

Bleak Promise, Bright Hope
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A Guide for New Believers in Jesus Christ

The title Bleak Promise, Bright Hope refers to the promises made by people of this world, how few are kept and the bright hope Christians have.

I. The New Believer, Getting Started on the Right Foot

A. Your New Found Faith - What is It Exactly?

To become a Christian means that you have given up your old way of life and have decided to follow Jesus Christ in The Way of Life. You must have come under the convicting power of the Holy Spirit, had a change of heart and asked Jesus to come into your heart and forgive and change your sinful life. Many call this conversion experience "salvation" or "being born again." Whatever you call the experience there is a change in your attitude and life that becomes apparent to everyone around you. You give up old habits and old friends in favor of the new habits and new friends God wants you to have.

Living the Christian life means emulating the life of Jesus Christ or trying to be Christ-like. While this goal of perfection is not attainable in this life true believers strive to be as much like Jesus as possible. To follow Jesus you must learn as much as you can about Him and His Way. Then you try to apply His Way to your life and follow in His footsteps. It also means obeying the commands Jesus gave. The sacraments of the church: believer's baptism and the Lord's Supper are to be kept. Evangelizing others as Jesus instructed in the Great Commission is one of our prime objectives, along with caring for others and serving others. True Christians wage war with evil spiritual forces on a daily basis. They are heart-broken for a world going to Hell without a Savior and they try to remedy that by spreading

His Good News or Gospel. They realize their salvation is faith plus nothing and faith minus nothing. It is a gift from God by His grace and immeasurable love for mankind. Believers appropriate the promises of God in their lives, that is they grab hold of them and claim them for their own. They protect one another in times of trouble. They hold one another up before God in prayer. In the face of all suffering, trials and persecution the Christian believer is peaceful, enduring, joyous and overcoming. They build up and strengthen the Church or Body of Jesus Christ, which are corporate body of believers. The true Church is comprised of only those believers that have been convicted of sin and repented or turned away from the sinful life. The church as an organization has mostly non-believing, unregenerated souls in it. This is not the Church or Body of Jesus Christ that true believers speak of. Organized churches today throughout the world are in a deep state of apostasy. Apostasy means acceptance of false teachings. Many churches in the United States and around the world are engaged in the same pagan practices as Jesus preached against during His ministry. Churches today devote much of their services to ritualism, icons and idolatry, graven images, pride, boastful, arrogance about what they are doing for God that existed during Old Testament and Roman times. Some churches exhibit the same characteristics as those the antichrist will have. But take comfort in knowing that God is still working on His purpose here on earth. Enjoy your daily walk and conversation with the Savior.

As you study and live the Christian life several things become very clear:

God is Love

God is Holy

God knows best

God is Just

God is Compassionate

God never changes

His Way is The Ultimate Truth

You will grow to see the absolute simplicity and fairness of the Master's Plan for all mankind. It is amazing to watch how the salvation message can reach a child, a mentally handicapped person and a learned man all with the same intensity. The beauty of the message is that the simplest mind can grasp it's truth and a mind bent on proving it's not true can be overwhelming convinced using the same beautifully simple message and logic.

God exists in simplicity and not in the astrophysicist's theories. Keep your faith simple, like that of a child. Don't allow yourself to become burdened with philosophical arguments about what God meant or didn't mean when He said a certain thing. These are vain disputes, intended to show one man's thinking superior to another's or to prove that one is closer to the mind of God - the Ultimate Truth. Much of what confronts us we are to take on faith. The LORD will protect us from or give us the knowledge we need at the moment through His Holy Spirit. Study to know God's Plan for your life instead of the Ultimate Truth. The Ultimate Truth is simply Jesus Christ, His birth, crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection, His love to save a dying world and His oneness with God the Father. Learn early that man spouts a lot of things about God and what He wants you to do. This book is included in those spoutings and they are puny when compared to the Word of God, His Holy Bible. It should be your ultimate authority on every aspect of your life. It's your owners manual for the new Temple of God that is under construction by the Holy Spirit inside your very own body. You must consecrate, dedicate and use this Temple as a Holy, Living Sacrifice to our Heavenly Father and the spreading of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. You may have to suffer countless trials, troubles and persecutions for His sake during your life. You are truly blessed if you do. Read the Beatitudes in Matthew 5:3-11 to find out what blessedness or true joy is. There are other beatitudes in the Old and New Testaments also,

you can find those on your own. That's part of the beauty of living The Way, as you search to learn more about God He will teach you by His Holy Spirit and His Word about Himself. A learned person without being reborn in Jesus can read the Bible from cover to cover and it will appear to be only a collection of stories about Jewish history. To the developing Christian it is the Master's Plan for Creation and the Universe, the Unfolding Sacred Spiritual Drama. What a difference accepting God at His Word makes in every life that will allow Him to work out His Holy Will and Plan.

One word of caution, when someone sounds too ethereal, too ecclesiastical or too ecumenical be very careful. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, never used complicated language, high sounding phrases or complex logic to tell His story. His message was absolute simplicity; Love, Trust and Obey and you will find true Joy, Peace, Happiness and Sublime Satisfaction. This is The Way and 'the other way' leads to disease, devastation, despair, destruction and death. It's only coincidental that deceit, demons and devil are also anaphoric (begin with the same letter or sound) with 'the road to destruction'.

Another word of caution is that you can have a room full of Bibles and listen to Christian radio 24 hours a day and still lack peace, joy and fulfillment. You must guard your soul and spirit jealousy. You are bought with a price, the precious blood of Jesus Christ and you aren't your own. You are a child of God and as such you need to watch your daily diet of thoughts and your daily schedule of exercise, your acts. Read the Bible some, pray some, work some, play some, witness some, serve some and sing some. Then you will find a life of contentment and the peace that passes all understanding.

B. What Does It Mean to be a Christian?

The word Christian means 'Christlike' or having a life like that of Jesus Christ. It means you are a follower of Jesus Christ, you are attempting to emulate His teachings and lifestyle. The word Christian does not mean perfect or that we have arrived at a higher plateau than the other men and women we share this planet with. When the early church was persecuted the Roman emperors looked for members of 'The Way', the name Jesus' followers gave to their gathering. This was after Jesus' own message; 'I am the way and the truth and the life...' (John 14:6b, NIV).

Some people, especially charismatics, present Christianity as a 'feel good' religion. As any serious student of the Bible will tell you the life of God's people has never been a happy one. Jews and Christians have suffered severe persecution throughout history for their belief in God. Millions have been martyred for the sake of Jesus Christ (many even in the name of Jesus Christ, a blasphemy by the Roman Catholic Church. See Jesuits, Society of Jesus for more information on the Pope's murderous army.)

To be a Christian is to admit your failure as a sinner, to give up 'The Old Way' - Satan's Way, and to allow Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit to begin a new work in you. By this inworking of God the Holy Spirit you will be transformed into a new creature in Christ. The desire for the old sinful ways will die and new desires to know God's plan for your life will take it's place. A real peace and joy will fill your mind, heart and soul as you allow God to take over the reins of your life. At times this is an instantaneous process, sometimes it takes decades. This incubation period is dependent upon how quickly you surrender the reins of control to your life. It can be a fairly simple

change or extremely complex change. All conversions are miracles and we don't understand the miracles of God. The conversion of the human heart is a mystery we cannot understand in and of ourselves. While the Holy Spirit enlightens us as believers about certain things in the Kingdom others must remain 'a mystery' until the Son of God makes His triumphant return in the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. All of the injustices that have ever been committed will be reduced to nothingness at that very moment. What a day that will be!

Some of the most valuable lives to the spreading of the gospel of Jesus Christ have been the most heavily persecuted. Men like Luther, Wycliffe, Zwingli, Knox and Calvin were branded heretics by the organized church and harassed, persecuted and excommunicated. Others like Tyndale were tortured and martyred. A real proof of The Truth is that a true Christian believer becomes more content, more placid, more peaceful and a more perfect picture of Jesus Christ with each trial he undergoes. Hard times, severe persecution and threats to life and limb crystallize the true Christian believers thinking and resolve. The most significant evil the forces of Satan can unload on Christianity is martyrdom. But this only kills the body which is going to die eventually anyhow. The spirit lives on and is glorified for the suffering of the body. The cause of Christ is glorified and magnified many times as word of the martyrdom spreads and the attitude of the martyr becomes known.

The sum total of the Christian life is repentance, submission, inworking, outworking, love, charity, peace, joy and fulfillment. As you allow the Holy Spirit to work in your heart, mind and life you will see a dramatic change. Others will see the change also and you may even

receive the greatest compliment a Christian can ever receive, 'Are you a Christian? or, I can see Jesus in you!' The Christian life is the most significant way anyone can use one single life. A man is either God's prisoner, shackled by love and hope or he is Satan's prisoner, trapped forever in time and space with the evil one. It's your choice.

BA. On Being Separated, God's Peculiar People

Separation is not pulling away from the world and becoming a recluse or a hermit, however tempting that might be at times. Separation is the recognition that you really have nothing in common with the people of darkness. They hate The Light (Jesus Christ), you love The Light. They hate The Way of Life (Jesus Christ), you love The Way. They hate The Truth (Jesus Christ), you love The Truth. They hate The Living Word of God (Jesus Christ), you love The Word of God. The walk of the true Christian believer is diametrically (just the opposite) different than the walk of the non-believer. Our path is narrow, their path is very wide. Our path is strewn with rocks and troubles. Theirs is smooth and trouble-free. Separation has positive aspects. Separation is what you do with the resources (time and money) God trusts to your care. A good manager of God's gifts puts them to effective use until the Lord returns or until the manager is called home to Heaven. Separation is also avoiding walking in the pathways of the ungodly. Don't subject yourself to unnecessary temptation and evil. If your walk is separated or called apart from the walk of the world others will recognize it and they won't like it one bit. Satan and his followers want you to go into the pit with them. Be separate and reflect the brilliant light of glory that dwells within you.

BB. The Work of the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete of God, the Helper, the Comforter, God's Advocate to the Spirit and Soul of Man.

The Holy Spirit of God was given to Christians as a Comforter (John 14:16 KJV) and a Counselor (John 14:16 NIV). The Holy Spirit is never spoken of as 'He' and is not to be worshipped directly. You can and should thank our Heavenly Father for sending His Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit works miracles in the human heart every day. The Holy Spirit convicts men, women and children of a sinful heart and their need for conversion. Instruction, spiritual growth and providing peace and understanding are also primary inworkings of the Holy Spirit. Search for passages in the Bible on the gifts of the Holy Spirit and how to discern whether someone else is a true believer and has the Holy Spirit dwelling in his heart. These are extremely important steps in your spiritual growth!

BC.Discerning the Holy Spirit of God.

The true test of whether something is from God or from Satan is the litmus test God gives so His people can see His invisible hand working. With Old Testament prophets God said that if the prophets words (prophecies) did not come true then he was a false prophet. No new Bible prophecies have been given since John wrote the Book of Revelation but false prophets have increased dramatically. There are thousands who claim to speak for God about coming events but these are all false prophets. In the New Testament the test of discernment is whether the act glorifies God or not and whether the actor admits his authority is from Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who has come in the flesh to earth (1 John 4:1-3.) If they don't admit this fact, it's the spirit of antichrist and not the Holy Spirit of God.

BD.Miracles and Endearing Qualities versus Magic and Enchanting Qualities.

C. Discarding Old Habits and Old Friends?

Whether you are a young Christian or a mature Christian losing a friend is a painful experience. However that's exactly what you might be required to do to begin living the Christian life as you should. As John writes in 1 John 2:15-17, "Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For everything in the world --- the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does --- comes not from the Father but from the world. The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever."

Shake off any old habits and old friends that would keep you from making a clean break with old sinful habits. Alcohol, drugs, tobacco, lust, immorality, greed, arrogance, hate, violence, stealing, occult worship and sexual perversion are some of the deadliest sins to change immediately. Other seemingly petty sins and bad habits may be harder to change as they aren't as apparent. Watching off-color television programs, being addicted to sports programs, ignoring your spiritual life and failure to read, worship, pray and witness seem like small sins to quibble over but they can rob you of your effectiveness as a Christian. Satan can't eliminate you, that isn't within his power. But he can neutralize and minimize the impact you have on the world for God's glory. If you are ineffective as a Christian he can use you as an example for why worldly citizens shouldn't follow your God.

D. Developing New Habits and Finding New Friends.

Putting on God's Armor and Getting Ready for the Battles of Your Life.

Cultivating new Christian habits requires you to discard the old ones

first. If you don't it's like trying to stuff brand new white shirts into a chest of drawers filled with rags covered with oil and grease and grime. It won't work. Even if you do somehow manage to get the new clothes into the chest of drawers the brand new shirts will pick up the filth and grime and dirt from the old rags. You have been given a chance to start completely over. You are a brand new bouncing baby boy or baby girl in Jesus Christ after your second birth. Don't put on the greasy, grimey rags from your dirty old lifestyle. Wear the crisp new whites the Holy Spirit will try to give to you. Adopt these new lifestyles:

Find a Bible-based congregation of believers. See our sample Statement of Faith. If the church you choose doesn't subscribe to these basic tenets keep searching.

Read as many fundamental, Bible-believing Christian magazines and books as you can get your hands on. Avoid New Age Movement books as well as any others that preach the secular humanist dogma. These are books that teach man as the one best able to solve man's problems. It's like saying a child who falls into a lake is going to be able to design, build and use a suspension bridge over the lake to extricate himself before he or she drowns.

Listen to as much Christian radio and television as possible. Turn your television off completely for one month. If you can do it for one month you will break the hold it has on you. If you have cable tell the cable company to take it out! Rent Christian videos from your local Christian bookstore if you want to watch a movie. A word of caution about Christian bookstores. Your chances are many times better of finding good, wholesome Christian reading material in your local Christian bookstore than in your local library. But you must remember that just because the sign says 'Christian' it doesn't mean that every one who works there is a 'Christian'. It also does not mean all

of their books are suitable reading material for Christians either. Be a discerning and discriminating reader. Don't allow Satan's lies to gain access to your mind. There are hundreds of good Christian music tapes and videos and magazines available. There are some that are not only not good but can be very destructive. Much of what is termed 'Contemporary Christian Music' (CCM) is dangerous. We are to be separated from the world. If you can't tell the difference between CCM and worldly music then there is a very significant problem. Go for authentic Christianity not a look-alike or counterfeit religion. Ours is not a religion, it's The Way of Life.

E. Choosing a Church to Attend? Warning Signs or When to Keep Looking!

F. What is Christian Fellowship? Why do I Need It? How do I Find It?

G. Why is Routine Bible Reading Important?

Chuck Swindoll gave a sermon in 1992 on 'God's Word - All Year Long'. His text was Psalm 119, the longest chapter in the Bible. The main thrust of his message was that reading God's Word every day provides the following:

Psalm 119:5 God's Word establishes my way.

Psalm 119:9-11 God's Word purifies my life.

Psalm 119:24 God's Word gives me counsel.

Psalm 119:29 God's Word removes everything false in me.

Psalm 119:38 God's Word produces reverence for God.

Psalm 119:46 God's Word increases my courage.

Psalm 119:50 God's Word comforts me in my sufferings.

Psalm 119:61-62 God's Word releases me from panic.

Psalm 119:65 God's Word gives me discernment and knowledge.

Psalm 119:79 God's Word makes me resourceful.

Psalm 119:87 God's Word cultivates patience.

Psalm 119:93 God's Word keeps me spiritually recharged.
Psalm 119:98-100 God's Word speeds up my understanding.
Psalm 119:111 God's Word creates a joyful heart in me.
Psalm 119:116 God's Word sustains me when I feel helpless.
Psalm 119:127-128 God's Word teaches me to love right and hate wrong.
Psalm 119:133 God's Word causes me to walk in truth.
Psalm 119:143 God's Word surrounds me with delight despite difficulties.
Psalm 119:147 God's Word develops the habit of prayer in me.
Psalm 119:153-154 God's Word rescues me when I am weak.
Psalm 119:164-165 God's Word fills me with praise and peace.
Psalm 119:176 God's Word draws me back when I stray away from Him.

If you read, reread, absorb, pray about, reread and understand these points you will begin reading your Bible on a daily basis without fail!

H. Where Should I Start Reading My Bible?

It's easier to tell you where not to start. Don't start with Genesis 1:1 or Matthew 1:1 and try to read the whole thing through in one sitting. God's Word is like a Goldmine, even if you could mine all the nuggets at one time you couldn't possibly carry them out all at the same time. There is more wealth here than you can mine in a thousand lifetimes. Avoid genealogies, the Old Testament and Revelations for now, they are very important but you can get bogged down trying to figure out why. They are hard reading. Every word in the Bible is important and there for a purpose but some of the passages are like feeding steak to a tiny baby. Leave the grown-up food for later when you become a 'mature' Christian. Some good starting places for a 'babe in Christ' include:

1 Corinthians 13:1-13 The Love Chapter of the Bible, the entire message

of Jesus Christ is Love, so this is a very appropriate starting point.

Ephesians, Paul's letter to the Ephesian church, this is appropriate for a new believer because it describes how we are to conduct our lives. He talks about the true 'Church - the body of Christ' and how our bodies are to be a Living Temple for God's Indwelling Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 3:16-17 also.) Paul describes how the miraculous conversion of our hearts and minds takes place.

After reading some introductory books such as Ephesians, Corinthians, Philippians, the Acts of the Apostles and the other 'Pauline' letters (Epistles written by Paul to the early churches) you can read the Bible several different ways. You can pursue it chronologically, Genesis to Revelation in one-year, three-years or five-years. You can read it for deep, scholarly meaning spending many months on one chapter or book. You can search it thematically, reading all the passages on the Sacrificial Lamb as an example. You can explore the Harmony of the Four Gospels. Another approach is to research all the parables, teachings and miracles of Jesus or to follow the missionary journeys of Paul. The methods of Bible study and reading are unlimited. Choose one method, plan your readings, make a commitment to follow your plan, pray for help in carrying out the plan and then start your readings. The important part is to stick with the plan.

I. What Does 'Pray Without Ceasing' Mean? (Luke 18:1)

Pray without ceasing does not mean to pray 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. It does mean to pray very frequently. Don't pray as a ritual, such as 'God Bless This Food to Our Bodies Use' before a Big Mac. God isn't listening to empty, insincere, vain phrasing. Effective prayer has to

come from a clean, compassionate, forgiving heart (Psalm 66:18 and Matthew 6:14-15). God knows what you are going to ask for before you even think of it yourself. Try to pray in the Will of God, it's the only way your prayer can be answered (1 John 5:14-15). God longs to hear from His child, put little notes around your house, car and workplace to remind you to pray until you get into the habit of prayer. Vary your prayers. There are as many types of prayer as there are different types of people. Keep a prayer list for others needs and keep a little journal to record how miraculously God answers prayer. You will be astounded at the results if you pray in the right attitude and come to your Father confessing your shortcomings and sin. He will give you back so much care and love and joy you will think your soul is going to burst at the seams (if a soul can be said to have 'seams'). Prepare to have God bless your soul beyond measure. I call it 'Treasure Beyond Measure.' Also pray in private and on your knees if you are able. Knees, heads and hearts will either be bent in this life or the next life so you should get some practice. Bent knees and a bowed head show a reverence for God and a submissive, repentant heart. What Father could refuse His child's request when it's made in such a humble way.

J. How Should I Pray? (Praise, Thanksgiving, Physical and Spiritual Need)

Prayer is the second half of the most important communications channel a Christian believer has in their life. The first part is allowing God to speak to you through His Holy Word, the Bible and the inner working of His Holy Spirit. You can quench the Spirit by not allowing the Spirit to work within you. You can keep God from speaking to you by never reading His Word. And you can keep God from working in your life by not praising Him, worshipping Him, giving Him thanks and fulfilling your needs by ignoring your prayer life. God says our prayers are like incense in His nostrils and

are so valuable He stores them up in bottles (Revelation 8:3).

There have been many great prayer warriors in the Christian faith in centuries past. Some of the greatest are probably unknown to men. Prayer is not to be offered for other men to hear you and say how great you are at praying. Jesus specifically forbids Christians from praying like the Pharisees who offered very lengthy prayers so they could be heard by other men. Your prayer is a private conversation between you and God the Father. Jesus intercedes in our behalf but we do not pray to Jesus. The Lord's Prayer is meant to be a model only, don't repeat it over and over again in a pagan ritual. Sincerity, Simplicity, Salvation and the Savior are the keys to effective prayer. Sin is a cement block wall that will keep your prayers from reaching God the Father. If you have sin in your life that you haven't confessed to God you need to ask for forgiveness before you do anything else. Don't forget to thank God for His blessings, His protection, His working in your life (even when His workings make you uncomfortable or miserable) and for His grace and gift of eternal life through His Son Jesus Christ. When you pray, pray in the name of Jesus Christ and claim God's forgiveness because you are under the cleansing and redeeming blood of Jesus Christ. You don't need to pray for hours to reach God, He knows what you want before you ask. Paul says in Romans 8:26 that the Holy Spirit intercedes for us when we don't know what we should pray for. Don't trust your own judgement, trust God's. The frequency of your prayer is more important than the duration of your prayer, pray without ceasing. Your attitude in prayer is of the highest importance. True humility, a forgiving nature, compassion, love for others, understanding, an unquenchable thirst for the friendship of God, a strong desire to be in His presence and a clean heart are the correct attitudes for prayer. Prayers offered with these attitudes will be answered. If you do

nothing else in your Christian life become an effective man or woman of prayer. You will be amazed at God's answers to effective prayer. God can and will alter national and international events due to the prayers of godly men and women.

K. The Greatest Compliment a Christian Can Ever Receive.

(I can see Jesus in your life or because of how you live your life I want to become a Christian).

L. How to Share Your Faith With Other People.

We share this planet with over 5 billion other human beings. According to Wycliffe Bible Translators there are 6,000+ distinct languages in the world. About 5,000 people are at work translating God's Word into the 1,000 languages without a translated Bible. About 2,700 other languages have been identified as having a translation needed. About 25 million Bibles or New Testaments a year are produced and distributed in the other 2,000 translated languages. The work of reaching others with the Gospel or Good News of Jesus Christ was the very last command of Jesus to His disciples before He returned to be with God the Father in Heaven (see The Great Commission, Matthew 28:16-20.) This outreach to others who don't know the Good News is called evangelism. Most "Christians" are not evangelical Christians. They prefer to give money to organized churches to send someone else. Christ's command was to each individual believer, "Go Ye!" not "Give Ye! So that someone else can go in your place." Over 95% of the money "Christians" give is used by their "church" for their own support and activities. A very tiny percentage goes to reaching countries with unreached people. The "Church" today consists primarily of "Christians" speaking to other "Christians" trying to make each other feel good. Jesus didn't come into the world to save religious people, He came to save sinners and He has told us as His followers to spread that

message. I am over 40 years old and I have never had one person personally approach me and ask me if I know Jesus Christ as my Savior. What a sad, pitiful state of unbelief the "Christian church" has dropped to.

If you want to witness effectively for Jesus Christ you need to attempt to reach others for Him with His Word, the Holy Bible. Witnessing comes in different forms. The most effective is personal, one-on-one testimony of the change God has made in your own life. God uses real-life models to communicate the truth in His Word. He says His strength is made perfect in our weakness (2 Corinthians 12:9), so don't be afraid of trying and failing. We already know how the story ends and we are already more than conquerors (Romans 8:37-39.) All the forces of evil cannot prevail against the Christian armed with the Sword of the Lord (Hebrews 4:12+13, Revelation 19:15.)

There are other forms of witnessing too. Some people have talents as writers, others are effective with little children. Some visit those in the hospital, nursing homes or jails as their effort to help. The most powerful moments in Jesus' life were when He was quietly ministering to the needs of others out of a heart of love and compassion and His teaching ministry as opposed to His preaching ministry. The Gentle Shepherd led by example and uses a quiet voice to call His sheep and guide them. Allow the quiet, Holy Spirit of God to use you in reaching others by The Way you live your life instead of how loud you can preach. One hundred thousand Sunday sermons spoken with thundering human voices are not nearly as effective as one word spoken in kindness with the Holy Spirit of God as the author. Take as your credo the words, "Live Simply So Others May Simply Live." Your actions will always speak louder than words and will reverbrate and echo through the passage of time even after your life here on earth has drawn to a close.

M. The Christian Art of Forgiving and Loving Even Your Enemy..

Probably the most difficult lesson to learn in the Walk of the Believer is forgiveness and loving one's enemies. Two of the greatest examples of the most powerful principal in the Bible are given by Jesus in His dying moments and in the words of Stephen, the first martyr of the young Christian Church. Jesus spoke of forgiveness in Luke 6:27-38 but then went on to give us a real life example to model our own lives after as He died on a cruel Roman cross (Luke 23:33-34.) Paul recounts in Acts 7:59-60 how Stephen emulated his Savior by asking God to forgive those who were stoning him to death. Jesus' example, the martyrdom of Stephen and the persecution suffered by the early church ensured the successful spreading of the Good News of Jesus Christ. It was better than any advertising campaign Madison Avenue could have devised to promote Christianity. Paraphrasing Joseph in Genesis 50:20, "Man meant it for evil, but God meant it for good."

N. Compassion on the Needy, Sick, Aged, Dying.

Jesus' emphasis on compassion is best illustrated by the overwhelming percentage of His miracles that were devoted to meeting people's needs. 29 of the 33 miracles recorded in the Gospels involved feeding hungry people, healing the sick and infirmed and raising the dead. Jesus never did anything to impress others. In fact, He told people not to tell others. By doing so He guaranteed His message would be spread more effectively than AT&T, IBM, NBC, CBS, ABC and UPI could ever dream of communicating with their weak earthly communications technology. Yes, compassion and love was at the very core of everything Jesus did. His coming to earth, His ministry, His suffering and His death, burial and resurrection were all proof of His love and compassion for mankind dying without God. With what He did for us, how can we do any less for Him than show compassion on His people. Jesus served the

lowliest people on earth, lepers, demon-possessed and the dying. He loved the unloveable. When you see a person in need run to their aid, give it quietly, don't look for recognition and never count the cost of what you have done. God will do the accounting work for you and will on that Great Day give you a certified balance sheet.

O. Growing and Maturing as a Christian.

Sometimes I get a little discouraged at my lack of Christian growth and my lack of effectiveness. Why can't I win more souls for the Lord? Why do I have to be taught the same lesson half a dozen times before the Lord's teachings sink into my life? Why can't I remember hundreds of Bible passages by heart like some of the great Christian warriors I have read about? Then I stop to think about how I have been so stubborn while God is trying to speak to my heart. I think about the times I have gone ahead of God. I have tried to live my life with the credo, "Not Thy Will, But My Will Be Done, O Lord!" It doesn't work. Submit yourself to God, try to learn as much as you can about Him, live a life separated from the rest of the world and the Holy Spirit will mature you and grow you as a Christian believer and worker. Think of your internal spirit and being as a large construction site. This living Temple of God is under construction by the Holy Spirit of God. Yellow construction warning signs have been posted all over. As long as you don't tear them down God will continue to put them up. Satan will try to move the signs and slow down construction work. But you are the job site supervisor. Construction will go as fast or as slow as you read the Master Builder's Blueprints and implement the engineering changes He has ordered. You can allow the Superintendent of Earthly Building Codes (Satan) slow down progress if you stand around and listen to him tell you why the Temple will never work. Don't follow his blueprints, they lead to many dead-end allies and call for

a foundation built on sand and slime. Build the Temple of God on Solid Rock, you won't be disappointed.

OA. Passing on Your Christian Values to Children or Friends.

Don't tell others how to live, lead them into The Way they should follow by living your life as an example of the Good News of Jesus Christ. Parents speak a few phrases to their children every day while their lives speak volumes. Think about how sports celebrities, Hollywood stars and TV personalities are revered by the American public. They have an impact on our lives because that's how we define success; money, good looks, prestige and power. Don't emulate the world's success because your message isn't for worldly people. The message you carry is for those who are seeking the Kingdom of God. If your life is a model of sincerity, humility, compassion, economy and love then those who are seekers will see in you The Hope, The Truth and The Way they have been searching for. By your example and without saying a word to someone watching your life you may have a significant impact on their eternal soul. This isn't to say you shouldn't personally witness to people, it simply means that One Quiet Solitary Life can have more impact on the history yet to be written than all the loudspeakers and newstand scandal sheets in America.

OB. Discipling Other Christian Believers.

OC. Teaching, Evangelizing, Mission Work, Christian Service.

The Great Commission.

OD. Stewardship, Tithing, Supporting Christian Ministries.

P. When the Tough Times Come.

'Do all the good you can to everyone you can everytime you can.'

- John Wesley

Then having done all you can, stand and occupy until the LORD comes.

Q. Testing, Temptation, Trials and Troubles, Overcoming Difficulties.

QA.False Teachings, the Spirit of Antichrist, Recognizing Satan, Heresy.

When I was a very young Christian and a freshman at a Christian Bible College I was accused of heresy. During a discussion with other students I said I believed that if someone in the remotest part of the earth would come to know God if he earnestly desired to find God. Someone would be sent to deliver the message, or the seeker would hear a portion of the Word of God via radio, a Bible or some special provision of God. A ministers son who knew my pastor sent the word back to my home church that I was spreading heresy. I was so heartbroken I dropped out of Bible school and went into the U. S. Army. I felt called into the ministry and I abandoned that calling because of that incident. With this little real life incident I hope to point out the danger of judging others. God's people were used by Satan to change the Will of Almighty God. This happens all the time. Well meaning people, even true Christian believers, go on witch-hunts and interfere with God's Plan. Don't participate in this kind of activity. God says by the same standard you judge others your own heart and life will be judged in that final day! This pronouncement alone should be enough to curb your tongue and reckless actions. You shouldn't take the advice of an ungodly person or participate in advancing causes or teachings that the Holy Spirit leads you to believe are wrong, but if it isn't a fundamental tenet of faith you shouldn't impede the spread of the gospel of Jesus Christ by slandering a well-intentioned worker.

Today, there is more occultism and Satan worship than ever before. It is far more openly practiced than ever before too. Believers need to arm themselves to recognize the forces of Satan and fight them off. God's spiritual

armor is described in Ephesians 6:10-18. You need all of this armor to fend off Satan. There is also a tendency today to study Satanism and occultism in all of its gory details and depravity. We are warned not to be too interested in the workings of Satan. Become more interested in the workings of God, His Son Jesus and the Holy Spirit and God will take care of Satan. Resist temptation and Satan will flee from you. When temptation is placed in your path as a believer you should immediately pray asking God to help you overcome this temptation. Search for Scripture verses that deal with the temptation or trial you are facing. Believe me, it's in there! We are told in 1 Corinthians 10:13 that no temptation has come our way that many other people have faced before us. The rest of the verse is more comforting though, God won't allow us to be tempted beyond what we are able to stand. What a blessed thought and comfort for every new believer!

R. Running a Good Race.

S. The Crowns for Living the Victorious Christian Life.

T. Reverence and Sanctity of God. Honoring Him.

Worshipping God in Spirit. Wherever You Are. With Your Life Best.

U. Recognizing Satan the Archenemy and his lies and deceptions. Avoiding his traps. How to have Satan flee from you.

V. Victory in Jesus, Leading a Life Pleasing to God. Separated, Dedicated, Unquestioned Commitment to the Will of God.

VA. Resting in Jesus. Don't Hurry, Worry, Bury like the rest of the World.

The Sum Total of All Human Effort To-Date Has Been to Get Us Wherever We Are Going Faster and Noisier, the Only Problem Is We Don't Have Any Idea Where We Are Going, from Adrian Rodgers and his radio program - Love Worth Finding, Memphis, Tennessee.

Be Still and Know That God Is God.

W. Never Consider Yourself as Having 'Arrived' or 'Special'.

X. Your Final Reward, Your Precious Homegoing.

Y. Receiving the Gifts of God. Recognizing the Hand of God Working.

Z. These Things Are Not Given to You to Know. Don't Be Too Curious About
the Workings of Satan. Recognizing the Evil Outworkings of Satan.

Cults, the Occults. Martydom.

ZA. Danger Signs for The New Babe in Christ.

ZB. Danger Signs for The Old Saint in Christ.

ZZ. Christian Resources and Ministries to Help You in Your Walk With Jesus.

Many so called charities and ministries in American Society are doing all the right things for all the wrong reasons. They feed and clothe the hungry so they won't be embarrassed when these poor people loiter around the fashionable boutiques of their downtown shopping and business districts. Such charity is never given out of a compassionate, loving heart. Without the love of Jesus behind the charitable act they would be better left undone. Humanitarianism without compassion is hypocrisy. Jesus didn't merely give a handout to the thousands who were hungry He gave them a full meal, He healed their broken and diseased bodies and then He spoke to them in love and kindness. He gave His very best for all mankind not merely the scraps and leftovers. Our poor, needy and sick deserve the absolute best from us. They also need our daily prayers and spiritual support by taking time to talk about their needs that eyes cannot see. The following ministries are a few of the more Christ-centered, compassionate type. Seriously evaluate some of the liberalistic, secular humanism charities you might now be giving to. These nationwide gargantuans sponge up most of the aid intended for the poor by high administrative overhead costs. They won't miss your \$20 as much as the work of the Lord will. Pray that God will guide your giving to place it

where it will do the most good for His cause.

Names and Addresses of Select Christian Ministries:

Billy Graham Evangelistic Association
1300 Harmon Place
Minneapolis, MN 55403
(612) 338-0500

Dr. Graham has preached to more people than anyone else in the world.

His evangelistic crusades have reached hundreds of millions directly and by television. His message is pure and simple, Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. Fundamentalist in doctrine, he communicates the gospel with clarity and direct and forceful logic.

The Salvation Army National Headquarters
Commissioner James Osborne, National Commander
P. O. Box 269
615 Slaters Lane
Alexandria, VA 22313

Founded by William Booth in London, England in the late 1800's.

The Salvation Army is one of the prime forces for good throughout the world. They house, clothe and feed the needy in hundreds of locations all over the globe. In addition, 'Sally' provides spiritual comfort and guidance to hundreds of thousands daily.

Wycliffe Bible Translators
P. O. Box 2727
Huntington Beach, CA 92647
(714) 969-4600

Founded in 1934 by Cameron Townsend and L. L. Legters, WBT and the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) work together to forward the task of providing God's Word for all language groups in the world.

The world has 6,000 spoken languages. Portions of Scripture exist in about 3,000 of these languages. Wycliffe and SIL have identified

1,000 of the remaining 3,000 as critical languages and is working to convert the Bible into those 1,000 tongues.

Moody Broadcasting Network
Moody Bible Institute
Dr. Joseph Stowell, President
820 North LaSalle Drive
Chicago, IL 60601

A fully staffed, professional radio broadcast organization carrying the Christian gospel and music to audiences throughout North America.

Affiliated with Moody Bible Institute and Moody Church in Chicago.

Named after D. L. Moody, the great evangelist of late-1800's America.

Joni and Friends
Joni Eareckson Tada
P. O. Box 3333
Agoura, CA 91301
(818) 707-5664

Joni is a best selling author and artist who founded JONI AND FRIENDS to minister to individuals with handicaps. Joni is an inspiration to many of the people she serves. The injuries she received in a teenage diving accident resulted in Joni becoming a quadriplegic. Joni shares her faith in God with everyone she comes in contact with.

Focus on The Family
Dr. James C. Dobson
Colorado Springs, CO 80995

Dr. Dobson has been broadcasting his 'Focus on the Family' radio program for 15 years. The program is aired on 1,550 radio stations worldwide. Additional 'Focus on the Family' outreach ministries include 'Adventures in Odyssey' radio dramatic series for kids and publishing books authored by Dr. Dobson. Dr. Dobson is an experienced physician.

Insight for Living
The Back to God Hour/FAITH 20

Dr. Joel Nederhood
6555 West College Drive
Palos Heights, IL 60463

Dr. Nederhood provides incisive solutions to many of the problems facing the modern Christian. All of his recommendations have a firm foundation in the Bible and at the same time are completely with the times.

Guidelines
Dr. Harold J. Sala
Box G
Laguna Hills, CA 92654
(714) 582-5001

Dr. Sala airs a daily radio program called 'Guidelines'. This excellent feature provides Biblical direction on daily problems and issues confronting Christians. Evangelical in nature, Dr. Sala has sound doctrine and teachings with a very practical outlook.

Radio Bible Class
Mark DeHaan, President
P. O. Box 1
Grand Rapids, MI 49555-0001

A multi-media source of Christian educational, inspirational and devotional materials. Print materials include 'Our Daily Bread'. Television programming includes 'Day of Discovery'.

Love Worth Finding
Dr. Adrian Rodgers
P. O. Box 38300
Memphis, TN 38183

Dr. Rodgers is an excellent Bible expositor. Fundamental, caring and uncompromising are adjectives that capture Adrian Rodger's style of preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Family Radio Network
P. O. Box 2140
Oakland, CA 94621-9985

A fully staffed, professional radio broadcast organization carrying the Christian gospel and music to audiences throughout North America via FM Radio stations owned by Family Radio. Also broadcasts in 10 major world languages via shortwave. Primarily an evangelistic and teaching ministry.

The Rutherford Institute
John W. Whitehead, Attorney
P. O. Box 7482
Charlottesville, VA 22906-7482
(804) 978-3888

A professional legal institution organized to advocate for Christian ethics in legal disputes. Protects individual and family rights. Provides high quality legal intervention where non-Christian forces are attempting to misuse their power or authority.

Chuck Swindoll

Chuck Swindoll is a dynamic, best selling author and speaker on Christian living. He has a daily radio program heard on many stations worldwide. Mr. Swindoll delivers his Bible-based message with the fiery zeal of a Billy Sunday with pragmatic insights and tips on real life applications of God's Word in a world turned upside down by Satanic forces.

Institute for Creation Research
P. O. Box 2667
El Cajon, CA 92021-0667

ICR develops seminars and Christian educational material supporting the creation-scientist point of view. Also has a daily radio program called 'Creation Moments' heard nationwide. Ken Ham is one of ICR's most requested speakers.

Christian Book Publishers:

Thomas Nelson Publishing Company
Nelson Place at Elm Hill Pike
P. O. Box 141000
Nashville, TN 37214-1000
(615) 889-9000

David C. Cook Publishing Company
850 N. Grove Avenue
Elgin, IL 60120
(708) 741-2400

Zondervan Publishing House
5300 Patterson, S. E.
Grand Rapids, MI 49530

Tyndale House Publishing
Wheaton, IL 60189

Harvest House Publishers
1075 Arrowsmith
Eugene, OR 97402
(503) 343-0123

Word Publishing
Dallas, TX 75039

Some of these firms have their origins in England during the 1800's.

II. RECOGNIZING THE ENEMY: SPIRITUAL WARFARE

III. SATAN'S TEMPORAL DOMAIN: A WORLD OF DECEIT AND GREED

- A. Myth America
- B. The Silly Symphony of Science
- C. Sagan's Follies, Satan's Follies
- D. Entropy and Chaos: Magic Touchstones and the New Alchemy of Science
- E. Brilliant Pebbles: Stumbling on a Path of Paradoxes
- F. Science Buries the Corpse of Science
- G. The Dark Side of the Universe

- H. Washington's Coronation of the god of Greed
- I. Great Men of Science versus the Mysterious Mind of the Infinite
- J. I Did It My Way versus The Way, The Truth and The Life

IV. RECOGNIZING THE SAINTS:

BY THEIR FRUITS YOU WILL KNOW THEM,
FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD

V. GOD'S ETERNAL DOMINION: THE INFINITE UNIVERSE OF TRUTH AND LOVE

- A. Creator of the Kingdom of Kindness
- B. Neverending Glory
- C. Goodness, Hope, Charity, Love: Hallmarks of a Christian Life
- D. Missionaries and Martyrs
- E. Treasure Beyond Measure
- F. Return of Martyrdom in the 21st Century
- G. Spiritual Warfare and the Unfolding Sacred Drama

III. SATAN'S TEMPORAL DOMAIN: A WORLD OF DECEIT AND GREED

A. Myth America:

Almost every American has a feeling that something is drastically wrong with American Society. The evidence is all around us with some of the most critical findings produced by the United States Government. The FBI Uniform Crime Reports, Department of Labor unemployment statistics, Department of Commerce trade imbalance, Congressional Budget Office budget reports on the deficit and dozens of other alarming reports combine to produce a disturbing picture of life in America in the 1990's.

As a nation we have begun to reevaluate who we are, where we are going and whether or not we should change directions. As a nation we have abandoned

traditionally held values, ethics and morality. We have blindly accepted immoral "patriotic" propaganda, social programs in quagmires of bureaucracy and abdicated our rights as citizens, parents and children of a most high God. In believing unscrupulous political pundits, educators, lawyers, judges, bankers, doctors and corporate officers we have abandoned the high ground of morality, goodness, right living and the quest for righteousness and holiness. Without the salt of Christianity this world will continue on an endless down escalator to the pit of Hell.

To understand what is going on around us and why we should closely examine the facts, trying to determine the true situation and what can be done to correct it. Americans have many misconceptions that have been fostered by the forces of Satan. They come in the form of political propaganda, subtleties, deceit, trickery and euphemisms dressed in glossy packages ranging from seemingly innocent games and movies to biased news media reporting to Government programs to influence public thinking (Vince and Larry, the Crash Dummies, Woodsy Owl, Smokey the Bear, MacGruff the Crime Dog, Just Say No, NASA Educational Programs, Pueblo Colorado Consumer Information Center, Federal Information Centers, Armed Forces Recruiting, et cetera).

Americans hold a number of myths that have been socialized into us by television, public schools and Madison Avenue Marketing and Advertising companies. These myths include:

1) Myth: 'America' is a patriotic, humble, all-loving, wonderful paradise on earth, the home of the free, the brave, the strong. A place where any child can become president if he tries hard enough. A place where there is true equality between all men, all races and between the sexes.

Fact: I think we all recognize the 'American Dream' has become a joke

because of the uncurbed greed, immorality and godlessness of the majority and the minorities of 'American' citizens. 'America' must turn back to it's first love, God, the Creator of all that is.

2) Myth: 'America' is 'One Nation Under God', a Christian nation, a people whose faith is expressed even on their money by the motto 'In God We Trust'.

Fact: 'America' has not been a 'Christian Nation' for many, many years. The United States has become a militaristic, self-seeking, corrupt Empire much like the Roman Empire was in Jesus' day. Christians who have abdicated the high ground of morality over the past 100 years need to retake that ground from the forces of Satan. We are being lulled into inactivity by

3) Myth: The professions are something to aspire to. Becoming a medical doctor, lawyer, judge, Congressman, Senator, banker, minister or corporate executive are worthy callings.

Fact: In recent days many of these 'professions' have shown their true colors. One report showed the vast majority of lawyers didn't like lawyers or their work. Congressman and Senators have shown their true characters as greedy, self-indulgent and irresponsible bureaucrats. Judges today make their own laws and feel they are above the law themselves. Follow God's calling and not Satan's calling.

4) Myth: Nature. Scientists deny anything exists beyond our immediate senses and at the same time imbue 'Nature' with a spirit that borders on animism. Animism is an ancient mystic ritualistic belief that everything (rocks, water, trees, dirt) has a spirit-being in it and deserves to be worshipped.

Fact: If science were really searching for the ultimate truth in the Universe they would start with the realization they can't have it both ways. If no spiritual forces exist they should stop treating 'Nature' as if it were a god. If they acknowledge some force exists beyond our earthly experience then

scientists should seek the Creator and not worship the Creation.

'America' as a place has never existed on any world map or globe. 'The Americas' do exist as North America and South America, two continents in the Western Hemisphere. 'The United States of America' exists as a political entity that occupies a certain portion of geography, but 'America' per se is a romanticized concept or vision of freedom and political paradise here on earth. This concept has been dogmatized by 'American' State Papers such as the Monroe Doctrine and political views such as 'Manifest Destiny' and hegemony (the views that God has ordained 'America' as a 'chosen nation' to rule over the world and the concept that 'America' is so strong that no other nation on earth would dare question the free exercise of its powers.) These are pure political propaganda and the outworkings of Satan and his followers. As Christians we must never forget Satan is the temporal ruler of this world and of the current world's governments.

There are numerous Gallup polls and other surveys showing 'America' as a Christian nation. The techniques used in all polls and surveys are self-report, in other words the pollster asks an interviewee their opinion about a certain circumstance or event or their beliefs or behavior. Self-report is an extremely subjective technique and may or may not reflect the truth. It would be the equivalent of running a 'scientific' experiment on a mouse and then asking the mouse to write a report on his findings, conclusions and recommendations. It lacks the rigor to produce reliable, objective results. It does produce a summary of what Americans are thinking and their beliefs, whether they have a basis in fact or are founded in the fiction and fantasy of the world as I see it or want it to be.

If 'America' was truly a Christian nation it would be apparent in the outworkings of the spirit of Jesus Christ. The fruits of the spirit according to Galatians 5:22-23 are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. These are in extremely short supply in the United States of 'America'. They are mocked by the media and entertainment industry as out-of-style, unnecessary in the 90's and as radical Christian fundamentalism.

We need to be reminded that our view of the world is obscured by Satan, that the ruler of this world has turned it upside down. In this 'Reverse Universe of Perversion' right seems wrong or at least square and wrong. Wrong doing is revered by those in authority over us. Congressmen, federal and state bureaucrats, judges, bankers, educators, lawyers and medicine men have an appearance of right living because of their money and possessions and power but laugh at the evil that pervades our society. The outworkings of Satan and his henchmen are sexual immorality, impurity, debauchery, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, occultism, dissensions, factions, envy, drunkenness, orgies and the like. This isn't the recent ramblings of some overzealous preacher, these words were penned by the Apostle Paul almost 2,000 years ago in Galatians 5:19-21. They fit our situation in 'American' Society in the 1990's just as well as they did to the Roman Empire in the first century A.D.

There are dire consequences for sinfulness. Disease, separation from God, depravity, destruction, devastation and ultimate, eternal death are just a few of the penalties for not turning away from sin. One of Satan's greatest lies is that a loving God wouldn't punish his people, not if he really loved them. God can't exist if he is a hateful, spiteful, revenging god. But as we go down

the highway of life we have been warned thousands and thousands of times by the Eternal Creator of the Universe and Worlds Unseen. God tells us "I am God, I have created you and everything there is, my creation is self-evident, my witness is the seed of conviction you are born with, the understanding of right and wrong innate to human beings, the evidence that you are the only creation I have endowed with thought, language, self-determination, creativity, and understanding. I am God, I never change, you cannot know my mind, without me you are nothing and cannot exist apart from me." Yet we ignore the evidence of His eternal beauty, order, compassion and the Infinite Light of the World choosing instead to believe the demonic forces of darkness who pursue deceit, violence and disorder.

In the chapters that follow we document evidence to 'prove' the existence of God and the existence of Satan. The Dichotomy of the Universe uses science to show why we should believe in the inerrancy of the Holy Bible and how science supports a faith in our God and not in the god of Carl Sagan. We discuss how science, intellectualism, liberalism and secular humanism have brought our society to the precipice of self-destruction. Other topics under discussion include stagnation and ineffective Christians in political, church and educational leadership positions, the Seven Deadly Sins for 'America', destruction of the 'American' family - a Satanic Master Plan and how networks such as Fox, Turner, HBO, Cinemax and Showtime are collaborating with some of 'America's' most respected corporations (McDonald's, Pepsi, Coke, Disney Studios, Sears, Pizza Hut, Kellogg's, General Mills, Pillsbury and many others) motion picture studios by way of tie-in sales and children's susceptibility to seduce our children to the dark side of the spiritual universe.

What ever happened to the beliefs our founding fathers held? Did they believe in the separation of church and state? Would they

approve of prayerless schools? What would they think of the current State of the Union? Would they admit to being a founding father of the current United States of America? Is abortion an option or murder? Is 'America' the 'Evil Empire' Ronald Reagan referred to?

What does God the Father demand from us?

The Complete Fear of God as the Beginning of Knowledge
The Faith of a Child
No Other gods in Our Lives, such as Money, Possessions, Success, Power, Images
Acceptance of His Gift of Eternal Life through His Son Jesus
Acceptance of His Word, the Holy Bible as Ultimate Truth
Absolute Faith that what God has in store for us is in our best interest
Faith in God without the need for God to 'prove' He exists
Trust that as we walk with Him daily He will provide everything we need for that day.
Complete Obedience
All Honor
All Praise
All Worship
Thankfulness
A Joyful Outlook and Countenance
Our Lives as Living Sacrifices (Our Work & Efforts should seek to please Him)
Our Very Life (Martyrdom, the giving of One's Life for their Beliefs, if nec.)
Complete Subservience
Our Love and Devotion to Him
Commitment
Dedication
Unquestioning Willingness to Follow His Will
Prayerfulness, a vibrant prayer life (You talking to God)
Reading His Holy Word, the Guidebook of Life (God talking to you)
True Humility (Giving without an audience, praying in solitude)
Giving everything back to God for His use, it's all His in any event
Simple Goodness
Compassion to those less fortunate (Whatever you do to the least of these you do also to me.)
Willingness to Bear All Difficulties for His Name Sake even death if necessary
Caring for the Sick and Dying
Enduring and Overcoming Temptation
Witness to others to the Good News of Jesus Christ
Mercy and Justice for others
Bear Fruit (Share the Good News, Bring Others to Heaven With You)

Thinking Good Thoughts
Not Speaking Evil of Anyone
A Broken Heart for Your Sins
Confession of Sin
Turning away from all sin
Caring for His Creations (Earth, Other People, Creatures, Your Own Body)
Caring for the Dying, Troubled and Needy
A Peaceful Spirit in Your Dealing With Others
Respect for Life (All creatures great and small, the Lord God made them all)
Respect for Every Other Human Being, Even the Unlovable and the Ugly
Study to know His Ways through His Word and other sources
Contemplation of God's Ways and Your Ways
A Spirit of Awe and Wonder that comes from an Awareness of the Vastness of the Universe and the Infinite Complexities God has created.

What God Offers Us as a Free Gift:

The Ability to Live With Him Forever (Eternal Life)
The Peace of Mind That Nothing Else in The Universe Can Give
The Simple Satisfaction and Fulfillment Found in Living a Good Life
Love and Respect for All of God's Creation
The Love and Respect of Other Christian Believers
Wisdom, Understanding, Knowledge Surpassing the World's Most Brilliant Minds

What God Takes Away From Us:

All Earthly Concern for Power and Wealth and Success
Worry, Doubt, Despair
Eternal damnation in a real burning pit called Hell
The Penalty of Sin, the Second Death, He paid the price with Jesus' death

Dichotomy of the Universe:

God's Attributes/Proof He Exists:

Creator
Creation (Nature)
Health
Life
Harmony
Angels
Singlemindedness
Truth
Unconditional Love
Peace
Openness
Goodness
Contentment
Purity
Fulfillment, Satisfaction

Satan's Attributes/Proof he exists:

Destroyer
Destruction (Devastation of Nature)
Disease
Death
Dischord
Demons
Depravity
Deceit and Lies
Hatred
Violence
Prejudice
Evil
Greed
Immorality, Impure Spirits
Emptiness, Wantonness, Longing

Peacefulness
Self-Sacrifice
Prince of Peace
Light of the World

Wandering, Searching
Self-Centered, Narcissism, Egomaniac
Prince of Evil
Prince of Darkness

Man's Self-Evidence of God's Existence and Creatorship:

1)

Man's innate belief that something exists outside of his physical experience, some call it his mystic nature, I call it his soul and believe God has planted the seed of belief in every individual. Whether we nurture it and allow it to grow or stamp it out like a weed is the turning point of our lives.

2)

The Peace that Passes All Understanding. When a person accepts Christ as his Savior he undergoes a change in his nature that is apparent to everyone around him. It is most apparent in the reaction a Christian has when facing death as opposed to the attitude displayed by a non-Christian facing death. The Christian is going home to be with his Heavenly Father and he knows his death is a precious moment to his Father and his Savior. The non-Christian knows that his death is the complete termination of all life for now and forever. It also signals a going down to the Pit or Abyss for rejection of God's gift of eternal life, a concept the unbeliever cannot grasp or cope with.

3)

Man is an amazing creation. And why not, he is cast in the image of God.

As the Psalmist states, man is wonderfully made. (Psalm 139)

The truth of God is self-evident in each cell of every person's body.

4)

God's Word is the official history book of His dealings with His people.

The Bible is also His Wonderful Master Plan for the future of His Church (the Saints), the remainder of mankind and the demise of the forces of evil.

5)

The awesome wonder of God's creation of man reoccurs with every single birth. His handiwork takes place where neither microscope or telescope can see. The mysteries of God will ALWAYS remain a mystery to man. He says His ways are beyond man's tracing out and that His mind is not man's mind. (Romans 11:33 and Isaiah 40:13)

6)

The Universe screams of the Absolute Authority and Magnificence of an all knowing, ever present, all powerful God and Creator. Three of the greatest witnesses against our eternal souls will be how we received or rejected eternal truths evidenced by His creation, rejection or acceptance of His gift of eternal life through His Son and the witness that comes from our own mouths and lives. God and not Carl Sagan created the 'billions and billions of stars' as witness to His magnificent power. The order of the Universe attests to God's existence, the chaos in the world and a dying creation (man and nature) attests to the existence of Satan.

7)

The Cycle of Life and the Seasons are powerful testimony to the Death, Burial and Resurrection of Jesus Christ and the Hope that Christians have for eternal life, life after death and a physical resurrection from the grave during the

Second Coming of Jesus Christ, their Savior and Redeemer. The same cycle exists in the tiniest seed and in man. Life doesn't begin at conception, it began when God breathed life into Adam and will continue until God separates the living from the dead. Even the dead in Christ aren't dead, Jesus said they were simply asleep (John 11:11, Acts 4:15). They are like a dormant seed waiting to be transplanted by the Great Gardener to His new field.

8)

The implications to man's world by his refusal to accept God's precepts, teachings and commands are enormous. The physical sciences and medical science are continually developing technologies and 'solutions' with poorly understood ramifications. Then the same sciences must develop solutions to problems their predecessors created only a few short decades before. We are given a lot of propaganda by the companies that manufacture and sell these technologies with only a profit motive. Acid rain, destruction of ecosystems such as the rainforests, endangered species, toxic wastes, ozone degradation and global warming, nuclear meltdowns and medicinal side-effects are all examples of man's thinking that his science is the search for ultimate truth in the universe. Recycling is an example of science's attempt to fix what science has destroyed, it's like placing a band-aid on an open heart surgery patient. Man's attempt to define himself and truth through science is analogous to Mickey Mouse recreating Walt Disney in Mickey's own image, you simply can't get there from here.

9)

Christians believe the Unfolding Sacred Drama or War between Spiritual Forces has already been won. The death of Jesus Christ on a Roman cross and His

resurrection provided victory over Satan and Death and Hell.

9A)

The question of a 'New World Order' pales in comparison to 'A New Heaven and New Earth'. Man's and Satan's rule over this world are extremely temporary. God's judgement will be final, swift and terrible. While Christian's have temporarily abdicated the high ground of morality God will not be mocked or have His Master Plan foiled.

10)

Entropy or decaying orbits of stars and solar systems and the death of stars is heralded by physicists and astronomers as scientific evidence proving the big bang theory (see Stephen Hawking's book). Some physicists call the apparent chaos in the universe a higher form of order, failing to see the absolute beauty and order in the stars that a child of three can recognize.

11)

If Charles Darwin's 'Origin of the Species' (Theory of Evolution) is correct why is man devolving to a less fit species. God's Word says a father's sins will be visited on his children, thereby producing weaker offspring (see Exodus 34:7).

The fossil record hoaxes of Piltdown Man, the Tasady people and Lucy are indications of the lengths that science (and Satan) will go to decieve people into believing that man is descended from apes and reptiles and fishes. By reducing man to an animal Satan eliminates the necessity for a God who is the Creator and Ruler of the Universe.

12)

The AIDS Epidemic (Auto-Immune system Deficiency Syndrome or HIV, HIV-2 and HTLV) is evidence that the result of disobedience to God's natural order is disease, destruction and death. Even preachers refuse to associate man's disobedience and defiance of God's law with the dire consequences. The death of AIDS infected children is also dictated by Exodus 34:7. Some people say it's a cruel and vindictive God who would kill innocent children. It isn't God killing these children, it's the wreckless lifestyles of the parents. If we follow the absolutes outlined in God's Word we will have absolutely no problems in this life or the next. We must learn to take God at His Word.

God's everyday miracles:

The Holy Spirit's inworking in the hearts of men, conviction, conversion and transformation of thinking and lives. The Holy Spirit's outworking in the lives of converted men, women and children include: Hope, Charity, Love, Patience, Longsuffering, Virtue, Purity, Compassion, Tenderness, Truthfulness, Freedom, Wisdom, Understanding and Healing.

Satan's daily outworkings in the acts of men include:

Vulgarity, Corruption, Greed, Hate, Murder, Avarice, Pride, Arrogance, Selfishness, Stubbornness, Defiance, Perversion, Sexual Immorality, Defeatism, Despair, Wars, Recrimination, Revenge and Abortion to name a few.

Proof of Satan's Existence by his Outworkings in the Souls of Evil Men:

1) Adolf Hitler and The Holocaust, an attempt by Satan and the German people to eliminate God's chosen people, 6 million Jews by gassing and many other atrocities.

2) Lenin and Josef Stalin, Russian rulers who systematically eliminated 20 million Russian dissidents, citizens of their own country.

3) The Gulag Archipelago, Russian communist Siberian concentration and forced labor camps for dissidents. Read the book by Alexander Solzenistin.

4) The Killing Fields, millions of Cambodians were systematically eliminated by their own army, the Kemer Rouge after the Vietnam war as revenge on democratic sympathizers and to eliminate the threat to communism.

5) The existence of Apartheid in South Africa and support for many years of the South African government by the 'democratic' governments of the world.

6) Martyrdom of Missionaries in current times, God's people murdered while trying to do good. The darkness hates the light with a vengeance enough to murder, while the light has compassion on the dark even while being murdered. See Saint Stephen and Jesus Christ and other Christian martyrs as examples of this total loving kindness. The martyrdom of all of Jesus' Apostles except one is excellent witness to the level that Satan and his followers will stoop to in an attempt to obliterate the truth and The Light of The World. Of course, these attempts are absolutely futile and can never succeed. Paul tells us in his letters that he is convinced nothing can separate him from the love of God. The Light of the World is so brilliant that nothing of this world or any other world can extinguish it's power.

Catholicism and Calamity Come to the Early Christian Church

Warnings About The Roman Catholic Church:

The State Church of the Roman Empire and Descent into Apostasy

Martyrdom of the Saints (see John Foxe's Book of Martyrs)

The greatest catastrophe to ever befall the young Christian Church was the edict by Emperor Theodosius circa 380 A. D. making Christianity the official religion of the Roman Empire. This Universal Catholic Church of the Roman Empire or Roman Catholic Church was the first Age of Apostasy or decline into disbelief for the early church. Unregenerate Romans, with their pagan gods and images and rituals still in their minds and hearts, were forced to integrate with true believers. This politization of the church into a State-Church and Church-State allowed the militarism of the Roman government to infiltrate and corrupt the all-loving and subservient message of Jesus Christ. Offices in the church were sold and Roman societal immorality crept in. Pagan idol worship crept into the simple Christian ceremony by way of Roman Catholic images, paintings and icons or symbols and statuary. These objects became their focal point for worship. As God states it, they worship the created and not the Creator. Their ceremonies became increasingly elaborate and 'stately', reminiscent of the pagan ceremonies they supposedly left behind. This was additional evidence of their unregenerated hearts. Icons began to fill the church and believing ministers were replaced with unconverted heathen 'priests' who bought the privilege of becoming priests

from corrupt church 'leaders'. These forerunners of the 'Pope' (which means 'Papa' in Italian) usurped the rightful role of Jesus Christ as the high priest interceding with God for man.

All of Jesus' Apostles were martyred except one. Martyrdom in the early Christian church began with Stephen, a disciple of Jesus Christ, by the Jewish religious hierarchy because they felt threatened by the message that the Messiah had come to earth in the personage of Jesus Christ. The Jews assisted in the Martyrdom of many of the early saints and the Protestants who came out of the European Reformation (circa 1520-1570) were responsible for the martyr of several hundred innocents. The Roman Catholic Church and the immoral Papacy were responsible for the outright murder of millions of believers in the years from Pope Gregory (590-604) through Pope Urban VIII (1623-1644) with the aid of the Society of Jesuit priests.

Some would say we need to forgive and forget these atrocities. After all, isn't that what Jesus would have done. This all happened a thousand years ago, shouldn't we forget about it. I don't agree. It's one thing to forgive the German people for what they did during the Jewish Holocaust. They have purged their political system of all of the Nazi influence and repudiated what Hitler did as war crimes and crimes against humanity. The Roman Catholic Church has never repudiated any of the millions of tortures and executions of 'heretics'. They don't even admit the incidents ever took place. The organization still has all of the corrupt practices that caused Martin Luther, Zwingli and others to voice their 'Protests' and launch the Protestant Reformation.

Today the 'natural sciences' have become the 'official state religion' in

the technology driven society called America. As the 'official state religion' of science, like Roman Catholicism, is intolerant of other beliefs and is actively used by the American State Empire to displace and destroy other 'false' religions such as Christianity. This dogma is carried out by Satan's hand-maidens; public school educators, university professors, lawyers, judges, politicians and bureaucrats. The result today in American Empire is the very same decline that Gibbons wrote about in Roman Empire. Corruption, greed, avarice, hatred, political oppression, world class military power and gross immorality where characteristics of Nero's time and are just as real in the Reagan/Bush era. While the Roman Catholic Church is declining in popularity it is still a very potent force in Satan's armament. Pope's have abused their authority many times in the past when the political winds shifted. As the American Empire is threatened and the New World Order becomes a distinct possibility (and danger to true Christianity) look for the Roman cancer to rear it's ugly head again in a subtle new wave of deceit and trickery. While it's call for One World Church (Ecumenicalism) is not new, the tools and tactics it will use will be much more technologically advanced and insidious. While the AntiChrist may not be apparent to us yet, the spirit of antichrist is alive in the world. Don't be deceived by all of the false teachers and false doctrine that's floating around. Hide the Word of God in your heart. Pray for the ability to distinguish between the truth and false spirits. This comes from the discerning spirit and guidance of the Holy Spirit.

We aren't saying individual Roman Catholics are or are not true believers. There are without doubt a number of true believers in their midst just as there are a number of true believers in the assemblies of Baptists, Methodists, Nazarenes, Presbyterians and the litany of orthodox Christian denominations. The danger is not with the individual, it's with the church

organization without a biblical foundation. The Roman Catholic Church does not represent the early Christian church or 'The Church' as the true body of believers. This is a claim made by an 'infallible' line of Popes which admit to 'false' Popes and numerous degenerates as head of 'the Church'. The current Ecumenical movement and New World Order is an old idea dressed up in new clothes. The first 'Catholic' Ecumenical council took place at Nicaea, AD 325. The attempt to formulate a global world government and global world religion has been ongoing for over two millenium. The Bible predicts and warns us about such developments and the danger in Satan's plan.

Satan is a very subtle deceiver. If his lies were obvious no one would believe them. Instead Satan uses partial truths, grey areas, appeals to logic (false logic - a logic that starts with false premises) and misinformation about the character of God. Satan doesn't attempt to convince you directly that there is no God. He himself believes IN God. The difference is that Satan does not believe ON God. Satan's trust is in himself and not in God. The deceit with the Roman Catholic church is that they receive their power and authority directly from Jesus Christ, the Son of God, through Saint Peter (Jesus speaking to Peter, 'On this rock I will build my Church...'), Matthew 16:18b (NIV). Believers protesting this lie (Protestants) such as Martin Luther, Zwingli, John Calvin, John Knox and others knew church history well enough to recognize the fallacy of this claim. They knew the Roman Catholic Church, per se, did not exist until 380 A.D. when Emperor Theodosius made his edict that Christianity would become the official state church and religion.

When something is built on a false foundation the building or organization is bound to rot, decay and crumble. That is exactly what has happened with the Roman Catholic Church, it is built on a faulty foundation, a false claim to be

linked directly to Saint Peter and inheriting the keys to the kingdom from him. It's like building a beautiful home on sand only to see it topple when ocean waves undercut the sand footings and foundations. Allow God to build your Christian faith and character on solid rock, The Solid Rock - Jesus Christ, and His Holy Word - The Bible. You can ignore some of the peculiarities of a church organization as long as it has certain basic tenets of faith that it holds inviolable and unchangeable. This statement of faith should include:

God is three persons yet one, God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit, a triune being.

There is only One God and that God is the God of the Old Testament Hebrews and Gentiles (non-Jews) who have accepted Jesus Christ as the Messiah and as their Savior. This represents 'The Universal Church' spoken of in the Apostle's Creed.

Jesus Christ is the Son of God, fully God and fully Man. He is the only way sinful men can be reunited with a Holy God. He was born a virgin birth, was crucified, died, was buried, descended into hell to conquer death and sin and was raised from the dead. His death was a complete sacrifice for our sins. Jesus offers us salvation from our sins. It is a gift from an all-loving God available to all men by the confession of a man's sinfulness, a broken heart, faith that God will do as He says He will do and a turning away from sin in the future.

Man can do nothing in and of himself to become worthy of God's gift of salvation. It is strictly the grace of God that will save an individual, not by works.

Jesus Christ is alive and sitting at the right hand of God. Jesus will return to earth again (His Second Coming) when He will rule for 1,000 years with His Church (true believers). Jesus and Jesus alone is our only priest. The only person to be called Father is our Heavenly Father. The Italian word for Papa (father) is 'Pope' and is in direct contradiction to God's Holy Word. Also we are fully capable of reading God's Word and interpreting it for ourselves as God the Holy Spirit gives us insight and wisdom.

The Bible is the entire message of God to mankind. It contains no errors and is eternal. Jesus Christ is the same Word of God as His Holy Bible. This is the history of God's dealing with His people as well as the Guidebook for His Church (true believers) on how they should conduct their lives every day. That the Holy Bible was written by men who were divinely inspired by God the Father.

The literal being and personality and depravity of Satan. This depravity is shared by man by his fall from his original

privileged with God.

That the true believers in Jesus Christ will be redeemed from the eternal damnation that awaits unbelievers and unregenerated souls. That Heaven (the presence of God) is a real place reserved for believers while Hell (separation from God) is also a real place reserved for the non-believer.

Orthodox Protestant denominations, leadership, pastors and congregations shouldn't be too glib or proud about the Catholic-bashing I've just done. In their apostasy they still reach out and serve more people than the Protestants do. Most Protestant churches have become hollow empty tombs with millions of dead souls walking around inside of them. It isn't a matter of revival, they haven't accepted the truth as it was presented to them. They aren't much of a threat to Satan or the New World Order or the New Age or One World Government or One World Church. They are impotent as ministers of the gospel because they are playing church instead of living as 'The Church', the loving, all-compassionate, all-giving body of Jesus Christ. The orthodox Christian Church has diminished in importance because it is failing to stand up for what is right, even if it means persecution and death. Jesus never said 'Don't rock the boat, His message was 'Go ahead and upset the boat - you can walk on the water, I'll even show you how to fish without nets!' What a wonderful, glorious message He has for you as a young baby in His Word or as a mature Christian soul on The Way home.

The orthodox Protestant denominations and their leaders have also become State Churches in the American Empire. Orthodox denominations worldwide have fallen into a deep state of apostasy and are leading hundreds of millions of people into 'The Abyss' with them. They preach a social gospel that approximates secular humanism then pat the needy on the back while they show them the door. These ministries store up vast wealth in land, buildings and bank accounts and use the concept of stewardship to justify their

self-adornment. This is in direct contradiction to Jesus' invective to sell all you have, give it to the poor and follow Him (Matthew 19:21). When you see a rich 'Christian' red lights and sirens should go off in your head.

The Society of Jesus (Jesuit Order of the Roman Catholic Church):

The Society of Jesus was organized by 'Saint' Ignatius Loyola and approved in 1540 A.D. by Pope Paul III in his bull, 'Regimini Militantis' (Military Regiment). This edict allowed the formation of a military order within the Roman Catholic Church, supposedly the 'church' of Jesus Christ. Military, Pope, Roman Catholic and Jesus are words that form the ultimate oxymoron. Roman soldiers are the very people who crucified Jesus Christ. This is blasphemy of our Lord and Savior in it's most grotesque form. An even greater blasphemy would occur as these Jesuit soldier-priests would torture and martyr of 'heretics'. A 'heretic' was anyone who disagreed with official church dogma and doctrine. Church dogma and doctrine changed constantly as spiritual pagan's tried to interpret and reinterpret the Word of God. The priests, bishops and cardinals also tried to reconcile prior incorrect interpretations with the best current thinking. Jesuit 'theologians' also agreed with the torture and execution of 'heretics' (See 'Uber Die Kirliche Und Politische Inquisition', 1875, pp65 seq., Fr. Wenig, Society of Jesus, 1866). They called it the 'Ecclesiastical Inquisition' and tortured and martyred millions of people in the name of Jesus Christ. The Jesuits may not have originated the term 'the ends justify the means' but they practiced it and honed it to a very sharp edge, the edge of an executioner's ax that is.

Jesuit colleges and universities are still very prominent in U. S. education.

A prime source of reading material about the Jesuits is E. Boyd Barrett's

book, 'The Jesuit Enigma', (c) 1927, Boni & Liverwright: New York. The

atrocities of the Pope's army are well documented by many ex-Jesuit priests.

Of course, the Roman Catholic Church immediately villifies the offender,

excommunicates him and at times has dispatched the whistle-blower the same as

any other 'heretic'.

Martyred Disciples and Apostles of Our Lord Jesus Christ:

Stephen, disciple of Jesus Christ, Martyred by Saul and other Jewish leaders.

The first martyr of the young Christian church.

James, son of Zebedee, brother of John, beheaded 44 A.D.

Philip, crucified in 52 A.D.

Matthew, killed by sword in 60 A.D. at Parthia, Greece.

Mark, dragged through the streets of Alexandria and burned the next day, his bones are supposedly buried at St. Mark's Cathedral in Venice.

James the Less, not the brother of John, stoned to death in Jerusalem.

Matthias, replaced Judas, stoned then beheaded at Jerusalem.

Andrew at Patrae in Greece was crucified for three days, was held to an 'X'

shaped cross by ropes instead of nails. During his crucifixion he

preached the gospel of Jesus Christ and many were converted.

Peter, crucified upside down in Rome in 64 A.D. by decree of Nero. He asked to

be crucified upside down because he didn't feel worthy to be crucified in the same way Jesus was. This was an extremely painful and cruel way to die. He was imprisoned with Paul in Rome for 9 months prior to his crucifixion.

Paul, martyred by beheading at the decree of Nero, 64 A.D. in Rome. In prison for 9 months preceding his death with Peter.

Jude, brother of James, also called Thaddeus, went to Persia, won many converts, crucified in 72 A.D.

Bartholomew, translated Matthew's gospel into languages of heathen nations.

Various reports held he was clubbed to death, others say he was martyred by the sword.

Thomas (Didymus), martyred by being run through with a spear.

Luke, may have died of natural causes, might have been martyred, unknown.

Simon Zelotes, preached in Mauritania, Africa, Britain, crucified 74 A.D.
John, brother of James, founded many churches in Greece, Asia Minor, died of natural causes at Ephesus at age 100.
Barnabas, manner of death unknown, A.D. 73.

Outstanding Christian men and women and
Other notables of the early Christian church:

Origen, (185-254), lived in Alexandria, Egypt. Origen was the son of Leonidas, an early church martyr. He was very learned, a prolific writer and well travelled. He died in prison in Palestine as a result of torture under Decius.

St. Augustine, (354-430 A.D.), Saint Aurelius Augustinus - Bishop of Hippo, Northern Africa, wrote 'City of God' as defense against those saying that Christianity was the reason that Roman Empire fell.

Albigenses or Cathari, Southern France, Northern Spain, Northern Italy, (circa 1150-1250) this group of zealots preached against the immoralities found in the Roman Catholic Church. In 1208 Pope Innocent III ordered a Crusade against the Albigenses resulting in the massacre of French town after town. The Inquisition came in 1229 to exterminate many thousands in France and Italy.

Waldo of France (1176 ?), Southern France, Northern Italy, wealthy merchant who followed Christ's command to sell all he had, give the money to the poor and follow Jesus. Preached against most of the historical heresies of the Roman Catholic church including praying the dead out of purgatory, priests only ones qualified to interpret the Bible, et cetera. Precursor to the Protestant Reformation. Waldenses still are a leading Protestant sect in Italy.

Saint Francis of Assisi, (1182-1226), See the books 'The Little Flowers of Saint Francis of Assisi' and Tomie de Paola's 'Francis, the Poor Man of Assisi' about this man's life. St. Francis was impoverished by choice in physical possessions but was extremely rich in spirit. He was very attuned to God's creations, animals, the human spirit and the wonders of God's gift to mankind - earth.

Thomas Aquinas, (1225-1274) wrote Summa Theologiae (1267-1273), first systematic exposition of dogma of the orthodox Christian church, adopted by the Roman Catholic Church as official church dogma.

John Wyclif, (1324-1384), A professor at Oxford, England. Preached against the many excesses of the Roman Catholic Church. Translated the Holy Bible into the English language long before King James authorized the translation of the Bible into the vernacular for the common people.

John Huss, (1369-1415), A student of Wyclif, Huss was the rector of the University of Prague in Czechoslovakia (then Bohemia). He railed against the immorality of the Roman Catholic Church and was burned at the stake as a heretic for his beliefs. Many thousands of Bohemian believers were also martyred after his death by another Papal Crusade.

Joan of Arc, (1412-1431), Saint and Martyr for her beliefs, see videorecording 1948 RKO Pictures with Ingrid Bergman, also book by Anatole France (1844-1924) at 944.026 J343re.

Savonarola, (1452-1498), Florence Italy. Pope Alexander VI tried everything he possibly could to discourage this early reformer. Savonarola preached against the immorality of the Roman Catholic Church and sacraments the Romans had instituted without a biblical foundation. He was finally hanged and burned as a heretic in the Great Square of his home town in 1498.

Erasmus, (1466-1536), probably the greatest scholar who lived during the Reformation period. His attacks against the Roman Catholic Church were vituperative but not unfounded. He especially enjoyed attacking 'unholy men in holy orders.'

Martin Luther, (1483-1546) German religious reformer, the Protestant Reformation began with Luther's 95 Theses nailed to the Roman Catholic Church door at Wittenberg Germany on October 31, 1517.

Zwingli, (1484-1531) One of first Protestant Reformers, his rejection of the teachings and extra-biblical rites and image worship predated Martin Luther's 95 Theses by over a year (1516 vs. 10/31/1517).

John Calvin, (1509-1564) French minister, wrote 'Institutes of the Christian Religion', driven out of France into Geneva Switzerland 1534-36. Was not founder but a key figure in the Protestant Reformation. His followers and Zwingli's formed the Swiss Reformed Church in 1549.

John Knox, (1515-1572) Protestant reformer, Scottish priest, began teaching Reformation ideology about 1540. In 1553 he went to Geneva Switzerland to attend John Calvin's Academy. He adopted Calvinistic teachings thoroughly and was recalled to Scotland by the Parliament of Lords to become the leader of the Scottish National Reform movement.

Jonathan Edwards, New England's leading Puritan preacher and philosopher, partly responsible for the 1740 Great Awakening in New England.

Roger Williams, Anabaptist, established his followers in Rhode Island.

William Blake, (1757-1827), poet, author, illustrator, wrote early book of poetry for children called 'Songs of Innocence'.

Soren Aabye Kierkegaard, (1813-1855), Danish philosopher and Christian apologist.

Robert Bridges, English Poet.

Dwight L. Moody, American preacher.

Francis Jane Crosby, Fanny Crosby (1818-1915), blind Christian songwriter, hymns such as 'Safe in the Arms of Jesus' written at age 47.

Lev Nikolaevich Tolstoy, Graf (1826-1910), Leo Tolstoy, author 'War and Peace'

John Wesley, English minister, responsible for Methodism on which the Free Methodist, Wesleyan Methodist and United Methodist churches are based.

Charles Wesley, English hymn writer, brother of John Wesley.

Charles Haddon Spurgeon, (1834- ?), English minister, pastor of New Park Street Baptist Chapel 1854- ?, London, England.

Charles G. Finney, minister.

H. A. Ironsides, preacher.

R. A. Torrey, preacher.

A. W. Tozer, preacher.

C. I. Scofield, preacher, lawyer, Bible interpreter and commentator.

David Brainerd, missionary to the Indians.

Mother Theresa, The House of the Dying, Calcutta, India.

Albert Einstein, check what he had to say about the existence of God.

Robert Browning, (1812-1889) poet, wrote 'The Pied Piper of Hamelin'.

Isaac Watts, (1674-1748) English songwriter.

Christina Georgina Rossetti, (1830-1894), poetess, wrote 'Sing-Song'.

George MacDonald, (1824-1905), Scottish author and poet.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, (1906-1945).

Clive Staples Lewis, (1898-1963), author, minister, wrote 'Narnia Chronicles'.

Billy Graham, 20th century American evangelist.

Lady Saint Clare

Saint Bernadette Soubirous, (1844-1879), Roman Catholic nun, the miracle of Lourdes, France occurred to her.

NOTE: 200 Christian Missionaries are martyred each year in current times.

The strong testimony of Christian Martyrs: (books about martyrs)

A New Martyrology or The Bloody Assizes
John Tutchin (1661-1707)

The Martyrdom of Baron George Jeffreys in Britain (1648-1689)
Microfilm

St. Joan of Arc
Anatole France

Martyrs at Leopoldville, African Congo

Priscillian of Avila

St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre of Christians, Paris, 1572 A.D.
Ordered by notorious Roman Catholic Pope Gregory.

The Age of Martyrs; Christianity from Diocletian to Constantine
Giuseppe Ricciotti (1890-?)
Anthony Bull, trans.
Milwaukee, Bruce Publishing Company; 1959.
Description: Christian Martyrs in the Early Church, ca. 30-600 A.D.

The Shrouds of Glory; Six Studies in Martyrdom
James Turner (1909-1975)
London, Cassell Publishers; 1958.

Foxe's Book of Martyrs
John Foxe (1516-1587)
Philadelphia, C. Foster Company; 1907. 1st American edition.
Grand Rapids, Zondervan Publ.; 1954. 2nd American edition.
Boston, Little Brown Publ.; 1965. 3rd American edition.
edited by G. A. Williamson.

Martyrs: From St. Stephen to John Tung
Attwater, Donald (1892-1977)
London, Sheed and Ward; 1958.

The Roman Catacombs and Their Martyrs
Freiherr Ludwig von Hertling (1892- ?)
Milwaukee, Bruce Publishing Company; 1956.

Halley's Bible Handbook
Henry H. Halley
Grand Rapids, MI, Zondervan Publishing; 1965.
Section on Church History, Papacy and Martyrs

Lives of Outstanding Christian's as testimony to the Power of God:

Blaise Pascal (1623-1662), mathematician, physicist.

A Third Testament (Pascal and others)
Malcolm Muggeridge
Boston, Little Brown; 1976.

Blaise Pascal
Harold Bloom, ed.
Chelsea House 1989

Peter Marshall (1902-1949), Chaplain to the United States Senate, minister.

A Man Called Peter; The Story of Peter Marshall
Catherine Marshall, 1914-
New York, McGraw-Hill; 1951.

Notes for book:
The Kingdom of Kindness
Bleak Promise, Bright Hope

The Formula for Success
Christ + Nothing = Everything in Perpetuity

The Formula for Destruction and Ultimate Defeat
Man + Everything = Nothingness Forever

Jesus First
Others Second
Yourself Last

No Jesus
No Peace
Know Jesus
Know Peace

'Come, follow me,' Jesus said, 'and I will make you fishers of men.' Mt 4:19
When you fish for fish they are alive then they die.

When you fish for men they are dead and then they become alive.
(spiritually speaking and by the Grace of God).

You're either a missionary or you're a mission field.

You shouldn't be upset by the prospect of Hell, you can choose not to go.

Christian terminology borrowed from the Greek, Aramaic or Hebrew languages:

Amen - is Hebrew for That is True Used to show agreement with the speaker.

Hosanna - Hebrew for Save Us Now used as a term for rejoicing.

Immanuel - God With Us (For He Shall Save His People).

Name given to Jesus by the angel who told Mary of His conception (The Annunciation).

Maranatha - The LORD Comes

Christian terms, concepts and doctrine that may be confusing to a new believer:

Parable - an earthly story with a heavenly message. These somewhat cryptic messages had to be interpreted to be completely understood. Jesus taught in parables so the ungodly religious leaders of his day would not become followers without faith (Matthew 13:13.)

Miracle - a display of God's power and intervention in human events. By definition miracles happen on earth but they have no earthly explanation as how they could occur. The Latin word means 'wonderful thing.'

Justification - ministers define justification with a memory aid, 'Just as if I had never sinned.' God absolves the believer of original sin by their act of faith and contrition or repentance. You turn away from your old sinful ways and trust in Jesus Christ as your Savior and you will not be held accountable for Adam's fall, sin and separation from God.

Santification - given different definitions by many denominations. Some define it as a process of living a holy, separated life apart from the world and by so doing you gain stature in Heaven as a more worthy saint. Some go so far as to say it is the mark of a true Christian and that you are in a state of grace. Not living "this life of perfection" indicates you were never a "true Christian" and that you have "fallen from grace," i.e., "lost your salvation." The holders of this position tend to be of the Charismatic and Pentecostal movements along with Nazarene's, Church of God, Assembly of God and so on. Baptists and Methodists tend to hold to the doctrine of "Blessed Assurance," or Eternal Blessedness of the Redeemed, also called Eternal Security of the Believer - Once Saved - Always Saved. Much of the argument here centers around the doctrinal differences that seem to exist between Peter and Paul in their

New Testament Letters and Books.

Immersion - Baptism by completely lowering the believer's body beneath the surface of the water. Usually performed shortly after a believer's confession of faith in Jesus Christ. Also called Believer's Baptism.

Believer's Baptism -

Pentecost -

Passover -

Sacrificial Lamb -

Eucharist -

Ascension -

Transfiguration -

Annunciation -

Holy Communion -

The Lord's Supper -

The Last Supper -

The Upper Room -

Dedication, Conversion, Commitment -

Walk of the Believer -

Assurance or Eternal Security -

Atonement -

Vicarious -

Immaculate Conception (Virgin Birth) -

Missions -

Tithing -

Plenary Death -

Tribulation -

Second Coming of Jesus Christ -

End Times -

Revelation -

Prophecy -

Perdition -

Fallen Angels -

Grace versus Works -

Legalism -

The Early Church -

"The Church" as the Body of Christ -

Beatitude -

Hell, the Pit, Lake of Fire -

Fire and Brimstone -

Second Death -

Covenant and Testament -

Disciple versus Apostle - Jesus had many disciples or followers but only 12 disciples were selected to be apostles. Apostle means 'someone who is sent.'

The Pentateuch -

The Talmud -

Major Prophets -

Minor Prophets -

Forbidden Practices -

Divination -

Licentiousness -

Fornication -

Avarice -

The Exodus -

Plagues -

Spiritual versus carnal -

Image of God -

I am that I am -

Blasphemy -

Sacrilege -

Visions -

Myth -

Eternal Blessedness -

Eternal Damnation -

Separation from God -

Carnal Knowledge -

Old Nature or the Old Man -

New Nature or the New Man -

Sin Nature -

Original Sin -

Falling from Grace -

Salvation -

Gifts of the Spirit -

Fruits of the Spirit -

Indwelling of the Holy Spirit -

Baptism of the Holy Ghost -

Speaking in Tongues -

The Occult -

Charismatic Movement -

New Age Movement -

Human Secularism -

Symbolism -

Allegory -

The Synoptic Gospels -

Harmony of the Gospels -

Paradox -

Mystery -

Mind of God -

Earthly Wisdom -

Reflections: 52 Weekly Thoughts

1)

Astronomers say there are at least 2 billion galaxies as large or larger than our own Milky Way Galaxy in the Universe. That's two million million galaxies each having 1 or 2 billion stars larger than our Sun. The power of God is Immense, His presence is Vast and His ways are completely untraceable by man. Science is Satan's Supreme Silliness. All of Creation screams out in witness to the existence of God our Heavenly Father.

2)

Huge particle accelerators at Fermi Lab at the University of Chicago, the National Laboratories of Sandia in New Mexico, Los Alamos, Jet Propulsion Labs, Lawrence Livermore Atomic Radiation Lab at UC Berkeley and others have allowed nuclear physicists to split the atom into subatomic particles. Some of the names are as mystic as the paths the particles leave on X-ray plates; quarks, up, strange, top, bottom, charmed and unk-unks for unknown-unknowns. Other scientists have identified naturally occurring subatomic particles passing through earth's atmosphere including; kaons, muons, gluons and those from light - photons. God's Ways are beyond man's tracing out (Romans 11:33). There is no proof to support the following view. But it is very possible for a Sovereign Creator of the Universe to change the nature of the matter underlying Creation at His Will to confound and confuse the ungodly and sinful efforts of man to discover the 'mind of God.' He tells us that He will allow a strong

delusion to come on men and they will believe the lie (2 Thessalonians 2:11).

3)

What if we some day find intelligent life on another planet?

Doesn't that prove God isn't the Creator of the Universe and Supreme Being?

In the first place it's pretty egocentric to think we are the only intelligent things God ever created. He created angels who are certainly intelligent. He created the animals in the field and I've met some dogs who are more intelligent than some university professors, lawyers and politicians I've known. Secondly, who are we to tell God whether or not he could create another intelligent race somewhere else in this Universe or even another Universe larger than our 15 billion light year wide Universe. Thirdly, as Albert Einstein told another fairly bright gentleman John von Neumann, 'Stop telling God what to do with His universe.' We seem to be earthbound.

We are trapped by time and space. NASA scientists are dismayed by the fact that extended space travel causes human bone marrow to deteriorate and cause the bones to weaken. This occurs even in only a few short days of space travel. God has us just where He wants us, we were created to live on a paradise called earth 6,000 years ago and now that we have made a living hell out of it we want to be anyplace else but here. Scientists will see this as an oversimplification or illogical argumentation. They will say in other words if God would have wanted us to fly He would have put wings on man. It's called 'reductio ad absurdum', an old Aristotelian device to show the conclusion is unbelievable if you can arrive at the same conclusion using false supporting logic. The difference here is we don't have logic to support our conclusion, we have scientific proof. Logic is man made reasoning and can be faulty. Scientific experimentation roots out all chance of error (supposedly). But man continues to resist God's laws and logic. NASA

scientists at this very moment are trying to find ways to overcome the bone mass loss problem in order to fulfill their 'Star Trek-like' mission to go where no man is supposed to go.

3)

Overcoming is the ultimate mission in a Christian's life. Overcoming the obstacles Satan and his demon-possessed world place in the believers path. Learning to overcome temptation, trials, adversity, anxiety, worry, feelings of inadequacy, guilt, despondency, despair, helplessness and hopelessness are difficult tasks. Without Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit it's an impossible task. Learning to lean on the strong yet tender arms of Jesus is easy when everything else you have tried doesn't work. He will turn all of your failures into successes. The weakness of God is stronger than men, (1 Corinthians 1:25 KJV).

4)

In this life you may not see the impact you have for the Lord. That doesn't matter. We are working for eternal results. Only Satan and his followers are working for temporal gain, money, possessions, land and position. In the Grand Scheme of things these possessions, position and power are absolutely meaningless. Don't live your life like you are working for an earthly banker. God's treasure vault is so large and wide it will take an eternity of eternities to travel from the door to your safety deposit boxes. Then it will take several eternities to count out your wealth. To be highest in the Kingdom you must be least here on earth. If you can't be trusted with very little how can you expect to be trusted with much in Heaven. Learn to serve others in true humility and never count the cost. Give your money to the poor and those in need. United States dollars are a blasphemy to God anyhow. The USA is not a

Christian nation and has not exercised 'In God We Trust' for many decades.

The country that has on several times attempted to eliminate 'One Nation Under God' from its children's pledge of allegiance doesn't have anything God wants, especially its filthy money. Live simply so others may simply live.

5)

The Universe consists of at least one quadrillion stars (one billion galaxies times one billion stars apiece) and yet it is 99.9% empty space. AMAZING!

6)

If no other thought we present humbles your thinking this should. As believers of His Gospel we are joint heirs with Jesus Christ. Our Inheritance includes the boundless Universe and all of Creation along with the uncounted numbers of things we have not seen yet (Romans 8:17 and 1 Corinthians 2:9 KJV).

7)

Have you reached the point in your Christian walk that you are willing to follow God's Way wherever it may lead? Is that an empty head nodding in agreement or has your will and heart been broken. Is it broken to the point where you are willing to sing the words of the missionary song 'I'll go where you want me to go, Oh, Lord. I'll be what you want me to be.' If not, I'm afraid God will have to break your heart even more. Do it the easy way, surrender your will to Him up front and avoid the mistakes, embarrassment, guilt, fear, anxiousness and sleepless nights of trying to work out your own will. The Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:9-13) doesn't say 'My will be done', it says 'Thy will be done'. His 'Will' will be done with or without you. Why not help the cause of Jesus Christ as much as possible. Pray that God will make

you a useful vehicle to carry out His Will here on earth.

8)

Sometimes when I think I'm working too hard for the Lord I stop and think of what some other men and women have done for the Lord. John Wesley wrote and delivered 40,000 sermons working 15 hours every day until he died of natural causes and advanced age at ninety. When he was seventy he lamented that he was only able to write and deliver two sermons a day. His brother, Charles Wesley, wrote 65,000 religious poems and songs. He even wrote several on his wedding day! My efforts are almost nonexistent by those standards. Are we going to be ashamed when we stand in front of Jesus because the harvest was plentiful but the workers are few? (Matthew 9:37 and Luke 10:2 NIV).

9)

Mysticism, the New Age Movement, spirit channellers, Vision Quests and releasing your 'inner self' are some new names for a very old practice by a very old force in the Universe. Satan is at the bottom of all of these practices. Satan worship, cults, occult practices, witchcraft, magic, sorcery are ancient equivalents of these 'new' practices. They are all forbidden by God early on in the Bible (Deuteronomy 18:9-13). God calls them detestable practices. While they are not unforgiveable the practitioners usually are so warped and depraved that God gives them a seared conscience (closed with heat so as not to be openable ever again). Even demon possession seems to be easier to remove than Satanic practices. You don't need to worry about the increase in occult practices. They have been there all the time. But in the last days Satan will become bolder and bolder. The practice of Satanic and pagan rituals will be done in the open and the dream state that God will allow to come over mankind will result in complete apathy towards the practices. This is the

final Apostate phase of the Church Age. Most 'church-goers' (not true believers) will be unaffected, even intrigued by mass murders, serial killers, cannibalism and open blasphemy of the Holy God. But you should not be worried. God is still in control and on His throne. Satan has no power over the Child of God.

Prophetic Passages in the Old Testament on Jesus Christ:

And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he will crush your head and you will bruise his heel.

Genesis 3:15 (CCV - Contemporary Christian Version)

And by your offspring will all the nations of the earth be blessed; because you have obeyed my voice.

Genesis 22:18 (CCV - Contemporary Christian Version)

The sceptre will not depart from Judah, nor a ruler from between his feet, until the one comes to whom it belongs; and all nations shall be gathered to him.

Genesis 49:10 (CCV - Contemporary Christian Version)

I will see him, but not yet; I will behold him, but not close by. A Star will come from Jacob; a Sceptre will rise out of Israel. He will crush the heads of Moab, and destroy the children of the noisy one. Edom will be overrun; Seir will be conquered for his enemies, and Israel will do well. From Jacob will come the one who has dominion and destroy the city's survivors.

Numbers 24:17-19 (CCV - Contemporary Christian Version)

The Lord your God will raise a Prophet like me from among their brothers; You will listen to him.

Deuteronomy 18:15 (CCV - Contemporary Christian Version)

Why do the unbelievers rage, and the people imagine unbelievable things? The kings of the earth have made up their minds, and the rulers listen to opinions, against the LORD, and against his Anointed, saying,

"Let's break their shackles off, and throw their chains away from us."

He that is seated in heaven will laugh; The Lord will hold them in derision. Then he will speak to them in his anger, and trouble them in his wrath. Still I have set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will make this decree: the LORD has said to me, You are my Son; today I have borne you. Ask me, and I will give you the unbelievers as your inheritance and you will possess the farthest reaches of the earth. You will rule them with an iron rod; you will break them into pieces like clay pots.

Therefore, o you kings, be wise now; listen to my instruction, you judges of the earth. Serve the LORD with fear, and be glad with trembling. Embrace

the Son, so he doesn't become angry and banish you from the way, when his anger is stirred up even a little. Blessed are all those who place their trust in him.

Psalm 2 (CCV - Contemporary Christian Version)

You are fairer than the children of men; grace is poured into your lips: therefore God has blessed you forever.

Psalm 45:2 (CCV - Contemporary Christian Version)

You have ascended to heaven, you led your captives in chains; you have received gifts meant for men, even for rebellious men, that the LORD God may live with them.

Psalm 68:18 (CCV - Contemporary Christian Version)

They gave me gall to eat; and when I was thirsty they gave me vinegar to drink.

Psalm 69:21 (CCV - Contemporary Christian Version)

The LORD says to my Lord, Sit at my right hand, while I make your enemies a stool to rest your feet.

Psalm 110:1 (CCV - Contemporary Christian Version)

The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone.

Psalm 118:22 (CCV - Contemporary Christian Version)

The LORD made a promise to David; he will not dishonor it; I will place one of your children on your throne.

Psalm 132:11 (CCV - Contemporary Christian Version)

And he will judge the nations, and will chasten many people: and they will beat their swords into plows, and their weapons into implements: one nation will not raise its weapons in anger against another nation and they will not study war anymore.

Isaiah 2:4 (CCV - Contemporary Christian Version)

Therefore the Lord will give you a sign; a virgin will conceive, and give birth to a son, and his will be called Immanuel.

Isaiah 7:14 (CCV - Contemporary Christian Version)

For to us a child is born, a son is given to us: and government will be his: and his name will be Wonderful, Counsellor, Almighty God, Everlasting Father and The Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 9:6 (CCV - Contemporary Christian Version)

Out of the trunk of Jesse a stiff branch will arise, and a tender shoot will grow out of his roots.

Isaiah 11:1 (CCV - Contemporary Christian Version)

This is what Almighty God has to say: I have laid in Zion a precious and proven stone for a solid foundation; those who trust it will never be disappointed.

Isaiah 28:16 (CCV - Contemporary Christian Version)

Here is my servant, who I support; the one I have selected, in whom I delight; I have placed my spirit on him: he will judge all nations.

Isaiah 42:1 (CCV - Contemporary Christian Version)

Who has believed what we said? and who sees the arm of the Lord? For he will grow a tender plant in his sight, like a root out of parched ground: he doesn't have a handsome frame or any beauty; and when we see him there won't be anything beautiful about him that would make us want his company.

Isaiah 53 (CCV - Contemporary Christian Version)

And he saw that there was no one standing there to intercede for men: therefore his right arm brought salvation to men; and his holiness, it sustained men.

Isaiah 59:16 (CCV - Contemporary Christian Version)

The Spirit of Almighty God is on me, because the LORD has appointed me to preach good news to the humble; he has sent me to wrap the brokenhearted, to announce freedom to those in captivity, and the opening of prison doors to prisoners;

Isaiah 61:1 (CCV - Contemporary Christian Version)

Who is this coming from Edom, from Bozrah with red stained clothing? He who is glorious in his robes, travelling with almighty strength?

"It is I, speaking in holiness, the mighty to save."

Isaiah 63:1 (CCV - Contemporary Christian Version)

"Listen to me, the day is coming," says the LORD, "that I will raise from David a holy Branch, a King who will reign in prosperity and will administer justice and judgement throughout the world."

Jeremiah 23:5 (CCV - Contemporary Christian Version)

Understand this and believe it, from the time the decree is issued to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until the Messiah and Prince comes will be 69 weeks: Jerusalem's streets and walls will be rebuilt in turbulent times.

Daniel 9:25 (CCV - Contemporary Christian Version)

But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, even though you are tiny among Judah's many, from you will come one to me the King of Israel; whose ways are ancient, from eternity past.

Micah 5:2 (CCV - Contemporary Christian Version)

For this is what the LORD of heaven says; 'Shortly I will shake heaven and earth and oceans and continents; and I will shake all peoples, and the world's desire will come: and I will bless this house with glory,' says the LORD of heaven.

Haggai 2:6-7 (CCV - Contemporary Christian Version)

"Hear this, Joshua the high priest, you and the men that sit with you: men who others wonder about: for I am bringing my servant, The Branch."

Zechariah 3:8 (CCV - Contemporary Christian Version)

"And say this to him, 'This is what the LORD of heaven says to you,' 'Look at the man called The Branch; he will grow out of his place, and he will build the temple of the LORD;'"

Zechariah 6:12 (CCV - Contemporary Christian Version)

Make a joyful noise daughter of Zion; shout daughter of Jerusalem: Look, your King comes to you: he is holy and has salvation; he is humble and riding

on a donkey even a colt, the foal of a donkey.

Zechariah 9:9 (CCV - Contemporary Christian Version)

And the LORD told me, "Throw it to them: the handsome price that my life was appraised at by them." And I took the thirty pieces of silver and threw it to those in the house of the LORD.

Zechariah 11:12 (CCV - Contemporary Christian Version)

And I will anoint the descendants of David and those living in Jerusalem with the spirit of grace and prayer: and those who have pierced me will look at me and cry as one cries for his only son, and will weep bitterly for me, as if they were weeping for their first child.

Zechariah 12:10 (CCV - Contemporary Christian Version)

"Arise sword, against my shepherd, and against the man who is by my side," says the LORD of heaven, "strike the shepherd and the sheep will scatter and my hand will be upon the smallest ones."

Zechariah 13:7 (CCV - Contemporary Christian Version)

"Listen to me, I will send my messenger, and he will prepare the way in front of me: and the One you are looking for, will come suddenly to his temple, the bearer of good news, who you delight in: I tell you, he will come," says the LORD of heaven.

Malachi 3:1 (CCV - Contemporary Christian Version)

Author's Note:

The final word on any subject in life is the Holy Word of God as given to us in the Bible and His indwelling Holy Spirit. If you confess and eliminate the sin that stands between you and God, search for His direction by sincere prayer and by reading His Master Plan for your life you will find true peace and happiness. You will not be a success as the world measures success. You will never be rich as the world counts richness. But in the infinite, eternal reaches of time you will have unbounded wealth. In scientific terms unbounded means that your wealth will have no limits. Infinite wealth - poor earthly kings and international bankers can't even comprehend what I'm talking about. To them such talk is foolishness. Unfortunately for them, to an unbounded God these men are foolishness in the flesh. In the Great Day that is coming, the wealth these men have accumulated over 40 or 50 centuries will burn and melt like a pile of dead leaves raked up in the fall. We have a Glorious Savior,

a Neverending Hope and an Unending Paradise to be spent with an all-loving God. Study, read, pray, wait, speak up, serve, love, sacrifice and you will have fought the good fight and run the race for the finish line where you will receive victor's crown and the adoration of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I pray our Heavenly Father will bless you as you begin your walk. It's a painful walk sometimes, but less so when you learn not to fight His gentle, prodding Spirit.

The title 'Bleak Promise, Bright Hope' illustrates the two conditions of man. First, his fallen state with Satan and without God. Second, the new hope we have of being restored to fellowship with God as a result of His Grace and Gift of Eternal Life through His Son and our Savior, Jesus Christ.

May the Lord use a few of these thoughts to help you on your journey. May you enrich some other human being's life and bring them to Heaven with you.