

50 Days to a **Firm Foundation**

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Day One

The Bible is reliable

The Bible can be trusted! This bold statement is not just my opinion. There are many reasons to trust the Bible and what it contains. Why is this important? Because the Bible itself claims to be divinely inspired. If a book claims that God inspired it to be written, we must address that claim. If it is reliable, then God is communicating to us through it. The Christian faith rests firmly on the foundation of the Bible. If it can't be trusted, then it should not be followed. So why should we trust the Bible? I will give you four reasons.

Manuscript evidence. Of all the ancient written texts, the Bible has more copies and fragments of copies than any other work. Why is this important? First, it gives us texts to compare to each other to look for errors and omissions. When we compare the over 10,000 texts and fragments that have been found so far, we see there is an amazing consistency between what was written long ago and what we have today. In fact, while there are minor differences, there is no significant or meaningful contradiction that would cause us to doubt the credibility of our modern Bible.

Internal consistency. The Bible was written and assembled over a period of 1500 years by more than 40 authors. When the stories and content are compared we find an internal consistency in the content and representation of God and historical events.

Prophetic accuracy. The New Testament mentions this - Mark 15:28, Jesus mentions it – Luke 4:21. Some scholars have documented over 1800 prophecies throughout the Bible. Many have already been fulfilled and with amazing detail and accuracy. The world today is amazed when someone predicts the future and gets just a few details correct. The Bible is batting 1000 when it comes to prophecy.

Archaeological evidence. Another amazing evidence for the reliability of the Bible is archaeology itself. It has been said that every time another shovel of dirt is turned by an archaeologist, another fact of the Bible is confirmed. For many years, scientists have cast doubt on parts of the Bible that contained information that was not confirmed by any other source. As discovery has continued to confirm, the Bible is a very accurate source of ancient information. In fact, it may be the best source of historical detail we have.

Read John 1:1-18 and see the connection between God and the Word.

Verse of the day: 2 Timothy 3:16 NASB95 - All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness;

Day Two

The Bible is written in three languages

The original texts of the Bible were written in three languages. These are Hebrew, Aramaic and Koine Greek. The books of the Old Testament are primarily in Hebrew and the New Testament in Aramaic and Greek. As Christianity spread across the world there became a need for the Bible to be translated into other languages in order to make the message more accessible. As of today, the Bible has been translated into more languages than any other book in history.

This task of translation poses some serious obstacles. One obstacle is the ancient context of the writings. It is difficult to compare the writings to other works since so few writings from these time periods exist. That leaves the translators using their best judgment when determining the right words. Another difficulty is that these original languages are in limited use or have morphed into other languages and are no longer used. This makes understanding the original text difficult.

Not all languages have similar words. An example is the word love. In English, the word love can take on many meanings. We can love our spouse and peanut butter but they don't mean the same thing. Koine Greek has many words for love, each denoting a different meaning. Another problem is that the language being translated to can often change. This leaves us with a need to update translations.

A great example of this is in Act 28:13 KJV - And from thence we fetched a compass, and came to Rhegium: and after one day the south wind blew, and we came the next day to Puteoli:

At the time this was written, the term “fetched a compass” was a common maritime term that would have been understood by most. Today the term is no longer used. See how modern translations have fixed this. Act 28:13 NASB95 - From there we sailed around and arrived at Rhegium, and a day later a south wind sprang up, and on the second day we came to Puteoli.

To some this may appear as a change to the text. It is simple saying the same thing in modern language. While we have many translations in many languages, we can see the differences as those of style and context. This means we can still trust our modern Bibles. When we encounter difficult translation issues we can easily use the internet to compare translations and even reference the original languages using a concordance.

Read 1 Corinthians 14:20-33 – Does the passage make sense? Is there a possible error in the translation in this passage?

Day Three

Why is there an Old and New Testament?

The Bible contains 66 books. Many are actually letters but are referred to as books. These books are divided into two main sections. The first section is called the Old Testament. In a biblical sense, the word testament refers to the covenant being described in each section. The Old Testament describes the Old Covenant known as the Law. The New Testament describes the New Covenant which is in Jesus Christ's blood, also known as the covenant of grace.

The Old Testament contains 39 books and the New Testament contains 27. The Bible has a total of 66 books. The Old Testament is divided into sections. The first 5 books are also known as the Pentateuch or Torah. This is followed by the books of history, wisdom or poetry books and then the major and minor prophets. The Old Testament outlines God's choosing and growing of the Jewish nation as His elect people. It describes how He revealed Himself to them and why. The Old Testament covers a long period of time and was compiled over 1000 years.

The New Testament covers a much shorter time period. It was written in less than 100 years. It reveals the Savior Jesus Christ and how He fulfills the old covenant recorded in the Old Testament. The New Testament is also divided into sections. It contains the 4 Gospels, history in the Book of Acts, the letters from the Apostles and the prophetic book of Revelations.

The Old Testament was assembled by the Jewish leaders as each book was written. The authors were recognized as being divinely inspired and the texts were preserved as sacred. These texts were copied over the years with painstaking care and accuracy. They were handed down through the generations and widely accepted as the word of God.

The New Testament books were widely circulated among the churches and accepted due to their apostolic authorship. Over time, other writings began to circulate that were not accepted by all as being divinely inspired. In the mid fourth century, church leaders agreed to a list of books that were commonly agreed to be divinely inspired and thus our modern Bible's contents were set. In the mid 16th century the Catholic Church added a series of books to their Bible. This was done in part due to the reformation started by Martin Luther. This section of books is called the Deuterocanonical books and is placed in the Catholic Bible between the Old and New Testament. Protestant religion rejects these books as being divine and does not include them in its Bible.

Read Romans 8:1-17

Verse of the Day - Mat 5:17 NASB95 - Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill.

Day Four

The Holy Spirit is required to understand the Bible

1Co 2:14 NASB95 - But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.

The Bible cannot be understood without the assistance of the Holy Spirit. You can read it. You can grasp many things from it. But to truly understand it requires the Holy Spirit. The divine authorship of the Bible becomes clear as it begins to speak to you in the spirit. When I hear people saying they just can't understand the Bible, I think of this verse.

If you are being called by God, and the Holy Spirit moves upon you, you can understand the message of the Gospel and receive the Holy Spirit through repentance. This can only be done by faith. A common error, especially in America, is to think we can learn our way to faith. We cannot. Saving faith can only come in one way.

Rom 10:17 NASB95 - So faith [comes] from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.

Read Galatians 3:1-14

Have you, by faith, believed the Good News of Jesus? That is the first step in understanding the Bible. We must possess the Holy Spirit in order to fully understand the Bible.

Rom 10:9 NASB95 - that if you confess with your mouth Jesus [as] Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved;

Heb 11:6 NASB95 - And without faith it is impossible to please [Him,] for he who comes to God must believe that He is and [that] He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.

Take a moment to pray and ask God to increase your faith as the apostles did.

Luke 17:5 NASB95 - The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!"

Day Five

The Purpose of the Bible

When we speak of the Bible there are many views regarding its purpose. How you see the Bible will greatly impact your faith in Jesus. If it is seen as an instruction manual for life, then you will approach it as a rule book to follow. If it is viewed as a supernatural work of God, then you will approach it with a sense of awe. If you view it as a flawed work of mere men, then you will likely approach it with skepticism.

The Bible itself gives us insight into its purpose.

2 Timothy 3:16 NASB95 - All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness;

The Bible is inspired by God. One of its purposes is for teaching and correction in order to produce righteousness. Following the teachings of the Bible changes us. It is not meant to be a rule book that brings punishment when violated. It is meant to be a profitable teaching book that produces good change in us.

1 Peter 1:25 NASB95 - "BUT THE WORD OF THE LORD ENDURES FOREVER." And this is the word which was preached to you.

It was given to us a testimony that will endure forever. The Bible is not temporary. It contains the Word of the Lord which will last forever.

2 Corinthians 5:19 NASB95 - namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

The Bible is the Word of reconciliation. It reveals God to us and shows us how to reunite with our creator. If you want to know about God, read the Bible. If you want to know God, accept Jesus and receive the Holy Spirit.

When you read the Bible you can approach it as a revelation of who God is and how He has pursued reconciliation with you. The Bible communicates God's nature and character as well as His relentless pursuit of you. To approach it as anything else will lead you to a wrong conclusion.

Day Six

There is only one God

One of the most complicated and misunderstood doctrines of Christianity is the concept of the trinity. The word trinity does not appear in the Bible. It is simply a term used to describe a complex idea that is clearly communicated in the Bible. This concept is defined as – There is only one God. He is eternally existing in three persons. In short, The Father is God, Jesus is God and the Holy Spirit is God, but there is only one God.

Deuteronomy 6:4 NASB95 - Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one!

Keep in mind that in order for God to be God, He must be way beyond our understanding. Even if we don't understand how the trinity is possible, we must accept what God is communicating to us about Himself in the Bible. In the Bible, God clearly communicates that the Father is God, Jesus is God, the Holy spirit is God and there is only one God.

Consider these following verses -

Isaiah 44:6, 8 NASB95 -- 6 Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: 'I am the first and I am the last, And there is no God besides Me.' ; 8 "Do not tremble and do not be afraid; Have I not long since announced [it] to you and declared [it?] And you are My witnesses. Is there any God besides Me, Or is there any [other] Rock? I know of none.'

Read Isaiah 45

In the coming days, we will explore the concept of the trinity even further. We will see how the Bible communicates that Jesus is God and the Holy Spirit is God.

Ask the Holy Spirit to give you understanding.

Day Seven

The one God is three persons (the Trinity)

Matthew 28:19 NASB95 - Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,

1 Peter 1:2-4 NASB95 – 2 according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, to obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with His blood: May grace and peace be yours in the fullest measure. 3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 to [obtain] an inheritance [which is] imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you,

The Bible often gives equal billing to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. They are mentioned in equality and as having one being. When considering these things we must keep in mind that God is far above us. He cannot be explained or contained. When He interacts with His creation He must do so in ways we can grasp and understand. This means the things we can understand about God are limited to what is known as His communicable attributes. Those are the things that can be expressed within the confines of time and space and understood by our limited minds.

1 Corinthians 2:14 NASB95 – But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.

Many have tried to come up with ways to explain the trinity. The egg, the clover, water etc... No analogy will ever completely grasp the complexity of an infinite God. We will do well to accept what the Bible communicates. The father is God, Jesus is fully God and fully man. The Holy Spirit is God. All are equal and there is only one God. This is the mystery and complexity of the trinity.

Genesis 1:26 NASB95 -- Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

Day Eight

God is love and loves all people

So with the complexity and mystery of the trinity facing us, how do we begin to know God? The first step is to accept God by faith. You will never be smart enough to understand God. Next, repent and accept the sacrifice of Christ and His resurrection. This will reconcile you to God and return the Holy Spirit to you. Then you can begin to study the Bible, which is a revelation of who God is. When we study the Bible we will begin to understand more about God by seeing the attributes He describes for Himself.

One very important attribute is love. The Bible does not just say that God loves. It says God is love.

1 John 4:7-8 NASB95 – Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love.

Because God is love, all love flows from God. Without God there would be no love. Therefore the love of God motivates and moves Him to action. One example of that action is in Jesus

John 3:16 NASB95 - For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

God loves you no matter what you have done.

Romans 5:8 NASB95 – But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 8:39 NASB95 – nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Try to think of some ways that God has shown His love for you.

Day Nine

God knows all things

God created everything. Nothing exists that was not created by God except God Himself. He knows how it was created. He has watched history unfold. He knows our thoughts and He sees our actions. God is not just smart. He knows everything. The theological term for this trait is omniscience.

1 John 3:19-20 NASB95 - 19 We will know by this that we are of the truth, and will assure our heart before Him 20 in whatever our heart condemns us; for God is greater than our heart and knows all things.

This is the second attribute of God we can know. I hear many people say things like - "Well if there is a God why doesn't He ...?" This statement is a very prideful thing. It assumes that we know better than God. It assumes the thing we think He should be doing is better than what He is doing. This statement simply puts the person saying it into the place of God thinking they are smarter.

The simple truth is that we are not smarter than God. We do not even understand how the creation works or came to be. When man gains a little knowledge, he gets puffed up with pride. Even if science could explain the origin of the universe, and it can't, it can not even imagine creating a universe from nothing. This is what God did.

Maybe this is why the Bible tells us the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge.

Proverbs 1:7 NASB95 – The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; Fools despise wisdom and instruction.

Proverbs 9:10 NASB95 – The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.

Understanding and accepting that God knows everything can bring us comfort. We do not have to beg God for our needs. He already knows what we need.

Matthew 6:8 NASB95 – So do not be like them; for your Father knows what you need before you ask Him.

Day Ten

God is all-powerful

Isaiah 40:28 NASB95 - Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth Does not become weary or tired. His understanding is inscrutable.(infinite)

The theological term for God's power is omnipotence. It refers to God's all-powerful character. To say that God is omnipotent is to say there is nothing outside of His ability to accomplish. The Bible also indicates that there is no one who can exercise power over Him. It is also stated that God created everything, and He holds the power over it all.

Psalms 115:3 NASB95 - But our God is in the heavens; He does whatever He pleases.

Colossians 1:17 NASB95 - He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.

Jeremiah 32:26-27 NASB95 - 26 Then the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah, saying, 27 "Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh; is anything too difficult for Me?"

Job 42:2 NASB95 - "I know that You (God) can do all things, And that no purpose of Yours can be thwarted."

God's infinite power gives us confidence that He can do what He promises. It can make us sure He is who He says He is. When we read the promises of God in the bible and the prophecies of things to come, we can rest assured that God can and will make them all come to pass.

God exercised some of this power by creating all things with a word. He again showed His power through many miracles throughout the records of the Bible. He also showed His power over death by raising Jesus from the dead. And He promises to raise you from the dead if you place your faith in the finished work of Christ's death and resurrection to pay for your sins.

Job 38:4 NASB95 - "Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell [Me,] if you have understanding,"

Day Eleven

God is everywhere

Read Psalm 139

The theological term here is omnipresence. It means God is **all-present**. This term means that God's presence is everywhere at the same time. It means his divine presence encompasses the whole of the creation. There is no location where His presence does not dwell.

Jeremiah 23:23-24 NASB95 - 23 "Am I a God who is near," declares the LORD, "And not a God far off? 24 "Can a man hide himself in hiding places So I do not see him?" declares the LORD. "Do I not fill the heavens and the earth?" declares the LORD.

Acts 17:27 NASB95 - that they would seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us;

Proverbs 15:3 NASB95 - The eyes of the LORD are in every place, Watching the evil and the good.

Knowing that God is everywhere should give us the comfort to know that nothing escapes His notice. He sees everything and is the only one that knows all things. This is why He is the only one qualified to bring justice and judgment. Every other attempt to bring judgment and justice is done from a place of partial knowledge. As humans, we don't even know what we don't know. Only God has complete knowledge.

He knows you intimately. He knows your thoughts and all of your actions, past, present and future. Even with this knowledge, God chose you and died for you.

Day Twelve

God is sovereign (supreme ruler)

When we speak of the sovereignty of God we are simply calling Him the supreme ruler over everything. In short, God gets His way. No one or no thing can prevent His will from being done. This is why the Bible contains so many accurate prophecies. God can tell us what will happen in the future because He has complete control over the circumstances that make it happen.

Daniel 4:35 NASB95 - "All the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, But He does according to His will in the host of heaven And [among] the inhabitants of earth; And no one can ward off His hand Or say to Him, 'What have You done?'

Due to His sovereignty, many have asked, then do we really have free will? The answer is yes. God can control circumstances and create conditions that produce His desired outcome without inhibiting your freewill. I use this analogy to help people understand.

My wife is a huge Blues hockey fan. If I approached her and said, 'I have two front row seats to a Blues vs Blackhawks game in Chicago. I have already bought the plane tickets and reserved the hotel room. We have reservations for dinner at a fancy restaurant and I have cleared our schedule and taken care of every detail. Do you want to go?' I know her answer will be yes. Did I compromise her freewill? No. I controlled many circumstances that I knew would lead her to say yes. God can do the same thing but on a much bigger scale.

God controls so many things that affect our lives. He controls where and when we are born, who our parents are, how many siblings we have and so much more. This should comfort us as the bible declares that God is working for us.

Romans 8:28 NASB95 - And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to [His] purpose.

Take comfort today knowing that the sovereign God watches over you and is working circumstances for your benefit.

1 Timothy 6:15-16 NASB95 - 15 which He will bring about at the proper time--He who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, 16 who alone possesses immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see. To Him [be] honor and eternal dominion! Amen.

Psalms 103:19 NASB95 - The LORD has established His throne in the heavens, And His sovereignty rules over all.

Day Thirteen

God is a spirit

John 4:24 NASB95 - "God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

We say God is spirit and not that God is a spirit. The difference is subtle but significant. Being spirit is His nature or essence. Being a spirit is a form or possibly one of many spirits. God is neither a spirit in form or one of many spirits. God simply exists as spirit without a physical form or limitation. God exists outside of His physical, created universe. He is not bound by time and space or physical limits. In His form, that of spirit, He maintains His limitless knowledge, power and presence throughout and over His creation as well as beyond and outside of His creation.

God had to voluntarily limit Himself in order to dwell in Jesus. The form of a human body is inadequate to hold God. This limit was to His omnipresence and not His eternal nature or character. The Bible says that the fullness of God dwelt in Jesus.

Colossians 2:9 NASB95- For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form,

This does not mean that Jesus was everywhere at all times, as God is. It also does not mean that God was limited for a time to the confines of Jesus's body. However, the limits God imposed on Himself did not diminish His nature of being God. This is hard to understand. God being spirit is an essential doctrine of the Christian faith. Jesus being fully God is also an essential doctrine of the Christian faith. Jesus was also fully human. We are fully human and yet when we accept Christ's sacrifice and repent of our sins, God's spirit also dwells in us. If God were a physical being, this would be impossible.

2 Corinthians 3:17 NASB95 - Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, [there] is liberty.

As we dwell in harmony with the spirit, we dwell in liberty. It is the spirit that testifies to us that we belong to God.

Romans 8:9 NASB95 - However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.

Day Fourteen

God created all things

The Bible does not argue for the existence of God. It proclaims it! From the very first words in the Bible come the claim – In the Beginning God!

Genesis 1:1 NASB95 - In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

God has been described by theologians as the uncaused cause of all things. The Bible makes this claim as well.

Isaiah 44:24 NASB95 - Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, and the one who formed you from the womb, "I, the LORD, am the maker of all things, Stretching out the heavens by Myself And spreading out the earth all alone,

Isaiah 45:12 NASB95 - "It is I who made the earth, and created man upon it. I stretched out the heavens with My hands And I ordained all their host."

Colossians 1:16 NASB95 - For by Him all things were created, [both] in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities--all things have been created through Him and for Him.

When we consider all that God created, we should be amazed at our special place in that creation. We are the only thing that was created in God's image and given authority to rule over living things.

Genesis 1:26 NASB95 - Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

Man was created with the purpose of having a special place in God's design and to have a special relationship with God. God even made the universe with the purpose of making sure that man would know there is a God.

Romans 1:20 NASB95 - For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.

All three persons of the trinity participated in creation. The Holy Spirit is there in Genesis. Jesus is said to have created all things in Colossians 1:16. John chapter one says Jesus was with God in the beginning. The concept of God as creator of all things is clearly communicated by the Bible.

Day Fifteen

God has always been God

Psalm 90:2 NASB95 - Before the mountains were born Or You gave birth to the earth and the world, Even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God.

From everlasting to everlasting. What a strange way to communicate this concept. The Hebrew word being translated to English here is *Olam*. It is better translated when we don't try to do it with only one word. The concept being communicated here is that God exists eternally and perpetually in both directions from the current moment. He has always existed when looking to the past. He will always exist when looking to the future. There has never been a time when God did not exist and there never will be a time when He does not exist in the future.

This is a difficult concept for many to grasp. It is especially hard today with scientists telling us the universe has an age and a beginning. But God is not contained in the creation. He is outside of His creation and time is part of His creation. When we understand that time is created we can start to understand how God can be eternal. The confines of time only apply to what He created.

Psalm 48:14 NASB95 - For such is God, Our God forever and ever; He will guide us until death.

Isaiah 26:4 NASB95 - "Trust in the LORD forever, For in GOD the LORD, [we have] an everlasting Rock."

The truth of the Bible says God has always been God. He did not work His way up to God or become God at some point in His existence. Some religions claim that God was once a man and became God. They claim we can do the same. The Bible stands clearly against this idea. God has always been God and never changes.

Malachi 3:6 NASB95 - "For I, the LORD, do not change; therefore you, O sons of Jacob, are not consumed."

Hebrews 13:8 NASB95 - Jesus Christ [is] the same yesterday and today and forever.

When we place our faith in God, we can rest in the unchanging nature of God. We do not need to worry about His character or nature changing. It has not and it will not. God is faithful and reliable.

Day Sixteen

Jesus is God

Read John 1:1-14

What is the correlation between God and Jesus that is being made in this passage?

When Moses first spoke to God at the burning bush in Exodus, we see Moses ask God who he should tell the Israelites has sent him to them. He answered Moses with this unique phrase.

Exodus 3:14 NASB95 - God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM"; and He said, "Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'"

God simply said to Moses – I AM – and that is who has sent you. The God of your fathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Fast forward to the book of John where Jesus is being confronted by the ruling religious leaders. They claimed Jesus did not even know God. His response was much more than they expected.

John 8:58 NASB95 - Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am."

Their immediate reaction shows that they knew what He was saying. They picked up stones to execute him right there in the temple. The only Law He could have broken with this statement was that of blasphemy. They knew He was claiming equality with God.

Do not be confused. Jesus was fully man and yet fully God.

Colossians 2:9 NASB95 - For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form,

In the book of Hebrews the author makes sure to make a distinction between Jesus and angels.

Hebrews 1:6-8 NASB95 - 6 And when He again brings the firstborn into the world, He says, "AND LET ALL THE ANGELS OF GOD WORSHIP HIM." 7 And of the angels He says, "WHO MAKES HIS ANGELS WINDS, AND HIS MINISTERS A FLAME OF FIRE." 8 But of the Son [He says,] "YOUR THRONE, O GOD, IS FOREVER AND EVER, AND THE RIGHTEOUS SCEPTER IS THE SCEPTER OF HIS KINGDOM.

This passage even refers to Jesus as God. There can be no confusion here. Jesus claimed to be God. The Bible claims Jesus is God and it also claims He is fully man. This is the

mystery we struggle to understand. How can He be both? Someday we will all find out. Until then we must trust what has been revealed. This is faith.

Day Seventeen

Jesus became a man and was sinless

Read Hebrews 9

According to God's design, there was a need for a sinless blood offering in order to fulfill the requirements of the Law. The only way for God to accomplish this was to become a sinless man and offer Himself on our behalf.

Philippians 2:5-8 NASB95 - 5 Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, [and] being made in the likeness of men. 8 Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Jesus was God in human form. He was a sinless man, immaculately conceived of the Holy spirit and thereby avoiding the sin of Adam that has been passed down through human seed since the fall. In order for Jesus to fulfill the requirements of the Law he needed to live a sinless life. He did this even unto the day of His death.

1 Peter 2:21-23 NASB95 - 21 For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps, 22 WHO COMMITTED NO SIN, NOR WAS ANY DECEIT FOUND IN HIS MOUTH; 23 and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting [Himself] to Him who judges righteously;

All of these attributes together made Him the only viable offering to end all offerings. He was fully God in human form. He was full man and sinless. He was immaculately conceived, avoiding the sin of Adam and He remained sinless even unto death. Jesus is the only possible atonement for our sin. And by His death, He demonstrated His love for us.

Day Eighteen

Jesus has two natures: divine and human

One of the great mysteries of God is His triune nature. There is one God who is three persons. The Father is God, Jesus is God and the Holy Spirit is God. Of these three persons the Bible makes clear that the Father is Spirit. The Holy Spirit is spirit and Jesus is both God and man. It also demonstrates that all three can be present at the same time, in unique ways, while maintaining the one God.

Matthew 3:16-17 NASB95 - 16 After being baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and He saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove [and] lighting on Him, 17 and behold, a voice out of the heavens said, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased."

One unique quality of Jesus is that He was both fully God and fully man.

Colossians 2:9 NASB95 - For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form,

1 Timothy 2:5 NASB95 - For there is one God, [and] one mediator also between God and men, [the] man Christ Jesus,

There are several reasons why this is important. The humanity of Jesus allows Him to understand our frailty. As a man, He could be tempted as we are.

Hebrews 2:18 NASB95 - For since He Himself was tempted in that which He has suffered, He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted.

Being a sinless man allowed Him to fulfill the requirements of the Law.

Read Hebrews 10.

Day Nineteen

Jesus was born of a virgin

Why is it important that Jesus was born of a virgin? One reason is in order to avoid the sin nature of Adam being passed down to him. Our sin nature comes from our father. Since Jesus' father is God the Father, He did not get the sin nature passed down from Adam for centuries.

Romans 5:15 NASB95 - But the free gift is not like the transgression. For if by the transgression of the one the many died, much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abound to the many.

This means He can be the sinless offering required to fulfill the Law. The other reason is that it makes Him fully God. God did not just indwell Jesus. God is Jesus. The Bible clearly communicates the virgin birth of Jesus in both the Old and New Testament.

Matthew 1:18 NASB95 - Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: when His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit.

Read Luke 1

Isaiah 7:14 NASB95 - "Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel."

Day Twenty

Jesus is the only way to reconcile with God the Father

Jesus is the only way to God the Father. What a bold claim. Surely someone who makes such a claim must have something to back it up. This is the claim made by Jesus.

John 14:6 NASB95 - Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me."

Why should we believe Him? The claim has been made by others throughout history. Many cult leaders make such claims. Why should we believe Jesus and not them? All of the authority of Jesus rests on one miraculous and historic fact. He rose from the dead! No one else has ever done this. He proved by His death a resurrection that He was God. He proved that He could back up His claims with the power to overcome death.

Romans 1:4 NASB95 - who was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, according to the Spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord,

1Corinthians 15:21 NASB95 - For since by a man [came] death, by a man also [came] the resurrection of the dead.

1 Peter 1:3 NASB95 - Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

Matthew 11:27 NASB95 - "All things have been handed over to Me by My Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father; nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son wills to reveal [Him.]"

The resurrection of Jesus gives us a living hope of life in the Spirit today. It gives us a future hope of a resurrected life eternal with the Father. It resolves the enmity between God and man and allows us to once again have a relationship with Father God as Adam did in the garden.

John 17:3 NASB95 - "This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent."

Day Twenty-one The Holy Spirit is God

Acts 5:3-4 NASB95 - 3 But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back [some] of the price of the land? 4 "While it remained [unsold,] did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not under your control? Why is it that you have conceived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God."

From this passage we can see that the Bible clearly makes the claim that the Holy spirit is God. We have already seen on other days that the Holy spirit was there with Jesus and the Father during Jesus' baptism. Another passage of note is a reference to the Spirit of God during the creation story.

Genesis 1:2 NASB95 - The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters.

This indicates the Holy Spirit had a role in creation. This is an act attributed to God.

Romans 5:5 NASB95 - and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

One way God pours out His love towards us is through the Holy Spirit.

Romans 15:13 NASB95 - Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you will abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

It is the Holy Spirit of God that fills us with hope.

Ephesians 4:30 NASB95 - Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

It is the Holy Spirit of God that seals us until the day of our redemption. Understanding and embracing the Holy Spirit is how we walk in the Kingdom of God.

Romans 14:17 NASB95 - for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

Day Twenty-two

The Holy Spirit is not a force; He is a person

Acts 13:2 NASB95 - While they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."

Who Is The Holy Spirit?

A. He is a *person*, not an "it".

1. There are three essential elements in being a person and the Bible says the Holy Spirit has all three:

- a. *intelligence* (the ability to think and be aware of your existence)
- b. *volition* (the ability to choose; the will)
- c. *emotion* (the ability to feel)

2. Proofs of the Holy Spirit's personality:

- a. The Bible uses personal pronouns for the Holy Spirit (John 14:16)
- b. He *acts* as a person would act. He searches, knows, reveals, speaks, testifies, moves, helps, guides, creates, recreates, sanctifies, inspires, intercedes, comforts, teaches, leads, gives gifts, and orders the affairs of the church.
- c. He is affected by the acts of *others*. He can be resisted, grieved, vexed, and blasphemed.

To understand the nature of the Holy Spirit is the basis for our relationship with the Holy Spirit. If we do not recognize Him as a person, we will not relate to Him as a person. Many cults end up in this position. The uniqueness of the Christian religion is the belief that God dwells in the believer. This is accomplished through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

It is true that the Holy Spirit fills us with power. But He is much more than just a source of power. He is a person that can and will relate to us as other people can and do. He chooses when to empower us and when to prevent us from action.

Mark 13:11 NASB95 - "When they arrest you and hand you over, do not worry beforehand about what you are to say, but say whatever is given you in that hour; for it is not you who speak, but [it is] the Holy Spirit."

Acts 16:6 NASB95 - They passed through the Phrygian and Galatian region, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia;

Having a relationship with the Holy Spirit will lead you into walking in the Spirit.

Day Twenty-three

The Holy Spirit empowers believers with supernatural powers called spiritual gifts

Ephesians 4:8 NASB95 - Therefore it says, "WHEN HE ASCENDED ON HIGH, HE LED CAPTIVE A HOST OF CAPTIVES, AND HE GAVE GIFTS TO MEN."

When someone repents of their sins and believes that Jesus died for their sins and rose from the dead, the Bible says they receive the seal of the Holy Spirit – Ephesians 1:13. Along with the seal of the Holy Spirit, Jesus endows believers with supernatural powers called spiritual gifts. These powers are designed by God and distributed to each believer in order to build up other believers and manifest God to the rest of the world.

These are not natural abilities but rather supernatural abilities. These gifts require the active presence of the Holy Spirit in order to function. There are as many as 30 different spiritual gifts either mentioned directly in the Bible or demonstrated in the stories of the Bible. You can find many of these gifts outlined in three main passages of scripture. Read the following passages.

Romans 12

1 Corinthians 12

Ephesians 4

It is the responsibility of the Christ follower to discover and develop their spiritual gifts. Functioning in our spiritual gifts is essential to walking in the Spirit. When we function in our spiritual gift we can feel the presence of the Holy Spirit more fully and we can gain confidence in His power.

Take a few minutes to consider the above passages. Write down which gifts you feel you have been given and how you have seen them work. Show this list to the person that is discipling you and ask them to confirm the gifts.

Day Twenty-four

The Holy Spirit seals us as a guaranty of our future inheritance

Ephesians 1:13-14 NASB95 - 13 In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation--having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, 14 who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of [God's own] possession, to the praise of His glory.

In Christ, we have been promised an inheritance.

Colossians 3:24 NASB95 - knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.

Hebrews 9:15 NASB95 - For this reason He is the mediator of a new covenant, so that, since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were [committed] under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.

1Peter 1:4 NASB95 - to [obtain] an inheritance [which is] imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you,

God has made a promise of a future and eternal inheritance which is in heaven. In order to give you confidence in that promise, He has given you the Holy Spirit as a pledge to guarantee your inheritance. The return of the Holy Spirit to you is the promise to restore what was lost by Adam in the Garden. The promise becomes the guarantee of your future inheritance. God fulfilled His promise by giving you the Spirit and then says the Spirit is the seal and guarantee that you will receive the inheritance of eternal life in heaven with God.

Acts 20:32 NASB95 - "And now I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build [you] up and to give [you] the inheritance among all those who are sanctified."

Acts 26:18 NASB95 - 'to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me.'

Because of this, you can look forward to the inheritance with all confidence as the Holy Spirit gives testimony within you of the reality of God and His faithful purposes.

Day Twenty-five

The Bible is inspired by God and is the Word of God

2 Timothy 3:16-17 NASB95 - 16 All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; 17 so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

We can see from this passage that the Bible claims it is inspired by God and designed for purpose.

Hebrews 4:12 NASB95 - For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

The Bible is not just a collection of stories and words. It is an active work of God in our lives. The Bible works in us to change us. As we invest time in the Bible, the words we read work in us to produce righteousness.

Jesus confirmed the Bible was the word of God as He quoted from it often. He even called it the Word of God.

Mark 15:6 NASB95 - he is not to honor his father or his mother.' And [by this] you invalidated the word of God for the sake of your tradition.

Jesus also commented on God's ability to preserve His word until its work was done.

Matthew 5:18 NASB95 - "For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished."

So we see that the Bible is inspired by God, confirmed by God by reference, preserved by God, and active in producing the results God desires in our life. No other collection of writings on earth make these claims. The Bible is a unique work of literature that is worthy of our trust and investment of time. The more we read it, the more we see its impact.

Day Twenty-six

The Church is the Body and bride of Christ

Ephesians 1:22-23 NASB95 - 22 And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, 23 which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

There are two analogies used in scripture that we must address in order for you to rightly divide the Word of God. The first is the analogy that the church is the body of Jesus.

Ephesians 4:12 NASB95 - for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ;

This picture is used to show how the church does the work of Christ on earth.

Read 1 Corinthians 12

Each of us makes up the body of Christ on earth and each is adorned with a different function. Some function as an eye and some as hands. Together we can manifest Christ to the world through our service.

The other analogy is that of the marriage at the end of the age where Jesus will be joined to the church as a bride to a bridegroom.

Revelations 19:7 NASB95 - "Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready."

Jesus is often referenced as a bridegroom. He tells a parable of a king giving a great feast.

Read Matthew 22:1-14

Later in the book of Revelations we see a reference to both the bride and the marriage supper of the Lamb, which is a common picture used to reference Jesus.

Revelations 19:7-9 NASB95 - 7 "Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready." 8 It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright [and] clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. 9 Then he said to me, "Write, 'Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.'" And he said to me, "These are true words of God."

These analogies communicate the reality of our work on this earth on behalf of Jesus and the ultimate end of the age where those who are the church will be joined to Jesus forever.

Day Twenty-seven

Each Christian is commanded to make disciples

Matthew 28:18-20 NASB95 - 18 And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

This command was given to the apostles by the risen Lord Jesus. Yet today, very few Christians are obeying the command. A careful examination of this passage will reveal the need for us to obey the command. In this passage the Apostles were commanded to make disciples and teach them to obey all that He commanded them. This command would be included in what they were told to teach them to obey. If the command would have been followed then every disciple of Christ would have been taught to make disciples and teach them to make disciples.

Somewhere this process broke down and people started taking people to church instead of making disciples. If we wish to obey Jesus we must get back to making disciples. It is very important to obey Jesus if we claim to love Him.

John 14:15 NASB95 - "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments."

In order to keep the commands of Jesus we must obey the command to make disciples and teach them to obey His commands.

The first step to making disciples is to first become a disciple of Jesus.

Read Luke 14 to see some of the things that are required to become a disciple of Jesus. Then learn to share the Gospel. Write your testimony and prepare to share it. Learn basic doctrine and prepare to teach it to others. Then find your ministry and serve the world. These are the basic steps to becoming equipped to obey the command to make disciples.

John 15:8 NASB95 - "My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and [so] prove to be My disciples."

Day Twenty-eight

All people have sinned

Original sin is a term used to convey the idea that all humans are born under the burden of sin. The idea comes from the fact that all humans are descended from Adam. Since Adam sinned in the garden of Eden, everything that proceeds from him is already corrupted by sin. This is why it is so important that Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit and not a man. Thereby, Jesus did not have the sin nature that comes from being descended from Adam.

Romans 5:12 NASB95 - Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned

Romans 3:23 NASB95- for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Jesus was not produced by the sinful seed of Adam's descendants. This allowed Him to be born sinless. We, on the other hand, are all born into sin. Since we fall short of the glory of God, we need intervention in order to be reconciled to God.

Speaking of Jesus the Bible says -

1 John 3:5 NASB95 - You know that He appeared in order to take away sins; and in Him there is no sin.

Of the rest of us it says -

1 John 1:8 NASB95 - If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us.

Our sin is what separates us from God. It is what caused Adam and Eve to be expelled from God's presence in the garden. Jesus is the only sinless sacrifice that can restore us to our relationship with God by paying the penalty of our sin.

Read Hebrews 7

Day Twenty-nine

The wages of sin is death

Romans 6:23 NASB95 - For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Man was created to live forever. Due to the Sin of Adam and Eve, sin entered the world and with it brought death. The warning from God was clear.

Genesis 2:16-17 NASB95 - 16 The LORD God commanded the man, saying, "From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; 17 but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die."

Nevertheless, Eve was deceived and ate the fruit. Then Adam followed after her in eating the fruit. As a result, they died a spiritual death of separation from God and eventually died a physical death.

So all that came after Adam proceeded from him. As his descendants we all share in the result of his actions.

Romans 5:12 NASB95 - Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned.

When the Bible describes death as the wages of sin, it is communicating that death is not a punishment from God but rather a result of what we have earned. Wages are earned, punishment is given. Instead we need to understand that we earned death as a result of our sins. We get the free gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ.

Day Thirty

Man did not evolve, he was created

Genesis 1:26 NASB95 - Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

Genesis 5:1-2 NASB95 - 1 This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day when God created man, He made him in the likeness of God. 2 He created them male and female, and He blessed them and named them Man in the day when they were created.

Isaiah 42:5 NASB95 - Thus says God the LORD, Who created the heavens and stretched them out, Who spread out the earth and its offspring, Who gives breath to the people on it And spirit to those who walk in it,

1 Timothy 2:13 NASB95 - For it was Adam who was first created, [and] then Eve.

Matthew 19:4 NASB95 - And He answered and said, "Have you not read that He who created [them] from the beginning MADE THEM MALE AND FEMALE,

The importance of the creation of man by God lies in the image and likeness man was created in. Man was created to be a visible representation of God in His creation. Man communicates by his design all the things about God that could be communicated in a created being. This is also the tragedy of sin. The representation was corrupted and could no longer accomplish its created purpose of expressing God's glory. This is one reason Jesus said we must be born again. The restoration of the Spirit that is given to us once we enter into a covenant with Christ puts us back in a position to obey God and declare His glory.

Ephesians 2:10 NASB95 - For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.

Rev 4:11 NASB95 - "Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and because of Your will they existed, and were created."

So man was created for a purpose. His purpose was corrupted by sin. Jesus came to take away the sins of man and restore the Spirit to him. This is accomplished as we are born again and walk free from sin in the grace of God. This restores to us our created and intended purpose of declaring the glory of God with our lives.

Day Thirty-one

Adam and Eve were real people

Genesis 5:1-2 NASB95 - 1 This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day when God created man, He made him in the likeness of God. 2 He created them male and female, and He blessed them and named them Man in the day when they were created.

1 Timothy 2:13 NASB95 - For it was Adam who was first created, [and] then Eve.

Genesis 3:20 NASB95 - Now the man called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all [the] living.

1 Corinthians 15:45 NASB95 - So also it is written, "The first MAN, Adam, BECAME A LIVING SOUL." The last Adam [became] a life-giving spirit.

From the very beginning the Bible declares that God created. It is man, in his own wisdom, that claims man evolved. With God's explanation we have purpose and design. With man's explanation we arrived here by chance with no purpose. The Bible says we were designed after a pattern. The pattern is God himself. We were made in the image and likeness of God. Our value does not come from reaching a higher state of evolution than other creatures. Our value comes from being a beloved creation of a loving God.

Genesis 1:26 NASB95 - Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

Day Thirty-two

Death entered the world because of Adam's sin

Romans 5:12-15 NASB95 - 12 Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned-- 13 for until the Law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law. 14 Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come. 15 But the free gift is not like the transgression. For if by the transgression of the one the many died, much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abound to the many.

Romans 3:23 NASB95 - for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Before Adam sinned, there was no death. Death came as a result of Adam's sin. It was what he earned as a result. God warned him what would be the result if he ate from the forbidden tree.

Genesis 2:17 NASB95 - "but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die."

Ever since that time, death has been certain for everyone. We have all inherited the sinfulness of Adam. Everyone has sinned therefore everyone dies. We earn that result.

Romans 6:23 NASB95 - For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The good news is that there is more to the story. God could have left us dead but He didn't. Just as sin entered through one man Adam, eternal life entered through the one man Jesus Christ. By faith in Christ we can escape the wages of our sin and enter into eternal life with Jesus.

Day Thirty-three

Sin separates us from God

Isaiah 59:2 NASB95 - But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, And your sins have hidden [His] face from you so that He does not hear.

When Adam sinned he was expelled from the Garden of Eden.

Genesis 3:24 NASB95 - So He drove the man out; and at the east of the garden of Eden He stationed the cherubim and the flaming sword which turned every direction to guard the way to the tree of life.

This was the place where Adam had intimate fellowship with God. Adam was ultimately cut off from the garden and God's presence at the same time.

Ephesians 2:12 NASB95 - [remember] that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

We would have stayed separate from God forever had Christ not intervened for us. Through His death, burial and resurrection, we can be reconciled to God.

2 Corinthians 5:19 NASB95 - namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

Without Christ we remain separate from God for eternity. Through faith in Christ we are reconciled to God and our sins are not counted against us. God even promises that once we are reconciled to Him through Christ that we can never be separated from Him again by anything.

Romans 8:39 NASB95 - nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Day Thirty-four

Jesus died for all our sins

1 John 2:1-2 NASB95 - 1 My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; 2 and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for [those of] the whole world.

There is no sin that Jesus did not pay for on the cross. The word propitiation here means that Jesus appeased God's demand for the wages of sin. Sin requires a punishment which was determined to be death. Jesus paid that penalty for us and His death appeased God and allowed for justice to prevail. If we accept the sacrifice of Jesus on our behalf, then our due penalty is considered paid. If we do not accept what Christ did for us, then we can pay the penalty ourself.

2 Corinthians 5:14-15 NASB95 - 14 For the love of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died; 15 and He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf.

The faith required to appropriate this propitiation on our behalf is not a passing faith or even an intellectual understanding or agreement. It is a life changing faith that shifts the focus of our life from living for ourself to living in service and gratitude to the one who freed us from our death penalty.

1 Peter 2:24 NASB95 - and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed.

As a result of His sacrifice and resurrection, we may receive healing from the effects and impacts of sin in our lives. The word most often translated as “saved” in the New Testament is the Greek word Sozo. It denotes wholeness. Jesus didn't just provide forgiveness and escape from death. He provides healing and wholeness.

This has a profound impact on our current life and our eternal future. Because of Jesus, justice is served and healing is made possible. We can possess the Holy spirit and walk free from the effects of sin and its power over us.

Have you accepted the forgiveness of Jesus for all of your sins?

Day Thirty-five

Jesus' death was a substitution for us

1 Peter 2:24 NASB95 - and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed.

Read Hebrews Chapter 7

God decided that the punishment for sin was death. This was demonstrated through the offering of blood sacrifices. Our life is impossible without blood so through the offering of blood, God agreed to overlook our sins.

Hebrews 9:13 NASB95 - For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh,

But this was in part symbolic. These sacrifices were never intended to take away sins.

Hebrews 10:3-4 NASB95 - 3 But in those [sacrifices] there is a reminder of sins year by year. 4 For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

Hebrews 10:11 NASB95 - Every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins;

The only way the guilt of our sins could be paid for was through the sacrifice of a sinless human. Who, by offering Himself, left no sin unpaid. This sacrifice was made by Jesus who substituted Himself for us when He died on the cross. His sinless sacrifice appeased God and provided justice for all. The penalty for sin was met and a way to reconcile to God was provided. This was done in such a way that our freewill was preserved. No one is forced to reconcile to God. It is offered as a gift. It is accessible to everyone through faith. You don't have to be wealthy enough, smart enough or even good enough to acquire forgiveness. You must believe. When you do, then the substitutionary atonement of Jesus Christ is applied to your sin debt and the penalty is considered by God to be paid in full.

Day Thirty-six

Jesus rose from the dead in His physical body

John 2:19-21 NASB95 - 19 Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." 20 The Jews then said, "It took forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?" 21 But He was speaking of the temple of His body.

All of Christianity hangs on the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus. His atoning death is the payment that reconciles us to God. His burial confirms His death. His resurrection proves He is God and that He has the power to give us a resurrection to eternal life. Even a disciple had trouble believing the resurrection when he was confronted with the concept.

John 20:25-28 NASB95 - 25 So the other disciples were saying to him, "We have seen the Lord!" But he said to them, "Unless I see in His hands the imprint of the nails, and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe." 26 After eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors having been shut, and stood in their midst and said, "Peace [be] with you." 27 Then He said to Thomas, "Reach here with your finger, and see My hands; and reach here your hand and put it into My side; and do not be unbelieving, but believing." 28 Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!"

The resurrection would have been fantastic enough if Jesus had appeared as a spirit to the disciples. To appear in physical form means that we too will be raised in a physical body.

Read 1 Corinthians Chapter 15

When we place our faith in Jesus Christ, we are born again to a new spiritual life here on earth. We are also guaranteed a new body and a new life after death.

1 Corinthians 6:14 NASB95 - Now God has not only raised the Lord, but will also raise us up through His power.

Day Thirty-seven

Those that reject Jesus go to Hell forever

Read Matthew 25:31- 46

It is clear teaching of Scripture that Jesus is the only way to reconcile with God the Father. At the end of the age there will be a final judgment. Those whose names are found written in the book of life will pass through into eternal life with God.

Revelations 21:27 NASB95 - and nothing unclean, and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

Read Revelation 20:11-15

The only way into the Book of Life is through Jesus. All other people will share in the same destination.

Revelations 20:12 NASB95 - And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is [the book] of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds

Revelations 20:15 NASB95 - And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

There are only two possible eternal destinations. With God or apart from God. This life is where the choice is made. Once we die, we face the judgment.

Hebrews 9:27 NASB95 - And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this [comes] judgment,

So there is an urgency for people to reconcile with God before it is too late. No man knows when his last breath will come. Those who wait may find it is too late to change your eternal destiny. But it is not too late today. Make sure you have repented of your sins and reconciled with God through Jesus while you still have time in this life.

Day Thirty-eight

Hell is a place of fiery punishment

The Bible clearly communicates that we will live forever. This life is where we choose our eternity. If we choose to be reconciled to God in this life, then we will live in the presence of God for eternity. If we reject reconciliation with God in this life, then we will live separate from God in eternity. The difference between these two choices is made as clear as possible. Life with God is portrayed as paradise. Life apart from God is communicated as a burning lake of fire.

Matthew 25:41 NASB95 - "Then He will also say to those on His left, 'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels;

Revelations 19:20 NASB95 - And the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet who performed the signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image; these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone.

Revelations 20:15 NASB95 - And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

Many take issue with a loving God that will torture people for eternity for rejecting Him. That is not really what is happening. The Love of God is expressed in His description of heaven and hell. God makes a clear and severe distinction between eternal life with Him and eternity without Him. When we look at the description of hell we should surely decide not to go there. It has no appeal. When we see the description of heaven, we should long for it. These descriptions are designed to help make the choice to reconcile even easier.

Some say that the description of a lake of fire is just apocryphal language and is not real. That may be true but it is not what is communicated. I think the most important thing to understand is that eternity apart from God will be a painful and miserable existence. It is also important to understand that the choice of our eternal destination must be made in this life. Once we understand the difference being communicated, it should be much easier to choose.

Day Thirty-nine

You are saved by faith through grace, not by works

Ephesians 2:8-9 NASB95 - 8 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, [it is] the gift of God; 9 not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.

For generations a controversy has reigned between Catholics and Protestants. This controversy is the opinion regarding the role that our works play in our Salvation. Some believe we have to do good works in order to be saved. Others do not believe that. There is a close relationship between salvation and good works. That is why there is controversy. The book of James links faith and works together as essentially linked.

James 2:26 NASB95 - For just as the body without [the] spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead.

Some take this to mean that a faith without works leaves us dead in our sins. That is not what is being said here. The focus of this statement is the faith. The proper connection here is that good works bring life to our faith just as the Spirit brings life to our bodies.

James 2:17 NASB95 - Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, [being] by itself.

Notice that James does not say that faith without works makes faith disappear. He says it makes it a dead faith if left alone. The faith still remains. So why the confusing language? What James is telling us is the desired result, that is - a living faith that gives way to active good works.

Titus 2:14 NASB95 - who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.

Your faith is what enters you into covenant with Jesus. This is what causes you to be saved. Your saving faith should produce in you good works. If it does not, then you may find your faith stagnant and dead. Joining Jesus in His mission to redeem and love the world is the desired result of Him calling you in the first place. If we have a genuine faith in Jesus we should see that change in our life to join Him in good works.

Day Forty

Salvation is a free gift of God

Romans 6:23 NASB95 - For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

When we talk about salvation, we are talking about the eternal destiny of our soul. Because of Adam, we are separate from God. He was told that if he ate from the forbidden fruit that he would die. This was the penalty for his disobedience.

Romans 5:12 NASB95 - Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned--

There was no way for us to right the wrong. There is nothing we can do to earn back our right standing with God or to escape the penalty of our sin. It was God that initiated the pursuit. He has pursued each of us in love. He went as far as to offer His only son on our behalf. Sin separates us, but Christ's sacrifice and resurrection reconnects us to God and satisfies the penalty of our sin.

We are unable to do anything to repair the breach except to accept what has been done for us and offered to us. If we do not do this in this lifetime, then we will stay separate from God for eternity. If we accept the free gift of God and reconcile then we are accepting what we call salvation and will spend eternity with God.

Ephesians 2:8-9 NASB95 - For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, [it is] the gift of God; 9 not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.

So we can see that the penalty was given for our sins, our deeds. The removal of the penalty was given freely as a gift. Our deeds do have consequences. We will see that in a later lesson. Our deeds do not free us from the death penalty for our sins. Only Jesus can do that and He chooses to offer it to us freely.

Day Forty-one

You must be born again

John 3:3 NASB95 - Jesus answered and said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."

This statement appears odd to us. It also appeared odd to Nicodemus. Look at his response.

John 3:4 NASB95 - Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he?"

The idea of being “born again” is as strange to us as it was to him. So Jesus explained Himself further.

John 3:5-6 NASB95 – 5 Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. 6 "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

Jesus differentiates between our fleshly birth, our first birth, and a spiritual rebirth, being born again. Being born again is what happens to us when we receive Jesus as our Lord and savior. Entering into covenant with Jesus returns to us the Spirit of God and literally rebirths us to life. This is the hope of salvation. A new life, free from sin and the penalty due us. If we are not born again, we have not received the spirit. If we are not born again, we have not defeated sin and death. The idea of being born again is the renewing of our life to a new life in the spirit. This is one of the things that baptism symbolizes.

1 Peter 1:3 NASB95 - Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

So when Jesus says – you must be born again – do not be amazed but rather be born again.

John 3:7 NASB95 - "Do not be amazed that I said to you, 'You must be born again.'

Day Forty-two

The saved will be raised from the dead at the rapture

1 Thessalonians 4:13-17 NASB95 - 13 But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. 15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of [the] archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord.

This passage refers to an event that is commonly called the Rapture. It is a controversial topic and not all Christians believe in it. I do not consider it to be an essential doctrine. It is important to know about it and understand it. This event is at the time of Christ's return and speaks about how the followers of Jesus will be gathered to Him.

The timing of this event is as controversial as the event itself. It is often tied to the Great Tribulation period at the end of the age. Among those who believe in the Rapture, there are a variety of ideas of its timing. The three common views are called Pre-tribulation, Mid-tribulation and Post tribulation. Each in order happening right before the Great Tribulation period, halfway through it or just at the end of it.

The reason I have added it into this devotional is because it is important to know about the doctrine. The doctrinal debate around the Rapture often creates division among Christians. It also can cloud more essential doctrines like that of the physical return of Christ and the judgment of all people at the end of the age. Both of these are much more essential elements of the Christian faith than the Rapture.

We cannot dismiss the idea of this gathering of all the dead and living at the return of Christ since it is included in Scripture. No matter what the debates may be, we must admit that the Bible speaks of it and then we must prayerfully request that God give us understanding. It is not included in the Bible to give us something to argue and divide over. It is included in order to give us hope of a coming rescue from the evil of this world. This concept is sure. Those in Christ will be rescued from this evil dying world and live forever in heaven with God. How we get there is less important.

Day Forty-three

Jesus will visibly return to earth

Acts 1:11 NASB95 - They also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven."

Revelations 22:20 NASB95 - He who testifies to these things says, "Yes, I am coming quickly." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

One promise of the Bible is that Jesus will return to earth. He rose from the dead. He did so in a physical body. He promises to return for His people.

1 Thessalonians 4:17 NASB95 - Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord.

When He returns He will gather His followers and defeat evil on earth. In the end, we will all stand before the judgment throne of God and our eternal destiny will be sealed.

Revelations 20:11-12 NASB95 - 11 Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. 12 And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is [the book] of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds.

The hope of our salvation lies in the death and resurrection of Jesus. The hope for justice lies in the return of Jesus. The hope of eternity lies in the judgment throne and our position is Christ to pass through that judgment into eternal life with God.

Day Forty-four

Jesus' Second Coming will be to judge the nations

Revelations 19:11-16 NASB95 - 11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it [is] called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and wages war. 12 His eyes [are] a flame of fire, and on His head [are] many diadems; and He has a name written [on Him] which no one knows except Himself. 13 [He is] clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. 14 And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white [and] clean, were following Him on white horses. 15 From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike down the nations, and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty. 16 And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS."

Jesus is coming back. When He does, He will judge the people of the earth and usher in a new heaven and a new earth. The end of this age will culminate in the judgment at the great white throne of God.

Psalms 96:13 NASB95 - Before the LORD, for He is coming, For He is coming to judge the earth. He will judge the world in righteousness And the peoples in His faithfulness.

The return of Jesus will not be a secret or hidden event. The Bible says it will be visible to everyone.

Revelations 1:7 NASB95 - BEHOLD, HE IS COMING WITH THE CLOUDS, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. So it is to be. Amen.

Matthew 24:27 NASB95 - "For just as the lightning comes from the east and flashes even to the west, so will the coming of the Son of Man be.

Matthew 24:30 NASB95 - "And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory.

The return of Jesus is one of the hopes of the Christian faith. His return signals the end of this age and the ushering in of the end of evil among His followers.

Day Forty-five

There will be a final judgment for all people

2 Peter 3:7 NASB95 - But by His word the present heavens and earth are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.

It is clear from the Bible that one day, everyone will stand before God for a day of judgment. This judgment will separate those who love God from those who hate God. There are two parts to this judgment. One is where everyone will be judged for their deeds.

Revelations 20:12-13 NASB95 - 12 And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is [the book] of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds. 13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one [of them] according to their deeds.

While this is an important element of the judgment, it does not determine your eternal fate. What does determine your eternal fate?

Revelations 20:15 NASB95 - And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

The Book of Life is where your name must be in order to pass through the final judgment. So how do you get your name written in this book?

Revelations 3:5 NASB95 - 'He who overcomes will thus be clothed in white garments; and I will not erase his name from the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.

How do we overcome?

1 John 5:4 NASB95 - For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world--our faith.

Faith in Jesus is the only way to get through the judgment and the final judgment is guaranteed to happen.

Day Forty-six

We will be judged for our deeds

John 3:19 NASB95 - "This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil.

In a sense, the appearance of Jesus revealed the true nature of men's hearts. He is the light of the world. The people that reject Him will be judged based on their deeds. The sad but profound truth is that none will be found innocent.

John 5:29 NASB95 - and will come forth; those who did the good [deeds] to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil [deeds] to a resurrection of judgment.

While this sounds like our efforts can save us, that is not what is being said here. The truth of the Bible says there is no good apart from God. So the only way to do good deeds is to be found in covenant with Christ.

2 Corinthians 5:10 NASB95 - For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

No one escapes the judgment seat of Christ. Since our deeds do not determine our eternal destiny, what is the point of this final judgment? The final judgment is where every excuse will be done away with. God will confront His enemies with their guilt. God will confront His followers with their great need for Jesus. In the end, all will have the same reaction right before they are sent to their final destination.

Romans 14:11 NASB95 - For it is written, "AS I LIVE, SAYS THE LORD, EVERY KNEE SHALL BOW TO ME, AND EVERY TONGUE SHALL GIVE PRAISE TO GOD."

Once everyone stands before the throne and gives an account for their deeds, they will know that Jesus is Lord and Jesus is right. No one will enter their eternal destination without knowing exactly why.

Revelations 20:13 NASB95 - And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one [of them] according to their deeds.

Day Forty-seven

Those not found in the Book of Life will be thrown into a lake of fire

Revelations 20:15 NASB95 - And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

Hell as a place of eternal torment in fire has long been criticized by those who have not placed their faith in Jesus. They mockingly ask "How can a loving God torment people forever?". They don't think the punishment fits the crime.

I do not want to argue the choice of language. This is what the Bible says will happen so I go with it. I know God is a just and loving God so His choice of eternal destinations must also be just and loving even if I don't understand how. The Lake of Fire is referred to in 5 verses and all are found in the Book of Revelations. This book is full of imagery and extreme symbolic language. So it is possible that this lake is metaphorical in nature. I do not want to say that unless I am sure, and I am not sure.

Let's talk about what we do know. There are only two possible destinations for eternity. One is with God and the other is separated from God. The Bible is also clear that all good things come from God. So if we are removed from God, no more good things will ever come to us. Imagine a place where evil exists unchecked. There is no good to counteract it. It runs rampant among the people there. Each can and will do as they please to each other. Only evil and selfishness exist there. Now that lake doesn't look so bad, does it?

I am sure that one thing that God is doing here is to communicate in extreme language to make our choices easier. Our eternal destiny is not a choice between vanilla or chocolate ice cream forever. That might be a hard choice. Our choice is between a wonderful place where there is no more tears or pain and a lake that burns us forever in torment.

Revelations 21:4 NASB95 - and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be [any] death; there will no longer be [any] mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away."

This is what awaits those who have reconciled with God through faith in Jesus. Maybe we should stop worrying about what eternity without God will be like and just accept Jesus. He has made the choice easier by making the contrast as clear as possible.

Day Forty-eight

Satan will be cast into the lake of fire

Revelations 20:10 NASB95 - And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

The end of the age will bring an end to evil. With that end will be the final judgment on the evil one. Satan has been corrupting mankind since the Garden of Eden. At the Great White Throne judgment his final destination and fate will be sealed. This will fulfill the promise of God to exact justice against him.

Romans 16:20 NASB95 - The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you.

Along with Satan, death and Hades will be done away with. There is no place for these three in heaven. In heaven there will be no death or evil. Therefore there will be no need for Hades.

Revelations 20:14 NASB95 - Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire.

This is called the second death. Not only will these three be thrown into the lake of fire. Others will join their fate there as well.

Revelations 21:8 NASB95 - "But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part [will be] in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

Day Forty-nine

There will be a new heaven and a new earth

Isaiah 65:17 NASB95 - "For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; And the former things will not be remembered or come to mind."

When Adam and Eve sinned in the garden they brought sin and death upon all of creation. God will repair this at the end of the age. He will do this by destroying the old and creating new again.

Romans 8:20-22 NASB95 - 20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope 21 that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. 22 For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now.

This new creation will not be corrupted. There will be no evil, sin, pain or death. It will be the perfect place for our new bodies to dwell in righteousness.

2 Peter 3:7 NASB95 - But by His word the present heavens and earth are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.

2 Peter 3:13 NASB95 - But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells.

One hope of Christians is to dwell in a perfect place forever. The promise to create a new world is a part of that promise. It is not enough that the evil will be separated from the righteous at the end of the age. If they were placed back into a corrupted creation then that perfect place would not exist. In order to fulfill His promises, God will create all things new again.

Revelations 21:1 NASB95 - Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer [any] sea.

Day Fifty

If we love Jesus we will obey Him

John 14:15 NASB95 - "If you love Me(Jesus), you will keep My commandments.

Entering into covenant with Jesus by faith is the only way back to God.

John 14:6 NASB95 - Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.

Reconciliation is only part of the covenant. In order to make Jesus the Lord of our life and live on a solid foundation, we must obey His commands and live in His ways.

2 Timothy 2:19 NASB95 - Nevertheless, the firm foundation of God stands, having this seal, "The Lord knows those who are His," and, "Everyone who names the name of the Lord is to abstain from wickedness."

Jesus understands the corruption that is in the world. He wants to guide us to a full and fruitful life in this age. He does this by giving us instruction and a purpose. When we are born again, we are born of the spirit for a purpose. This purpose has been designed for us since before we were created.

Ephesians 2:10 NASB95 - For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.

The way to find these good works is to follow Jesus. We follow by obeying. We understand how to obey by abiding.

Matthew 7:24 NASB95 - "Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them, may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock."

We will still live in a corrupted creation full of sin and evil. We will still be affected by these things. Obedience to Jesus is the best way to endure till the end. So that when the storms of life lash at us, we can stand firm in Jesus. That is what a firm foundation will do for you.

Luke 6:48 NASB95 - he is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid a foundation on the rock; and when a flood occurred, the torrent burst against that house and could not shake it, because it had been well built.

Many may say that Jesus is their Lord. Proving it by the way we live is how to have a firm foundation.

Read John Chapter 15