church) and fill believers (His disciples) with power, anointing them with the fruit of the Spirit, gifting them with gifts so that they can serve the body of Christ Jesus throughout the world.”

8. Church

Prophecy:

Matthew 16:18-19 *“And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My **Church**, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. And I will give to you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”*

Key Scriptures:

Acts 2:46-47 *“So continually daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the **church** daily those who were being saved.”*

Ephesians 1:22-23 *“And He put all things to His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the **church**, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.”*

Ephesians 5:23-27 *“For the husband is the head of the wife, as also Christ the head of the **church**; and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore, just as the **church** is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the **church** and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious **church**, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.”*

Colossians 1:18 *“And He is the head of the body, the **church**, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that all things He may have the preeminence.”*

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On the Day of Pentecost, Christ sent forth the power of the Holy Spirit and at that moment the church was birthed. Christ not only wanted us to have a personal relationship with Him but also desired for us to build relationships with other believers. The church was to be His body, the organism that He would be head of, and flow through as a witness to a lost world. It would be a light to all who would desire to give their lives to Christ; a place of refuge and safety for the pilgrim that was travelling through. The word “church” means “to be called out” or “the called out ones.”

Jesus would empower His body in unity and harmony, equipping them for various types of ministries and service. The life blood of the body would be the Holy Spirit, evidenced by the fruit of the Spirit displayed through the church as a body and people as individuals. The church is Christ living body which is still living and serving here on earth.

The church was to be a place of rest and peace, a place to be restored, built up, trained and equipped for service. We do not have to feel alone or abandoned, as we are now part of a worldwide family. We have been adopted into the family of God, having brothers and sisters who can help and care for us as we walk with Christ.

Christ Jesus has become the head and is the head of the universal Church which is His body. But throughout history this church has been fractured by division. Today we have various denominations, various kinds of local churches throughout our communities. We also have organizations that call themselves churches but in reality they are cultic in nature, organization that have turned their backs on the true gospel of Jesus Christ and have even taught and deceived others into believing that Jesus Christ truly was not the Son of God. They just want profit, like some of the Old Testament prophets.

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The purpose of the Church is to be an extension of Christ to this lost world. That's why He has sent to us the Holy Spirit that when we are filled with His presence are able through His strength to manifest to others the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22). Christ also through the power of the Holy Spirit has given gifts to various members of the church so that we can serve one another and be a witness to those around us (1 Corinthians 12 & 14). God has also set forth in this church leadership that can help direct under the headship of Christ the various ministries and outreaches of the Church. Paul states in Ephesians 4:11-16, *“And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, to become to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to perfect man, to the measures of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, and the cunning craftiness of the deceitful plotting, but speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head – Christ – from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.”*

There are also four areas that the Church and the disciples are commanded to be doing. One is, we are to love God and to love our neighbour as ourselves (Luke 10:27). Secondly, we are to carry out Christ's great commission to take the Gospel to all the earth (Mark 16:15). Thirdly, we are commanded to teach and train and baptize people in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:19-20). Fourthly, we are called to continue to have communion so that we can remember what Christ has done for us until He returns (Matthew 26: 26-30).

The church can be pictured sometimes as a plot of land where seeds are planted and nurtured so that in due time these plants will

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grow and mature and bring forth a harvest. It has also been described as a building, where the people are being built up together, upon the rock of Jesus Christ. But most of all the church is pictured as a body where the various parts, no matter how small they are, all have a key part in making the body, function and work for the glory of Christ.

In the book of Revelation, we are also given a description of what the end time churches are going to look like and some of the problems that they will face and struggle with. It seems the biggest problem is with the last day churches is that they begin to follow the voices of the world instead of listening and hearing with the Spirit has to say to them. Seven times Jesus speaks out concerning the church and what they need to do and how they need to make changes if they hope to survive in the last days (Revelation 2:1, 3:22). Here is a quick overview of what Christ states concerning these seven churches.

1. Ephesus - The strong church

Revelation 2:1-7

- Had patiently borne adversity, and could not stand evil.
- Had left their first love. God appealed to them to remember from where they had fallen.

2. Smyrna - The poor, rich church.

Revelation 2:8-11

- Would face persecution.
- God had nothing against them.

3. Pergamum - The faltering church

Revelation 2:12-17

- Had not denied God.
- Had allowed false prophets into the church.

4. Thyatira - The apostate church

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Revelation 2:18-29

- Had many good works.
- Had allowed the false prophetess Jezebel to come in.

5. Sardis - The dying church

Revelation 3:1-6

- Was asked to repent and watch.

6. Philadelphia - The weak church

Revelation 3:7-13

- God promised to keep them from the hour of temptation.
- The synagogue of Satan, who claimed to be Jews, would know that God was with them.

7. Laodicea - The lukewarm church

Revelation 3:14-22

- Thought they were fine.
- God asked them to buy gold from Him, so they would be rich.

In the last days we are told by Christ that the Church, which as His bride will be raptured up with Him into heaven will be a church that is without spot or wrinkle washed in the blood of the Lamb. The church will come before the Father in heaven and be presented as Christ's bride. This will be a glorious day for many who have never seen Christ face-to-face. We will know Him and will be with Him then and for all eternity (Revelation 19:7-9).

Finally, in the book of Revelation 22:16, Jesus gives us His last prophetic word concerning His church. He states, "*I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright and morning Star.*" (Revelation 22:16). Then in verse seventeen He exhorts us by saying, "*And the Spirit and the bride say, Come! And let him*

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who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.”

The Gospel opens up to us a place where we can go, that even if we do not have family and we find ourselves falling down. Through faith we are able to become part of a beautiful body known as the Church. This part of the good news tells us of a universal Church where Christ is the head and we are His body and that we are important in the body as His servants and ministers.

Scripture Reference:

Matthew 18:17; Acts 12:5; Acts 14:23; Acts 16:5; Acts 20:28; Romans 16:5; 1 Corinthians 16:19; Galatians 1:13; Ephesians. 3:10; 1 Timothy 3:15; Hebrews 12:23; James 5:14; Revelation 1:4

Discipleship Teaching Principle:

“Ecclesia”, Greek word for church; means "called out one", “to assemble, gathering; the gathering of believers in Christ” who assemble for worship, teaching, communion, etc. (Ephesians 5:21-32). The church is also referred to as the body of Christ, to be His hands and feet to a lost world. The church is the means by which the Spirit of God extends the fruit of the Spirit to the world through the gifts He provides us with. The disciple of Christ is to be His living testimony to others here on earth.

Antichrist lies and deceptions:

From the very day that the church was birthed it was empowered from on high by the Holy Spirit, while Satan has tried everything possible to destroy the church, Christ’s bride. His biggest weapons are to bring discord and disharmony, to take away the unity of the body, so that it becomes handicapped and not able to function as it should in this lost world. His goal is to come and

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to deceive, divide and, if possible, to destroy the church. Satan has as his only purpose getting people to worship and bow down before him, but the truth is, as discovered in the book of Revelation is that only Jesus Christ is and always will be, the One and only true God. As disciples we must worship Him only by dying to ourselves and through faith joining ourselves to Christ, with Him as our Lord and Saviour.

In the last days Satan is going to fill the churches with false teachers, Antichrists, proclaimers who will say that much of the Bible doctrine is dead or has no importance or value to our humanistic, self-centered age. He will attempt in many ways and has in some cases succeeded in putting the church asleep, which then will open the doors for the beast and the antichrist to try to set up their reign here on earth. But we must remember that “greater is he that is in us than he that is in the world” (1 John 4:4) and one day soon he will lose his battle and will be defeated for all eternity.

Gospel Creed Statement:

Now this brings us to the key question. “Do I as a disciple believe and commit myself to the eighth point of the Gospel Creed which states, ‘I do believe and confess in the one church Jesus Christ, which He birthed on the Day of Pentecost through the Holy Spirit, Jesus being the head, making her a living organism, with the purpose of proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ on earth and giving to her His presence of love, making her a place of refuge, encouragement and nurturing, a place for which the teaching of Christ would go out, a place for all who would receive Him as their Lord and Saviour to have fellowship.’ ”

9. Second Coming

Prophecy:

Daniel 7:13-14 *“I was watching in the night vision, and behold, One like the Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, and then brought Him near before Him. Then to Him was given dominion and glory and the kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom the one which shall not be destroyed.”*

Key Scriptures:

John 14:3, 18 *“And if I go and prepare a place for you, **I will come again** and receive you to myself; that where I am, there you may be also. ... I will not leave you orphans; **I will come to you.**”*

Acts 1:11 *“Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will soon **come in like manner** as you have saw Him go into heaven.”*

1 Thessalonians 4:16 *“For the Lord himself will **descend from heaven** with a shout, with the voice of an arch Angel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air and thus we shall always be with the Lord.”*

Revelation 22:7, 12, 20 *“Behold, **I coming quickly!** Blessed is he who keeps the word of the prophecy of this book. ... And behold, **I am coming quickly**, and My reward is with Me, to give to everyone according to his work. ... He who testifies to these things says, “surely **I come quickly.**” Amen. Even so come, Lord Jesus!”*

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He told the disciples on the day of His ascension, just like you have seen me go I will come back again to personally receive you as my own. We are now His children, joint heirs with Him. He is our King and we are here on earth at this time as His ambassadors, proclaiming the Gospel while there is yet time. The time is short and we must continue to give out freely the grace, love and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to all who would receive it.

Jesus told the disciples several times that He would be going to heaven and that He would be preparing a place for them but that they should not be fearful or feel like they'd been abandoned, but that He was going to come back again to set up His Kingdom here on earth. John 14:28 says, *“You have heard Me say to you, I am going away and **coming back** to you. If you love Me, you would have rejoiced because I said, I am going to the Father, for my Father is greater than I. And now I have told you this before it comes that when it does come to pass, you may believe.”*

Matthew, Mark, Luke, and Paul relate to us Jesus' time with the disciples when they celebrated the Passover just hours before being arrested, tortured and hanged on a cruel cross. As the church today we know this as the communion service in which Jesus commands the disciples to continue as often as possible, in remembrance of Him. He stressed that we keep doing it until He comes back. Matthew states, *“But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it a new with you in my Father's kingdom”* (Matthew 26:29; Mark 14:25; Luke 22:18; 1 Corinthians 11:26).

Jesus had left and ascended into heaven that in due time He would return back for His church. He came the first time as a servant but this time He will return as victorious King, the Almighty One. He is coming so we can be with Him face to face for all eternity. The church will be taken up to be with Him as His bride and to participate in the marriage supper of the Lamb.

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Jesus is coming back to reward those who faithfully serve Him during their time here on earth. He desires to bless us and meet with us (Revelation 22:12). It shall be a wonderful day when we hear the trumpet of the Lord sounding and time will be no more. All suffering, pain, heart aches and challenges will come to an end. What a wonderful day that will be.

This is going to be a wonderful day for the believer in Christ. The day Christ returns and brings victory against the enemies of our God. This news concerning His second coming gives us great hope that in spite of all the challenges, we have a day coming where our Lord has not left us as orphans, but comes to us to gather us up as His own children.

Scripture Reference:

Matthew 24:29-44; 1 Corinthians 15:50-54; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11; Revelation 3:11

Discipleship Teaching Principle:

Jesus' first coming was as a servant, but when He comes the second time He will come as LORD of LORDS and KING of KINGS (Rev. 19:16) to destroy His enemies and to set up His Eternal Kingdom. We are also given hints about what to watch for, but we told that no man can know the day or the hour of His return. The disciples must be ready at all times and we must keep a clean slate before our Lord and remain clothed in His righteousness. We need to make sure before Christ that our names truly are written in the Lamb's Book of Life. There will be many challenges ahead, but Christ will walk with us and will continue to strengthen us as we give our lives totally over to Him and to let Him be a path of light that we can follow.

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Antichrist's lies and deceptions:

The antichrist wants to fool people in two areas, one that there is no such thing as Christ the Son of God and secondly if people do believe, Satan will want them to believe that he is the messiah of the world. As we draw near to the second coming of Christ the deception and lies are going to be greater. Many will fall away from the truth of the Bible and will turn from doing God's will to doing their own will and following after their own desires. Satan is going to promise to the world that he is the only one that can bring true peace to this depressed, economically destroyed war-torn world.

The book of Revelation sets up for us this last a battle between Satan and Jesus Christ. The truth is concerning this book really can be boiled down to one thing, whom will we worship and exalt as are one true God. Satan will try to bring peace to the world for three and half years but in the second three and half years, great devastation and destruction will come by him upon this whole world. The only One able to save this world from total destruction, and the Jews from total annihilation, will be Jesus coming in the clouds with His army. And it will be at that time that Satan and all his demonic adversaries will be bound and cast in to eternal pit of fire (Revelation 20:10).

Gospel Creed Statement:

Now this brings us to the key question. Do I as a disciple believe and commit myself to the ninth point of the Gospel Creed which states, "I do believe and confess in the second coming of Jesus Christ, that He will soon come again with His army as Lord and King, defeating all His enemies and binding Satan and putting to death the curse of sin and disobedience once and for all, resulting in a new kingdom and new earth and new heaven?"

10. Heaven

Prophecy:

Deuteronomy 10:14 *“Indeed **heaven** and the highest **heavens** belong to the LORD your God, also the earth with all that is in it.”*

Isaiah 66:1 *“Thus says the Lord: **Heaven** is My throne, and earth is My footstool. Where is the house that you will build me? And where is the place of my rest?”*

Daniel 7:13-14 *“I was watching in the night visions, and behold, One like the Son of Man, coming with the clouds of **heaven**! He came to the Ancients of Days and they brought Him near before Him. Then to Him was given dominion and glory and the kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom the one which shall not be destroyed.”*

Malachi. 3:10 *“Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house, and try Me now in this, says the LORD of host, if I will not open for you the windows of **heaven** and pour out for you such blessings that there will not be room enough to receive it.”*

Key Scriptures:

Matthew 3:2 *“And saying, repent, for the kingdom of **heaven** is at hand!”*

Luke 15:7 *“I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in **heaven** over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance.”*

Acts 7:49 *“**Heaven** is My throne, and earth is My footstool. What house will you build for Me? Says the Lord, are what is the place of My rest?”*

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Revelation 21:3 *“And I heard a loud voice from **heaven** saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God himself will be with them and be their God.”*

Jesus tells the disciples in John chapter 14 not to worry because He was now going to prepare a place for us (John 14:1-3). What a beautiful day it will be when we enter the gates to heaven, where streets are paved with gold and everywhere one looks, mansions prepared for our arrival. We will also for the first time meet Jesus face to face. He will then welcome us personally into His Eternal Kingdom.

The question of heaven has been on people’s minds since the day of creation, and at Jesus’ time there was two religious groups that spent much time arguing over the issue of heaven. One group, called the Pharisees, believed that there was a heaven and that law-abiding righteous people would go there. The other group, the Sadducees, did not believe that there was such a place as heaven but that once you died that was the end of your existence here on earth. Often Jesus debated with these two groups who challenged Him concerning the kingdom of heaven. But Jesus used the Old Testament Scriptures and taught about the Kingdom of Heaven and that His Father had sent Him from heaven to earth to be the sacrificial lamb and to become the bridge where people would give their lives in faith to Jesus Christ so they could be guaranteed eternal life in heaven. One of the main themes of the book of Matthew was concerning the “kingdom of heaven.”

Jesus also told the disciples that He would soon be leaving earth and going to heaven to prepare a place for them (John 14:3). He would be seated at the right hand of the Father and from that position He would be interceding on our behalf. It tells us that He also is preparing heaven for our coming, that one day at the appointed time Jesus will call forth His church, His people, to come to be with Him in paradise for all eternity.

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Throughout time people have asked many basic questions concerning heaven. They wonder what it is like, who is all there? The Bible gives small pictures what heaven is like. We get glimpses of heaven both in the Old Testament and New Testament. We know God the Father dwells in heaven and that from heaven Jesus Christ was sent to be a redeemer and deliverer of this earth. We are told about gates that we will enter through. We are told about a throne where God and Jesus are seated. We are told about angels and we are even told about some of the people who are already there. The book of Revelation is like a window that allows us to see into heaven.

We know that in the last days the church will be raptured up to heaven, but we also know that all peoples one day will come before Jesus Christ in heaven to be judged by Him. For we are told that in heaven is kept the Lamb's Book of Life (Revelation. 21:27) that records our whole lives, and this book will reveal to us whether our names are found in it or not. From that our destination for all eternity will be determined.

We also know from the book of Revelation in the last days great turmoil and battles will take place both on the physical earth and in the spiritual realms (Ephesians 3:10). Satan desires to destroy the kingdom of heaven and to remove God from His holy throne. But Satan is a defeated foe. His lies and deceptions will bring many followers to him but in the end all who were with him will spend an eternity of death and destruction.

There is a day coming when Jesus will set up His Kingdom here on earth and when every knee will bow and every tongue confess that He is Lord of lords and King of kings (Philippians 2:10). And when the battles and suffering and martyrdom are all over, Christ's people will gather together at the marriage supper of the Lamb. What a day of celebration that will be when we are introduced to the heavenly Father as the bride of Christ. From that day forward we will experience and live for eternity in a new

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heaven and new earth (*Isaiah 66:22; 65:17; 2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:1*).

This point of the Gospel is so exciting because it brings to a conclusion all the challenges, heartaches and pains that take place on earth. The Good News of Jesus Christ sets the captive free. Even though the world was full of sin and death a Redeemer and Deliverer came as the Righteous Son of God to show us grace, mercy, and love and most, to give us a hope for the future. The day that the Gospel is completely fulfilled will be a day of great jubilation. We will bow our knees, lift up our hands and worship our King and Lord face to face.

Scripture Reference:

Genesis 1:1; Genesis 7:11; Deuteronomy 1:10; Deuteronomy 30:12 1 Kings 8:27; 2 Kings 2:11; Ezra 1:2; Psalm 11:4; Psalm 19:1; Psalm 50:6; Psalm 102:25; Matthew 5:16; Luke 6:23; John 6:50; Romans 10:6; Ephesians 3:15; 1 Thessalonians 4:16; Hebrews 1:10; 1 Peter 1:12

Discipleship Teaching Principle:

We as disciples should never forget that heaven is the end goal for our walk here on earth. It is a place where we will meet the triune God in all His glory. But it is also the place that the armies of heaven will be sent from to do battle here on earth. We need to remember that we fight not against flesh and blood but against principalities and powers (Ephesians. 6:12). And it is also the place where we will stand before the judgment seat of Jesus Christ (Romans 14:10). But in the end it is also the place where we, together with Jesus, will celebrate the marriage supper of the Lamb (Revelation 19:7). It is a place where we will spend all eternity free from sickness and death, where we will have a new name and new clothing, and where we will be part of a glorious new heaven and earth (Revelation. 21:1).

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Antichrist lies and deceptions:

What Satan wants above all else is to set up his own kingdom and that people would worship him. From the book of Revelation, we can see that there is going to be a great war between good and evil in the last days. Satan desires to destroy God's kingdom and does set up his own kingdom here on earth. But the truth is Satan is a defeated foe; he will be conquered and bound for 1,000 years and then put into the abyss for all eternity. His goal is to take with him as many of God's creation as he possibly can. He even tried to deceive Christ Himself by using the Word of God in a deceptive way, but even during Christ's temptation trial, Christ, with the Word of God, rebuked Satan (Matthew 4:1-11).

In the last days Satan will use every tactic at his disposal both to try to destroy the disciple of Christ and the church of Jesus Christ and the best way he can do that is when we are ignorant to the teaching and truths of the Word of God. We need to remember it is the Word of God that sets the captive free. It's the blood of Jesus that makes us righteous before the Father and it is by the grace and mercy and love that God has given that we have an opportunity through faith to believe in Him and have an eternity with Him in heaven.

Gospel Creed Statement:

Now this brings us to the key question. Do I as a disciple believe and commit myself to the tenth point of the Gospel Creed which states: "I do believe and confess in the literal place called heaven, where all will be judged, a place where the Lamb's Book of Life is kept, a place where one day as a disciple I will go, a place of no more sickness or death, a place where I will become a new creation with a new name, a place where we will come face to face with our Lord Saviour Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, Redeemer for all who have believed in Him, and that we will

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gather together with Him at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb, worshiping and adoring our King Jesus for all eternity.”

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Conclusion:

What Christ did was truly “good news” for all mankind and it showed forth a heart relationship of love and grace to all who would just receive it as a gift with no strings attached. Christ came and served mankind to show them that God was going to reach out to them with a plan that would call on His Son, Jesus Christ to die and then be raised from the dead so we, through faith in Him, could have eternal life. But out of the Gospel came two doors for us to walk through. One of restoration and one of fellowship.

Right at the very beginning of Hebrews 1:1-4, we get an in-depth picture of truly who this Jesus Christ is and what His purpose was for coming to this earth. The Scripture states, “*God, who in various times and in various ways spoke in times past to the fathers by the prophets, has in the last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; who being the brightness of His glory and express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become so much better than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.*”

The Gospel has the complete truth on how we can have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, that when accepted, makes us joint heirs with Christ for all eternity. We are also commanded by Christ to preach the Gospel to the lost people and nations of the world and the Word of God is to be taught to the disciples of Christ (Matthew 28:19-20).

The Gospel of Mark gives to us a wonderful overview concerning the Good News of Jesus Christ. Let’s take a moment to reflect on what Mark shares concerning this gospel: “*The beginning of the **Gospel** of Jesus Christ, the son of God. Mark 1:1 “The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent*

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*and believe in the Gospel.” Mark 1:15 “Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brother or sister or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for my sake and the **Gospel’s**, who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time – houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions – and in the age to come, eternal life.” Mark 10:29 “And the **Gospel** must first be preached to all the nations. But when they arrest you and deliver you up, do not worry beforehand, or premeditate what you will speak. But whatever is giving you in that hour, speak that; for it is not you who speaks, but the Holy Spirit.” Mark 13:10-11 “Go into all the world and preach the **Gospel** to every creature.” Mark 16:15*

The Gospel is also a bridge between the Hebrew Scriptures and the teachings in the New Testament concerning the church of Jesus Christ. Christ fulfilled all that the Scriptures that had been prophesied concerning Him. He is moved people from followers of the Old Covenant to followers and believers in a New Covenant that His life pictures for us.

The Future:

Paul’s warning to the Galatian Church is that we are to look out for the false gospel, one that is being preached and taught throughout the world by many churches in various cultic type groups. Paul calls it “another Gospel.” He states to the church, “*I marvel that you are turning away so soon from him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the **Gospel** of Christ. But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other **gospel** to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other **gospel** to you than what you have received, let him be accursed. For I do now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? Or if I still please men, I would not be a bondservant of Jesus Christ. But I make known to you, brother,*

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*that the **gospel** which was preached by me is not according to men.”* (Galatians 1:6-10)

As disciples of Christ we must understand that we cannot pick and choose various parts of the Gospel and decide which ones we will believe and which ones we will not. But we must believe and accept the Gospel account of Jesus Christ. It is all or nothing. Each one of the ten Gospel Creed points are there to challenge us but we must accept all ten if we are going to call ourselves true disciples of Jesus Christ. Christ has given us His Word; He has shown forth His light and has opened up a door and pathway for us to walk on, but we must choose to follow Him with all our hearts and to give to Him our will, and take up His will as the ultimate truth for our lives.

Finally, John gives to us a prophetic word about Christ and about that which is yet to come in the near future.

“Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth - to every nation, tribe, tongue and people – saying with a loud voice, “Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water.” Revelation 14:6-7 NKJB

Our prayer is that this little booklet which gives us a small overview of the Gospel of Jesus Christ will become a foundation stone that we will build upon and that will remain firm as we walk forward in our daily walk here on earth. And that we will commit ourselves 100% not to wander off into another gospel but that we will stand and live in the True Gospel of Jesus Christ.

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Gospel Salvation Prayer:

Dear Jesus,

I confess that I am a sinner, having gone my own way and that I need you as my Lord and Saviour. I believe that You paid the price for my sins when You died on the cross and shed Your blood for me, so that I might have eternal life. I am ready and willing to turn from my sin and return back to You. I now invite you into my heart and surrender the control and direction of my entire life to You. Help me to be a true disciple in You and to serve others. Thank You for taking my punishment and providing for me a way of escape from eternal death to an everlasting life and for coming into my heart so that I can now have a close personal relationship with You.

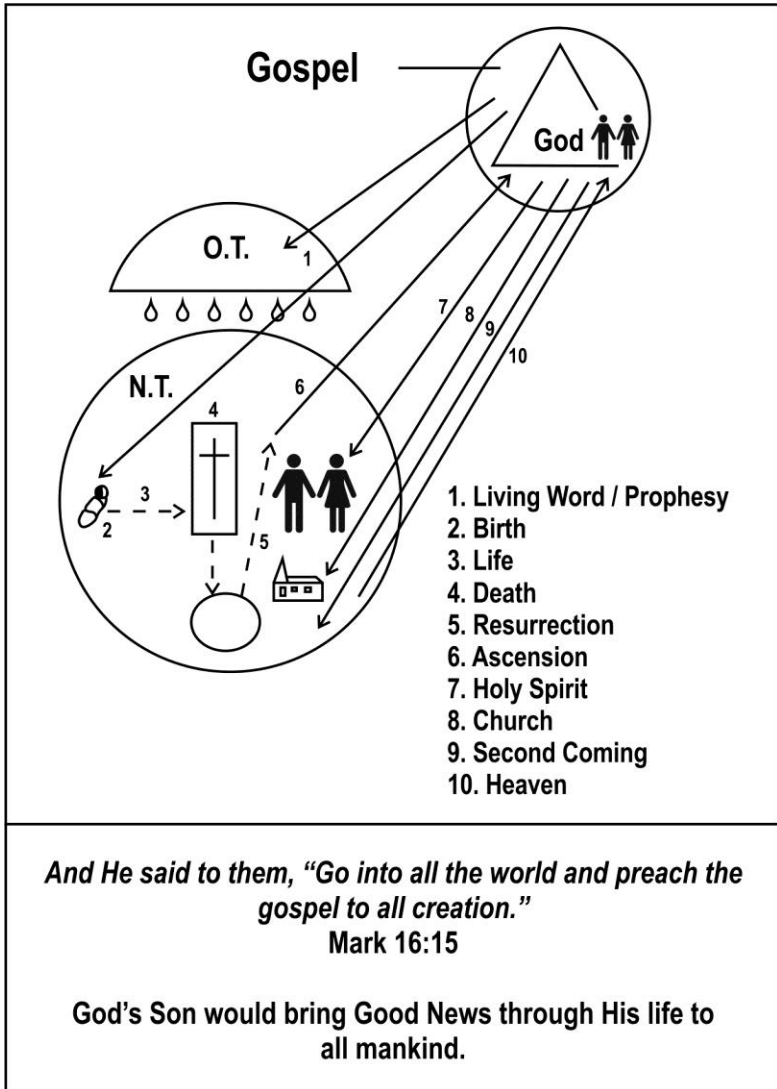
Amen

Welcome home to eternity with Christ Jesus.

Appendix:

1. Overview of The Gospel

This picture or chart gives an overview to the good news of Jesus Christ and shows to us the important teachings concerning the major doctrines of the life of Christ.



2. Disciple's Gospel Creed

1. I do believe and confess in the **Living Word** of God who, in the beginning was and is God, who created all things and without Him nothing was created, and as the Word He became flesh and dwelt amongst us, the only begotten of the Father who is full of grace and truth.
2. I do believe and confess in the **virgin birth** of the second person of the Triune God Head, God's Son, Jesus Christ through the woman Mary and that she was imbued from on high by the power of the Holy Spirit and conceived and gave birth to a Son whose name is "Emanuel, God with us".
3. I do believe and confess in the **life of Christ** who lived and taught here on earth proclaiming the Father and the Kingdom of God, exemplifying to all that He was the only way, truth and life, and that one should take up the cross and follow Him.
4. I do believe and confess in the **physical death** of our Lord Jesus Christ on the cross, where He bore my sins and opened to people a way into the Holy of Holies where we could stand before the Father, clothed in Christ's grace and righteousness, proclaiming that we have died to ourselves and now live our all, as disciples, for Jesus.
5. I do believe and confess in the **bodily resurrection** of Jesus Christ that after being dead for three days He rose victorious from the grave, becoming the firstborn among many, putting to death the old man and making way for a new man, clothed and filled with His power and truth.
6. I do believe and confess in the **ascension** of Jesus Christ, that from the time of the resurrection, to the day He was taken up into the clouds, being seen by many, is now in paradise, preparing a place for the disciples, interceding before the Father on our behalf.
7. I do believe and confess in the **Holy Spirit** who, as one of three Persons of the triune God, is sent by the Father to regenerate, baptise into Christ's Body (the Church) and fill believers (His disciples) with power, anointing them with the fruit of the Spirit, gifting them with gifts so that they can serve the body of Christ Jesus throughout the world.

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8. I do believe and confess in the one **church** of Jesus Christ, which He birthed on the Day of Pentecost through the Holy Spirit, Jesus being the head, making her a living organism, with the purpose of proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ on earth and giving to her His presence of love, making her a place of refuge, encouragement and nurturing, a place from which the teaching of Christ would go out, a place for all who would receive Him as their Lord and Saviour to have fellowship.
9. I do believe and confess in the **second coming** of Jesus Christ, that He will soon come again with His army as Lord and King, defeating all enemies and binding Satan and putting to death the curse of sin and disobedience once and for all, resulting in a new kingdom and new earth and heaven.
10. I do believe and confess in the literal place called **heaven**, where all will be judged, a place where the Lamb's Book of Life is kept, a place where one day, as a disciple, I will go, a place of no more sickness or death, a place where I will become a new creation with a new name, a place where we will come face to face with our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ the Lamb of God, Redeemer for all who have believe in Him, and that we will gather together with Him at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb, worshipping and adoring our King Jesus for all eternity.

I now and forever confess my total allegiance to My LORD and King Jesus Christ both now and for all eternity. Amen.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

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3. List of Scriptures that use the word Gospel or the phrase Good News.	
Matthew 4:23	1 Corinthians 9:16
Matthew 9:35	1 Corinthians 9:17
Matthew 11:5	1 Corinthians 9:18
Matthew 24:14	1 Corinthians 15:1
Matthew 26:13	2 Corinthians 2:12
Mark 1:1	2 Corinthians 4:3
Mark 1:14	2 Corinthians 4:4
Mark 1:15	2 Corinthians 11:4
Mark 8:35	Galatians 1:6
Mark 10:29	Galatians 1:8
Mark 13:10	Galatians 1:11
Mark 14:9	Galatians 2:7
Mark 16:15	Ephesians 1:13
Luke 4:18	Ephesians 6:15
Luke 7:22	Ephesians 6:19
Acts 8:25	Philippians 1:7
Acts 20:24	Philippians 1:12
Romans 1:1	Philippians 1:17
Romans 1:16	Philippians 1:27
Romans 2:16	Colossians 1:5
Romans 10:15	Colossians 1:23
Romans 10:16	1 Thessalonians 1:5
Romans 15:19	1 Thessalonians 2:4
1 Corinthians 1:17	2 Thessalonians 2:14
1 Corinthians 9:12	1 Timothy 1:11
1 Corinthians 9:14	2 Timothy 1:10
	Hebrews 4:2
	1 Peter 1:25
	1 Peter 4:6
	Revelation 14:6

Project L.A.M.B.S. International

Making disciples is the call and mandate of our Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus urged the disciples to follow Him. He laid down before us the teaching and the walk that we need to follow with Jesus as our supreme example. It is imperative for every believer and the church to know that disciples are not born but they are made. For the church to be strong in the last days, we must be about the business of equipping the saints (disciples) for the work of service.

Dr. James Humphries has been ministering for over 40 years, and has experience in a variety of ministries including church planting, children's ministry, street ministry, youth ministry, camp ministry, pastoral work and directing and teaching in schools all over the world. In addition, he has taken part in traveling and ministering in the USA, Mexico, Ukraine, Myanmar, Israel, Jamaica, Japan, Thailand and across most of Canada. He completed his B.R.E. and his M.A. from Briercrest, and his Doctorate of Ministry from Providence Theological Seminary in the spring of 1999.

In January 1996, Dr. James Humphries resigned as pastor of a local church with a vision to reach further abroad with the Word of God and to use it to train labourers for Christ (Matthew 9:36-38). He shared this with Dr. David Smith and Dr. Chuck Nichols of Providence Theological Seminary and they greatly encouraged Dr. James Humphries and his wife Irene to develop what God was laying on their hearts.

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In March 1997, they traveled to Jamaica where they met several pastors who were very concerned about the need for training and disciplining their young people as leaders in their churches. Dr. James Humphries and Irene did not know this would be the starting point to an international ministry of discipleship training around the world known as Project L.A.M.B.S. International.

To date, Project L.A.M.B.S. has ministered in Canada, Myanmar, Ukraine, Africa, Jamaica, Mexico, Israel, Thailand, Japan, Dominican Republic, Naga Land and China. We offer over 30 different courses. Our graduates number over 1000, and are serving worldwide. Out of this group of graduates, we have equipped and trained directors, teachers and pastors who in turn are carrying out II Timothy 2:1-2 to an even larger group of people.

In 2002 it was discovered that Irene had cancer again. God gave Irene another three years and because of that she was still able to travel and teach in many different countries. Shortly after what was to be her last trip, Irene was hospitalized in February, 2005. A few weeks later she went home to be with her Lord and Saviour on March 9.

My second wife Hkaw Win was raised and trained mostly in the land of Myanmar. She has earned B.th, University Degree and a master of Divinity Degree in Myanmar. In April 2007 she finished a second Master's Degree at Providence Theological Seminary in Christian Education. After July 1st, 2007 she headed back to Myanmar to head up the Christian Education Department for the Myitkyina Kachin Baptist

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Association and oversaw various ministries to 62 churches. After her four-year term was completed, she has been traveling and working as an interpreter and doing translations concerning various kinds of discipleship books and materials.

Over the last ten years we have lived in the countries of Myanmar and Thailand preparing a variety of resources in the Burmese (Myanmar) and Kachin Languages. To date we have published over 20 different kinds of books. Our goal is to equip and establish people as Disciples of Christ. Please pray for God's leading and wisdom. Our walk with Christ has taken us down many challenging pathways but we have seen the faithfulness of our Lord and Savior in every area. His grace has been sufficient.

Founder and Director,

Dr. James and Hkaw Win Humphries

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Discipleship / Leadership Booklets

1. My Call with Christ
2. Called to His Purpose
3. Abiding in the Vine
4. Knowledge, Wisdom and Understanding
5. Scripture: The Disciples' Anchor
6. Baptism: The Disciples' Testimony
7. The Disciples' Church
8. Servant Leadership
9. Teacher / Learner, Learner / Teacher
10. Being Wise Builders
11. Shepherds of God's Sheep
12. End Times
13. Relationship Pilgrimage
14. Christ's Disciple
15. Disciple's Prayer Life
16. Communion
17. Ambassadors for Christ
18. Full Armour of God
19. Good News for Challenging and Changing Times
20. Christ our Mediator
21. Jesus our Deliverer
22. Mission and Missionaries
23. Passing the Torch
24. Full Gospel Discipleship
25. Five Fold Ministry
26. Envisioning Change
27. Individualism VS Community
28. Igniting a Mission Fire
29. Igniting Discipleship Equipping
30. Igniting the Gospel
31. Psalm 23
32. Beatitudes

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