

Christian Growth

By Felix Immanuel

This eBook is a collection of 16 articles of various topics that every true Christian must know and understand from the Bible in order to grow in righteousness and holiness to be sinless and undefiled before God when the Jesus Christ comes back. Each chapter is organized into an individual article. Read and be blessed.

Other books by the author includes Christian Truth, Christian Journey, Handling Deceptions in Christianity, Apostate Paul: Deceiver of Christianity, Christian Comics, Devil's Deceptions, Christian Essentials, Revelation: Verse-by-Verse Commentary, Daniel: Verse-by-Verse Commentary and Bible Timelines.

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Overview

Christian Growth is a collection of 16 articles of various topics that every true Christian must know and understand from the Bible in order to grow in righteousness and holiness to be sinless and undefiled before God when the Jesus Christ comes back. Each chapter is organized into an individual article. Read and be blessed.

Q & A: Biblical Age of the Earth

1. What is one full day and who defined it?

It was God who defined a Day.

(Genesis 1:5) God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. So the evening and the morning were the first day.

2. Which day was Sun created?

The Sun was created on the fourth day.

(Genesis 1:17-19) God set them in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth, and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness. And God saw that [it was] good. So the evening and the morning were the fourth day.

3. Did God divide light from darkness before the creation of the Sun?

Yes. God divided the light “twice”. First in Genesis 1:4 before the creation of Sun and in Genesis 1:17-19 after the creation of the Sun.

(Genesis 1:4) And God saw the light, that [it was] good; and God divided the light from the darkness.

4. Does a creation day related to the Sun?

Absolutely not! A creation day has nothing to do with Sun because, the first 4 creation day exists even without the Sun.

5. If a creation day is not related to the Sun, how can it be 24 hours?

A creation day is not 24 hours. Bible simply puts it as a day. A day defined by God split by light and darkness.

6. What is the relation of a day to 24 hours and when did it began?

God created the Sun, Moon and the stars for signs and seasons for all his creations, not for Himself to be bound by it.

(Genesis 1:14) Then God said, “Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and seasons, and for days and years;

7. How can we be sure that there are two timelines – i.e., a creation day and a normal day?

God Himself defined what a day is. He divided the light from the darkness to call it day and a night. Interestingly, He does twice, clearly indicating two separate timelines. The first time, He Himself divided it on the first day. But on the fourth day, He created Sun to divide light from darkness.

(Genesis 1:4) And God saw the light, that [it was] good; and God divided the light from the darkness. (Genesis 1:17-19) God set them in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth, and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness. And God saw that [it was] good. So the evening and the morning were the fourth day.

8. Are there any references in the Bible that Creation day is not 24 hours, apart from the ‘lack of Sun’ evidence from Day 1 to 4?

If God rested on 7th day and we are yet to enter His rest which is on the 7th day, what day we are on? 6th day.

(Hebrews 4:4-5, 9-10) For He has spoken in a certain place of the seventh [day] in this way: “And God rested on the seventh day from all His works” and again in this [place:] “They shall not enter My rest.” There remains therefore a rest for the people of God. For he who has entered His rest has himself also ceased from his works as God [did] from His.

9. If there are two timelines, and if we are still on the 6th day, does this mean the earth is older than 6000 years? So, what is the significance of 6000 years?

Yes. The earth is not 6000 years old. But rather, simply older than 6000 years old. Bible never states how long was each of creation day. While the 6th day started long back before 6000 years, we never know when.

However, Adam was created 6000 years back which can be calculated based on Biblical genealogies.

10. If the age of the earth is more than 6000 years, could it be billions of years?

Certainly Yes! But bible never states it how long based on normal 24 hour day. It only says, God created everything in 6 days and rested on the 7th day. While we are still on the 6th day, we never know how long each creation day is.

Land Vomits its Inhabitants

There are laws for entire mankind which are a super set for the laws of Moses and the New Covenant. God expects all nations to follow these as a basic requirement. These are not just part of Mosaic Law but every nation on earth must follow them if they want live in their own lands. For easy identification, we will refer them as 'Universal Law'.

Here we will look into the sins which are part of this Universal Law that will cause a land to vomit its inhabitants, either pagan or Christian.

Universal Laws

Incest

None of you shall approach anyone who is near of kin to him, to uncover his nakedness: I am the LORD. The nakedness of your father or the nakedness of your mother you shall not uncover. She is your mother; you shall not uncover her nakedness. The nakedness of your father's wife you shall not uncover; it is your father's nakedness. The nakedness of your sister, the daughter of your father, or the daughter of your mother, whether born at home or elsewhere, their nakedness you shall not uncover. The nakedness of your son's daughter or your daughter's daughter, their nakedness you shall not uncover; for theirs is your own nakedness. The nakedness of your father's wife's daughter, begotten by your father—she is your sister—you shall not uncover her nakedness. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's sister; she is near of kin to your father. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your mother's sister, for she is near of kin to your mother. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's brother. You shall not approach his wife; she is your aunt. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your daughter-in-law—she is your son's wife—you shall not uncover her nakedness. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your brother's wife; it is your brother's nakedness. You shall not uncover the nakedness of a woman and her daughter, nor shall you take her son's daughter or her daughter's daughter, to uncover her nakedness. They are near of kin to her. It is wickedness. Lev 18:6-17

Incest is a grave sin. Bible gives a detailed near of kin list who are not supposed to be married. In other words, except cousin marriages, all other

near of kin marriages within a family are incest. If a nation commits incest, the land will vomit it's inhabitants out.

Marrying Multiple Sisters

Nor shall you take a woman as a rival to her sister, to uncover her nakedness while the other is alive. Lev 18:18

If a man married two or more sisters from a same family it is against God. If a nation actively participates in allowing men to marry multiple sisters of same family, then the land will vomit it's inhabitants out.

Sex during Mensuration

Also you shall not approach a woman to uncover her nakedness as long as she is in her customary impurity. Lev 18:19

It is forbidden to have sex when his wife is in her periods. If the people of a nation does this thing, they will be vomited out.

Adultery

Moreover you shall not lie carnally with your neighbor's wife, to defile yourself with her. Lev 18:20

Adultery is a grave sin. If people participate in adultery, the land they live in will vomit them out.

Killing Own Children

And you shall not let any of your descendants pass through the fire to Molech. nor shall you profane the name of your God: I am the LORD. Lev 18:21

Whether it s an ancient practice of child sacrifice or modern practice of abortion, killing their own child will cause the land to vomit those inhabitants.

Homosexuality

You shall not lie with a male as with a woman. It is an abomination. Lev 18:22

Just as in the days of Noah where sons of God went after strange flesh and as in the days of Sodom where homosexuality is widely practiced, today, the

nations who once sent missionaries had become Sodom themselves ready to be overthrown and vomited by the land.

Bestiality

Nor shall you mate with any animal, to defile yourself with it. Nor shall any woman stand before an animal to mate with it. It is perversion. Lev 18:23

Bestiality is a grave sin. If people participate in bestiality, the land they live in will vomit them out.

Punishment

Do not defile yourselves with any of these things; for by all these the nations are defiled, which I am casting out before you. For the land is defiled; therefore I visit the punishment of its iniquity upon it, and the land vomits out its inhabitants. Lev 18:24-25

If you carefully notice, not all sins are included in this list. For example, idolatry is not included. While Idolatry is still a sin, it neither causes the land to vomit its inhabitants nor does God cast them out.

What is Vomiting?

Lev 18:26-28 'You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, and shall not commit any of these abominations, either any of your own nation or any stranger who dwells among you (for all these abominations the men of the land have done, who were before you, and thus the land is defiled), lest the land vomit you out also when you defile it, as it vomited out the nations that were before you.

The Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites were killed, destroyed and invaded by Israel. The land of Canaan was defiled by the children of Canaan and the land vomited them out. Vomiting could mean, a nation being invaded, people moving out as asylum seekers, refugees, slaves, prisoners etc. It can either result from another nation or power or through natural disasters.

Threshold

Gen 15:16 "But in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete."

God is not using Israel to punish immediately but rather, He waits for 400 years until it becomes no longer bearable for the land to vomit of Amorites out. This is same for today's countries as well. When any group of people have these sins abound, God will wait until it is full so that He can wipe them out.

Conclusion

The following are to be avoided under Universal Laws for all nations, and if any group of people disobeys, the land which they live will be defiled and it will vomit them out.

1. Incest
2. Marrying Multiple Sisters
3. Sex during Mensuration
4. Adultery
5. Killing own Children
6. Homosexuality
7. Bestiality

These 7 laws are required to be followed by any group of people, either Christian or pagan, so that he can dwell safely in his land.

Discerning Deceptions

We live in these last days which are like the days of Noah and the days of Lot.

*Mark 13:22 “For false christs and false prophets will rise and show signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, **even the elect**.”*

These are troublesome days where even the elect could be deceived. Hence, it is essential for every true Christian to discern deceptions and false doctrines.

Cry Out for Discernment

*Prov 2:3-5 Yes, if you **cry out for discernment**, And lift up your voice for understanding, If you seek her as silver, And search for her as for hidden treasures; Then you will **understand the fear of the LORD**, And **find the knowledge of God**.*

In the book of Proverbs, we see that if we cry out for discernment, we will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God. The first thing required for discernment is understanding the fear of the Lord.

*Prov 15:21 Folly is joy to him who is **destitute of discernment**, But a man of understanding **walks uprightly**.*

In the above verse, we see that the man with understanding is the one having discernment and walks uprightly.

Undiscerning Deserves Death

*Rom 1:29-32 being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, **undiscerning**, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful; who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.*

It is important to note that among those who deserve death, undiscerning is one of the characteristics mentioned for those who call themselves Christians but have no discernment.

Exercise to Discern

*1Cor 12:7-10 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all: for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another **discerning of spirits**, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.*

Discerning of Spirits is a gift from God, which is a manifestation of the Holy Spirit. This is not the same discernment we are discussing here.

*Heb 5:14 But **solid food** belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses **exercised to discern** both good and evil.*

Discernment must be trained or exercised to whom solid food belongs to and it is not a gift. So, how do we exercise for discernment? As we saw earlier, the first thing we need to do is cry out for discernment in order to understand the fear of the Lord.

*Prov 8:13 The fear of the LORD is to **hate evil**; Pride and arrogance and the evil way And the perverse mouth I hate.*

*Prov 16:6 In mercy and truth Atonement is provided for iniquity; And by the fear of the LORD one **departs from evil**.*

So, what is this fear of the Lord? It means to hate and depart from evil. This is the beginning of wisdom. Hence, the understanding to hate and depart from evil is discernment.

Knowledge of God

*Prov 2:3-5 Yes, if you **cry out for discernment**, And lift up your voice for understanding, If you seek her as silver, And search for her as for*

*hidden treasures; Then you will **understand the fear of the LORD,** And **find the knowledge of God.***

When we cry out for discernment, we not only understand the fear of the Lord, but also find the knowledge of God. It is this knowledge of God that helps us to discern.

*Hos 6:6 For I desire mercy and not sacrifice, And the **knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.***

God desires the knowledge of Him more than the burnt offerings. While fear of the Lord is to hate and depart from evil, what is the knowledge of God mean?

*1Cor 15:34 Awake to righteousness, and **do not sin**; for some do not have the **knowledge of God.** I speak this to your shame.*

*2Pet 2:20-22 For if, after they have **escaped the pollutions** of the world through the **knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ**, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning. For it would have been better for them not to have known the **way of righteousness**, than having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them. But it has happened to them according to the true proverb: “A dog returns to his own vomit,” and, “a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire.”*

The knowledge of God is to know how to be holy or the way of righteousness so that we don't sin and escape the pollutions of the world.

Knowing God Intimately

*Gen 4:1 Now **Adam knew Eve his wife**, and she conceived and bore Cain, and said, “I have acquired a man from the LORD.”*

Marriage is not about just having the knowledge of the spouse. A husband knowing his wife in the Bible is far more richer and intimate in it's meaning. When a wife spends more time with her husband, she will come to know more about her husband, his liking, his desire, his actions and other intimate details shared only between herself and her husband. The more she knows about her husband, the more she will be able to discern a message if sent from her husband or a stranger. This discernment can be of his writing style, handwriting and other intimate details shared only

between the wife and the husband. How will a wife discern if a message is from her husband if she haven't spent enough time to read his previous messages or see his hand writing or spend time intimately?

During Nazi persecution, Corrie ten Boom received a secret message under the stamp, telling her "all watches in your closet are safe," meaning that the Jews escaped. How did Corrie knew that the watches in the closet are safe means that the Jews escaped, unless the sender of the message and Corrie shared a secret knowledge not known to Nazis or anyone else? In Roman times, the persecuted Christians used the symbol of fish. These are examples from history where shared knowledge between believers were used during persecution.

But between a husband and wife, the shared knowledge is far more intimate and the more time spent is knowing more and more about each other. This also means, in the absence of her husband, the wife will be able to discern and know exactly if a message is from her husband and/or if she is required to take a decision, she will take the correct decision her husband will take.

*Isa 62:5 For as a young man marries a virgin, So shall your sons marry you; And as the **bridegroom rejoices over the bride**, So shall your **God rejoice over you**.*

*John 10:27 "**My sheep hear My voice**, and I know them, and **they follow Me**.*

God's relation to His people is compared to the relationship between a husband and his wife. God expects us to know Him intimately and the way He is known is by His judgments. This does not mean He is not merciful or compassionate. While Scripture mentions the attributes of God as being compassionate, merciful, gracious, long-suffering etc., He is specifically mentioned as known by the judgment He executes. The book of Ezekiel is full of these judgments which will make the people know the Lord God.

*Ps 9:16 **The LORD is known by the judgment He executes**; The wicked is snared in the work of his own hands. Meditation. Selah*

*Exod 7:5 "And the Egyptians shall **know that I am the LORD**, when I stretch out My hand on Egypt and **bring out the children of Israel from among them**."*

*Ezek 7:4 My eye will not spare you, Nor will I have pity; But I will repay your ways, And your abominations will be in your midst; Then you shall **know that I am the LORD!***

The more we read the Scriptures with His word abiding in us and spend time in prayer, the more we will be able to grow in the knowledge of God which is to know His righteous judgments and His desire for our holiness and righteousness. The more we know God, the more we will be able to discern deceptions that deviates from what He pleases.

Conclusion

- Cry out for discernment and you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God.
- Undiscerning are deserving death.
- Fear of the Lord is to hate and depart from evil.
- Knowledge of God is to know how to be holy and the way of righteousness. The Lord is known by the judgment He executes.
- The more we know God intimately, the more we will be able to discern deceptions that deviates from what He pleases.

Depart from Sugar Coated Gospel

Why should sinners need love and grace unless they are aware of the coming judgment? Many of today's churches are hiding the fact and sugar coat the coming judgment with a false deceptive unconditional love.

Mark 6:11-12 "And whoever will not receive you nor hear you, when you depart from there, shake off the dust under your feet as a testimony against them. Assuredly, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city!" So they went out and preached that people should repent.

Preaching the message of Christ should make people repent and turn back from sins and not allow them to live in a false love which is not from God, and grace which is turned into lewdness. However, many churches preach God's love and grace without mentioning why God loved and showed grace, which is from His wrath and judgment. Depart from these deceptive preaching and churches who don't preach the truth.

Christ never knew sinners

*Matt 7:21-23 "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' And then I will declare to them, **'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'***

All Christians can call upon Christ but He does not know those who practice lawlessness. Neither does the love of the Father in those who love the world.

*1 John 2:15 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the **love of the Father is not in him.***

These are some of the important teachings of Christ which are never mentioned in most modern churches because most of their messages are sugar coated with love diluting the gospel.

Devil is the father of sinners

*John 8:44 “You are of your father the devil, and **the desires of your father you want to do**. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.*

Christ did not preach a sugar coated message. He declared that devil is the father of those who do not believe in His Word and follow the desires of devil and sin.

*John 8:34-35 Jesus answered them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, **whoever commits sin is a slave of sin**. And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever.*

All who commits sin are not His children but slaves.

*Heb 12:7-9 If you **endure chastening**, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are **illegitimate and not sons**. Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected us, and we paid them respect. Shall we not much more readily be in **subjection to the Father of spirits and live**? For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed best to them, but He for our profit, that we may be **partakers of His holiness**.*

The author of Hebrews goes even further and calls those who don't endure chastisement and are not ready to be in subjection to the Father, as illegitimate.

Repent! Believe in True Gospel

*Matt 4:17 From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, “**Repent**, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”*

*John 5:14 Afterward Jesus found him in the temple, and said to him, “See, you have been made well. **Sin no more**, lest a worse thing come upon you.”*

*John 8:11 She said, “No one, Lord.” And Jesus said to her, “Neither do I condemn you; go and **sin no more**.”*

Christ never sugar coated the truth. Sinners need to repent, turn from their sinful ways and then they will be adopted by God and loved as His son or daughter. Otherwise their father is the Devil. Hence, depart from sugar coated gospel that preaches a false unconditional love that denies His righteous requirement of entering through the narrow gate and grace turned into licentiousness to sinners, without mentioning His wrath and the coming judgment on all ungodly and sinners.

Repent Now! Believe in the true gospel of Christ.

Scripture vs Word of God

All Scripture is inspired by God or God breathed. Many Christians including several Pastors refer Scripture as Word of God due to ignorance not knowing the difference between two. While it is generally not deceiving in nature to refer Scripture as Word of God but if a doctrine is drawn out of it, you need to stop listening to it and be cautious.

*Luke 24:44-45 Then He said to them, “These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the **Law** of Moses and the **Prophets** and the **Psalms** concerning Me.” And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the **Scriptures**.*

Jesus Christ defined what Scripture is which includes the Law of Moses, Prophets and Psalms. The New Testament on the other hand repeatedly uses Scripture to preach Jesus Christ and validate their claims.

*John 5:38-40 But you do not have **His Word** abiding in you, because whom He sent, Him you do not believe. You search the **Scriptures**, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me. But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life.*

Jesus Christ Himself differentiates His Word and Scriptures as we read in the above verse. Do not be deceived!

Scripture	Word of God
Confined all under sin <i>But the Scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe (Gal 3:22)</i>	Set free from sin <i>For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death (Rom 8:2).</i>

<p>Inspired by God</p> <p><i>All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work (2Ti 3:16-17).</i></p>	<p>He is God</p> <p><i>He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God (Rev 19:13).</i></p>
<p>Testifies Jesus Christ</p> <p><i>But you do not have His word abiding in you, because whom He sent, Him you do not believe. You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me (Joh 5:38-39).</i></p>	<p>He is Jesus Christ</p> <p><i>And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth (Joh 1:14).</i></p>

<p>Will lead to Eternal Life</p> <p><i>But you do not have His word abiding in you, because whom He sent, Him you do not believe. You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me (Joh 5:38-39).</i></p>	<p>He is Eternal Life</p> <p><i>Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me (Joh 14:6). And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life (1Jn 5:20).</i></p>
<p>Searchable</p> <p><i>These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so (Act 17:11).</i></p>	<p>Unsearchable</p> <p><i>Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; And His greatness is unsearchable (Psa 145:3).</i></p>
<p>Written by Prophets, Inspired by God</p> <p><i>Bible is a book written by prophets inspired by God. There are no errors anywhere in the whole Scripture including the Old and New Testament. However, this is not equal to the Word of God but testifies the Word of God.</i></p>	<p>God Himself</p> <p><i>Word of God is not the scripture. He is Jesus Christ and He is God. I can give all references differentiating a book and God but that's not my aim. I just want everyone to understand that wherever Scripture says 'Word of God' it is actually representing Jesus Christ and not a book.</i></p>

Beware! Paul's letters are not equal to God's words which does not return to Him void or Christ's words which will never pass even after the heaven and earth pass away. By calling scripture as Word of God, Paul's letters and the disciples' epistles are elevated to an authority equal to God's which is a terrible sin. This is by no means degrading either Paul's or other apostle's letters but they cannot be exalted to be equal with Christ's or God's. Do not be deceived.

How to read Paul's Letters?

Paul's letters are known to be twisted even two millennia back based on what Peter wrote about some people who twist Paul's letters. Even today, many doctrines which Christ did not preach are solely based on Paul's letters. What's going on? Why are so many deceived by Paul's teachings?

*2Pet 3:14-16 Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, **without spot and blameless**; and consider that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation—as also our beloved brother **Paul**, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable **people twist to their own destruction**, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures.*

The fact is, Paul did not preach anything wrong or preached a false doctrines. However, twisters, as Peter calls them, derive teachings and doctrines solely from his teachings, completely out of context of the old testament verses which Paul uses. In other words, when Paul wrote his letter referring from the law or the old testament prophets, he expected every reader to go back to old testament and fully understand the context around that verse and then apply them the way Paul intended. However, many never refer the old testament to understand what Paul is writing.

To fully understand how to read Paul's letters, we need to first understand his approach. This helps to correctly understand what He is saying rather than fall into trap of twisters which Peter warned on Paul's letters.

Acts 17:2-3, 11 Then Paul, as his custom was, went in to them, and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures, explaining and demonstrating that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead, and saying, “This Jesus whom I preach to you is the Christ.” These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so.

There are three steps in the process.

1. Paul put forward the idea: “This Jesus whom I preach to you is the Christ”

2. Paul then reasoned from Scriptures, explaining and demonstrating that Christ had to suffer and rise again.
3. Bereans received the word with eagerness and searched the Scriptures daily to verify Paul's claims. These are the three steps Paul mostly takes as mentioned in the book of Acts.

Many Christians often miss out what Bereans did in the last step, which leads into total darkness of having no context of scripture or Christ's teachings which Paul is referring to.

Example: Faith in Paul's Mind

*Rom 1:17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "**The just shall live by faith.**"*

*Gal 3:11 But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for "**the just shall live by faith.**"*

*Heb 10:38 Now **the just shall live by faith**; But if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him."*

The book of Hebrews is generally attributed to Paul by several scholars, even though there is nothing in it to suggest that Paul is the author. Irrespective of it, let us see what does "faith" in the above verses actually mean in Scriptures?

*Hab 1:13 You are of purer eyes than to behold evil, And cannot look on wickedness. Why do You look on those who deal treacherously, And hold Your tongue when the wicked devours A person more righteous than he? ... Hab 2:3-4 For the vision is yet for an **appointed time**; But at the end it will speak, and it will not lie. Though it tarries, wait for it; **Because it will surely come, It will not tarry.** "Behold the proud, His soul is not upright in him; But the just shall live by his faith ... Hab 2:14 For the earth will be filled With the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, As the waters cover the sea.*

If you read Habakkuk in detail, you will soon realize, the faith is not just "believing" but it is a reference to the persecuted righteous people holding on to their righteousness without falling back and waiting for Christ's coming who will judge the wicked and fill the earth with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord.

*Acts 24:24-25 And after some days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, who was Jewish, he sent for Paul and heard him concerning the faith in Christ. Now as he reasoned about **righteousness, self-control,** and the **judgment** to come, Felix was afraid and answered, "Go away for now; when I have a convenient time I will call for you."*

This is also echoed in Paul's response to Felix. Paul clearly mentioned, righteousness, self-control and the coming judgment as faith in Christ.

Do not be deceived by modern day faith preachers who had drifted so much from the Scriptures. Always search the Scriptures to verify claims just as the Bereans did.

Conclusion

When you read Paul's letters, make sure to check the scripture reference he quotes to fully understand the context to avoid deceptions from many modern preachers.

Jesus is Not a Friend of Sinners

Jesus Christ as a friend of sinners is widely misquoted and often used to justify his closeness to sinners. Let's look into what the Bible actually says.

*Matt 11:15-19 "He who has ears to hear, let him hear! But to what shall I liken this generation? It is like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling to their companions, and saying: 'We played the flute for you, And you did not dance; We mourned to you, And you did not lament.' For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He has a demon.' The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and **they say**, 'Look, a glutton and a winebibber, **a friend of tax collectors and sinners!**' But wisdom is justified by her children."*

Jesus never referred Himself as friend of sinners but the people who also called John as having a demon. Hence, next time when you use this phrase or sing "Jesus, friend of sinners" from Casting Crowns, you are acknowledging that Jesus is also a glutton and a winebibber, and John the baptist has a demon. How unbiblical, deceiving and a misquoted phrase? The worst thing is, it is even sung in many churches with no discernment on what they are even singing!

Not a Friend of Sinners

*Matt 9:9-13 As Jesus passed on from there, He saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, "**Follow Me.**" So he arose and followed Him. Now it happened, as Jesus sat at the table in the house, that behold, **many tax collectors and sinners came and sat down with Him and His disciples.** And when the Pharisees saw it, they said to His disciples, "Why does your Teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" When Jesus heard that, He said to them, "Those who are well have no **need of a physician, but those who are sick. But go and learn** what this means: '**I desire mercy and not sacrifice.**' For I did not come to call the righteous, but **sinners, to repentance.**"*

We see here Matthew, a tax-collector followed Jesus Christ who came to his home. But many other tax-collectors and sinners also came and sat with Him. Note that Christ did not invite any of those other sinners or tax-collectors but they came and sat with Him. So, what is Jesus doing? Having fellowship? building friendship? Absolutely not! He is preaching sinners for

them to repent. It is more merciful to preach sinners to repentance than to walk away and leave them to die in their sins. Jesus is not hanging out with sinners or having any fellowship with them.

Who are the Friends of Jesus?

John 15:14 "You are My friends if you do whatever I command you."

Jesus's friends are those who do whatever He commands them to do. These followers of Christ who obey Him are not called as sinners. He is a friend of anyone who repents and obeys Him.

Beware!

It is not only unbiblical to use the phrase that Jesus is a friend of sinners, it is also sending a deceiving message to sinners and ungodly. Jesus is only friends of those who obey whatever He commanded. If you are deceived by these sugar coated messages, beware. He will declare He never knew you if you are a sinner. Repent now! Forsake your sinful ways and obey Him! Then, He will be your friend.

How to be Sinless?

Christ came into this world to free us from sin. But Christians still believe it is not possible to be free from sin and be sinless either because they have some sin in their life or they don't believe Christ can redeem them.

*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.**” Jesus answered them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, **whoever commits sin is a slave of sin.** And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever. Therefore if the **Son makes you free**, you shall be free indeed. (John 8:31-36)*

Jesus Christ said, if we abide in His word, we will know the truth and we will be set free. Being free from committing sins, we are no longer slave of sins.

So why do many Christians not free from their sins?

Knowing Christ

If we abide in His Word, we shall know the truth. We know that Christ is that truth (John 14:6). Knowing Christ is not the same as knowledge of Christ but it is much deeper.

*Now Adam **knew** Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, and said, “I have acquired a man from the LORD.” (Gen 4:1)*

*I will **betroth you** to Me in faithfulness, And you shall **know** the LORD. (Hos 2:20)*

It is deeper than an intimate relationship between the husband and a wife. In other words, just like a good wife who knew everything about her husband and builds the house, we are called to know everything about our Lord and build His kingdom. As a bride of Christ, we must know what He likes, His dislikes, things that He gets angry about, things that He get sad, things that makes Him happy, knowing what His judgments and decisions will be etc – everything about Him. This is knowing Christ.

*Now by this we know that **we know Him**, if we **keep His commandments**. He who says, “I know Him,” and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. (1John 2:3-4)*

How do you know that you know Him? If you obey His commandments. Hence, if we abide in His word or obeying His commandments, we will know that we know Him.

Difficult Entry

If we abide in His words, we know the Truth who is Christ and He will set us free from sins. Sounds easy right?

*“Because **narrow is the gate and difficult is the way** which leads to life, and there are **few who find it**. (Matt 7:14)*

But it is not easy. Christ Himself said it is difficult and only a few will find it. Which is why many Christians struggle to enter and never find it. Which is also why many think it is impossible to be in sinless perfection.

*But Jesus looked at them and said to them, “With men this is impossible, but **with God all things are possible**.” (Matt 19:26)*

With God all things are possible, but we must obey Him. So, what did He told us to do? Cut off.

Cut Off

The reason why many are trying hard but never enter is because, they are not willing to leave the things that causes them to sin. These can even be part of things that are essential to our life but Jesus clearly told us to cut off everything that causes you to sin including our own body parts. That is how serious He is taking about and the importance of being holy and sinless.

*If your right eye causes you to sin, **pluck it out** and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, **cut it off** and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell. (Matt 5:29-30)*

*For there are eunuchs who were born thus from their mother’s womb, and there are eunuchs who were made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs who have **made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven’s sake**. He who is able to accept it, let him accept it.” (Matt 19:12)*

Many tend to ignore these as only illustration. But truly He meant what He meant. We need to cut off the things that causes us to sin. If TV causes you to sin, throw it off. If internet causes you to sin, disconnect. If mobile causes you to sin, break it. If your job causes you to sin, resign. If your friend causes you to sin, keep away from him. If your wealth causes you to sin discard it. Jesus advises to even become a eunuch for the sake of kingdom of Heaven. This is where many Christians are failing.

Satan does not gives you a direct sin to commit. Rather, he sugar coats it with holiness or makes channels which you cannot cut off for they are too important in your life. TV and/or internet are important and it's has advantages, but what good it is if it becomes a channel for sin entering in your life? Similarly, identify the chains that are holding you to be slaves of sin and cut it off.

God can only call you and guide you to cut the chains that are holding you. He is not going to cut the things for you but you need to obey Him and cut off them yourself. This is exactly what Jesus said in His parable.

*“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and **sells all that he has** and buys that field. (Matt 13:44)*

*“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and **sold all that he had** and bought it. (Matt 13:45-46)*

*“So likewise, whoever of you does not **forsake all that he has** cannot be My disciple. (Luke 14:33)*

*“He who finds his life will lose it, and he who **loses his life for My sake** will find it. (Matt 10:39)*

If you want kingdom of Heaven, it can cost you a lot to lose, from everything to even your life. God cannot set you free unless you are not willing to cut off the things that causes you to sin which may be too important in your life but for the sake of God.

This is exactly what Paul said.

What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not! Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves

slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness? But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness. (Rom 6:15-18)

If you want to be free from sin, you must obey Christ.

Deception

*If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say that **we have no sin**, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:6-9)*

The biggest deception we often hear is, we all are sinners. You repeatedly hear this from those walking on the broad way leading to death and those who are slaves of sin. We were all sinful but after He had cleansed from all unrighteousness, we are to practice righteousness and walk in light – not sin and walk in darkness anymore.

*Awake to righteousness, and **do not sin**; for some do not have the knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame. (1Cor 15:34)*

*Afterward Jesus found him in the temple, and said to him, “See, you have been made well. **Sin no more**, lest a worse thing come upon you.” (John 5:14)*

*But your **iniquities** have **separated** you from your God; And your **sins** have **hidden His face** from you, So that He will not hear. (Isa 59:2)*

God is holy and He cannot tolerate your sin and still dwell with you. It is very important that we confess our sins and we sin no more.

Conclusion

If we abide in Christ's word, we will know the truth who is Christ. Knowing Christ is deeper than an intimate relationship between the husband and a wife. We know that we know Him if we obey His commandments. Christ

Himself said it is difficult and only a few will enter through narrow gate. We need to cut off the things that causes us to sin. By this, we will be able to obey Christ and free from committing sins. Thus we can no longer be slaves of sins.

*Whoever has been born of God **does not sin**, for His seed remains in him; and **he cannot sin**, because he has been born of God. (1John 3:9)*

Hence, we need to cut off everything that causes you to sin.

Generational Curses

Many Christians assume that asking forgiveness and coming into Christ to receive Salvation will automatically remove all curses which are upon them. But they are wrong! There are two things usually Christians mixed up. They are the generational curses and salvation. Generational curses, just like inheritance from forefathers, have nothing to do with Salvation. It is very different and most Christians mix up generational curses from salvation.

*Gal 3:13 Christ has **redeemed** us from **the curse of the law**, having become a curse for us (for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree")*

Christ came to end the curse of the law, not the curses which were upon gentile Christians who were never under the law. Also, Generational curses precedes the law, as we inherit the curses from Adam which is not of the law.

Inheriting Curses & Blessings

*2Kgs 5:27 "Therefore the **leprosy** of Naaman shall cling to you and **your descendants** forever." And he went out from his presence leprous, as white as snow.*

The descendants or the generations of Gehazi did not do any sin to receive this leprosy.

*2Kgs 10:30 And the LORD said to Jehu, "Because you have done well in doing what is right in My sight, and have done to the house of Ahab all that was in My heart, your sons shall sit on the throne of Israel to the **fourth generation**."*

The LORD said to Jehu that He will make his sons shall sit on the throne of Israel till the fourth generation because of what Jehu did. However, Jehoahaz (son) 2Kgs 13:2, Joash (grandson) 2Kgs 13:11, Jeroboam (great-grandson) 2Kgs 14:24 and finally Zechariah 2Kgs 15:9 – all did evil in the sight of the LORD.

2Kgs 15:12 This was the word of the LORD which He spoke to Jehu, saying, "Your sons shall sit on the throne of Israel to the fourth generation." And so it was.

God also fulfilled His promise of blessing to Jehu because he did what was right in the sight of the Lord irrespective of whether his descendants who received it was worthy of receiving it.

Sins Forgiven, Curses Remain

Curse is not sin but a result of sin. Our sins forgiven does not automatically remove our curses.

*2Sam 12:11-13 Thus says the LORD: ‘Behold, I will raise up adversity against you from your **own house**; and **I will take your wives before your eyes and give [them] to your neighbor**, and he shall lie with your wives in the sight of this sun. ‘For you did [it] secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, before the sun.’. So David said to Nathan, “I have sinned against the LORD.” And Nathan said to David, “The LORD also has put away your sin; you shall not die.*

*2Sam 16:22 So they pitched a tent for Absalom on the top of the house, and Absalom **went in to his father’s concubines** in the sight of all Israel.*

If God had put away the sin of David, then why is the curse executed by God later in chapter 16?

People often mix-up curses and blessings with salvation of God.

- You can be cursed with sickness and poverty by the sins of your forefathers and yet you can be saved in Christ.
- You can be blessed with health and riches of this world through the blessings of your forefathers and yet you may not be saved.

Every sin or good work produces curses and blessings for himself and his generation. When God forgives our sins, the curse because of that sin remains. Some curses are not the curses in Bible but put by men for the injustice done unto them and God executes them exactly how the victim cursed it. If we know that we did such an injustice, until we settle them, the curse will remain on us. We see this in Prov 26:2.

Prov 26:2 Like a flitting sparrow, like a flying swallow, So a curse without cause shall not alight.

The curses in Gen 3:19 (becoming dust) and Gen 3:16 (pregnancy pain), which are the results of the sin of Adam and Eve is still going throughout generations inspite of us believing in Christ and becoming a born again Christian. Did God removed the curse of pain during pregnancy when we believed in Christ? No!

Curses comes in various forms

Sickness, hunger (Exod 23:25), miscarriage, barrenness (Exod 23:26), history of violence in family (2Sam 12:10), short life, constantly facing violence (Prov 3:2) etc.

If these can be broken by coming into Christ, then why do many Christians still suffer? Coming back to the original question, yes, they will have the generational curse whatever they inherited from birth until they believed in Christ, but their generation will not because, the person believed in Christ and God will show mercy to his/her generation. Just to add, this does not mean Christians will not inherit any generational curses. It simply means, we will have God's mercy on our to overcome any curse.

Curses are from God and His Word will not return to Him void (Isa 55:11). He can through His mercy, delay the curse just like what God did to Hezekiah (2Chr 32:26) and Solomon (1Kgs 11:12).

If a Christian did some evil and asks forgiveness, then God will forgive his sins but the curse of that evil he did will be upon his head and his generation. Curses don't vanish away but if we are with Christ, God will give us the strength to face it and overcome it (or) even gives us a blessing that nullifies that curse. Daniel didn't do any sin to be in Babylon. Although he suffered as an alien for the sins of his forefathers, he was raised next to king by God and he lacked nothing.

Changing Curses to Blessings

Levites were cursed to be without any inheritance with his brothers.

Gen 49:5-7 "Simeon and Levi are brothers; Instruments of cruelty are in their dwelling place. Let not my soul enter their council; Let not my honor be united to their assembly; For in their anger they slew a man, And in their self-will they hamstrung an ox. Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce;

*And their wrath, for it is cruel! **I will divide them in Jacob And scatter them in Israel.***

Jacob before he died, prophesied what shall befall to his children in the last days. To Simeon and Levi, it's real bad news.

- Let not my soul enter their council
- Let not my honor be united to their assembly
- I will divide them in Jacob And scatter them in Israel.

Levi and Simeon were cursed even before Jacob's descendants were even born and inherited the land. It is such a tragedy. How can someone with such a curse ever inherit the promised land?

*Deut 18:1-2 "The priests, the Levites—all the tribe of Levi—shall have no part nor inheritance with Israel; they shall eat the offerings of the LORD made by fire, and His portion. Therefore they shall have no inheritance among their brethren; **the LORD is their inheritance**, as He said to them.*

Num 35:2 "Command the children of Israel that they give the Levites cities to dwell in from the inheritance of their possession, and you shall also give the Levites common-land around the cities.

Levi's choice of standing with the Lord and not worshiping the idols with their brothers changed their curse into a great blessing far beyond his brothers could ever imagine. This blessing did not nullify or change the curse that was spoken but the curse itself became a blessing.

*Josh 19:9 The inheritance of the children of Simeon was included in the share of the children of Judah, for the share of the children of Judah was too much for them. Therefore the children of Simeon had **their inheritance within the inheritance of that people.***

While Levite's curse became a great blessing, Simon's curse did not for he did not stand with the Lord.

God of Recompense

It is important to understand that 'visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children's children' is never referred in scriptures as a

curse. 'Generational Curse' is a term that we use because the generation had to answer for the iniquity of their forefathers.

While iniquity is synonymous to sin, is a bit different and used differently in the Bible. Iniquity is injustice which mainly deals with others. However, sin has a broader meaning which also includes iniquity and sins that aren't iniquity. e.g, lustful thoughts are not iniquity but rape, murder, cheating which deals with others is iniquity. God questions the generation (the so called generational curse) only for iniquity not sins.

*Jer 31:29-30 "In those days they shall say no more: 'The fathers have eaten sour grapes, And the children's teeth are set on edge.' But **every one shall die for his own iniquity**; every man who eats the sour grapes, his teeth shall be set on edge.*

*Ezek 18:17-18 Who has withdrawn his hand from the poor And not received usury or increase, But has executed My judgments And walked in My statutes— He shall not die for the iniquity of his father; He shall surely live! As for his father, Because he cruelly oppressed, Robbed his brother by violence, And did what is not good among his people, Behold, **he shall die for his iniquity**.*

The above verses say that the son shall not die for the iniquity of his father – which is exactly what God said to David 'you shall not die' in 2Sam 12:13 but still killed the child and God executed his judgement as He told David.

*Deut 24:16 "Fathers shall not be put to death for their children, nor shall children be put to death for their fathers; a person shall be put to **death for his own sin**.*

*Deut 5:9 you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, **visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations** of those who **hate Me***

It is our God in the same book of Deuteronomy who said everyone shall be put to death for his own sins also said that He will visit the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations.

*Jer 32:18 'You show lovingkindness to thousands, and **repay the iniquity of the fathers into the bosom of their children after them**—the Great, the Mighty God, whose name is the LORD of hosts.*

We also see Jeremiah saying the same. God will not put to death the children for father's sins does not nullify the fact that He will visit the iniquity of the fathers upon the children of those who hate Him.

*(Jer 51:56) ... For the LORD is the **God of recompense**, He will surely repay.*

Beware! Never think in your heart that you can do iniquity that affects others, then escape by asking forgiveness. The God of recompense never changed for He never changes yesterday, today or tomorrow and He will surely repay you and your descendants. Therefore, repent and do what is right in the sight of the Lord and He is merciful and compassionate to change your curses which are upon your head and upon your children into blessings far beyond what you can ever imagine.

Responsibilities of Godly Parents

Children are a heritage from the Lord. They are a reward from the Lord.

Ps 127:3 Behold, children [are] a heritage from the LORD, The fruit of the womb [is] a reward.

Such a great heritage from God are given to parents as a reward comes with great responsibilities.

Luke 11:11-13 “If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if [he asks] for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will [your] heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!”

Responsibilities of parents include taking good care of their children. Christian and pagan likewise knew them and follow them as Jesus mentioned. But here, we will focus on what it means to be a godly parents.

Unborn and Infants

*Ezek 16:20,45 “Moreover you took **your sons and your daughters**, whom you bore to Me, and these you sacrificed to them to be **devoured**. [Were] your [acts] of harlotry a small matter, ... “You [are] your mother’s daughter, loathing husband and children; and you [are] the sister of your sisters, who loathed their husbands and children; your mother [was] a Hittite and your father an Amorite.*

*Jer 1:5 “**Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; Before you were born I sanctified you; I ordained you a prophet to the nations.**”*

When God symbolically represented Israel as a women during the last days of the kingdom of Judah, He mentioned how they loathed Him by worshiping other gods and His inheritance, the children by sacrificing to other gods to be devoured. Like the ancient Israelite people, many mothers loath their own children even today. Instead of sacrifice they call it abortion and treat them like flesh and not human. Yet, God knew everyone and has a plan for them before they are even born.

*Isa 49:15 “Can a **woman forget** her nursing child, And not have **compassion** on the son of her womb? Surely they may forget, Yet I will not forget you.*

Here, God is comparing His characteristics with a different mother who never forgets her nursing child and have compassion on her children. This mother is not like some modern mothers who forget their infants in cars. Hence, one of the important responsibility for a parent, especially for a mother towards a nursing child, is to care for and not forget her child, also to have compassion towards her child and not to abort them.

Childhood

*Deut 8:5 “You should know in your heart that as **a man chastens his son**, [so] the LORD your God chastens you.*

*Heb 12:7 If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what **son** is there whom a **father** does not **chasten**?*

*Prov 1:8 My son, hear the **instruction** of your father, And do not **forsake the law of your mother**;*

*Prov 4:1 Hear, [my] children, the **instruction** of a father, And give attention to know understanding;*

The father has an important role of giving instructions and chastening the child. The mother has important role of putting rules for the child.

*Prov 13:24 He who spares his rod **hates his son**, But he who loves him disciplines him promptly.*

Every father who does not chastens hates his child.

*Prov 22:15 **Foolishness** [is] bound up in the **heart of a child**; The **rod of correction** will drive it far from him.*

*Prov 29:15 The rod and rebuke give wisdom, But a child left [to himself] brings **shame to his mother**.*

Today we live in a world where chastening is seen as abuse and rules for child are seen as fascism. Hence, one of the important role for a father is to chasten and instruct the child while the mother puts rules for the child.

Youth

*Prov 19:18 **Chasten** your son while there is **hope**, And do not set your heart on his destruction.*

It is very important to understand that chastening and disciplining cannot be done forever. A parent cannot smack a child who has grown more than the parent's shoulders. The level of chastening also reduces significantly because the child had grown up. Usually, restricting access or chastening at this point will backfire and hard.

*Gen 8:21 And the LORD smelled a soothing aroma. Then the LORD said in His heart, "I will never again curse the ground for man's sake, although the **imagination of man's heart [is] evil from his youth**; nor will I again destroy every living thing as I have done.*

*Eccl 11:10 Therefore remove sorrow from your heart, And **put away evil from your flesh**, For childhood and youth [are] **vanity**.*

The imagination of youth is evil. The preacher in Ecclesiastes advises the youth to put away evil from flesh because they are vanity.

Prov 22:6 Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it.

Hence, chastening and training must be done while there is hope, when the child is young. If the child is grown with chastening and training in the way of the Lord, then the child will not leave them when s/he grows up. These days, a new unchastened generation are being raised who boast on their shame in foolishness and take pride of it mocking Paul's instructions of wearing modest apparel.

*1Tim 2:9 in like manner also, that the **women adorn themselves in modest apparel**, with propriety and moderation, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing,*

We have mothers who don't chasten kids but encourage to be shameful and sinful.

*1Sam 2:22-25 Now **Eli was very old**; and he heard everything his sons did to all Israel, and how they lay with the women who assembled at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. So he said to them, "**Why do you do such things?** For I hear of your evil dealings from all the people. No, my*

*sons! For [it is] not a good report that I hear. You make the LORD's people transgress. If one man sins against another, God will judge him. But if a man sins against the LORD, who will intercede for him?" Nevertheless they did not heed the voice of their father, because the LORD desired to kill them. ... 27 Then **a man of God came to Eli** and said to him, "Thus says the LORD: 'Did I not clearly reveal Myself to the house of your father when they were in Egypt in Pharaoh's house?"*

God expects parents to warn youth and even adult children who sin against God. However, as we see in the case of Eli's sons, it is hard for youth and grown ups to endure chastening from older parents. It is important to note, if we do not properly chasten and train our children to bring them into the way of the Lord, God will question the parents, just as He questioned Eli.

Practical Suggestions

Always chose a spouse who is a believer in Christ. This is the first step is becoming a godly parents. Chastening and training in the ways of the Lord is not about having strict rules for children while having all temptations within the house. In the world filled with sin, even the news teach wrong and abominable things to kids. Here are some practical tips actively used by us to guard children from pollution of the world.

- **Disconnect / restrict TV:** Programs are always designed to make sure you watch again, wasting valuable God given time in something useless. Parents need to make sure TV is not a hurdle for children to obedience to God. i.e., things that are indirectly taught in them. If an immoral lifestyle is shown in TV many times, it becomes normal for the person who is watching it. Are you teaching children God's ways or your TV is teaching children the devil's ways? Instead of TV connection, kids can be given freedom to play any of christian cartoons in DVD/CDs/external HDD. This way, parents know exactly what they watch and they grow in the knowledge of God. Some of the good cartoons that can recommended are,
 - Veggie Tales (veggietales.com)
 - Superbook (cbn.com/superbook)

- Theo Presents (theopresents.com) – You can purchase online and download as mp4 file. Excellent videos teaching theology for kids using a Tom and Jerry style cartoons.
 - *(and many more)*
- **Offline Wiki:** Children don't need to browse and search in a place filled with sin and temptations. It is understandable that kids may require to do research on the internet for their studies. To overcome this, you can use an offline Wikipedia called kiwix.org. It also has a school version where Wikipedia pages are hand-picked and verified.
- **Home Internet Security** is from OpenDNS (opendns.com/home-internet-security) to change the DNS servers in your router instead of the ISP provided. This will block most of the known offensive websites on any device using the internet connection from home. You can also configure several categories to get blocked depending on the age of children.
- **K9 Web Protection** is a free Internet filter and parental control software for home Windows or Mac computer. This installs on the computer and have several categories to block. Time restrictions can also be enforced. K9 also allows parents to monitor the browsing behavior rather than blocking websites. You can know more about it at K9 Web Protection website (www1.k9webprotection.com).
- **Do not leave kids alone:** It important to remember, a child left to itself brings shame (Prov 29:15). However, modern parents are after money and work, leaving children to themselves having no idea of their whereabouts who do things shameful to speak about. Every family situation is different but parents need to decide how to make sure their kids are not left alone to their own.
- **Family Prayer:** It is important to do family prayer everyday. Children must be asked to read the the Bible and explain what they learnt. This cultivates the habit of reading and meditating the Bible in children.

Conclusion

The responsibilities for a new parent, especially for a mother towards a nursing child, is to care for and not forget her child, also to have compassion towards her child and not to abort them. When the child grows, the father has an important role in chastening and instructing the child while the mother puts rules for the child. Chastening and disciplining cannot be done forever. God expects parents to warn their youth and even if their children had grown up as adults to depart from sins.

What does it mean to eat Christ's body & drink His blood?

Often referred as communion which is done in remembrance of what Christ had done for us, eating Christ's body & drinking His blood as Jesus Christ said, is a teaching even Jesus's disciples found hard.

*Matt 26:26-28 And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, "Take, **eat**; this is My **body**." Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "**Drink** from it, all of you. For this is My **blood** of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.*

What does it mean?

*John 6:53-57 Then Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood **has eternal life**, and I will raise him up at the last day. **For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed**. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me.*

When Jesus spoke these words, the disciples said, "This is a hard saying; who can understand it?" and Jesus reply was "Does this offend you?"

- You don't eat unless you are hungry or drink unless we are thirsty
- The bread and the fruit of vine are symbols.
- Eating His body and drinking His blood are not literal but spiritual.
- A spiritual food and and drink.

Jesus Himself in His teachings gives an explanation for what it could mean.

*John 6:35 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**.*

Hence, eating his Body represents “coming to Him” and drinking His blood represents “believing on Him”, so that we shall never hunger and never thirst. This is why Christ said: Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life

*John 3:15 “that whoever **believes in Him** should not perish but have **eternal life**.*

John 6:37 “All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out.

Christ is conveying an important message through this passover meal, to make us understand that “coming to Him” and “believing in Him” is extremely important to have eternal life.

Preparation:

*1 Cor 11:28-30 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks in an **unworthy manner** eats and drinks **judgment to himself**, not discerning the Lord’s body. For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep.*

We know Paul is not referring to a physical weakness or sleep but a spiritual one. We also know that kingdom of Heaven is not about eating and drinking. We also know from Mark 7:15 that nothing that enters a man from outside can defile a man. So, how is that we can come to Christ and believe in Him unworthily? Yes! We can come to Christ and even believe in Him unworthily.

Coming to Christ Unworthily

Remember the parable of the Wedding invitation in Matthew 22.

Matt 22:11-13 “But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who did not have on a wedding garment. So he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?’ And he was speechless. Then the king said to the servants, ‘Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

Garment is often referred in Scriptures as righteousness as in Ps 132:9.

Ps 132:9a Let Your priests be clothed with righteousness

We are to be clothed with righteousness. We can even respond to the King's invitation and go. But if we are without righteousness we are unworthy. This is why for the church of Sardis we see:

Rev 3:4 "You have a few names even in Sardis who have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with Me in white, for they are worthy."

Therefore, do not defile your garments if you are to be found worthy to walk with Christ.

Matt 16:24 Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me."

Isn't we are to come to Him how we are and He shall cleanse us with His blood? Very true, but coming to Christ means you need to deny yourself, take up your cross and follow Him. You cannot come to Christ by refusing to deny yourself or not taking up your cross. Those who walk on the broadway instead on the narrow and difficult path, come to Christ unworthily.

Believing in Christ Unworthily

Remember the parable of Sower in Luke 8?

Luke 8:11-15 "Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. Those by the wayside are the ones who hear; then the devil comes and takes away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. But the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, who believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away. Now the ones that fell among thorns are those who, when they have heard, go out and are choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity. But the ones that fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep it and bear fruit with patience."

We are not to believe or have faith like the way side, rocky, filled with thorns but a good ground to produce fruit with patience. If you believe like the seed that fell on the way side, where you do not believe and the devil

will take away the word of God from their heart. If you believe like the seed that fell on the rocky ground, it doesn't have roots or a strong foundation on Christ. They will believe for a while and will soon wither with temptations come. If you believe like the seed that fell among thorny ground choked with the pleasures of this world, it becomes unfruitful bearing no fruit to maturity. But if you believe like the seed that fell on good ground, you become very fruitful, bearing fruits with patience.

Jas 2:20 But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?

Therefore, do not believe Christ unworthily by having only faith and no works or fruits to maturity.

Communion

Matt 26:26-28 And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, "Take, eat; this is My body." Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."

Beware! Do not come to Christ without denying yourself having no desire to follow Him. Do not believe in Christ without having any works or fruits to maturity. These are referred as taking part in communion or fellowship with Christ in an unworthy manner.

Satan's Ministries: Pseudosalvation

As most Christians already know, Satan does not come with 2 horns but as an angel of light.

*2Cor 11:14 And no wonder! For **Satan** himself transforms himself into an **angel of light**.*

Also, Satan does not use just lies.

He mixes them in way that even the elect can be deceived. As we see in the garden of Eden, he didn't say just lies. He mixed them with just 1 lie with 2 truths.

*Gen 3:4-5 Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will **not surely die**. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your **eyes will be opened**, and you will be **like God, knowing good and evil**."*

The only lie is that they will not surely die.

*Gen 3:19b For dust you are, And to **dust you shall return**."*

Satan spoke truth on the other two:

*Gen 3:7 Then **the eyes of both of them were opened**, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings.*

*Gen 3:22 Then the LORD God said, "Behold, **the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil**. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever"—*

Satan mixed 1 lie with 2 truth and packaged it to make it look good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise.

*Gen 3:6 So when the woman saw that the tree was **good for food**, that it was **pleasant to the eyes**, and a tree desirable to **make one wise**, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.*

Eve's desires (Gen 3:6)	Satan's sayings (Gen 3:4-5)
Good food	You will not die <i>Food is required for living. Satan is now offering something that does not require any food.</i>
Pleasant to eyes	Eyes will be open <i>Eve was only able to see what Satan offers was pleasant to eyes. However, what Satan offers is to open her eyes beyond what she can experience.</i>
Make one wise	Knowing good and evil <i>Being wise is good. But Satan offers something to make her like God knowing good and evil.</i>

What can we learn today from what Eve desired for?

*John 6:35,55 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. ... For **My flesh is food indeed**, and My blood is drink indeed.*

*Eccl 11:7 Truly the **light** is sweet, And it is **pleasant for the eyes** to behold the sun; John 12:46 "**I have come as a light** into the world, that whoever **believes in Me should not abide in darkness.**"; Luke 11:34 "The lamp of the body is the **eye**. Therefore, when your **eye is good**, your whole body also is **full of light**. But when your eye is bad, your body also is full of darkness.*

*Matt 7:24 "Therefore whoever **hears these sayings of Mine**, and **does them**, I will liken him to **a wise man** who built his house on the rock:*

Today, many Christians are listening to Satan to do the same mistake what Eve did. They are hungry and seek spiritual food, they are look for light that are pleasant for eyes and want to be wise. But instead of following God and obeying His commandments, they follow Satan. Those who come to Christ will never hunger. Christ is the light of this world and those who believe in Him should not abide in darkness. Those who hear the sayings of Christ and does them, Christ declares them as wise.

Christian's desire	Satan's Plan
<p>Eternal Life</p> <p>Christ is the bread from Heaven and He is the true food. Those who come to Christ and believe in Him eat the food that endures to everlasting life.</p> <p><i>John 6:27-29 Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him. Then they said to Him, "What shall we do, that we may work the works of God? Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent."</i></p>	<p>You will not die</p> <p>It is God's love that saved us while we were still sinners. There is nothing that can separate us from the love of God on us. Anything that makes us doubt our salvation is from the devil. All we need to to is just believe in Him.</p> <p><i>John 3:16-17 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. .. Rom 5:8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.</i></p>

Walk in light

Christ is the light of the world. Those who come into that light must not abide in darkness. To see the light, the eye must be good by having no sins blocking the light.

*Luke 11:34 "The lamp of the body is the eye. Therefore, when **your eye is good**, your whole body also is **full of light**. But when your eye is bad, your body also is full of darkness; Matt 7:5 "Hypocrite! First **remove the plank from your own eye**, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye. Rev 3:18 "I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and **anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see**.*

You are not in darkness

Christ is the light of the world and any darkness in you cannot stop His light from shining on you. If you believe in Him, His righteousness is imputed on you irrespective of how sinful you are. You cannot do anything to walk in His light. It is His grace that makes you to walk in His light and do the good works He require. If you try to walk in His light it is not counted as grace but debt. You are in light because of what Christ had done and His grace.

*John 1:5 And the **light shines in the darkness**, and the darkness did not comprehend it. ... Rom 4:4-6 Now to him **who works**, the wages are **not counted as grace** but as debt. But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness, just as David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom **God imputes righteousness** apart from works:*

<p>Become wise</p> <p>Not everyone who says to Christ as Lord, Lord will not enter His Kingdom. But those who hear the sayings of Christ and does them, He declares as wise and will inherit His Kingdom.</p> <p><i>Matt 7:21-24 Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!' Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock</i></p>	<p>You are wise</p> <p>Thousands of theologians wrestled with the Scriptures to conclude we are saved by faith alone and grace alone. It is the grace of God that makes us wise, not something we can do to become wise.</p> <p><i>2Thess 3:6 But we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you withdraw from every brother who walks disorderly and not according to the tradition which he received from us. ...</i></p> <p><i>1Cor 3:10 According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it.</i></p>
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Satan uses scripture alone to exalt Christ alone using faith alone to have grace alone so that Christians who are deceived can have all unrighteousness and unholiness for glory of devil because they can reject Christ's teachings and the requirement of righteousness and holiness as works which something they can boast on.

Satan's Bible-based Ministries: Scripture Alone

Scripture alone was used during the protestant reformation to reject traditions of men used by Catholics. It was by all means with good intent.

What could possibility go wrong by saying ‘Bible based’ or ‘Scripture alone’? What many forgot is that, Satan uses Scripture to deceive Christians, just as he tempted Christ using Scripture. It is important to understand not all that are written in Scripture are equal. If anyone said Bible is the word of God rather than inspired word of God and all parts of the Bible are equal it is a deception.

Matt 23:23 “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone.

If there are weightier matters of the law within the Scripture, certainly not all Scripture are equal and must not be considered equal.

Below are a few deceptions you may be deceived with:

- **Bible is the word of God:** Certainly not. Christ is the Word of God. There are several [differences](#) between word of God and Scripture. e.g., In John 5:38-40, Christ clearly differentiates His Word and Scriptures.
- **All parts of Scripture are equal:** Certainly not. Words of God shall not return to Him void (Isa 55:11). Heavens and earth can pass away but the words of Christ will never pass away (Matt 24:35). Some deceivers will make the letters of Paul and apostles of Christ to be equal with word of God.

Thus, by exalting the letters of apostles and epistles of the disciples of Christ, to be equal with the spoken words of Christ and the word of God Himself, the devil can now easily deceive those who believe in Scripture alone to reject the teachings of Christ as works exalting Paul’s letters to be authoritative which causes the next deception of faith alone.

Paul did not write anything wrong but using his arguments to avoid doing works of the law is twisted by many to reject the righteous requirements and holiness taught by Christ as works.

Satan’s Faith Ministries: Faith Alone

The only place where “faith alone” or “faith only” occurs in the Bible is in James, rejecting faith alone.

*Jas 2:24 You see then that a man is justified by works, and **not by faith only**.*

Jesus never taught faith only. He always insisted the requirement righteousness and holiness. He taught that only the narrow gate and difficult path will lead to life.

Luke 14:27 “And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.

Matt 10:38 “And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me.

In His great commission, He did not ask us to make believers of all nations, but disciples who bear their cross and follow Him.

*Rom 4:5-6 But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, **his faith is accounted for righteousness**, just as David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness apart from works:*

Now, the devil using Paul's letter as authoritative text twisting it as done during his own time which was mentioned by Peter (2 Pet 3:16), Christ's teachings are rejected as works. Because Paul's letters are now considered authoritative and equal with Christ's words by those who are deceived, the devil can now further deceive that the righteousness of God are now imputed just by believing in Christ.

Satan's Grace Ministries: Grace Alone

John 1:17 For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

Grace and Truth did come through Jesus Christ. But what could possibly go wrong by saying grace alone? What many Christians never realize is, Jesus Christ never taught grace the way it is taught today.

*Luke 13:6-9 He also spoke this parable: “A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none. Then he said to the keeper of his vineyard, ‘Look, for three years I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree and find none. Cut it down; why does it use up the ground?’ But he answered and said to him, ‘Sir, **let it alone***

***this year** also, until I dig around it and fertilize it. And if it bears fruit, well. But if not, after that you can cut it down.’ ”*

As we see in the above parable, Christ who is the keeper of the vineyard pleads with the Father who is the owner to provide grace of one year for the fruitless fig. If it didn't bear fruit within that one year, it will be cut down. This is grace taught by Christ.

Matt 18:32-33 “Then his master, after he had called him, said to him, ‘You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you begged me.

Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you?’

The prodigal son (Luke 15:11-32) and the parable of the unforgiving servant explains God's compassion. He expects us to forgive others the same way how God forgave us. If we don't have compassion towards others or forgive our debtors, God will also not forgive us and will not have compassion. This is compassion taught by Christ.

*Eph 2:8-9 For by **grace you have been saved** through faith, and that **not of yourselves**; it is the gift of God, **not of works**, lest anyone should boast.*

It is true we cannot save ourselves. But it is not true that we don't have to bear fruits. However, many are deceived by the devil in twisting Paul's letter by rejecting the requirement of righteousness and holiness taught by Christ as works. Paul was actually referring to works of the law which the scribes and Pharisees follow and not the works which Christ taught.

*Matt 5:21 “You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘**You shall not murder**, and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.’
(works of the law)*

*Matt 5:22 “But **I say to you** that whoever is **angry with his brother without a cause** shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says to his brother, ‘Raca!’ shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, ‘You fool!’ shall be in danger of hell fire. **(works which Christ requires)***

Do not be deceived regarding grace. You are indeed saved by grace but only for a limited time. Your time is running out before you will be cut down if

you don't bear fruit. Grace is not same for all. Ananias and Sapphira did not receive any such grace (Acts 5:1-5).

Conclusion

*Eph 4:21-24 If indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: that you **put off**, concerning your former conduct, **the old man** which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be **renewed in the spirit of your mind**, and that you put on **the new man** which was created according to God, in true **righteousness and holiness**.*

The new man is renewed in the spirit of our mind created according to God in true righteousness and holiness. It begins from within our heart.

*Matt 23:25-28 “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, **hypocrites!** For you cleanse the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of extortion and self-indulgence. Blind Pharisee, **first cleanse the inside of the cup and dish**, that the outside of them may be clean also. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.*

God expects us to clean the inside and have righteousness and holiness in our heart. Our thoughts are to be holy and pleasing to Him. Those who don't have their thoughts clean are given the title of hypocrites.

*Mark 7:21-23 “For from within, **out of the heart** of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. **All these evil things come from within and defile a man.**”*

Any teaching or doctrine that deviates from the requirement of righteousness in our heart and holiness in our thoughts, is not from God but from the devil prepared for Christian hypocrites who are unwilling to cleanse their inside of their hearts.

Never Reject God's Promises for Small Blessings

Everyone looks for blessings from God. Jacob even cheated his own brother Esau and wrestled with God Himself for blessings. If God has a promise for us, we must hold on to it. Even good blessings must never hinder us from seeking what is promised. Here, we will look into a group of people who rejected what was promised but satisfied with their current blessings and the consequence of it.

Promise

Exod 3:8 “So I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up from that land to a good and large land, to a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites.

Ezek 20:6 “On that day I raised My hand in an oath to them, to bring them out of the land of Egypt into a land that I had searched out for them, ‘flowing with milk and honey,’ the glory of all lands.

God's promise to the children of Israel is to give the land which He Himself searched out, flowing with milk and honey. It is the glory of all lands.

Blessing

*Deut 2:9 “Then the LORD said to me, ‘Do not harass Moab, nor contend with them in battle, for **I will not give you any of their land as a possession**, because I have given Ar to the descendants of Lot as a possession.’*

*Deut 2:19 ‘And when you come near the people of Ammon, do not harass them or meddle with them, for **I will not give you any of the land of the people of Ammon as a possession**, because I have given it to the descendants of Lot as a possession.’*

God strictly warned not to harass, contend with them in battle or meddle with either Moab or Ammon. He also made it extremely clearly that He will not give any of their land as a possession to the children of Israel.

*Num 21:23-26 But Sihon would not allow Israel to pass through his territory. So Sihon gathered all his people together and went out against Israel in the wilderness, and he came to **Jahaz** and fought against Israel. Then Israel defeated him with the edge of the sword, and took possession of his land from the Arnon to the Jabbok, as far as the people of Ammon; for the border of the people of Ammon was fortified. So Israel took all these cities, and Israel dwelt in all the cities of the Amorites, in **Heshbon** and in all its villages. For Heshbon was the city of Sihon king of the Amorites, who had **fought against the former king of Moab, and had taken all his land** from his hand as far as the Arnon.*

All the land of the former king of Moab was conquered by Sihon, king of the Amorites who was in turn defeated and children of Israel took all his land. Thus the land of Moab is now in the hands of the children of Israel. It is a blessing God delivered the king of Amorites into the hands of Israelites.

Rejecting the Promise

*Num 32:1-5,33 Now the children of **Reuben** and the children of **Gad** had a very great multitude of livestock; and when they saw the land of Jazer and the land of Gilead, that indeed the region was a place for livestock, the children of Gad and the children of Reuben came and spoke to Moses, to Eleazar the priest, and to the leaders of the congregation, saying, **Ataroth, Dibon, Jazer, Nimrah, Heshbon, Elealeh, Shebam, Nebo, and Beon**, the country which the LORD defeated before the congregation of Israel, is a land for livestock, and your servants have livestock.” Therefore they said, “If we have found favor in your sight, **let this land be given to your servants as a possession**. Do not take us over the Jordan.” ... So Moses gave to the children of Gad, to the children of Reuben, and to **half the tribe of Manasseh** the son of Joseph, the kingdom of Sihon king of the Amorites and the kingdom of Og king of Bashan, the land with its cities within the borders, the cities of the surrounding country.*

The tribes of Reuben and Gad were satisfied with the land they just defeated. They do not want to go to the promised land. Similarly many Christians seek after small blessings of this world instead of seeking the promise of inheriting the kingdom of Heaven.

*Matt 6:31-33 “Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ **For after all these things the Gentiles seek.** For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.*

We are called to seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness. The rest will be added to us. Many are satisfied with the rest that was added and never seek to inherit the promises.

*Josh 22:1-4 Then Joshua called the **Reubenites**, the **Gadites**, and **half the tribe of Manasseh**, and said to them: “You have kept all that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, and have obeyed my voice in all that I commanded you. You have not left your brethren these many days, up to this day, but have kept the charge of the commandment of the LORD your God. And now the LORD your God has given rest to your brethren, as He promised them; now therefore, return and go to your tents and to the land of your possession, which Moses the servant of the LORD gave you on the other side of the Jordan.*

Finally, the tribe of Reuben, Gad and half-tribe of Manasseh took inheritance on the east side of Jordan, which was never promised to the children of Israel. It is important to note, Moses with whom God spoke face to face, never consulted God regarding this matter.

Small Blessings

God defeated Sihon, the king of Amorites before Israel not for the purpose of giving their land to the children of Israel as a possession but for them to pass through so that they can possess the promised land. Sometimes, God gives us a blessing, a victory over our enemy not for the purpose of taking advantage and be satisfied with it but for us to proceed and seek His kingdom and His righteousness.

*2Kgs 10:32-33 In those days the **LORD began to cut off** parts of Israel; and **Hazael** conquered them in **all the territory of Israel from the Jordan eastward: all the land of Gilead–Gad, Reuben, and Manasseh**–from Aroer, which is by the River Arnon, including Gilead and Bashan.*

God will cut off the blessings which He had given if we do not obey or follow Him. When the land inherited by the tribe of Reuben, Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh was cut off, these three tribes permanently lost their inheritance, because they did not seek what was promised forever.

*Exod 32:13 “Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, Your servants, to whom You swore by Your own self, and said to them, ‘I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven; and **all this land that I have spoken of** I give to your descendants, and they shall **inherit it forever**.”*

Instead of the land flowing with milk and honey that was promised as an inheritance forever, the tribe of Reuben, Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh went after small blessings and possessions that were not promised.

Conclusion

Are you like the the tribe of Reuben, Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh, satisfied with worldly blessings instead of seeking to inherit the kingdom of Heaven which He promised? Repent Now!

Hell: Annihilation or Eternal Torment?

For many Christians, hell with an eternal torment of burning fire seems to be unacceptable and incompatible with the nature of a merciful God. The rest of Christians believe hell as an eternal place of torment. Whichever side you are, it is important to note that the Bible does support both views but only one view can be true. Here, we will look into different verses from the Bible to understand hell.

The English word hell refers to several words in original language and refers to different meaning. e.g., Sheol, Hades, Geenna and Tartarus.

Sheol or Hades

*Acts 2:27 For You will not leave my soul in **Hades**, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.*

*Ps 16:10 For You will not leave my soul in **Sheol**, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.*

Sheol in the Old Testament is the same as Hades in the New Testament.

*Gen 37:35 And all his sons and all his daughters arose to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted, and he said, "For I shall go down into the **grave** (Sheol) to my son in mourning." Thus his father wept for him.*

*Num 16:33 So they and all those with them went down alive into the **pit** (Sheol); the earth closed over them, and they perished from among the assembly.*

However, Sheol in the Old Testament simply refers to grave as we see in the above verses.

*Ps 6:5 For in death [there is] no remembrance of You; In the **grave** (Sheol) who will give You thanks?*

*Ps 30:3 O LORD, You brought my soul up from the **grave** (Sheol); You have kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit.*

*Eccl 9:10 Whatever your hand finds to do, do [it] with your might; for [there is] no work or device or knowledge or wisdom in the **grave** (Sheol) where you are going.*

*Isa 38:18 For **Sheol** cannot thank You, Death cannot praise You; Those who go down to the pit cannot hope for Your truth.*

We see from Psalmist that Sheol is again referring simply to grave where the dead have no work or device or knowledge of wisdom.

*Jonah 2:2 And he said: “I cried out to the LORD because of my affliction, And He answered me. “Out of the **belly of Sheol** I cried, [And] You heard my voice.*

Based on Jonah’s words, the belly of the fish is the belly of Sheol. In other words, it is his grave if he dies. Therefore, Sheol or Hades refers to grave.

*Dan 12:2 And many of those who **sleep in the dust of the earth** shall awake, Some to everlasting life, Some to **shame** [and] **everlasting contempt**.*

The reference in Daniel is extremely clear that there is no suffering in Hades and all will be sleeping in the dust of the earth. While the righteous gets everlasting life, the wicked will get shame and everlasting contempt. The verse does not say anything about everlasting torment.

There is no reference in Old Testament that suggests eternal torment in Hades.

*Luke 8:52-53 Now all wept and mourned for her; but He said, “Do not weep; she is not dead, but **sleeping**. And they ridiculed Him, knowing that she was **dead**.*

*John 11:11-14 These things He said, and after that He said to them, “Our friend Lazarus **sleeps**, but I go that I may wake him up. Then His disciples said, “Lord, if he sleeps he will get well. However, Jesus spoke of his death, but they thought that He was speaking about taking rest in sleep. Then Jesus said to them plainly, “Lazarus is **dead**.*

The same is mentioned by Jesus as well when He referred those who are dead as sleeping.

Tartarus

*2Pet 2:4 For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast [them] down to (Tartarus) **hell** and delivered [them] into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment;*

Peter refers to a different word used only once which is translated as hell. Just as Hades is a Greek word referring to the land of the dead, Tartarus is the lowest depths of Hades. If we consider the English word hell, it is from an Indo-European root meaning 'to cover or hide'. We see the actual meaning is now lost and now has a different meaning. This is exactly the case with Greek speaking Jewish population and early Christians.

*Ps 88:6 You have laid me in the **lowest pit**, In darkness, in the depths.*

*Isa 14:15 Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol, To the **lowest depths of the Pit**.*

*Lam 3:55 I called on Your name, O LORD, From the **lowest pit**.*

Just as we use hell to refer to the place of the wicked which has nothing to do with it's original meaning to cover or hide, Hades in Greek was used to refer Sheol in Hebrew and Tartarus in Greek was used to refer to the lowest parts of Sheol in Hebrew.

Hell or Geenna

Before we explore about annihilation or eternal torment, we need to find what hell is. Hell is the geenna meaning, valley of (the son of) Hinnom.

*2Kgs 23:10 And he defiled Topheth, which [is] in the **Valley of the Son of Hinnom**, that no man might make his son or his daughter **pass through the fire** to Molech.*

Hell which has its origin in Hebrew certainly refers to a place of torment using a symbolic reference to the valley of (the son of) Hinnom where the children of Israel made their own children pass through fire.

It is very important to note that there is no verse in the New Testament that suggest that hell is same as Hades/Sheol. When Jesus and apostles want to refer Sheol, the Bible always used Hades and not Geenna. However, when they want to refer burning with unquenchable fire, they referred it as Geenna/hell.

Hence, hell is a used as a symbolic reference for the place of torment where wicked and sinful will end.

Outer Darkness

Apart from hell, there is also a place mentioned by Christ as Outer Darkness.

*Matt 8:11-12 “And I say to you that many will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. But the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into **outer darkness**. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”*

*Matt 22:13 “Then the king said to the servants, ‘Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast [him] into **outer darkness**; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’*

*Matt 25:30 ‘And cast the unprofitable servant into the **outer darkness**. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’*

Those who are unworthy for the kingdom of God will be thrust out into outer darkness. This is where some have suggested that hell is about absence of God.

Hell & Outer Darkness

*Matt 13:41-42 “The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, and will **cast them into the furnace of fire**. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.*

*Matt 8:11-12 “And I say to you that many will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. But the sons of the kingdom will be **cast out into outer darkness**. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”*

Outer darkness is used synonymous to furnace of fire.

Eternal Torment

Eternal torment as the name suggests, sinners will experience an eternity of suffering in hell.

*Matt 25:41,46 “Then He will also say to those on the left hand, ‘Depart from Me, you cursed, into the **everlasting fire** prepared for the devil and his angels: ... And these will go away into **everlasting punishment**, but the righteous into eternal life.”*

Hell is a place of everlasting fire which was originally prepared for devil and His angels.

*Rev 20:10 The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the **lake of fire and brimstone** where the beast and the false prophet [are.] And they will be **tormented day and night forever and ever.***

John gives more details that the everlasting fire mentioned by Jesus is the lake of fire and brimstone where those who rejected Christ will be tormented day and night as an everlasting punishment.

*Mark 14:21 “The Son of Man indeed goes just as it is written of Him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would **have been good** for that man if he **had never been born.**”*

When Jesus revealed about Judas who betrayed Jesus, He gave an important revelation. The existence of a worse punishment, far worse that is better for him not to be born. In other words, annihilation would have been much better for Judas than the punishment for betraying Him.

*Mark 9:47-48 “And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into **hell fire**— where “Their **worm does not die**, And the **fire is not quenched.**”*

Jesus Christ mentions the existence of hell where worms does not die and the fire is not quenched.

Annihilation

While eternal torment is a suffering in hell for eternity, annihilation as the name suggests, all sinners are completely destroyed as if they never existed.

*Matt 10:28 “And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to **destroy both soul** and body in hell.*

*Luke 12:4-5 “And I say to you, My friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear Him who, **after He has killed**, has power to **cast into hell**; yes, I say to you, fear Him!*

The first evidence for annihilation is from the book of Matthew where God will destroy both soul and body in hell. If the soul is destroyed, then the sinner is annihilated. But Luke on the other hand mentions the same spoken words of Jesus a bit different, which supports eternal torment where sinners are cast into hell after being killed.

*Luke 4:33-34 Now in the synagogue there was a man who had a **spirit of an unclean demon**. And he cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Let [us] alone! What have we to do with You, Jesus of Nazareth? Did You **come to destroy us**? I know who You are—the Holy One of God!"*

*Mark 1:24 saying, "Let [us] alone! What have we to do with You, Jesus of Nazareth? **Did You come to destroy us**? I know who You are—the Holy One of God!"*

Jesus Christ is able to destroy the spirit of an unclean demon. If the spirit of an unclean demon is destroyed, then demon is annihilated.

*Matt 25:41,46 "Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the **everlasting fire** prepared for the devil and his angels: ... And these will go away into **everlasting punishment**, but the righteous into eternal life.'*

From an annihilation perspective, everlasting fire and everlasting punishment does not necessarily mean everlasting torment. For example, a fire that burns forever to annihilate is a punishment forever.

*Rev 20:10 The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the **lake of fire and brimstone** where the **beast** and the false prophet [are.] And **they** will be **tormented day and night forever and ever**.*

The above verse seems to be a torment for day and night until you realize the beast is actually "a kingdom" and not a living creature.

*Isa 66:22-24 "For as the new heavens and the new earth Which I will make shall remain before Me," says the LORD, "So shall your descendants and your name remain. And it shall come to pass [That] from one New Moon to another, And from one Sabbath to another, All flesh shall come to worship before Me," says the LORD. And they shall go forth and look Upon the **corpses of the men** Who have **transgressed against Me**. For **their worm does not die**, And **their fire is not quenched**. They shall be an abhorrence to all flesh."*

*Mark 9:47-48 “And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire– where ‘**Their worm does not die, And the fire is not quenched.**’*

When Christ is referring to the unquenchable fire where worms does not die, He is referring not about everlasting torment, but a punishment of their the corpses of sinners being burnt forever, as prophesied by prophet Isaiah.

*Mark 9:47-48 “And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with **one eye**, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire– where “**Their worm does not die, And the fire is not quenched.**’*

When Christ is referring the entry with two eyes to the place where fire is not quenched and worms do not die, He is also referring to entering kingdom of God with one eye. We know no one will be maimed in the kingdom of God when the wicked is cast into hell. Hence, it is certainly possible Christ is referring only about the entry to hell and not about eternal suffering after entering hell.

Rev 1:18 “I [am] He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death.

Rev 20:14 Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

The first death is about our physical death and our soul going to Hades but the second death is about the end of death itself. Christ has the keys to Death and Hades who can redeem anyone He wants. Bible does not say He will redeem everyone neither does it say He will not.

*2Pet 3:9 The Lord is not slack concerning [His] promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, **not willing that any should perish** but that all should come to repentance.*

However, the Bible does say, God does not want any to perish but come to repentance.

*Matt 24:51 “and will **cut him in two** and appoint [him] his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be **weeping and gnashing of teeth.***

Weeping and gnashing of teeth is often referred to torments in hell. However, the above Bible reference mentions the same for a person cut into two which supports annihilation.

Quick Recap

- Sheol or Hades is grave where the dead have no work or device or knowledge or wisdom.
- There is no reference in Old Testament that suggests eternal torment in Hades.
- Hell is a symbolic reference to the torment suffered by the children of ancient Israel in the valley of (the son of) Hinnom who made them pass through fire.
- Hell is synonymous to Outer Darkness.
- The beast who will be tormented day and night in the lake of fire and brimstone forever and ever, is a nation.
- There is a worse punishment for the betrayer of Son of Man. It is better he had never been born, which supports the view of a punishment rather than annihilation.
- Christ gave graphic details of the flames of torment in Hades after death in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus.
- God has the power to destroy soul in hell which supports annihilation. Christ can destroy the Spirit of an unclean demon.
- Everlasting punishment does not necessarily mean everlasting torment.
- Christ's reference to the place of unquenchable fire where worms do not die is to burn the corpse of those who transgressed against God. It is not a reference to eternal torment.
- Just as there is not maimed person in heaven, entering with one eye is only a reference to enter kingdom of God. The same is true for being cast into unquenchable fire. The verse does not explain if the maimed will be cured in heaven or the wicked will suffer forever.
- John uses lake of fire and brimstone to describe hell.

- Death and Hades will be cast into lake of fire which is called second death.
- The evil servant cut into two and thrown in a place where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. Being cut into two, it supports annihilation.

Jesus Christ on Hades/Sheol

Let us focus on what Jesus said especially about Hades (or after death) by revisiting some of the verses.

*Matt 22:31-32 “But concerning the **resurrection of the dead**, have you not read what was spoken to you by God, saying, 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.**”*

When Jesus said, God is not the God of the dead but the living, He is referring with context to resurrection of the dead. He is not necessarily referring to Abraham being alive but sleeping and will one day resurrected from the dead.

*Luke 20:34-36 Jesus answered and said to them, “The sons of this age marry and are given in marriage. But those who are counted worthy to **attain that age**, and the **resurrection from the dead**, neither marry nor are given in marriage; nor can they die anymore, for they are equal to the angels and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection.*

Further, only those who are worthy will attain the age to come, which suggests, the rest will be annihilated.

*Luke 8:52-53 Now all wept and mourned for her; but He said, “Do not weep; she is **not dead, but sleeping**. And they ridiculed Him, knowing that **she was dead**.*

*John 11:11-14 These things He said, and after that He said to them, “Our friend Lazarus **sleeps**, but I go that I may wake him up. Then His disciples said, “Lord, if he sleeps he will get well. However, **Jesus spoke of his death**, but they thought that He was speaking about taking rest in sleep. Then Jesus said to them plainly, “**Lazarus is dead**.*

Jesus always referred to dead people as sleeping during both occasions with the only exception of parables.

*Luke 16:23-24 And being in **torments in Hades**, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. “Then he cried and said, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am **tormented in this flame**.’*

In the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, Jesus Christ gave a glimpse of torments in Hades. Now here are the important questions:

- If Sheol/Hades is a place for the dead who have no knowledge or wisdom, how can the rich man in the parable suffer and have a conversation with Abraham?
- If Abraham was sleeping, just like the Lazarus and the little girl who were also dead, how can Abraham have a conversation with the rich man until the resurrection of the dead?

*Matt 27:52-53 and the graves were opened; and many **bodies of the saints** who had **fallen asleep were raised**; and coming out of the graves after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many.*

In the book of Matthew, we see the dead were referred as fallen asleep. Hence, Jesus Christ and His disciple Matthew, consider death as falling asleep in Sheol where no knowledge or wisdom exists. Now the question is, what about the parable?

Torment in Hades & Final Annihilation

It seems there is a different thirst unknown or unexpressed which may not be understandable by us, which Jesus seems to warn us repeatedly using parables and other terms using furnace of fire, outer darkness, flames of torment.

*Luke 11:24-26 “When an **unclean spirit** goes out of a man, he goes through **dry places, seeking rest; and finding none**, he says, ‘I will return to my house from which I came.’ And when he comes, he finds [it] swept and put in order. Then he goes and takes with [him] seven other*

spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter and dwell there; and the last [state] of that man is worse than the first.”

Clearly, the dry places referred here is in the spirit realm and it seems the spirit requires a host/body to have rest. Without this rest, the spirit will be going through dry places and the torments of it is similar to the flames of this world and the rest is compared to cooling the tongue.

*1Sam 28:13-19 And the king said to her, “Do not be afraid. What did you see?” And the woman said to Saul, “**I saw a spirit ascending out of the earth.**” So he said to her, “What [is] his form?” And she said, “An old man is coming up, and he [is] covered with a mantle.” And Saul perceived that it [was] Samuel, and he stooped with [his] face to the ground and bowed down. Now Samuel said to Saul, “**Why have you disturbed me by bringing me up?**” And Saul answered, “I am deeply distressed; for the Philistines make war against me, and God has departed from me and does not answer me anymore, neither by prophets nor by dreams. Therefore I have called you, that you may reveal to me what I should do.” Then Samuel said: “So why do you ask me, seeing the LORD has departed from you and has become your enemy? And the LORD has done for Himself as He spoke by me. For the LORD has torn the kingdom out of your hand and given it to your neighbor, David. Because you did not obey the voice of the LORD nor execute His fierce wrath upon Amalek, therefore the LORD has done this thing to you this day. Moreover the LORD will also deliver Israel with you into the hand of the Philistines. And **tomorrow you and your sons [will be] with me.** The LORD will also deliver the army of Israel into the hand of the Philistines.”*

In the above passages, we see the spirit of Samuel is disturbed from his sleep. He also mentions that tomorrow Saul and his sons will be with him (i.e., Sheol). There are two possibilities. Either the devil is impersonating Samuel or it is indeed the spirit of Samuel.

*Luke 16:26 ‘And besides all this, between us and you there is **a great gulf fixed**, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us.’*

Just as the great gulf, the spirit of the wicked cannot go near the spirit of the righteous. This gulf is no more because when Christ died, He entered

Hades to defeat death itself, for He is life. Now, He has the keys to Hades and victorious over it.

*1Pet 3:18-20 For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit, by whom also **He went and preached to the spirits in prison**, who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while [the] ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water.*

The above is a fulfillment of the below prophecy.

*Zech 9:11 “As for you also, Because of the blood of your covenant, I will set your **prisoners free from the waterless pit**.*

Waterless pit, dry land, cooling of the tongue – all points to some kind of torment in spiritual realm for the spirits of sinners in Hades, but the righteous seems to have rest and referred as sleeping until the day of resurrection.

After the resurrection of Christ, the righteous are freed from the prison of Hades and are with Christ, but the wicked are left in Hades until the second resurrection.

*Rev 21:8,10 “But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the **second death**.” ... The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet [are.] And they will be **tormented day and night forever and ever**.*

*Rev 20:11 Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the **earth and the heaven fled away**. And there was found no place for them.*

*Rev 20:14-15 Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the **second death**. ... And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the **lake of fire**.*

All the sinners whose name is not found in the Book of Life will have their part in second death. The devil, beast and the false prophet were cast into the lake of fire and tormented day and night forever and ever. However, the

next verse is the Great White Throne Judgment where heaven and earth fled away. In other words, the day/night will cease to exist suggesting that the torment will be until the Great White Throne Judgment and after which all the sinners will be annihilated.

*Rev 21:1 Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for **the first heaven and the first earth had passed away**. Also there was no more sea.*

*Rev 21:4-5 “And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.” Then He who sat on the throne said, “Behold, **I make all things new**.” And He said to me, “Write, for these words are true and faithful.”*

*Isa 66:22-24 “For as the **new heavens and the new earth** Which I will make shall remain before Me,” says the LORD, “So shall your descendants and your name remain. And it shall come to pass [That] from one New Moon to another, And from one Sabbath to another, All flesh shall come to worship before Me,” says the LORD. And they shall **go forth and look Upon the corpses of the men** Who have **transgressed against Me**. For **their worm does not die**, And **their fire is not quenched**. They shall be an abhorrence to all flesh.”*

We see this final annihilation when the new heavens and the new earth are created where the righteous shall go forth and look upon the corpse of the men who transgressed against God.

Conclusion

We still have some differences from prophet Daniel, who mentions both righteous and wicked will sleep (Dan 12:2). By comparing what Jesus spoke about death, He may simply be referring to the sleep in flesh in the dust of the earth but not the spirit or soul as we see in the parable of Jesus (Luke 16:23-24). Jesus knew Hades is a place of torment and He doesn't want anyone to go.

*Luke 8:30-33 Jesus asked him, saying, “What is your name?” And he said, “Legion,” because **many demons** had entered him. And they begged Him that He would not command them to go out into the **abyss**. Now a herd of many swine was feeding there on the mountain. So they **begged** Him that He would permit them to enter them. And He **permitted** them. Then the*

demons went out of the man and entered the swine, and the herd ran violently down the steep place into the lake and drowned.

We see here, Christ is merciful even to demons and listened to their plea and did not cast them to the abyss (or Sheol). What is more important to understand is that, even demons doesn't want to go into abyss.

Hades is a place of torment for the wicked but a rest for the righteous whose death is often referred as sleep. While the torment is not literal flames, several clues from the Bible reveals something similar to waterless, dry, restless wandering in the spirit realm, which is compared to flames of torment and unquenchable thirst. But when Christ was resurrected, the righteous were freed and are with Christ. But the wicked are still in torments until their second resurrection where they will be judged and annihilated in the lake of fire. Why would anyone want to go through this torment? Repent!

When will Christ Return? 2036 AD?

We all know that we are in the last days. This century had seen technological advancements and the increase in knowledge as never before as spoken by prophet Daniel.

Dan 12:4 “But you, Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book until the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase.”

Every year that passes by is getting closer to our Lord’s coming. We see lawlessness abound and the days of Noah had already come. Now the big question we all have is, can we even roughly predict our Lord’s second coming?

Mark 13:32-33 “But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Take heed, watch and pray; for you do not know when the time is.

No one knows the day or the hour. This means, the Bible may not stop us from knowing the year.

Spring Feasts of the Lord

Passover, Unleavened Bread, First fruits and Pentecost – all being the spring feasts of the Lord, they are fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

Feast	Scripture Reference	Fulfillment
Passover	<i>1Cor 5:7 Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.</i>	Christ is our Passover Lamb.
Unleavened Bread	<i>John 6:51 "I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world."</i>	Christ is our unleavened bread who came down from heaven.

Firstfruits	<i>1Cor 15:20 But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.</i>	Christ has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.
Pentecost	<i>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 of 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.</i>	Holy Spirit was given on the day of Pentecost.

We also see that these above feasts are for what Christ came to fulfill based on His scripture reading.

*Isa 61:1-3 "The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me, Because the LORD has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to those who are bound; To proclaim the **acceptable year of the LORD**, And the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn, To console those who mourn in Zion, To give them beauty for ashes, The oil of joy for mourning, The garment of praise for the spirit of*

heaviness; That they may be called trees of righteousness, The planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified.”

Luke 4:17-20 And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written: The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.” Then He closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him.

As colored in blue for clarity, He abruptly stopped in the middle of the prophecy indicating that [His preaching was only one year](#) which is the “acceptable year”.

Lev 25:10 ‘And you shall consecrate the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a Jubilee for you; and each of you shall return to his possession, and each of you shall return to his family.

Also, this acceptable year must be a Jubilee as per the law to proclaim liberty.

Based on Luke’s account (as [I prefer Luke over Matthew](#) based on historical and theological reasons), the acceptable year declared by our Lord Jesus Christ must be 36 AD (refer to [Desolations to Jesus Christ timeline](#)).

Based on the [timelines](#), Exodus happened on 1468 BC and acceptable year of the Lord was on 36 AD, which gives a difference of 1504 years. Given the reasonable assumptions and variables in the timelines, 1504 should actually be 1500 because 36 AD must be a Jubilee. This moves the correct Exodus date to 1464 BC (4 years lesser), keeping the 36 AD as a Jubilee. Hence, the acceptable year of the Lord is the 30th Jubilee when Jesus Christ came to this world and fulfilled all the Spring feasts of the Lord.

Fall Feasts of the Lord

Trumpets, Atonement, Tabernacles – all being the fall feasts of the Lord, they are yet to be fulfilled by Jesus Christ.

Feast	Scripture Reference
<p>Trumpets</p> <p><i>1st Tishrei</i></p>	<p><i>Lev 23:24-25 Speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you shall have a sabbath-rest, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, a holy convocation. You shall do no customary work on it; and you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD.'</i></p>

<p>Atonement</p> <p><i>10th Tishrei</i></p>	<p><i>Lev 23:27-28 Also the tenth day of this seventh month shall be the Day of Atonement. It shall be a holy convocation for you; you shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire to the LORD. And you shall do no work on that same day, for it is the Day of Atonement, to make atonement for you before the LORD your God.</i></p> <p><i>Lev 25:9-10 ‘Then you shall cause the trumpet of the Jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month; on the Day of Atonement you shall make the trumpet to sound throughout all your land. And you shall consecrate the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a Jubilee for you; and each of you shall return to his possession, and each of you shall return to his family.</i></p>
<p>Tabernacles</p> <p><i>15-22 Tishrei</i></p>	<p><i>Lev 23:34-36 ‘Speak to the children of Israel, saying: ‘The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the Feast of Tabernacles for seven days to the LORD. ‘On the first day there shall be a holy convocation. You shall do no customary work on it. ‘For seven days you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD. On the eighth day you shall have a holy convocation, and you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD. It is a sacred assembly, and you shall do no customary work on it.</i></p>

We can also clearly see the Trumpets, Atonement and the Tabernacles will happen on the scripture part which Christ didn't read on His first coming, because these are to be fulfilled on His second coming where He executes His Judgment.

*Isa 61:1-3 “The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me, Because the LORD has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to those who are bound; To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, And **the day of vengeance** of our God; To comfort all who mourn, To console those who mourn in Zion, To give them beauty for ashes, The oil of joy for mourning, The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; That they may be called trees of righteousness, The planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified.”*

Just as all the spring feasts were fulfilled in one year, which is the Jubilee, the fall feasts will also be fulfilled in one year which will also be a Jubilee (because the last trumpet as per the law will be on the year of Jubilee).

*1Cor 15:51-52 Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed— in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, **at the last trumpet**. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.*

*1Thess 4:16-17 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, 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.*

This gives us some clues on the year or at-least some possible range of years when Christ will come. If 36 AD is the 30th Jubilee, then the next upcoming is the 70th Jubilee which is on 2036 AD.

Is Christ's Second Coming on 2036 AD?

If the acceptable year of the Lord is 36 AD as per Luke's account is correct, then 2036 AD will be the 70th Jubilee from the Exodus (or when the law was given to Moses). This makes 2036 AD significant. Even though I prefer 36 AD, several others accept 30 to 33 AD to be the year of Christ's crucifixion and if true, 2030 or 2033 AD to be the year of Jubilee. Hence, we now have a range of years to look upon which is 2030, 2033 or 2036 AD, which is the 70th Jubilee. This is only an indication as we have several assumptions and variables to arrive this. If Christ didn't come during this time, we can expect Him around the next Jubilee 2080, 2083 or 2086 AD

which will be the 71st Jubilee. It is also entirely possible the 3 feasts of the Lord can be on separate years, yet fulfilling all the requirements of the law.

Considering what we do know, 2036 AD is just 20 years away.

*Luke 17:26-30 “And as it was in the **days of Noah**, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man: They **ate**, they **drank**, they **married** wives, they were **given in marriage**, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. Likewise as it was also in the **days of Lot**: They **ate**, they **drank**, they **bought**, they **sold**, they **planted**, they **built**; but on the day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all. Even **so will it be** in the day when the Son of Man is revealed.*

If you carefully read, marriage wasn't mentioned in the days of Lot. Neither does the buying/selling or planting/building for the days of Noah. When Christ spoke these words, He isn't just generalizing things as people will normally do what they do but being specific. In the days of Noah, the sons of God took wives for themselves whoever they chose, which Christ referred as “married” and “given in marriage” which He did not mention it in the days of Lot. Is this one of the reasons same-sex marriage propaganda is being in full swing to fulfill Christ's words that they will be marrying and given in marriage?

Time is Very Near

Don't trust or put your faith on 2036 AD or any particular year.

*Matt 16:2-3 He answered and said to them, “When it is evening you say, ‘It will be fair weather, for the sky is red’; and in the morning, ‘It will be foul weather today, for the sky is red and threatening.’ Hypocrites! **You know how to discern the face of the sky, but you cannot discern the signs of the times.**”*

But if you do not discern the times and seasons, you are a hypocrite. We are not only living in the last days, but at the last hour.

Rev 6:9-11 When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. And they cried with a loud voice, saying, “How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who

*dwell on the earth?” Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, **until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed.***

True Christians will be persecuted and killed before His second coming until the required number is complete. What we need to be prepared is for our persecution.

*Rev 3:8-11 I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, **have kept My word, and have not denied My name.** Indeed I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, but lie—indeed I will make them come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you. Because you have **kept My command to persevere**, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth. Behold, **I am coming quickly!** Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown.*

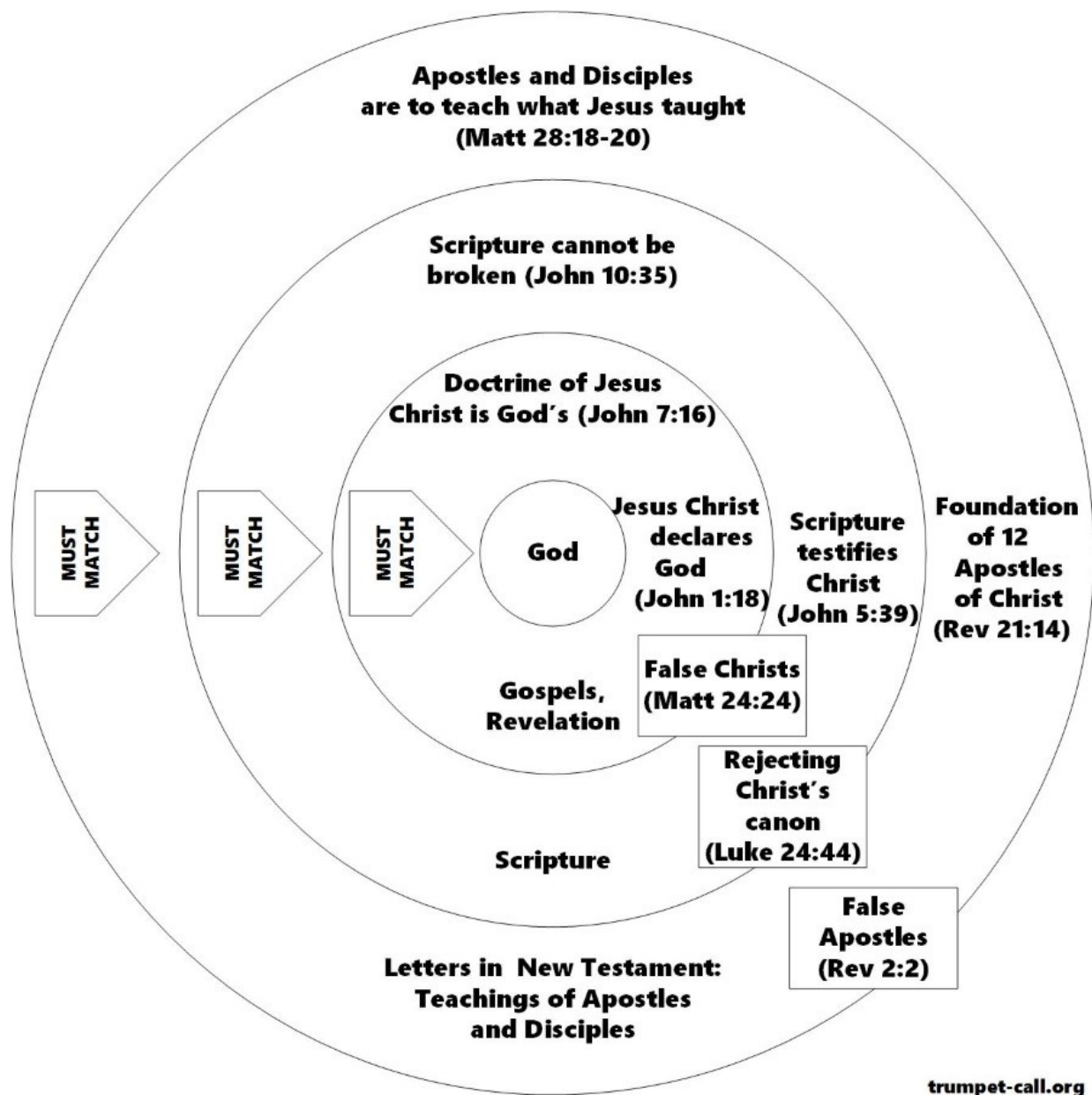
Let us listen to Christ who gave us a way to escape the hour of trial which is to come upon the whole world, that is to keep His command or word to persevere and not deny His name before His second coming.

Bibliography

- All Scripture verses are quoted from New King James Version (NKJV) and Brenton Septuagint Translation (LXX).
- Cover Page picture adapted from <http://techmoran.com/silicon-savannah-needs-early-stage-investors/>

Statement of Faith

Being a Protestant Christian, it is easy for me to simply say, I believe the Bible. But, there are lots of different interpretations of the Bible and several deceptions without sound doctrine which created thousands of denominations. Hence, I had put forward a Circle of Discernment to discern every interpretation from the Bible to avoid deceptions.



Source: File: Circle-of-Discernment.png - trumpet-call.org

Circle of Discernment is another way of saying, all interpretations must match God's spoken words, Christ's teachings, Scripture (Law, Psalms and Prophets) and the teachings of apostles and disciples in the authoritative order. If you cannot find the conclusion of your interpretation taught by Christ, or found in Scripture, or spoken by God in the authoritative order, then your interpretation is wrong. Similarly, if you interpret Scripture that does not agree with Christ, then your interpretation is wrong.

Christ did not give anyone authority to change His canon of Scripture (Luke 24:44-45). He included only 28 books from the Christian Bible: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, I & II Samuel, I & II Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi and Psalms. Just like there are weightier matters of the law (Matt 23:23), Gospels and Revelation are the weightier books in the New Testament. We need to listen and obey Christ's teachings for which Father will require of all who reject His Words spoken through His Son (Deut 18:19). It is blasphemy to exalt and glorify a man's letter and make it equal with Christ's words.

About the Author

Felix Immanuel is a born-again Christian, trying to live a Christ-like life. He is a software professional who write blogs in trumpet-call.org focused on the spiritual growth of Christians. God had blessed him with his wife and two daughters.