

DIVINE REVELATION
OF THE BAPTISMS

By Trevor Knoesen

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BOOK LEGEND

When I was contemplating writing this book, God the Holy Spirit started revealing the way the references to the Godhead were to be displayed. The Holy Spirit first led me to the following Scriptures:

They are to make these sacred garments for your brother Aaron and his sons, so they may serve me as priests. Have them use gold, and of blue, purple and scarlet yarn, and of finely twisted linen – the work of a skilled craftsman (Exodus 28:4-6).

From the blue, purple and scarlet yarn they made woven garments for ministering in the sanctuary. They also made sacred garments for Aaron, as the Lord commanded Moses. They made the ephod of gold, and of blue, purple and scarlet yarn, and of finely twisted linen (Exodus 39:1-2).

These directly corresponded with the colours the Lord had given me in a vision. He clearly showed me salvation and the baptisms in the diagrammatic form contained in this book. The fourth colour revealed in these Scriptures is gold which the Holy Spirit told me is the colour that represents God. He emphasised that as I compiled the book I was to use these colours to clearly display each personality within the Godhead. This would make God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit more understandable to

the reader.

The legend of colours used is thus given:

God – **Gold**

Father – **Blue**

Jesus the Son – **Scarlet (Red)**

Holy Spirit - **Purple**

References to the Bible are in red because Jesus is described in Scripture as The Word.

PREFACE

My grandfather was born in Port Elizabeth, South Africa from a heritage of settlers who came from Europe to South Africa at the end of the 16th Century. When neighbouring Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), was opening up in the beginning of the 19th century, my grandfather left South Africa to seek his fortune in this new land of promise. Our family background was one of adventure, creativity and reward, but it was also one of duty, thrusting two generations into war. I believe what God started as a heritage of blessed settlement in new lands, the enemy tried to rob from our family. In spite of this, throughout these periods of good and bad seasons, God eventually brought me great blessing leaving me with the ultimate realisation that out of every dark situation, he can bring light.

My father Hartley, a second generation Rhodesian and my mother Rebecca, a Scot, met during World War II when my father was assigned to the British 44th Bomber Squadron based near Lincoln, England. They married in Lugar, Scotland, in 1944 and settled in Rhodesia after the war. I was born in Bulawayo, Rhodesia, in 1952.

At the age of three we relocated to a small mining town called Mashaba, which is 40 miles from the Great Zimbabwe Ruins. To a young boy there seemed no better life than this carefree outdoor environment where shooting and fishing were amongst our main activities. In my early years, we would ride our bicycles far into the bush, visiting remote African villages.

The rural African people were always friendly. This would change radically in years to come through communist indoctrination. Looking back, it was such a privilege to grow up during this time when life was free from many of the vices the world is exposed to today.

As there were no secondary schools in the vicinity, my mother, determined to keep me from attending boarding school, persuaded my father to return to Scotland. I was nine at the time. For the first three months we lived in a cottage on a farm near Cronberry, close to where our Scottish relatives lived. My father was unable to secure any work in Scotland so we moved to Leicester in England. After six months there, my father was unhappy with the employment he found, and we all agreed to return home to Rhodesia.

I completed my primary schooling at the same school I had left nine months before, and then went off to secondary boarding school near Gwelo (now Gweru). By the time I finished, clouds of war were throwing a dark shadow over all our futures. The government ordered all young men to do national military service in response to armed incursions from bordering countries initiated by the military wings of the then-banned Rhodesian opposition parties.

Our service was split into six months basic training and three months fully operational. Upon completion of this service, we were assigned to Territorial Army Units closest to where we lived. The fighting, in what became known as the Rhodesian Bush War, intensified far quicker than anyone anticipated and within three months we were called back to active service. Such

call-ups were designed to last no longer than a month, but they became longer and more frequent, affecting people from all spheres of life. Thankfully, employers were most understanding in these difficult circumstances and virtually no one lost their employment.

Within a year of finishing my national service, I married my secondary school sweetheart, Maria. We fully understood the need to defend our country, but the frequent call-ups caused major disruption to our lives, especially when our son Dean arrived.

Territorial forces soon adopted a system whereby the troops were on one month's operational duty and one month off, back in "Civvy Street." As the situation became more critical, the military was forced to implement an indefinite call-up system. The real story of this book stems from my experience during the "continuous service" period.

As we were fighting for our very lives and the future of our country, we learned that a political "solution" was being thrust upon Rhodesia that would ultimately terminate the war and bring the very enemy we were fighting into power. It was heart-wrenching to know that the highest authorities in our land consented to this pressurised capitulation – which we considered to be the final betrayal of our country.

We soldiers did not always enjoy being in the army, but were unanimous in defending our country. Now the men in my unit were reluctant to continue fighting. Higher military authority, however, quickly quashed any such notion and gave

no leeway in its resolve to keep the “front up.” The following events emanate from the point of my unit receiving this crippling information.

CHAPTER ONE

The Deal

Hour after endless hour, I scanned the horizon for our deadly enemy, the ruthless African insurgents, armed with Russian-made weapons. To the outside world the Rhodesian Bush War was naively and incorrectly understood in all aspects. Our army comprised not only of regular soldiers, but conscripted civilians such as farmers, miners, shopkeepers and professional people who were born and raised in this beautiful and fertile land. We all saw it as a battle for the survival of our nation, to maintain the standards of civilization and stop a communist bid for power. Tragically, in 1976, after 12 years of fighting, our national leaders were bending to international pressure, ready to yield at the bargaining table to those our men were still fighting in the bush.

On this hot day – like hundreds before it, I was on Observation Point Lookout (OP). An OP included groups of three men, called “sticks,” who would walk long distances by night into suspected enemy territory. We would base up in the hills for weeks at a time watching for enemy movement. Once an enemy presence was observed, the “stick” would report the sighting by radio to base camp, which would initiate a “fire force” attack by air and ground troops.

This particular OP was like most others, spent concealed in the undergrowth of dense bush without adequate

food or water. The unrelenting heat and baking sun encrusted my combat fatigues with sweat and dirt. The last time I had had a bath was perhaps two weeks earlier. By day, the mopane flies continually attacked, searching out any moisture they could locate in one's eyes and nose. After sunset, out came menacing mosquitoes that seemed to take great delight in their nightly feasts. It seemed uncanny to me the way these tormenting insects seemed to relieve each other at the end of their particular shift.

As bad as these conditions were, I never had any doubt as to why we were needed. Not until this mission. Now I pondered why we were continuing to operate, especially as the end result seemed preordained. In those long, boring hours on watch I usually thought of my wife Maria and our little son Dean, our dreams for the future and our hopes for peace in Rhodesia. On this OP, strange new thoughts were developing.

One such thought was a recollection of a weekly ritual at our home. Every Sunday, my father washed and dipped our dog Buster. People might say my father did this "religiously." This struck me as odd since my father was not religious in any conventional sense. We never attended church or had any firm belief in anything of spiritual significance. I think he believed there was a God but really knew nothing about him.

My mother speculated about mystical things, and I knew I had been baptised as an infant in the Anglican church. I accepted the idea of a spiritual dimension, but was unsure of how all this fit together. Now this odd memory made me think how lucky Buster was that he had enough food and water every

day. I was living a life worse than a dog and now for no reason whatsoever.

In this despairing moment, I found myself looking up to the sky and wondering if God possibly existed. To my surprise, I spoke to God with all sincerity saying, “If you are really up there – or perhaps I am the biggest fool as you may not even exist, but if you do – I will make a deal with you. If you get me out of the army and out of Rhodesia, I will go to this so-called church of yours.”

CHAPTER TWO

On to South Africa

When my army service period ended, my parents asked us to accompany them on a holiday to the Durban North Coast in South Africa. After nine months of continuous service in the war, this was just the kind of rest I needed. On our way back to Rhodesia, Maria, Dean and I visited Maria's cousin in Kempton Park, near Johannesburg. Whilst there, I went to an employment agency to see what jobs might be available. To my surprise, the agency arranged an immediate interview for me with 3M South Africa. Without doubt, I was well suited for the job they offered me. The stumbling block was that 3M needed to fill the position within a month. This was impossible for me as I knew we would require at least three months to wrap things up in Rhodesia. With great disappointment, I declined the offer.

We returned to Rhodesia with heavy hearts, knowing our way of life would be lost as soon as the insurgents took power. Worse yet, I still had to continue my military service. Two months after returning from our holiday, I was called up for another "camp." During the latter part of this stint, Maria received a call from 3M South Africa inviting me to another interview. Shortly afterward, I wrote to her saying I could not be released until the camp was over, and instructed her to make an appointment for me shortly after my return. 3M graciously consented.

Not wanting my current Rhodesian employer to know my plans – just in case anything went wrong with the interview – I took Monday off and planned to drive from Gwelo to Bulawayo on Sunday night. From there it was only an hour and a half's flight to Johannesburg. I would return Monday evening and drive back to Gwelo with my employer being none the wiser.

One problem with this plan was that all of Rhodesia had become dangerous for travel. Police convoy systems operated once or twice a day between towns to protect innocent motorists wanting to travel. Three police vehicles were assigned to each convoy, and a machine gun was mounted on the back of each police pick-up vehicle. Heavily armed police or police reservists accompanied each convoy. The insurgents sometimes attacked these convoys, however it was still the safest way to travel.

As I did not want to run the risk of anyone in the convoy recognising me or knowing where I was going, I left very late in the afternoon, alone. This was not a responsible decision because dusk is such an opportune time for insurgents to strike and then slip away into the darkness safe from the military tracking teams and helicopters that would pursue them.

Of course, I didn't go unarmed. Whenever we travelled as a family, my shotgun lay next to me on the seat. Maria would strap on her ammunition belt carrying over 80 rounds. I would carry a loaded pistol in my shoulder holster, extra AAA shotgun cartridges and two magazines holding pistol rounds. We would put the back seats of our station wagon down and strategically place our suitcases around the inside perimeter for additional protection from bullets. This time,

having no family travelling with me, my security routine did not differ.

When I arrived in Bulawayo, I first visited a close family friend who was a member of Parliament and who had served in World War II with my father. I did this to ascertain whether the government had any plans to rectify the horrendous situation we faced. This meeting would either confirm my plans or perhaps get me to change my mind about moving to South Africa. I felt I owed this to myself and to my family. The first ten minutes consisted of the usual political spin. When I challenged him candidly and firmly, he confirmed everything I already knew.

I concluded that our country was indeed doomed. I was grateful for this opportunity to meet with him and to voice my discontent with my government's decision. From there I hurried to the Bulawayo Airport. After locking my weapons and ammunition in the trunk of my car, I checked in and flew to South Africa.

The interview with 3M went extremely well, and they graciously agreed to wait three months for me to immigrate to South Africa and take up the position. On Monday evening, with a letter of appointment in my hand, I left Johannesburg a very happy man, knowing that we would soon begin a new life. It was a great relief to know there was a way out of the disaster that would soon befall my country.

That evening, after arriving back in Bulawayo, I removed the weapons from the trunk of my car and tried to assemble my shotgun. To my dismay, it malfunctioned. The

thought of driving home 100 miles armed only with a pistol was frightening, but I had to get home. Fortunately, it was a fast and trouble-free journey. I had the accelerator pedal pressed to the floor pretty much the whole way home!

During the three months before leaving, I had to do one more call-up. The last thing required of us before leaving Rhodesia was an interview with the South African Diplomatic Mission in Salisbury (now Harare). If successful, we would be granted Permanent Residence Permits to enter South Africa. This process was usually a formality. The problem for me was that the date of my interview fell during my last call-up. I was hesitant to ask my commanding officer for leave, as I needed two days to travel to attend this critical meeting. I also didn't want to disappoint the Major, who I highly respected and liked. He had promoted me to acting Platoon Commander and encouraged me to consider returning to our School of Infantry to attain a commission.

This last camp was the best of my entire military career, and it was certainly an honour for me to sit in the officers' dining tent each night I was in base camp. I was now privy to all the daily military communiqués and situation reports throughout the country. My unit was part of this information flow, and I soon learned that the truth about our national security was never fully conveyed to the civilian population.

When I finally asked my Major for leave, he asked why, then pleaded that I would re-consider. Seeing that I was staid in my resolve, he reluctantly granted me permission. I had to hitch-hike from my base camp to Salisbury and back, but this

was not a problem. The first motorist seeing me in uniform, carrying my military rifle, stopped to gratefully offer me a lift. I was additional protection to those in this vehicle. Wearing full combat uniform, I attended the interview with the South African High Commissioner.

When he asked me why I wanted to immigrate to his country, I told him the whole story. He knew it was true. He liked my skill base, and I also found that he knew one of Maria's relatives, a Managing Director of a major Rhodesian manufacturing company, very well. With the offer of employment from 3M, he had no hesitation in issuing our Permanent Residence Permits.

My Major was most understanding when I returned and on leaving the operational area at the end of the camp, he allowed my platoon to lead the company convoy to our rear Battalion Base in Gwelo. Normally the platoon commander would sit with his men in the back of these sand-bagged trucks (in case of landmines and ambush) with weapons at the ready. This time I sat in the cab with the driver in a privileged position.

Heading for home on that cool winter's evening, I felt mixed emotions, sadly realising that this was the last time I would be wearing the uniform of my native country and at the same time thrilled that our final move out of Rhodesia was imminent. I guess it was similar to a sportsman leading his team out after the final game before retiring. Feeling truly honoured, it was a fitting way to finish!

Our last weekend in Rhodesia was spent with my

parents, another time of mixed emotions. We all knew this was the only thing to do, and so we left with their full blessing. It was painful to say goodbye. We drove in the convoy system to Beit Bridge at the Rhodesian/South African border.

As we crossed the Limpopo River, I stopped the car and asked Maria to look back at the bridge and into Rhodesia. I said, “Take one last look. There is no going back as there is no future there. Consider this bridge burned. I don’t know what lies ahead of us but there is no return, and I know we are going to make it no matter what lies ahead.”

CHAPTER THREE

God Speaks Audibly

Our arrival in Kempton Park was not without mishap. The estate agency that was supposed to have secured us a rented house disputed our earlier agreement. We were short of cash because of Rhodesia's severe exchange control restrictions. We eventually secured another house to rent, then discovered our furniture would take another week to arrive. When it did arrive, the removal company demanded further money because there had been a shortfall in their calculation. They refused to unload our furniture until we paid this in full with cash. At the end of the first month, all we had left was 99 South African Rand (equal to about US \$100 at that time).

Our rented house came with a swimming pool that gave us much pleasure. After having been deprived of water for long periods in the Bush War, I found myself showering more often than needed. Everything after this initial hurdle went exceptionally well. I was successful in my job and we settled very quickly into our newly adopted country. Life could not have been better.

The second Sunday in Kempton Park, whilst I was walking with a tray of cold drinks from the kitchen to the pool, the audible voice of God stopped me dead in my tracks, saying, "What about your part of the deal?" The voice was so authoritative

and profound I felt like it literally cut the marrow from my bone. I immediately knew **who** was **speaking** and remembered the words I had spoken during that OP in Rhodesia. A hundred theology professors or skeptics could not dissuade me from the truth and reality of what I experienced at that moment.

I felt the blood drain from my face and upon arriving at the pool Maria remarked on how pale I looked. I shrugged off her questions but could think of little else for the remainder of the day. That night, very hesitantly, I asked Maria if we could go to church the following week. She seemed surprised by my suggestion, but not resistant.

Maria had attended church regularly prior to our marriage, and had made a faith commitment to Jesus Christ when she attended a concert given by a visiting American gospel singing group. Her openness to returning to church was encouraging, but I could not bring myself to explain my motivation. We chose to visit the local Presbyterian church because it was fairly close to where we lived, and because we had been married in a Presbyterian church in Gwelo, Rhodesia.

The following Sunday, as agreed, we went to church. I felt glad that I was honouring my side of the deal as I knew now, without doubt, that **God** did exist. **He** had proven this to me. Our church attendance was a bit sporadic at first, but soon we started to attend on a regular basis. This later increased to two visits to church on a Sunday, one in the morning and one in the evening. This out-of-character behaviour concerned a few people, especially Maria's cousin Eric, who was also our close friend.

I felt quite welcome and content at the church. The minister was a friendly and respectable man named Theunis Van Den Berg, and whilst he was preaching, I often felt he was speaking directly to me. Many things were starting to make sense for the first time in my life. His preaching was based on sound **biblical truth**, however I was never aware of the **gospel of salvation** or the steps towards **salvation** ever being clearly spelt out in the church services. This unfortunately may have been done to ensure that some church members, who were pretty staid in their ways, were not offended.

Interestingly, not once in my entire life had I ever heard the **message of salvation**; not during my childhood; not during visits by the army chaplain in the bush, not in the church in Rhodesia where Maria and I were married, not from friends or co-workers, and not in our new South African church home.

Then one evening, our minister asked me if I was ready to **receive Jesus** into my life. I had no idea what he was talking about. He explained that this was the way to become a **Christian**. As far as I was concerned, I was a **Christian** because I knew **God** existed.

“Oh no,” he said, “There’s sin in your life.” Of course, he was right, but how did he know, I wondered? He asked me to go with him to pray. I told him he could forget that idea, however, somehow I realised he was offering me something I needed. I asked him if I could pray on my own, and he said that I could. I then asked, “How will I know if **God** has

accepted me?” Theunis replied, “You will know without a doubt because **God** knows you better than you know yourself and will **supernaturally** confirm **his acceptance.**”

Well, that’s exactly what I did. I went home (Maria and Dean were visiting Rhodesia at the time) and seriously considered all the known sin in my life. I decided I was through with it. Then I asked **God** to forgive me and to accept me. I did feel a little better the next day but not the “supernatural confirmation” Theunis had indicated would happen.

While getting off the train after work the next evening, I knew deep within me that I needed to return to see him. So I hurried home, prepared myself a meal of sloppy eggs and bacon (very much the limitation of my culinary skills), then set off to the minister’s home. His wife Marion answered my knock, and asked with a great big **Christian** smile, “Did it happen, Trev, did it happen?” At that moment, I thought all **Christians** were crazy and turned to walk away. However, she stopped me and gently persuaded me to come inside.

This precious lady sat me down and told me of her experience when she accepted **Christ**. I said, “That may have been all right for you but not everybody can expect that type of experience.” She politely informed me that the experience is indeed for everybody. She asked me if I wanted to try again, and since that’s why I was there, I said yes. I intended to return home to pray as instructed, but she refused to let me go. She promptly walked me up the stairs to her own private place of prayer in her bedroom. There she placed me on my knees at the end of their bed. I had never knelt before this occasion. She knelt beside me

and asked me to ask **Jesus** to forgive my sin. As I started to do this, the **Lord Jesus Christ appeared** to me **physically**. This was not a **vision**. **He** was elevated just above their bed.

I was aware of two rows of angels in a “V” formation behind **Jesus**. What I remember clearly is that **he** was so **holy, awesome and mighty**. **His eyes** were **all-knowing** and **all-piercing** as **he** looked at me and through me. I was awestruck and afraid in this **mighty being’s presence**. The centre-point of **his being** was **his eyes**. The penetration of **his eyes** was so dissecting that they exposed every fibre of my being. So profound was **his physical presence** that the presence of the angels was a mere, dim experience. A **cloud of holiness** emanating from **him** spread out around the room. When this cloud touched me I felt like the filthiest piece of coal from the dirtiest coal mine in comparison to **his holiness**. I started to weep uncontrollably. Within a few seconds **he** was gone.

Still weeping, I asked Marion if she had seen **him**. She replied, “No, but the **Lord** had spoken to me saying that **he** wanted to break you down to nothing and to rebuild you again because **he** wants to use you in this life.” My tears continued to flow. I had to decline her offer of coffee because I was so embarrassed and just wanted to get home. She understood and, with a rejoicing heart, sent me on my way.

After driving a short distance from the Presbyterian Manse, I had to stop the car as I was feeling extremely nauseous. My first thought was, “Here come the eggs and bacon!” After getting out of the car, I started retching violently. It was so intense that I thought I was going to die. I knew something was

being expelled, and yet there was no physical emission at all. Once this horrible retching was over, I felt the most wonderful presence of peace falling over me. It was as if wave after wave of peace, like curtains, were falling down from the sky over Kempton Park directly over me.

A year later the Lord revealed to me that he was personally exorcising me as I had unwittingly been exposed to spiritualism in my later school and early working years. I had attended some séances after I went to a “spirit guide” asking her to heal my injured leg so I could compete in an inter-school rugby game that was critical to the success of the team. This woman placed her hands about six inches away from my back and intense heat drove into my back from her hands for about two minutes. She said her guide – actually a demon – told her, it was a pinched nerve that was affecting my hamstring. When it was over she said I was healed. I certainly was. I played without hindrance, and we won the game.

After my deliverance by the Lord, I realised these meetings were not innocent boyhood activities, but were indeed wrong in God’s eyes. Whatever foothold these foul spirits had gained in me was broken that night and with the Lord’s Spirit now dwelling in me, these evil spirits had no alternative but to leave. Quite simply, the Lord had exorcised me himself without anyone else being present. I learnt through this that these spirits may not have possessed me, but without doubt there had been oppressive and undesirable influence.

CHAPTER FOUR

God's Lesson on Being Born-Again

On arriving home, I was exhausted but felt **absolute** and **wonderful** peace that truly surpassed all understanding. I went into our bedroom and found Maria's **Bible** as I did not own one at this time. As I held the **Bible**, I prayed, "Please **God**, don't be harsh with me. I have such an urge to read out of this **book** but I don't know where to begin." The **Lord** clearly gave me John 3 in my mind, which astonished me. I didn't even know where to find the book of John so I looked it up in the index.

When I turned to John 3 it was as if the page lit up and I realised that **God** was **speaking** directly to me through **his Word**. This is what I read:

Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a member of the Jewish ruling council. He came to **Jesus** at night and said, "**Rabbi**, we know **you** are a teacher **who** has come from **God**. For no one could perform the **miraculous signs** you are doing if **God** were not with him."

In reply **Jesus** declared, "**I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born-again.**"

"How can a man be born when he is old?" Nicodemus asked. "Surely he cannot enter a second time into his

mother's womb to be born!"

Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of **God** unless he is born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.' The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit."

After reading this, I was both amazed and confused. I said to **God**, "Thank you so much for what **you** have given me, but I am a simple man and do not understand what I have read."

I was immediately **lifted** from my bedroom and found myself walking with **Jesus** into the maternity room where Maria was giving birth to Dean. Now this was extraordinary as the birth had taken place three years earlier. To this very day, I believe this **supernatural encounter** was more than a **vision**. I have had many **visions** since and this was very different. **Jesus** was somehow able to take me back in real time to this event or to replicate it.

As we entered the maternity room **Jesus** dropped **his** hand towards Maria and asked me, "**What is happening here?**" I looked and saw her waters break. Before any child comes into this world, the mother's waters break. The child is born soon after. Instantly, I found myself back in my bedroom. I was stunned and then I heard **God's** voice speak to me again:

"This is what my Word means when I say you must be

born-again. You have to be born of water, which is physical birth, but to enter my kingdom and receive eternal life you have to be born-again of my Spirit. This is what has happened to you: you were born once into this world physically, and tonight, you were born-again spiritually and now have my Holy Spirit dwelling in you for eternity.”

I continued reading on in John 3:

“How can this be?” Nicodemus asked.

“You are Israel’s teacher,” said Jesus, “and do you not understand these things? I tell you the truth, we speak of what we know, and we testify to what we have seen, but still you people do not accept our testimony. I have spoken to you of earthly things and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things? No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven—the Son of Man. Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life.

“For **God** so loved the world that **he** gave **his** one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For **God** did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of **God’s** one and only Son.

“This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been through **God.**”

Reading this part of John 3 revealed to me why I had just had the **experience** of being **born-again**. The justification for eternal life is **God’s love** toward us when **he** gave **Jesus Christ**, not only to **live** among us as an example, but also to **die** for us so that our sins can be **forgiven**.

Our assurance of eternal life is based upon the fact that **Jesus rose** from the dead, guaranteeing us the same **resurrection** to heaven if we **believe** in **him**. For whatever other reasons **God** chose to **reveal his son** to me physically, I am now a witness to the fact that truly **he is resurrected!** The **power that raised Jesus** from the dead was that of **the Holy Spirit**. The **same power of the Holy Spirit** was demonstrated to Pharaoh through Moses’ staff when it turned into a snake and Moses lifted it up.

The distinct voice of **the Holy Spirit** then directed me to John 1:12.

Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become **children of God...**

I instantly realised that although **God** gave **his** only **son** to **live, die** and be **resurrected** on our behalf because of **his love**

for us, it is not automatic that all receive eternal life. There is a requirement from us, and that is to **receive him**. To **receive him** we have to be “**born-again**” and by this **supernatural act** we **receive the Holy Spirit** who makes our spirit come **alive** and now **dwells** permanently in our hearts.

As I read these last verses I had absolute clarity from **God** regarding the meaning of being **born-again**. I now comprehensively understood what I had heard from the minister about “giving one’s life to **Jesus**.” Though he and others may have tried, no one except **God himself** had ever simplified or explained **the gospel of salvation** to me.

I realised that, prior to this amazing evening, whenever I read the **Bible** it never seemed to make much sense to me. Now, within hours of my **conversion** my spirit came **alive** enabling **the Holy Spirit**, now **dwelling** within my heart, to reveal the **truth** of **God’s given Word** to me.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Change

From the moment of **receiving salvation** I was **changed** forever. When I woke the next morning, not a detail was lost of the whole experience of my **rebirth**. To this day it remains burned into my soul and spirit.

Gone were the desires of any known previous sins. On arriving at work, without saying anything, everyone commented on how different I was. I was so full of excitement about the **Lord Jesus Christ** that I could not keep silent. My co-workers and everyone else whom I came into contact with were told of my **rebirth experience**. I wanted them all to experience **God's** wonderful **love** and **forgiveness**.

Most had no explanation for the radical change that had taken place within me and therefore could not understand. It did not bother me that some did not believe. I knew the **truth** about this **wonderful act of love**, which far surpassed anything people said or argued about. The following **Scripture** found in 1 Corinthians 2:6-10 confirmed why they did not understand:

We do, however, speak a **message of wisdom** among the mature, but not the wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. No, we speak of **God's secret wisdom, a wisdom** that has been hidden and that **God destined** for **our glory** before time began. None of the rulers

of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have **crucified the Lord of glory**. However, as it is written:

“No eye has seen,
no ear has heard,
no mind has conceived
what **God has prepared for those who love him**”
- but **God has revealed** it to us by **his Spirit**.

Later reading 2 Corinthians 5:17-21, I saw further **scriptural** evidence of this:

Therefore, if **anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation**; the old has gone, **the new has come!** All this is from **God, who reconciled us to himself** through Christ and gave us **the ministry of reconciliation**: that **God was reconciling** the world to **himself in Christ**, not counting men’s sins against them. And **he has committed to us the message of reconciliation**.

We are therefore **Christ’s ambassadors**, as though **God were making his appeal through us**. We implore you on Christ’s behalf: be reconciled to **God**. **God made him who had no sin [Jesus] to be sin for us**, so that in him we might become the righteousness of **God**.

This whole experience turned my life around 180 degrees. The great joy and wonder of knowing that **God’s Spirit** was **living** within me and that I was now a **“Child of the Living God,”** was overwhelming.

CHAPTER SIX

The Commission

As I told other Christians about this wonderful **reconciliatory act** of **love** and **grace** from **God**, I realised that my **conversion** was far more profound and dramatic than most people had experienced. I could not understand why this was so. This set me on a year-long study of the **Scriptures** to see if there were any similar cases or references to this in the **Bible**.

I started to see many accounts of people being **called** or **commissioned**. From the outset of the establishment of the **Church** (the authentic **body of Christ**) the disciples were initially **commissioned** to take the **gospel** and form the early **Christian** leadership. Not only had they been with **Jesus** and were **discipled** by **him**, but they were witnesses to his **physical resurrection** from the dead. After Judas met his destruction, this principle was again demonstrated when another had to be chosen into leadership to replace him. This was done through divine guidelines that included the strict requirement that one had to be a witness together with them to the physical **resurrection** of the **Lord Jesus Christ**, however only two candidates qualified.

I found a similar account at the **conversion** of the Apostle Paul. Although earlier in Acts a direct account was given when **Jesus revealed himself** to Paul by way of a light from heaven that flashed around him, Paul later, in Acts 26 declared that **Jesus appeared** to him to **appoint** him as a witness of what he had seen

and **commissioned** him to be **sent**. The fuller account is found in Acts 26 verses 15-18:

“I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting,” the Lord replied. “Now get up and stand on your feet. I have appeared to you to appoint you a servant and as a witness of what you have seen of me and what I will show you. I will rescue you from your own people and from the Gentiles. I am sending you to them to open their eyes and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.”

To this day, **Jesus** still appoints **apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors** and **teachers** to prepare **Christians** for works of service, building them up until unity of faith towards maturity in the knowledge of **Jesus Christ** is attained. The difference is that they are **appointed** and **gifted** through **Christ** and **the Holy Spirit**. In many churches, man-made appointments and promotions are the norm with titles that are not of **Christ’s commissioning**.

The **gifts** of **the Holy Spirit** are still fully available and any **Christian** flowing in these **giftings** may perform random deeds of the above **Christ-appointed offices**, but this does not mean they occupy the office and **commissioning** of these **divine ministries**. These **gifts** of **the Holy Spirit** will be dealt with in depth in later chapters.

There is similarity to what I have read, studied and quoted above regarding my own personal experience, yet there are

still some differences. However, the one biblical account that most clearly identified with my own experience was that of the prophet Isaiah. He too witnessed heavenly things during the time of his **commissioning by the Lord**. This account is found in Isaiah 6:1-8 and the similarities are shown in the following table:

COMPARISON OF EXPERIENCES

ISAIAH CHAPTER 6 v 1-8	MY CONVERSION
I saw the Lord seated on a throne, high and exalted.	I saw the Lord elevated above the bed but not touching the bed. His presence was high and exalted in the positioning of the room.
And the train of his robe filled the temple.	Clouds of holiness emanated from him.
Above him were seraphs, each with six wings.	Standing behind him and leading out the room in a “V” formation were angels.
With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying.	In the presence of Jesus they were insignificant. The formation of angels extended out of the room.
And they were calling to one another, “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory.”	When Jesus appeared to me all I saw was his holiness. When the clouds of holiness touched me I felt filthy in his presence.
“Woe to me!” I cried. “I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the Lord Almighty.”	I cannot tell you how fearful I was of Jesus and how ashamed of my sin I was in comparison to his holiness. I could not believe that I was seeing him physically. This was unbelievable!

COMPARISON OF EXPERIENCES (CONTINUED)

ISAIAH CHAPTER 6 v 1-8	MY CONVERSION
<p>Then one of the seraphs flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar. With it he touched my mouth and said, “See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for.”</p>	<p>There are two incidents here:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) When the clouds of holiness touched me I felt my shame and guilt. I believe I was being forgiven. (2) After my deliverance the peace of God “that passeth all understanding” fell on me like sheets from heaven.
<p>Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?”</p>	<p>I heard no voice at my conversion but this was to come later. See Chapter 17.</p>

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Pathway to Heaven

The question asked by people since the beginning of time is, “How does one qualify for heaven?”

There is nothing one can do to earn one’s way to heaven. Many have tried. The Apostle Paul truly verified this saying, “No man was more zealous than I for my faith.” This was not good enough, however, as the **Lord Jesus** had to **appear** to him to divert his path and to **save** his soul.

Since my own **salvation** I have had the privilege of leading a number of people to faith in **Christ**. In doing so I have witnessed varying experiences culminating in **rebirth/conversion**. I am including some of my observations to enable you to identify with the **truth of the Gospel** and not just my specific experience, which could seem exceptionally dramatic.

In all my time of ministering the **gospel of salvation** I have learnt that there is no perfect formula; however, there are certainly some clear and fundamental principles.

RECOGNITION OF JESUS CHRIST

People seeking **salvation** need firstly to believe that **Jesus Christ** is who **he** says **he** is. Here are three statements by **Jesus** about who **he** is:

I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me (John 14:6).

I am the resurrection and the life (John 11: 25).

I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved (John 10: 9).

Romans 3:22 also declares: This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe.

Every person must answer the question of Jesus:

“Who do you say I am?” (see Mark 8:29).

Therefore, the first principle of salvation is to believe in him. There is no other way.

RECOGNITION OF SIN

The second core element of receiving salvation is recognition of your personal sin. In Romans 3:23, the Apostle Paul declares: All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

Sin separates us from God, and only one person can take away sin – Jesus! This is clearly seen in John 1:29: Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!

REPENTANCE

It is not enough to only recognise your sin. You must

determine to rid yourself of it. This step toward cleansing of the heart is called repentance, which means literally turning 180 degrees away from all known sin. In other words, ask for **forgiveness**, then walk away from it. This is what **God** requires of us, and it is no more clearly identified in the **Bible** than in Acts 2:38 when the Apostle Peter told new believers: “Repent and be **baptized**, every one of you, in **the name of Jesus Christ** for the **forgiveness** of your sins.”

The **baptism** described here is not **water baptism** but “**baptism into the body of Christ**,” meaning **rebirth/salvation/conversion**, whatever term one is most comfortable with. Repentance, therefore, can be seen as the third principle of **salvation**.

REBIRTH, SALVATION, CONVERSION

The moment you sincerely seek **rebirth/salvation/conversion** to become a **child of the living God**, and call out to the **Lord Jesus Christ** for **forgiveness** of sin, your heart is cleansed and **God** immediately places **his Holy Spirit** within you. At that precise moment the greatest miracle takes place. You are **born-again** of the **Spirit of God**! In Acts 2:38 Peter promises every one who believes in **Jesus** and repents, “And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”

Therefore, repent of your sin, **believing in Jesus Christ who will forgive** your sin. The moment **he does, he births the Holy Spirit** in you, **sealing you** as a **child of God**. Romans 8:15-17 confirms this saying,

For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but **you received the Spirit of sonship**. And by **him** we **cry, “Abba Father.”** **The Spirit himself testifies** with our spirit that **we are God’s children**. Now if **we are children**, then we are heirs – **heirs of God** and **co-heirs with Christ**.

Ephesians 2:4-5 describes how **God** “made us **alive with Christ**” through **his grace and mercy**. Ephesians 2:19 elaborates further on our new relationship to **God**:

Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but **fellow citizens with God’s people and members of God’s household**.

I have come to understand more deeply, every year, how much love **God** has for each of us. There is nothing we can do that cannot be redeemed. **God’s** love is *that* all encompassing. **He** knows we were born into sin in a fallen world and knows that if we stay that way, being a righteous **God**, **he** cannot let sin go unpunished. So great was the love of **God** to **save** us from the punishment of hell that **he** sent **his son, Jesus Christ** to become the ultimate **atonement** for our sin. There is, however, a condition – we must believe in **him** and live for **him**.

For **God so loved** the world that **he gave his one and only Son**, that whoever **believes** in **him** shall not perish but have eternal life. For **God did not send his son** into the world to condemn the world, but to **save** the world through **him**. Whoever **believes** in **him** is not condemned, but whoever does not **believe** stands condemned already

because he has not **believed** in the name of **God's one and only Son** (John 3:16-18).

Whoever believes in **Jesus** will escape the fiery punishment reserved for unrepented sinners. In the shedding of **his blood** on the cross, **he** made a way for us to be justified by faith.

There is no difference, for all have sinned and fall short of the **glory of God**, and are **justified freely** by **his grace** through the **redemption** that came by **Christ Jesus**. **God presented him** as a **sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood** (Romans 3:22-25).

This gift of eternal life is the fourth and final principle of **salvation**.

THREE REAL LIFE EXAMPLES

To make these principles more clear I would like to tell a few stories of people who received **salvation** in varying circumstances.

The Businesswoman

Whilst on a consulting job many years ago, a **Christian** friend phoned me, and our conversation was overheard by a woman in the office where I was working. She later asked to speak to me about **Christianity**. I agreed, and the next day made some time available to meet with her. She told me she was a lesbian and that the guilt of this lifestyle weighed heavily

upon her. Because of the influence of a **Christian** friend many years before, she openly expressed her belief in **God** but had no concept of **salvation**.

I informed her that what she was involved with was indeed sin in **God's eyes**. She needed no further convincing as she was undeniably remorseful. I explained to her that **salvation** required turning away from and forsaking her sins. She was eager to obey. I further explained that her right to **forgiveness** from **God the Father** was through **Jesus dying on the cross** for her sin. This she also accepted. I finally asked her to pray and ask **God** to **forgive** her and to enter her life. Embarrassed, she politely informed me that she had never prayed before and did not know how. She asked if I would pray for her. I suggested that she sincerely repeat the following prayer after me: "I recognise the sin I have committed for which I am truly sorry. This I now forsake and turn away from. Please **forgive** me and **wash away** my sin through the **blood you shed** for me **on the cross**. Please **enter** my life and make me a **child of God**."

The woman repeated my prayer but at this point our prayer couldn't continue as she burst out, exclaiming, "Thank you **Jesus**, thank you **Jesus**!"

She then described to me how, while we were praying, she felt like she was **physically receiving Jesus** into her life! Her face lit up with joy and all her tears of sorrow disappeared. As she departed, I sat amazed. She was indeed **free** and **forgiven**!

Some days later, her director called me into his office.

He looked so serious that I thought I was in for a severe dressing down, however, he only wanted to know what I had said to this woman. I asked “why?” He said his company had paid a great deal of money for professional counseling to help this woman, and it had yielded no results whatsoever. Since I had spoken to her, she had become a completely different person. She was excelling in her work and was now a delight to work with, which was previously not the case. The director wanted to know my winning formula. However, when he learnt it, his expression revealed both disappointment and disbelief. This was definitely not the answer he had expected!

The Business CEO

One evening during a flight from Port Elizabeth to East London in South Africa, I sat next to a business executive. Based on his loud conversation with a friend sitting beside him, he was returning home from a business trip. His comments and actions also showed evidence of an ungodly lifestyle. The air hostess had considerable difficulty keeping up with his alcohol intake and inappropriate behaviour. Turning to me he asked what I did for a living. I informed him that I was a Productivity Management Consultant which interested him to the extent that he invited me to his company, an offer I declined as I had a full schedule for the week ahead.

At the end of the week, my last few appointments were cancelled at short notice. I tried unsuccessfully to book an earlier return flight and there was a long wait at the airport. Remembering that this man’s company was fairly close to the airport, I decided to take him up on his offer and visit him.

On arriving at his company, I was shown to his office and asked to wait. The secretary said it would be another half an hour before he could see me. Whilst waiting I noticed a number of books lying on his desk. I do not remember their titles, however, they were offering various ways to bring peace to one's soul, and these were definitely not of a **Christian** nature. As I perceived this man to be rather "worldly," I was surprised to find him interested in this subject.

As he entered the office, he seemed genuinely grateful to see me. After I enquired about his collection of books he replied, "Don't we all need to find some peace in this mad world?"

His remark enabled me to understand the reasons why he clearly had no peace in his life. I explained to him that the only true way of **peace** was through the **Lord Jesus Christ** and what this involved. He then phoned his secretary and instructed her not to disturb us under any circumstances for the next hour. We talked at length during that time, and I tried my utmost to answer his questions. He told me that he was a deacon in his church but that this had little meaning and certainly was not meeting his desire for peace. Suddenly he exclaimed that he understood what I was saying and could see it clearly.

He then proceeded to pray and pleaded with the **Lord** to **forgive** his sin and for the **Lord** to make him a "**Child of God.**" When he finished praying he looked up, and I asked him if he felt different in any way. Replying, he said he had not experienced anything dramatic or different. **The Holy Spirit** then clearly said to me, "Ask him, if he walks out of his office now and falls down the stairs and dies, where will he go? To heaven or to hell?"

After I did this, he told me emphatically that he would go directly to heaven. When I asked him how he knew this, he looked puzzled and then, after more thought, he answered, “I just know for certain deep down inside.”

I asked him if this would have been his answer an hour before he walked into his office to see me, and he replied, “Certainly not, I knew I was going to hell.”

Instantly, a great big smile spread over his face and as the realisation of what had transpired hit him, he shouted out, “I am **saved**, I am **forgiven** and now I belong to the **Lord**.”

There was an immediate **witness** of the “**Holy Spirit**” within him. He asked me to excuse him while he made a quick phone-call. He phoned his minister’s wife and excitedly told her what had just happened and that he wanted to come to her Bible study group that evening. I was hurriedly dismissed as he wanted to leave early to tell his wife and ensure that he arrived at the Bible study on time. As I drove to the airport to catch my flight home, I marveled with joy and amazement at how the **Lord** creates “**divine appointments**” for **his purposes**.

The Man in Maui

After one of my visits to the University of the Nations in Kailua-Kona, Hawaii, I went to the neighbouring island of Maui for a few days of relaxation before returning to South Africa. From my hotel room I could see a number of beaches not far from the hotel. **The Holy Spirit** then indicated to me

which one I should visit. When I arrived, I met a Hawaiian man and his son who started a conversation concerning certain **Christian topics** that related to their lives. A friend of the man also joined in the discussions.

The first man asked me to talk to his friend about the way to **salvation**, which I did. He seemed to be a pretty hardened man, but he listened intently. Being exceptionally excited about the wondrous things **God** had **accomplished** in my life during this particular trip, I erroneously, and for the first time, omitted the principle of repentance when I presented **the gospel** to him. The man seemed so excited by the joyful possibility of becoming **born-again** that he undoubtedly wanted to **give his life** to **Jesus Christ**. However, as I finished, **the Holy Spirit** spoke to me saying, “**What are you doing? You know better than to leave out repentance.**”

I humbly made amends and hoping not to offend the man, pointed to the stumbling block of sin. The moment I mentioned this, he jumped to his feet and said he needed to return home to sort out all his wrong doings. Before he left, I managed to tell him exactly what to do once he had turned 180 degrees away from his sin. I do not know the final result of this encounter between **God** and this man, but I trust all went well and that he would have **received the fullness and blessing of salvation**. I firmly believe in the principle of “no repentance, no salvation.”

Due to my error in the above account, I became even more acutely aware of the vital importance of this principle.

Concerning the above principle, I have been in congregations where the **gospel** has been preached without any emphasis on true repentance, majoring mostly on the **truth of receiving Jesus**. The absence of any sign of repentance during the altar calls greatly disturbs me. However, I have seen some people who, without a doubt, have been **born-again**. The reason for this in my opinion is that there is a true state of repentance within that person's heart as he/she comes forward to **receive Jesus**, therefore meeting all the **principles of salvation**.

There are, however, many who are not **born-again** though the church or the evangelist tells them they are. I believe this is why the church at large is in a state of weakness and only a small percentage of people who come forward for **salvation** ever go on to live a true **Christian lifestyle**. In spite of an incomplete presentation of the **gospel of salvation**, I believe that those who **received salvation**, did so through the sheer “**grace and mercy of God.**”

BORN-AGAIN CHRISTIANS WITHOUT THE TESTIMONY OF SALVATION

This is another category of **believers** who may not easily identify with all that I have presented so far. For their benefit the explanation below is added.

I have often met **born-again Christians** who do not have a testimony of how or when they **received salvation**, and yet they serve the **Lord** faithfully with a love for **him** that is very profound. In my opinion, the explanation for this is that many have never had true teaching on **salvation** in their churches. These

Christians do, however, believe in Christ with all their hearts and live for him. In essence, the principles of the gospel were not excluded in their salvation as they accepted Jesus and, knowingly or unknowingly, rejected any known sin in their lives.

The truth is that we all have to be born-again so salvation had to have happened at a specific point in time and may not be remembered or understood as I have already described. This also often happens in the case of young children.

This insight should not, however, allow those who have frequented churches for many years to remain in a comfort zone. Church and its ordinances will not get you into heaven. This will only happen through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and by being born-again.

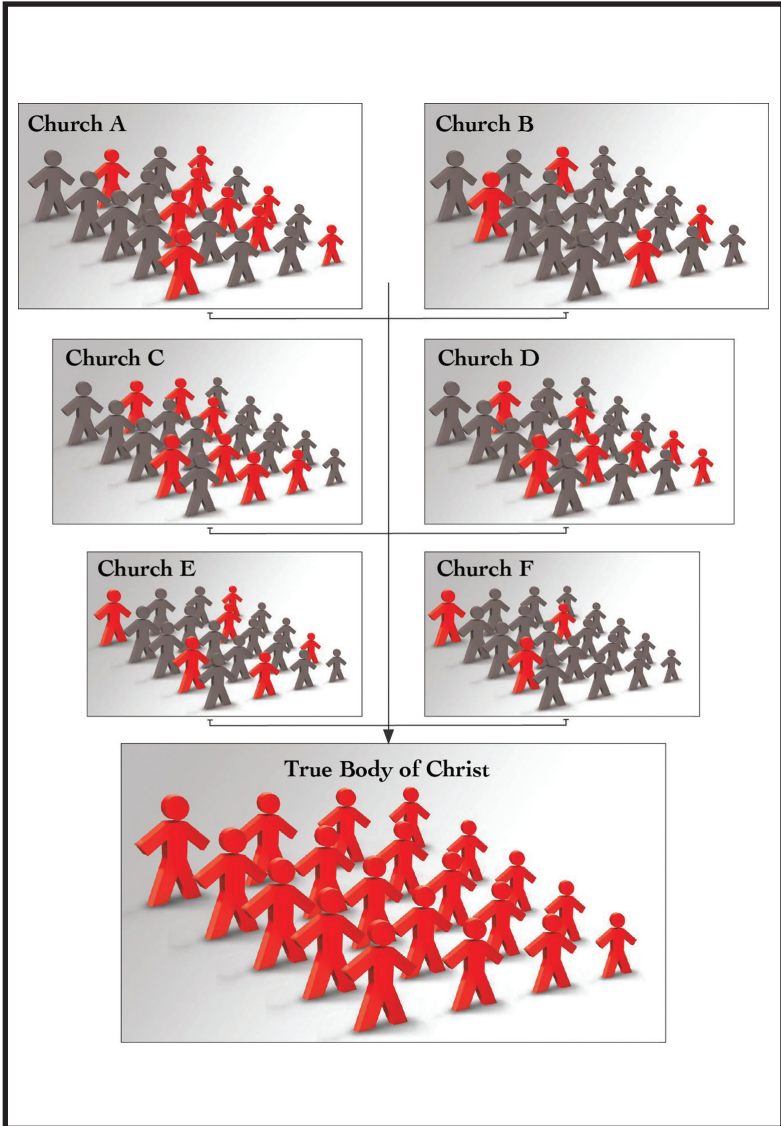
CHAPTER 8

The Body of Christ

Are all who say they are Christian truly members of the **body of Christ**? Certainly not. And what about church denominations which claim that only their members are the true **followers of Christ**? This is simply not true. Only those who have been **born-again** have the right to be called **children of God**. They alone form the **glorious church** or the **body of Christ** that **he came** and **died** for. The **truth** of this is **revealed** in Romans 12:4-5:

Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in **Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.**

This **Scripture** illustrates the fact that many parts make up the human body, enabling it to function correctly. These include arms, legs, nose, ears, etc. So it is with the **body of Christ**. This spiritual body consists of those who are **born-again** regardless of their **denomination** and **church**. The following diagram illustrates this:



Black figures = members who are “not” born-again

Red Figures = members who “are” born-again

When all the **red figures** (**born-again believers** from every church or denomination) are pooled together, they form **one unit** representing the true “**body of Christ.**”

The **body** is a **unit**, though it is made up of many **parts**; and though all its **parts** are many, they form **one body**. So it is with **Christ**. For we were all **baptised by one Spirit** into **one body** – whether Jew or Greeks, slave or free – and we were all **given the one Spirit to drink** (1 Corinthians 12:12-13).

Sadly, many within the churches today may well be destined for hell, resulting in eternal separation from **Christ**. It is your individual responsibility to ensure that you have **received salvation** through **accepting Jesus Christ** and repenting of sin, thus being **born-again**. Regardless of whether you come from the most Reformed, Charismatic, Evangelical or Pentecostal denomination or movement, you must **receive salvation** through individual commitment to **Jesus** and through **the baptism of the Holy Spirit that happens at rebirth**. As Ephesians 1: 22-23 says:

And **God placed all things** under **his feet** and **appointed him** to be **head** over everything for **the church**, which is **his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.**

In my early years as a **Christian**, during a visit to Escourt, South Africa, I was invited by my sister-in-law to a special service at a Catholic church. I was hesitant to go as the church I was attending at that time was opposed to many of the Catholic beliefs and ways.

My sister-in-law’s friend, however, whom I knew to be a

wonderful **Christian** lady, was also going, so I decided to trail along. Well, was I in for a wonderful surprise and revelation! That evening, after one of the nuns preached the greatest sermon I have ever heard on love, the priest proceeded to pray for the sick. I witnessed a number of **miraculous healings** and to clinch it all for me, the priest went on to invite people to **receive salvation through being born-again**.

I thoroughly enjoyed the evening experiencing **God's presence and power** in that place, and felt quite at home, realising I was truly with **sisters and brothers in Christ**. After I returned home, I asked **God's forgiveness** for any previous negative and preconceived thoughts I may have had towards this denomination.

Since that time I have visited churches of various denominations. I have, however, discovered that not all churches of any one denomination conform to each other. Many are **set free** and follow the **revelation of truth** while others remain stagnant, believing that their church ordinances are sufficient. Even within the Pentecostal denominations, I have noticed that some churches have fallen back into lifeless forms of worship and service regardless of having previously experienced **the truth** and **freedom brought by the Holy Spirit**.

Through all my **experiences** and **revelation** from the **Lord**, I have come to highly value inter-denominationalism, as I see more of the **true body of Christ** coming together in **unity**. A fine example that I have personally observed through many years of relationship is the organisation called YWAM (Youth with a Mission).

The one place I love most in this entire world is the YWAM training centre known as University of the Nations in Kailua-Kona on the Big Island of Hawaii. **Believers** from many nations and denominational **backgrounds**, whether **born-again** in the dense jungles of the world or in sophisticated urban churches, converge here to be trained in effective **missionary outreach** and to increase their knowledge of **God**. Their differences are clearly seen when **they** sit together at meals. One will eat with his hands, one with chop sticks, another with a fork, another with a fork and the occasional use of a knife, and others with both a knife and fork. It's so amazing to watch all this diversity whilst at the same time the **brotherhood is one**. This is especially noticeable when they all assemble together in praise and worship to the **Lord** our **God!**

CHAPTER 9

Baptism in the Holy Spirit

After I was **born-again** in the Presbyterian Church, my wife and I attended many of the church prayer groups and **Bible** studies where we were exposed to the “**Charismatic Renewal**” that was so prevalent in the **move of God** at that time. We witnessed people **speaking in tongues** while others **interpreted** what was said.

Fortunately for my **Christian** growth at that time, the Presbyterian minister and his wife were very “**Charismatic.**” This terminology in **Christian** circles is used to describe those who **operate** in the **gifts of the Holy Spirit** as they are listed in 1 Corinthians 12:4-11:

There are different kinds of **gifts**, but **the same Spirit**. There are different **kinds of service**, but the **same Lord**. There are different kinds of **working**, but the **same God** works all of them in all men.

Now to each one the **manifestation of the Spirit** is given for the common good. To one there is given through **the Spirit** the **message of wisdom**, to another the **message of knowledge** by means of the same **Spirit**, to another **faith** by the same **Spirit**, to another **gifts of healings** by that one **Spirit**, to another **miraculous powers**, to another **prophecy**, to another **distinguishing between spirits**, to another

speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines.

Further detail and understanding of this marvellous working of the gifts of the Holy Spirit are found in 1 Corinthians 14:1-33:

Follow the way of love and eagerly desire spiritual gifts, especially the gift of prophecy. For anyone who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God. Indeed, no one understands him; he utters mysteries with his spirit. But everyone who prophesies speaks to men for their strengthening, encouragement and comfort.

He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church. I would like every one of you to speak in tongues, but I would rather have you prophesy. He who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues, unless he interprets, so that the church may be edified.

Now brothers, if I come to you and speak in tongues, what good will I be to you, unless I bring you some revelation or knowledge or prophecy or word of instruction? Even in the case of lifeless things that make sounds, such as the flute or harp, how will anyone know what tune is being played unless there is a distinction in the notes? Again, if the trumpet does not sound a clear call, who will get ready for battle?

So it is with you. Unless you speak intelligible words with

your tongue, how will anyone know what you are saying? You will just be speaking into the air. Undoubtedly there are all sorts of languages in the world, yet none of them is without meaning. If then I do not grasp the meaning of what someone is saying, I am a foreigner to the speaker, and he is a foreigner to me. So it is with you. Since you are eager to have **spiritual gifts**, try to excel in **gifts** that build up the **church**.

For this reason anyone who **speaks in a tongue** should pray that he may **interpret** what he says. For if I **pray in a tongue**, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful. So what shall I do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will also pray with my mind; I will sing with my spirit, but I will also sing with my mind. If you are praising **God** with your spirit, how can one who finds himself among those who do not understand say “Amen” to your thanksgiving, since he does not know what you are saying? You may be giving thanks well enough, but the other man is not edified.

I thank **God** that I **speak in tongues** more than all of you. But in the **church** I would rather speak five intelligible words to instruct others than ten thousand words **in a tongue**.

Brothers, stop thinking like children. In regard to evil be infants, but in your thinking be adults. In the Law it is written:

“Through men of strange tongues
and through the lips of foreigners
I will speak to this people,

but even then they will not listen to **me**,”
says the **Lord**.

Tongues, then, are a **sign**, not for **believers** but for unbelievers; **prophecy**, however, is for **believers**, not for unbelievers. So if the whole **church** comes together and everyone **speaks in tongues**, and some do not understand or some unbelievers come in, will they not say that you are out of your mind? But if an unbeliever or someone who does not understand comes in while everybody is **prophesying**, he will be convinced by all that he is a sinner and will be judged by all, and the secrets of his heart will be laid bare. So he will fall down and worship **God**, exclaiming, “**God** is really among you!”

What then shall we say, brothers? When you come together, everyone has a **hymn**, or a **word of instruction**, a **revelation**, a **tongue** or an **interpretation**. All of these must be done for the strengthening of the **church**. If anyone **speaks in a tongue**, two – or at the most three – should **speak**, one at a time, and someone must **interpret**. If there is no interpreter, the speaker should keep quiet in the **church** and speak to himself and **God**.

Two or three **prophets** should **speak**, and the others should weigh carefully what is said. And if a **revelation** comes to someone who is sitting down, the first speaker should stop. For you can all **prophesy** in turn so that everyone may be instructed and encouraged. The **spirits of the prophets** are subject to the control of the **prophets**. For **God** is not a **God** of disorder but of peace.

These **spiritual gifts** did not operate during normal services in our Presbyterian Church, which was quite conventional, with many of the members being older and rather conservative. I believe the minister did not want to offend them in any way. Nevertheless, the **gifts of the Holy Spirit** were certainly encouraged at prayer groups and **Bible** study sessions as the people genuinely sought the **Lord**.

While studying the **Bible**, the accounts of **miracles and spiritual gifts** in the **book of Acts** impacted me immensely. I also witnessed a number of people **flowing** in the **gifts of the Holy Spirit** at various meetings and began to truly desire these **giftings**. When I asked my minister how one **received them**, he informed me that it was through the **baptism of the Holy Spirit**, something I vaguely understood and which seemed out of reach.

One Sunday night we attended a service at a Presbyterian sister church in Edenvale, near Johannesburg where a visiting minister was preaching. His sermon explained the **baptism of the Holy Spirit** and at the end, he invited those who desired to be **baptised in the Holy Spirit** to come forward. Before I knew it, I was on my feet and heading for the front! As he prayed for me nothing much happened. He then asked me to copy him as he **spoke in tongues**. This seemed totally impossible. Nevertheless, I followed him as best I could. Without me realising it, he moved on to pray for others and I instantly became aware that I was **praying in tongues**, totally unhindered.

It felt just like when I was a young boy learning to ride a bicycle. My father would hold the seat as I pedalled enabling

me to feel secure and not fall off. One day, whilst pedalling in this fashion, I looked back and to my astonishment, saw my father some 50 yards behind me. I had been pedalling on my own for that entire distance. He had let go, stopped and allowed me to pedal off! That visiting minister guided me in a similar way spiritually.

The **experience of speaking in tongues** is so wonderful that it defies description. In the following days I found myself **praying in tongues** whenever and wherever I wished and the ability to do so has never left me. From that time on, attending prayer groups and **Bible** studies was more liberating and the **presence of God** more exhilarating than ever. However, I also found there is a mysterious or even mystical aspect of this **Holy Spirit gift**, which has caused confusion and even division in the church. It is described in 1 Corinthians 14:2:

For anyone who **speaks in a tongue** does not **speak** to men but to **God**. Indeed, no one understands him; he **utters mysteries with his spirit**.

From the moment I **received salvation**, denomination or church labels no longer held any real significance for me. The **truth of the gospel** cannot be harnessed or solely owned by any individual or denomination as **Christ died** for us all, so that we may be set **free** from the bondage of sin, enabling us to know **God's son Jesus** through a personal relationship.

It became fascinating to meet other **Christians** from all denominations and walks of life and, as a result, a whole new world opened up to me. With the **freedom** that I had

obtained I had no problem with “denomination-hold” or restrictions when some of these people invited me to visit their churches. Through this rich experience of visiting other churches, I started to grow in my understanding of **the Holy Spirit baptism**.

One night, whilst attending an Assemblies of God service in Primrose, near Johannesburg, I experienced the wonderful **presence of God**. What astounded me most was how differently events unfolded after the pastor invited those seeking to be **born-again** to the front of the church. Firstly, he prayed for them and they **experienced the miracle of being born-again**. He then continued to pray for the **baptism of the Holy Spirit**. Those who had been **saved** immediately started **speaking in tongues**. There was hardly any waiting period before this second experience manifested.

Because of my personal experience of being **born-again**, then later **baptised in the Holy Spirit** and also witnessing others receiving in the same way, I had come to believe these were two different experiences. This stance, like that of many Charismatic or Pentecostal **believers**, caused me to view mainline or Reformed church believers as less spiritual. I might say, “Isn’t it great that you are **born-again**, but are you **filled with the Spirit (baptised in the Holy Spirit)?**” I continued with this train of thought for many years, and I now know that I must have offended many dear **Christians**. Asking this question insinuated that, as they were not speaking in tongues or experiencing other **gifts of the Holy Spirit**, that **the Holy Spirit** was not residing within them. In other words, they were not truly **filled with the Holy Spirit**.

My experience at the Assemblies of God church service was to build and clarify my understanding to **truth** through **revelation** in a **vision** from **the Holy Spirit**, shortly afterwards. This made me realise that we are **born-again** of the **Spirit of God** (Holy Spirit) at **rebirth**. So at the same time you receive the **Lord Jesus Christ** as **personal Saviour** you also **receive the Holy Spirit**.

Since coming to this realisation, I have been grieved at some **Christian** wedding ceremonies when the couple is asked, “Have you received **Jesus Christ** as your **personal Saviour**?” and then, “Have you **received the Holy Spirit**?” This clearly portrays the belief in two separate experiences. I believe the second question should not be asked as it is actually erroneous.

The **manifestation** of the **gifts** of the **Holy Spirit** is another subject on its own and is indeed a **second experience**. This process is largely misunderstood in the **body of Christian believers**.

As mentioned earlier, direct intervention from the **Lord** after a visit to the Assemblies of God church, changed my mind. One evening the **Lord** granted me a **vision**:

I saw **Jesus**, followed by angels, descending a stepped pathway to a still and calm pool at the bottom.

The **Lord** gave me no further explanation that night. The following morning, whilst driving to work, I asked the **Lord** what the **vision** meant. The **Lord** said, “**The pool of water represents my Holy Spirit. This is what my children must drink**”

from daily. Those who you say are not baptised in the Holy Spirit, are indeed!”

I instantly understood that for **Christians** to live effective lives through the Holy Spirit they need to drink (be filled) on a daily basis. This is how **God’s children** are able to move in many areas of **anointing** without necessarily having to **manifest** the gifts of the Holy Spirit. One and the same Holy Spirit accomplishes everything. I must confess, I was more than a little taken aback by this **Word**. However, because **Jesus had said it**, I knew it had to be the **truth!** Some years later I discovered 1 Corinthians 12:13 which confirms the need to “drink” from the Holy Spirit:

For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body – whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free – and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.

We all desperately need the Holy Spirit, as without him we cannot do anything that is of any eternal value. After **Jesus died upon the cross** and **rose** from the grave, **he appeared** to his disciples, instructing them in Acts 1:4-5:

Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. For John baptised with water, but in a few days you will be baptised with the Holy Spirit.

It was necessary for the **disciples** to be baptised in the Holy Spirit as **Jesus, who** was their **teacher** and **master**, was soon to ascend into heaven and would no longer be with them physically. They would need to totally rely on the Holy Spirit

for guidance and instruction. During his earthly ministry, Jesus told his disciples that it is better that he went so that the Holy Spirit could come. This is recorded in John 16:7:

But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor [Holy Spirit] will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.

The reason why the coming of the Holy Spirit was so necessary is seen in Acts 1:8:

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

This “power” Jesus is describing is the power required to transform people from being incapable of carrying out this commission, to enabling them to do so through the strength of the Holy Spirit who lives within them. This divine impartation that took place at Pentecost is still available now to everyone who is born-again.

At the beginning of the church age, which started at Pentecost, those preaching the gospel were ordinary men with many limitations and failings, nevertheless, the Holy Spirit empowered them to take the gospel all over the world. This is still true today and many have continued to meet the challenge of the “Great Commission” as commanded by Jesus in Matthew 28:18-20:

All authority in heaven and earth has been given to me.

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

The power from the Holy Spirit that helps us to be effective witnesses for the gospel includes a greater measure of spiritual attributes such as courage, boldness, confidence, insight, ability and authority. These are essential in our endeavour to successfully fulfill the “Great Commission.”

The Holy Spirit also enables us to have abundant life through him. The more we accept his working in our lives and yield to him, the more we deny the desires of our “sinful nature,” which is described by the Apostle Paul in Romans chapters 7 and 8. This fallen aspect of our humanity, which is also known as our “carnal nature” or “the flesh,” always lusts for that which is contrary to what the Holy Spirit ordains for our life.

I believe the secret is to have as much fellowship as is possible with our Father, the Lord Jesus and the Holy Spirit. This is how to live “by” the Spirit. The longer we stay away from direct personal fellowship with our Lord, the more open we become to allowing our flesh to rule again.

The Word of God repeatedly affirms that our sinful nature is in “conflict” with what the Spirit wants. Obvious acts of man’s sinful nature found throughout the Bible are:

- Sexual Immorality (Galatians 5:19)
- Impurity (Galatians 5:19)
- Lust (Colossians 3:5)
- Hatred (Galatians 5:20)
- Discord (Galatians 5:20)
- Jealousy (Galatians 5:20)
- Anger (Galatians 5:20)
- Selfish ambition (Galatians 5:20)
- Dissension (Galatians 5:20)
- Arrogance (2 Cor 12:20; Galatians 5:20)
- Envy (Galatians 5:21)
- Murder (Revelation 22:12-16)
- Idolatry (Galatians 5:20; Ephesians 5:5)
- Witchcraft (Galatians 5:20)
- Drunkenness (Galatians 5:21)
- Wild living (Luke 5:13 and Galatians 5:21)
- Cheating (1 Corinthians 6:8)
- Adultery (1 Corinthians 6: 9-10)
- Homosexuality (1 Corinthians 6:9-10)
- Greed (1 Corinthians 6:9; Ephesians 5:5)
- Stealing (1 Corinthians 6:9-10)
- Lying (Revelation 22:12-16)

If we live by and adore **the Holy Spirit**, yielding to **him**, our lives will be continually **transformed** and we will produce the **fruit of the Spirit**. These are found and listed in Galatians 5:22-23:

Love • Joy • Peace • Patience • Kindness
 Goodness • Faithfulness • Gentleness • Self-Control

These are the virtues that we should aspire to and work with the Holy Spirit to develop, so that we may be well pleasing unto the Lord and bring him glory. See John 15:8:

This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

CHAPTER 10

Baptism of Fire of the Holy Spirit

After the Lord corrected me concerning my old belief about baptism in the Holy Spirit, I asked the Lord to explain what had taken place in my life concerning this truth and why I and many others had had two separate experiences. The Lord replied, “Remember the Scripture John quoted in Luke 3:16:

But one more powerful than I will come, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

Your second experience was that of the fire of the Holy Spirit.”

I then clearly understood the difference between the two experiences and how the power of God is manifest through man. When we receive salvation, we are also baptised in the Holy Spirit who then resides in us. Just as we are required to drink daily from the still and calm pool of water described in the vision, so we must “drink” from the Holy Spirit. This is clearly stated in 2 Corinthians 1:21-22:

He anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.

Another profound **Scripture** to substantiate this is found in Ephesians 1:13-14:

And you also were included **in Christ** when you heard the **Word of truth, the gospel of your salvation**. Having **believed**, you were **marked in him** with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a **deposit guaranteeing our inheritance** until the **redemption of those** who are **God's possession** – to the **praise of his glory**.

Receiving the gifts of the Holy Spirit is indeed an additional experience. It is not the baptism of the Holy Spirit, however, but the **release of the fire of the Holy Spirit** who already **dwells** within you. The **Lord** later confirmed this to me through diagrams **he** showed me in a **vision**.

In concluding this chapter, I must again emphasise that when you are **born-again** you simultaneously receive both **Jesus Christ** as your **Saviour** and the Holy Spirit as your baptiser who also **dwells** within you. The **baptism of fire of the Holy Spirit** is therefore the **second experience** that many incorrectly term as the **baptism in the Holy Spirit**.

CHAPTER 11

Water Baptism

Shortly after experiencing this baptism of fire of the Holy Spirit, the friend who originally invited me to the Assemblies of God church in Primrose asked if I had been baptised in water. I replied that there was no need for this as I had been baptised as a child. This good friend then kindly informed me that it was indeed scriptural to be baptised in water by full immersion. This, I must confess, left me a little confused but I desperately desired to fulfill all that God required in his ordinances for his children and to walk in all the truth of his ways.

I went to discuss this matter with my Presbyterian minister who assured me I was right about the baptism and that there was no need to be baptised again. After weeks had passed, however, I still had no true peace about the matter. I read as many Bible verses as I could find on the topic and could not reach any satisfactory conclusion.

Deciding that the only place to settle this was at the Lord's feet, I asked, "What is the truth of the matter and what do you require?" The Lord answered clearly and directly, "If I could go through the waters of baptism, why can't you?"

Hearing the Lord so clearly, I immediately surrendered and declared, "Lord, at the first opportunity I will be baptised in water."

During this period, I discovered the Hatfield Baptist Church in Pretoria, which was led by Pastor Ed Roebert, a well-respected **Christian** leader in South Africa. From the first night I walked in, I knew I was home. It felt like a hand slipping into a perfectly fitting glove. The **presence of the Holy Spirit** in that place was almost tangible at times. Many of the things that were preached and taught were identical to what **God** was personally teaching me.

I later joined this church and spent a number of years there. I was impressed with the prominence given to **water baptism** in their services and within weeks was **baptised in water** myself. The profound **peace** I experienced through this act of obedience to **God's direction** was exceptional. One of the first **scriptural** mentions of a new believer receiving **water baptism** is in Acts 8:34-39:

The eunuch asked Phillip, "Tell me, please, who is the **prophet** talking about, himself or someone else?" Then Phillip began with that very **passage of Scripture** and told him the **good news** about **Jesus**.

As they travelled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water. Why shouldn't I be **baptised?**" And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Phillip and the eunuch went down into the water and Phillip **baptised** him. When they came up out of the water, **the Spirit of the Lord** suddenly took Phillip away, and the eunuch did not see him again, but went on his way rejoicing.

We must accept that after Phillip had told the eunuch

about **Jesus**, the eunuch **believed** and **accepted Jesus** and thus was **born-again**. Once he had the inner confirmation of this, he realised there was no reason why he should not be **baptised in water**.

One of the best examples showing the **divine requirement** of **water baptism** is seen in Acts 10:42-46 when Peter visits the house of Cornelius and finds a large gathering of people to whom he preaches:

“**He** commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that **he** is the **one** whom **God appointed** as **judge of the living and the dead**. All the prophets testify about **him** that everyone who believes in **him** receives forgiveness of sins through **his name**.”

While Peter was still speaking these words, **the Holy Spirit came on** all who heard the **message**. The circumcised **believers** who had come with Peter were astonished that the **gift of the Holy Spirit** had been **poured out** even on the Gentiles. For they heard them **speaking in tongues** and praising **God**.

This clearly shows that when the **message** was preached, the people **believed** and were **born-again (receiving both Jesus and the Holy Spirit simultaneously)** and then received the **gift of the Holy Spirit** in the form of **tongues**. In other words, they **received the baptism of fire of the Holy Spirit**.

With this evidence profoundly demonstrated, Peter then ordered the last remaining **foundational ordinance** of

water baptism to be fulfilled.

“Can anyone keep these people from being baptised with water? They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have.” So he ordered that they be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ (Acts 10:47-48).

This creates a most interesting scenario concerning God’s divine ordinances. No other experience can precede the first experience. The first experience is to be born-again through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. There is no other way into heaven and no other way to receive salvation. The other two experiences, namely, the baptism in water and the baptism of fire of the Holy Spirit, may take place in any order.

I want to stress here that, should born-again believers not experience the baptism of water and the baptism of fire of the Holy Spirit, their salvation and everlasting life in Jesus Christ will not be affected in any way.

Those who believe there is no need to be baptised in water, often use the story of the Philippian jailer in Acts 16:29-34 to justify their belief:

The jailer called for lights, rushed in and fell trembling before Paul and Silas. He then brought them out and asked, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?”

They replied, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved – you and your household.”

Then they spoke **the Word of the Lord** to him and to all the others in his house. At that hour of the night the jailer took them and washed their wounds; then immediately he and all his family were **baptised**. The jailer brought them into his house and set a meal before them; he was filled with **joy** because he had come to **believe in God** – he and his whole family.

The entire family undoubtedly received **salvation** through being **born-again**, entitling them to be **baptised in water**. An incorrect assumption here is that there were infants in the house and so this **Scripture** is often quoted to justify the practice of baptising or christening infants. There is nothing here to even suggest there were infants present.

Paul and Silas tell the jailer and his family that the only way to **salvation** is to **believe** in the **Lord Jesus Christ**. The family does this and are then **baptised**. Infants do not have the ability to make a decision to **believe** in **Jesus Christ**, therefore, this teaching is erroneous. It is impossible to be **baptised** in either **water** or in **the Holy Spirit** without firstly being **born-again**. This is putting the cart before the horse!

Mention must be made here for those parents who have lost infants and may be concerned for their child's **salvation** because of the above **truth**. For all children who have not reached an age at which they can make a decision to accept **Christ**, I fully and firmly believe these children immediately go to be with **Christ**. The reason I believe in the eternal security of young children is because of the **assuring words of Jesus** found in Matthew 19:13-15:

Then little children were brought to Jesus for him to place his hands on them and pray for them. But the disciples rebuked those who brought them.

Jesus said, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.” When he had placed his hands on them, he went on from there.

In this vein, many Charismatic and Pentecostal churches practise a dedication service for their children whereby the parents come and dedicate their children to God. The predominant theme here is that they are asking the Lord to protect their children and asking God’s help to enable them to bring them up in the ways of the Lord until they reach an age where they can make a decision for Christ. This is undertaken in the same way as when Joseph and Mary went to the temple to dedicate Jesus at a young age.

Another misunderstood Scripture concerning the baptisms is Acts 2:38:

Peter replied, “Repent and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”

Many Christians from an opposite viewpoint believe this means we must repent and be baptised (water baptism) to receive salvation – and then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit (baptism of the Holy Spirit). Here again believers are confused by the word “baptism.”

This Scripture only refers to **salvation**. When you **believe** in **Jesus Christ**, you repent of your sin and at the point of **rebirth** you are both **baptised into the body of Christ** and **baptised in the Holy Spirit**. This has nothing to do with either **water baptism** or the release of the **fire of the Holy Spirit** (experiencing the gifts of the Spirit).

Many theologians have termed this baptism to be **water baptism**. They take this from historical baptismal events that always clearly defined the occurrence by water. I do not believe this because this portion of **Scripture** has a continuous theme that after being **“baptised”** you receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Nobody receives the Holy Spirit from **water baptism** alone, this only occurs through being **born-again**.

Forgiveness of sin is accomplished only through repentance and through being **born-again**. In other words, only through **salvation**. **Water baptism** on its own will not produce forgiveness from sin. **Water baptism** is the **manifestation of salvation in Christ Jesus**. More simply phrased, it is the **outward working of Jesus’ part as God the Son’s role in salvation**.

Water baptism can follow very quickly from the time of being **born-again** (**baptised into the body of Christ** and **baptised into the Holy Spirit**) as happened with these early church **believers**. However, the **truth** remains that one receives the gift of the Holy Spirit at **rebirth** and not from **water baptism**.

CHAPTER 12

Conflict in the Body over the Baptisms

Soon after I acquired a clearer understanding of the **gifts of the Holy Spirit**, our Presbyterian minister was called to another church in South Africa. On the arrival of the new minister, I was most eager to ask how he perceived the **operational giftings of the Holy Spirit** as I did not want the **move of the Holy Spirit** within the church to be quenched. He assured me that he did believe in the **gifts**, but to my dismay, I discovered that he only believed in a theoretical sense. He found the actual **operation of the gifts** quite foreign. He was, in fact, firmly opposed to the **manifestation of the gifts of the Holy Spirit**. This stance soon became a source of much conflict in the church.

As an elder, one of my duties was to visit members of the congregation. During my visits, I often felt conflicted when people enquired about **the gifts of the Holy Spirit** as I knew our minister's beliefs were different than mine. However, to remain faithful to the **Lord**, I had to tell them the **truth** as it had been revealed to me in **Scripture** and personal experience.

One Sunday evening after the service, a member of the congregation came to me and asked how to be **baptised in the Holy Spirit** as he understood this to be the way to **receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit**. After explaining it to him, he was like a bubble waiting to burst and pleaded with us to pray for him to

receive these gifts. I pointed out that our minister disapproved of this form of ministry, but he was so persistent that I took his request to the minister. He responded sharply, informing me and another elder that there was no such thing. Not wishing to challenge him publically, I asked if we all could just lay hands on the man and ask the Lord to bless him in the way he desired.

Annoyed, the minister agreed, however, he strictly informed us that he would pray for “an infilling of the Holy Spirit.” I thought this was a wonderful compromise and thought, “I don’t care what you call it, even call it ‘bubble gum’ if you wish, just pray for the desire of his heart.”

When we prayed I distinctly sensed that this man had received the baptism of fire of the Holy Spirit, however, there was no physical manifestation of any of the gifts. The minister seemed happy with the situation, but the man we prayed for was deeply disappointed. Whilst the minister was locking up the church, I sat with the man in his car, trying to console him. I told him I was certain he had received and felt he should simply open his mouth in faith and let the Holy Spirit fill it.

Immediately, as he did this, he began to shout in tongues. His noisy outburst gave me quite a shock! It was late and the evening still. The loudness of his new gifting brought not only the minister running, but also his wife from the church manse. I will never forget what the minister’s wife said, “I came as quickly as I could because I thought there was someone out here drunk and out of control.” It was obvious that the minister and his wife were quite perturbed as they returned to the manse.

This episode reminded me of the experience of **Christ's disciples** in Acts 2:1-21:

When the day of **Pentecost** came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be **tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them**. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. When they **heard this sound**, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard them **speaking in his own language**.

Utterly amazed they asked, “Are not all these men who are speaking Galileans? Then how is it that each of us hears them in his own native language? Parthians, Medes, and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs – we hear them declaring the **wonders of God** in our own **tongues!**”

Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, “What does this mean?”

Some, however, made fun of them and said, “They have had too much wine.”

Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: “Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say. These men are not drunk, as you suppose. It’s only nine in the morning! No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

“In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy.

“I will show wonders in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and billows of smoke. The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord. And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

Many years later, during my time as an elder in a Pentecostal church, I found another misunderstanding of this truth. The church often led people to receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit but it was done with an incorrect understanding of Scripture. The pastor taught that one did not fully possess the Holy Spirit until displaying evidence of the gifts. This teaching left many believers within this church troubled because they knew they possessed the Holy Spirit, although they did not manifest the gifts. Out of love and loyalty to this pastor, who was a passionate man of God and probably the dearest and most

sincere man I have ever known, they chose to let things lie so as not to offend him.

In private discussions on this subject, the pastor told me he believed we **receive the Spirit of Christ** and not **the Holy Spirit** at **rebirth**. At the same time he agreed that a **believer** has **the Holy Spirit working** within his/her life. However, this largely negated the **truth** of the **permanent indwelling** of the **Holy Spirit** at the point of **spiritual rebirth**.

What most confused the congregation was the teaching of **believers receiving the Spirit of Christ** rather than **the Holy Spirit** at **rebirth**. Knowing this pastor's heart, we're certain he intended no malice or confusion. It is not entirely incorrect to state that we have **the Spirit of Christ at rebirth**, however, it is essential to understand that **the Spirit of Christ** is indeed **the Holy Spirit**.

It must be stated that this pastor's position is not the generally held belief within Charismatic or Pentecostal churches. Many of these churches believe you have **the Holy Spirit**, not **the Spirit of Christ**, **dwelling** in you immediately at **rebirth**. However, many incorrectly believe that the **manifestation of the gifts of the Spirit** is the **baptism of the Holy Spirit** and not the **baptism of fire of the Holy Spirit**.

THE ROOT OF CONFLICT OVER THE BAPTISMS

Because the **baptisms** associated with **the Holy Spirit**

have sparked so much conflict in the **body of Christ**, it is necessary to do an in-depth study of the **Scriptures** to gain a clearer understanding of **God's truth**. To begin we must look again at Acts 2:1-4:

When the day of **Pentecost** came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be **tongues of fire** that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

Two purposes were fulfilled in this event. The first was the **birth of the Church** or the **body of Christ**, as is revealed in Luke 24:46-49:

He told them, “This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. I am going to send you what my **Father has promised**; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.”

Though the disciples had **followed Jesus** during **his ministry** and were with **him** prior to **his crucifixion**, their belief was fully confirmed when they saw **him resurrected** from the dead. Their first step towards **salvation** was to **recognise who he** was and believe.

Jesus also instructed the disciples to wait for the Holy Spirit:

“Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit” (Acts 1:4-5).

Further clarity is found in Acts 1:8:

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

Before the disciples could be released to undertake this task of preaching the gospel to all nations they had to wait for the coming of the Holy Spirit. Before you can truly be born-again you have to receive the Holy Spirit. They were no exception! They were filled with the Holy Spirit, (baptised in the Holy Spirit) completing their rebirth (remember they had first believed on the name of Jesus) and then they received the Holy Spirit.

The second purpose of Pentecost was fulfilled when they began to speak in other tongues (a supernatural sign of speaking in tongues personally and publicly whereby people from many nations came to hear them speaking in their own native language). One has to have received salvation in fullness to be enabled to speak in other tongues. What these Scriptures are describing is the following:

They believed in Jesus Christ.

They were baptised in the Holy Spirit (filled with the Holy Spirit in this context).

They were baptised with the fire of the Holy Spirit (speaking in tongues).

In the Primrose Assemblies of God I actually witnessed similar occurrences as described in Acts 2:1-4. That is when someone had just received salvation (baptised into the body of Christ and baptised in the Holy Spirit) and within a few minutes began speaking in other tongues (baptised with the fire of the Holy Spirit). It can happen almost immediately or much later in life should the person desire this gifting. You need no further sanctification, nor can you earn it by being a better or more mature Christian. It's a genuine gift of the Holy Spirit.

The result of Pentecost was the birth of the Christian Church (also known as the body of Christ). This great and glorious fulfillment of the salvation of our God came with a purpose – the equipping of Christians to undertake the “Great Commission” as described in Matthew 28:18-20:

All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

This is one of the most misunderstood Scriptures in the Bible. The foundational pillar of becoming a disciple is to first

receive salvation. This Scripture is referring only to salvation. Why is the term “baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” used then? It is because the fullness of the Godhead, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, is involved in one’s salvation.

This can be more easily described in the following manner: It is the Father’s plan to reconcile man to God, therefore, the Father orchestrated the plan of salvation in conjunction with the Son (Jesus Christ) and the Holy Spirit. Jesus is the only one through whom we can be saved or receive salvation as is seen in John 14:6:

I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

The Holy Spirit completes the process of rebirth by our spirit being born-again through him as the prime agent, often referred to as regeneration. This is substantiated in Acts 2:38:

Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Put in a simpler manner, the following takes place in salvation: The Father wants to reconcile mankind to himself. God the Father primarily achieves this through the Holy Spirit drawing one towards Jesus Christ. Man does not initiate this although he is often a tool in the process of developing faith in Jesus Christ through preaching the Word of God or witnessing. The Bible further clarifies this in John 6:44:

Jesus answered, “No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day.”

The only way one can receive salvation is through Jesus Christ who was made a sacrifice for us through his crucifixion. This act washes us by the blood of Christ for the forgiveness of our sin, and we are presented to the Father as righteous and forgiven.

Therefore the Scripture, “baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” simply means receiving salvation. To reiterate, two distinct baptisms occur at this one time in salvation, namely:

You are baptised into the body of Christ.

You are baptised in the Holy Spirit.

This is clearly not water baptism, yet many missionary outreaches from mainline denominations and evangelistic movements mistakenly apply this Scripture to water baptism. The command for these movements is primarily to bring people to salvation, not to measure growth by the number baptised as infants or by immersion. To be baptised in water is of course absolutely correct once salvation has been attained, but the Scripture above does not allude to this act.

I find it both comical and tragic that a sect who is trying desperately to win converts in the South Pacific nation of Tonga has promised new bicycles to those who were baptised!

Clearly the number of baptisms performed measured their level of success!

CHAPTER 13

Vision from God Interprets the Baptisms

Sometime during 1983, I was early for a business appointment so I decided to wait in my car. As I sat there, the Lord clearly began to speak to me showing me the following:

The Lord said, “Before you can understand the baptisms you need to understand who God truly is.” The Lord then gave me the following simple vision:



The **Lord** then said to me, “If a person truly wants to understand who **God** is, the person must understand that **God** consists of three persons – **Father**, **Son** and Holy Spirit. To worship only one **person** of the **Godhead** and exclude the other two is not correctly worshipping or understanding the fullness of **God**. To only worship **God** alone is not understanding who **God** actually is. **He** is **Father**, **Son** and Holy Spirit. If any **person** of the **Godhead** is excluded or not believed in, then that person is not truly worshipping or understanding who **God** is.”

The first **scriptural** reference to the plurality of **God** is found in Genesis 1:1-2 where the **maker and creator** of the world are found:

In the beginning **God** created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the **Spirit of God** was hovering over the waters.

The Hebrew **word** for **God** used here is **Elohyim**. Now **Elohyim** is a plural noun categorically referring to **God** as not being one entity or person. This is clarified in verse 26 where **God** says:

Let us make man in our image, in our likeness...

So who is **God**? This is the most critical question facing all people and religions. The **God** of the **Bible** is unique among religions. Some worship multiple gods, others worship one, but only **Christians** worship a triune **God**. Therefore, understanding the **Trinity** is essential to understanding **God's** purposes and true

worship. This is explained well in this study note on Genesis 1 from YWAM's *Christian Growth Study Bible*:

“The purpose of all things flows from who **God** is. And central, to who **God** is, to all his purposes and to all creation, is his triune nature. Before the first thing was created, the one **God** existed in three persons – **the Father**, **the Son** and **the Holy Spirit**. All that **God** has ever done and will ever do flows from this eternal love relationship. **God** did not create love; **he is love**. **God** did not invent relationship; **he** has always been in relationship. Relationship is **God's** highest priority and greatest desire. It should be ours as well. **God** did not create us just to do things for **him**, but to love and honor **him** as **children of their Father**. The whole of our lives should be grounded in intimate relationship with the **God** of relationship.”

Sadly, many religious writers who have questioned the **deity** of **Jesus** and the whole concept of the **Trinity** miss the heart behind this heavenly relationship. Some who question the **Trinity** ask: Is God one person, **Jesus** another and **the Holy Spirit** another outside the **person of God himself**? If this were so, then **Jesus** and **the Holy Spirit** would have had no part in **creation** because they are not **God**. But there are very clear passages of **Scripture** that illustrate the **deity** of **Jesus Christ**. They affirm that when **God** **created** the heavens and the earth, it is **God the Father**, **Son** and **Holy Spirit** who **created together**.

An extensive study of this subject would require a full thesis, but in this short study let's examine **Scriptures** on the **deity** of **Jesus** and **his** role in the **creation**. In John 11:25-26, **Jesus** says,

I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die.

Revelation 13:8 describes him as “...the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world.” Should this Scripture appear in any way ambiguous, Colossians 1:15-20 clearly identifies Jesus as being involved in the creation of the world:

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

This affirms that Jesus the creator is both God (within the Godhead) and the Son of God at the same time. More extensive evidence is found in John 1:

Verses 1-2: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning.

Verses 3-4: Through him all things were made; without him

nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of men.

Verse 10: He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him.

Verses 11-13: He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become **children of God** – children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of **God**.

Verse 14: The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his **glory**, the **glory** of the One and Only [Jesus], who came from the **Father**, full of grace and truth.

Verse 18: No one has ever seen **God**, but **God** the One and Only [Jesus], who is at the **Father’s** side, has made **him** known.

A REVELATIONAL VISION OF SALVATION

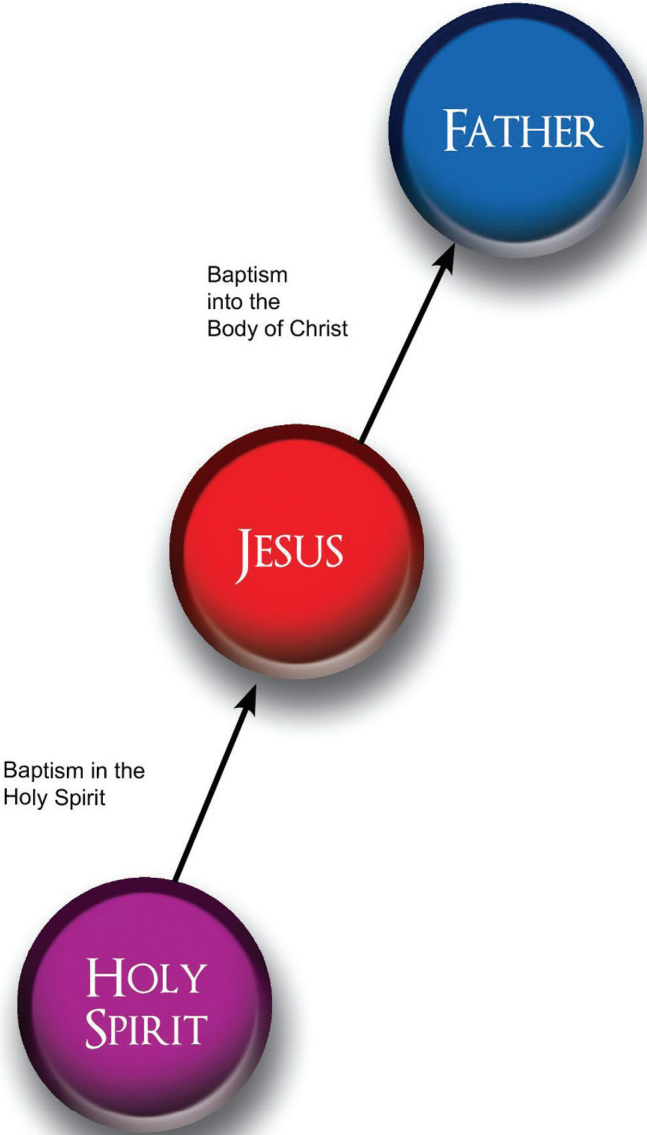
The **Lord** then spoke to me again, saying: “There is something further that you need to understand. This is what happens at **salvation**.” He then showed me another simple vision – **Salvation** in a person’s life.



Salvation, marked with the Red Cross, could happen anywhere along this lifeline of any person. It could be early in a person's life; it could be right at the end of one's life, even at the very deathbed. The point is that **salvation** comes to those who call on the **name of the Lord** for **salvation** at any point during their life.

The **Lord** then said to me, "Now I am going to show you what happens at the precise point of **salvation** so that you may fully understand the impact of **salvation** and of the **baptisms.**"

DIAGRAM 1 – *God's Divine Foundation of Christianity through Salvation*



EXPLANATION OF DIAGRAM 1

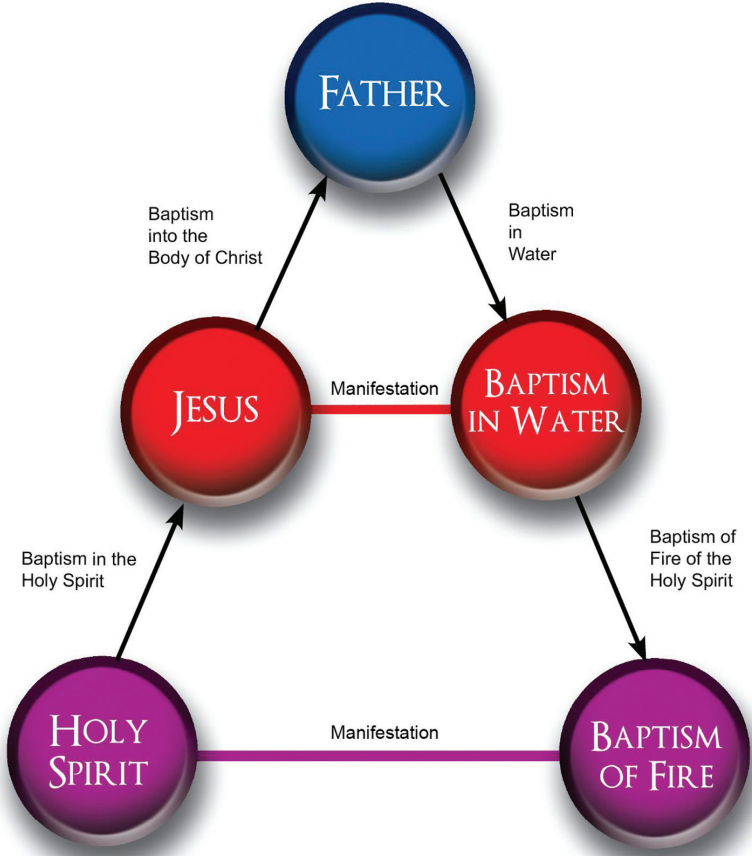
Here I must reiterate what is necessary for mankind to come to **salvation**. Firstly, it is only possible through **the Holy Spirit**. He works in one's life to bring about the circumstances where he points one to the only way to **salvation in Jesus Christ**. We can only be **saved** through the **full redemptive work of Jesus Christ who died on the cross for our sins**. When it was complete, he said, "**It is finished**" (see John 19:30). This **great and wondrous deed** leads to the **final fulfillment** which meets all the requirements of the law through perfect and unmerited **grace** and our **Father forgives** us for our transgressions.

At **salvation** three things happen simultaneously:

- We are **baptised in the Holy Spirit** and are **marked** with the **seal of ownership** for our final **redemption** at the end of this age.
- We are **baptised into the body of Christ** through the **shedding** of the **blood** of **Jesus** on the **cross** where **he paid** the penalty for this to be made possible.
- We are **forgiven** by **the Father who** has **reconciled** us to **himself** through **Jesus** laying **his life** down for us.

Through the work of **salvation** we attain the first two **baptisms** supernaturally. We are **instantly baptised in the Holy Spirit** and **baptised into the body of Christ** at the same time.

DIAGRAM 2 – *God's Divine Foundation of Christianity through Salvation and the Baptisms*



EXPLANATION OF DIAGRAM 2

The Holy Spirit then graciously revealed to me the next part of the vision showing how all the baptisms fit together and how they reveal salvation to us through their outward manifestation of this truth, thereby glorifying God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.

What I saw in an incredible and profound way through this vision of detail and truth were the manifestation lines from both receiving Christ (being baptised in the body of Christ) and from receiving the Holy Spirit (also being baptised in the Holy Spirit) at salvation. One can only be baptised in water if he or she has firstly received Jesus at salvation and one can only experience the gifts of the Holy Spirit if you have received the Holy Spirit at salvation. The baptism in water and the baptism of fire of the Holy Spirit manifest the glory of Jesus and the Holy Spirit through the rebirth of man (salvation).

Let's take a closer look at the manifest baptisms (physical and outward) one at a time.

BAPTISM OF WATER

The Holy Spirit revealed to me that this is the physical manifestation of what has already taken place – baptism into the body of Christ through salvation in Christ. Then the Holy Spirit said to me, “Those that go through the waters of baptism glorify the Lord Jesus Christ in what he has done for them through salvation.”

I suddenly saw the **truth** of this. Unbelievers will ask the question, “Why do they do this?” The answer is the amazing story of **redemption** and **grace** only achieved through the **Lord Jesus Christ!** Why is it important for the person being **baptised in water?** It is because they need to know that they are not only walking in obedience to this commandment, but **glorifying** their **Lord** and **Saviour** by publicly declaring their faith to the world and to the heavenlies. Why is it important to the **believers** in attendance? It is because we witness the **glory** over and over in the foundation of our **Christian** existence!

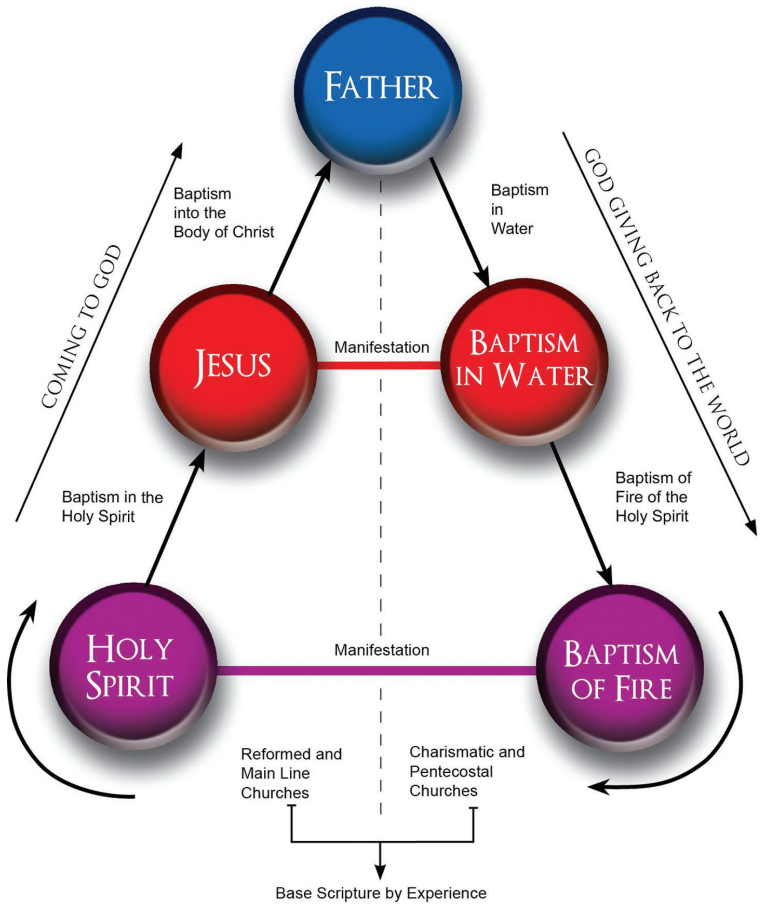
BAPTISM OF FIRE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

When there is a message of wisdom, a message of knowledge, the gift of faith, the gift of healing, the gift of miraculous powers, the gift of prophecy, the gift of discernment of spirits, the gift of tongues and the gift of interpretation of tongues (see 1 Corinthians 12:8-10) these **manifestations** are the physical evidence of what has already taken place – **the baptism in the Holy Spirit!**

This occurs for two reasons. Firstly, it **glorifies** the **Holy Spirit** and points to **the Holy Spirit’s work** in **salvation** and once again points us to the wondrous work through **Jesus Christ** in **salvation**. What does it do for unbelievers? No matter how skeptical they are, the **Bible** tells us that when they witness the **gift of prophecy** they will say, “**God** is really among you!” What do the **gifts of the Holy Spirit** do for **believers?** They edify and build them up. The following verses are summarised:

- 1 Corinthians 12:7 – they (the gifts) are given for common good.
- 1 Corinthians 14:2 – For anyone who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God. Indeed no one understands him; he utters mysteries with his spirit.
- 1 Corinthians 14:3 – But every one who prophesies speaks to men for their strengthening, encouragement and comfort.
- 1 Corinthians 14:4 – He who speaks in tongues edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church.

DIAGRAM 3 – *God's Divine Foundation of Salvation, the Baptisms and Evangelism*



EXPLANATION OF DIAGRAM 3

The Lord then gave me the next explanation from the **detail** and **truth** in this vision showing that this was the only way to come to **God**, and he drew an arrow parallel to the experience of **salvation** displayed. To understand this, the following **Scripture** is fundamental:

[There is] one **Lord**, one **faith**, one **baptism**; one **God** and **Father** of all, **who** is over all and through all and in all (Ephesians 4:5-6).

Truly there is only one **baptism**, however, there are many manifestations of this. As described earlier, **the Father's** plan in **salvation** is to **draw** you to **him** through **redemption in Christ** and by the workings of the Holy Spirit.

The **Lord** then went on to explain to me that once **salvation** has been achieved this is not the end. **The Father** now wants to witness back to the world the profound and amazing nature of extensions to this amazing “**one baptism**” quoted in Ephesians 4:5 above – because through all of the manifestations they point back to the **reconciliation** of man to **God – SALVATION** through **Jesus Christ!**

The **Lord** then said to me, “**The manifest baptisms** are the ways **God** uses **believers** to give back to the world.” In other words, these are the ways **God** uses to continually prove **his existence** and the **divine** method to draw unbelievers to **himself** through **salvation**.

The **Lord** then took me back to the **vision** of the third baptismal diagram and **drew** a dotted line down the centre. When I enquired what this meant, the **Lord** said, “This is the line that divides the **body of Christ**. There are two factions (Reformed and Mainline churches, and Charismatic and Pentecostal churches) that sit on either side of the divide and both incorrectly base the **Scriptures** concerning the baptisms on their own experiences.”

The **Lord** then **showed** me that if any of the **foundational divine baptisms** are missing, **the church** or **the body of Christ** cannot be “fully effective” in the evangelism command to “**go and make disciples of all nations**” (winning unbelievers to Christ and reconciling them to **God**).

THE CHALLENGE TO US ALL

If we have obediently followed **God’s** commands and the **ordinances** of foundational **Christianity** through the **baptisms**, we will be more fully equipped and effective for our **God** in all that **he** requires of us. If one of the components is missing we can still be **Christians** loving and serving the **Lord**. However, we are missing out in our ministries and service on the **divine provision** given in a most wonderful and meticulous strategy.

The following statement may present a challenge to many of us: If we have been baptised in water or christened as an infant but have never been **born-again** it would all have been in vain, thus accounting for nothing. Quite simply, you cannot

put the “cart before the horse.” The start of a **walk with God** is only through **salvation** in **Jesus Christ**. If we have been **born-again** and have not experienced the other two **baptisms**, **water baptism** and the **baptism of fire** of the Holy Spirit, then we are missing out on so many **divine blessings** that will enrich our lives immensely.

Since the day I was **born-again** these **truths have** impacted me profoundly. I clearly saw the division across the **body of Christ**, and it saddened me greatly. I always saw the **Scripture** John 17:20-23 in this light from a chorus we used to sing:

Father, make us **one** that the world may know that **you sent your son**.

In this **Scripture** **Jesus** prays for future **believers**. The actual words from these verses are:

My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, **Father**, just as **you** are in me and I am in you. May they also be in **us** so that the world may believe that **you have sent me**. I have given them the **glory** that **you gave me**, that they may be **one as we are one**: I in them and **you** in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that **you sent me** and have loved them even as **you have loved me**.

This illumination of the **Word** of **God** that **he** revealed to me may not be accepted by all. However, through this revelation of why there is this great divide within the **body of Christ**, I

trust and pray that the **body of Christ** may come together in greater unity and understanding and that unbelievers will see a more united **church**.

What I have written is not something that I or any man could have made up. I did not **receive** this **revelation** from any man or any **church**, nor was I taught it. All that is contained in this study was given directly to me by the **Lord Jesus Christ** and the **Holy Spirit**.

CHAPTER 14

The Continuing Work of the Holy Spirit

The work of the Holy Spirit cannot be understood simply by studying His role at the Creation (Genesis 1:2) or in the miracle of spiritual rebirth (John 3:1-8). To fully grasp the truths presented in this book it is fundamentally important to review all related scriptural background. The Holy Spirit has been moving throughout history and it is important to consider his role in the lives of faithful men and women through the centuries, and how that role came into fullness at Pentecost. In years of extensive reading and research, the most compelling scriptural argument I've found to support the belief that the Christian church was born at Pentecost is found in the book *The Holy Spirit* written by Sinclair B. Ferguson and published by IVP, United Kingdom. Some selected supporting segments have been extracted from this work and incorporated with the author's revelation to reach final consensus on this subject.

THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

Many of the Old Testament saints were empowered by the Holy Spirit. Through this empowering of the Holy Spirit, extraordinary and supernatural acts were performed by these people to prepare them for special tasks ordained by God. Many of these deeds were carried out to continually bear witness of

God's dealings with **his** people, in order to bring them to faith in **God** and to repentance whenever they turned away from **him**. There are many examples of this, some of which are mentioned below:

Bezalel – I have filled him with the Spirit of God, with skill, ability and knowledge in all kinds of crafts... (Exodus 31:3).

Moses – I will come down and speak with you there, and I will take of the Spirit that is on you and put the Spirit on them (Numbers 11:17).

Gideon – Then the Spirit of the Lord came upon Gideon, and he blew a trumpet, summoning the Abiezrites to follow him (Judges 6:34).

Samson – The Spirit of the Lord came upon him in power so that he tore the lion apart with his bare hands as he might have torn a young goat (Judges 14:6).

Saul – The Spirit of the Lord will come upon you in power, and you will prophesy with them; and you will be changed into a different person (1 Samuel 10:6).

David – The Spirit of the Lord spoke through me; his Word was on my tongue (2 Samuel 23:2).

Ezekiel – The Spirit then lifted me up and took me away... (Ezekiel 3:14).

Daniel – Finally, Daniel came into my presence and I told him

the dream. He is called Belteshazzar, after the name of my god, and the **spirit of the holy gods** is in him (Daniel 4:8).

Micah – But as for me I am **filled with power, with the Spirit of the Lord**, and **with justice and might**, to declare to Jacob his transgression, to Israel his sin (Micah 3:8).

THE SALVATION OF OLD TESTAMENT BELIEVERS

The **ministry of the Holy Spirit** has continually drawn the Jewish people to **God** so that they could develop faith in **him** and recognise and praise **him**. Old Testament believers also were justified before **God** by faith. This is clearly seen in Deuteronomy 30:6:

The Lord your God will **circumcise** your hearts and the hearts of your descendants, so that you may love **him** with all your heart and with all your soul, and live.

God's mercy and **love** are all-encompassing. Even when the Jews deliberately walked away from **him** and ruined their lives, **God** still forgave them when they repented. The beginnings of **salvation** were achieved through faith in **God**, however, those who died during this period still had to wait for **Jesus Christ**, the **Son** of the **living God**, to fulfill **God's plan** of **salvation** through **his atoning death on the cross**. These did not go to heaven immediately but first to Abraham's bosom (also called "the limbo of Fathers") which is the waiting place for those who "lived by faith" in **Yahweh** and died before the coming of **Jesus**.

Sometime during the three days between the **crucifixion** of **Jesus** and **his resurrection**, **Jesus** descended into the realm of the dead and retrieved those in Abraham's bosom. Further manifest evidence of this is seen here in Matthew 27:51–53:

At that moment [**the crucifixion**] the curtain of the temple was torn in two from the top to bottom. The earth shook and the rocks split. The tombs broke open and the bodies of many **holy people** who had died were **raised** to life. They came out of their tombs, and after **Jesus' resurrection** they went into the holy city and appeared to many people.

WHAT OLD TESTAMENT BELIEVERS LONGED FOR

The **Holy Spirit** has been exceptionally **active** amongst the Jewish people, especially their kings, prophets and judges. This **ministry** was selective, purpose-driven and isolated in nature. The prophets longed for a **greater fullness of the Holy Spirit**, for they had **experienced him** only in part.

Through the centuries there were many **prophecies** and **promises of a later time** when the **Holy Spirit** would be **permanently** and **universally poured out**. The following **Scriptures** show the promises made to the Jewish believers and then to all mankind:

Isaiah 32:15:

...till the **Spirit** is **poured upon** us from on high...

Isaiah 44:3:

For **I** will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; **I** will **pour out my Spirit** on your offspring, and **my blessing** on your descendants.

Ezekiel 36:24-29:

“For **I** will take you out of the nations; **I** will gather you from all the countries and bring you back into your own land. **I** will **sprinkle clean water** on you, and you will be clean; **I** will **cleanse** you from all your impurities and from all your idols. **I** will give you a **new heart** and put a **new spirit** in you; **I** will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And **I** will put **my Spirit** in you and move you to follow **my decrees** and be careful to keep **my laws**. You will live in the land **I** gave your forefathers; you will be **my** people, and **I** will be your **God**. **I** will **save** you from all your uncleanness....”

Ezekiel 37:26-28:

I will make a **covenant of peace** with them; it will be an **everlasting covenant**. **I** will establish them and increase their numbers, and **I** will put **my sanctuary** among them forever. **My dwelling place** will be with them; **I** will be their **God**, and they will be **my** people. Then the nations will know that **I the Lord** make Israel **holy**, when **my sanctuary** is among them forever.

Ezekiel 39:28–29:

Then they will know that **I am the Lord their God**, for though **I** sent them into exile among the nations, **I** will gather them to their own land, not leaving any behind. **I** will no longer hide **my face** from them, for **I will pour out my Spirit** on the house of Israel, declares the **Sovereign Lord**.

Joel 2:28–29:

“And afterward, **I will pour out my Spirit** on all people. Your sons and daughters will **prophesy**, your old men will **dream dreams**, your young men will **see visions**. Even on my **servants**, both men and women, **I will pour out my Spirit** in those days...”

Joel 2:32 says to the Jewish believers and then to all mankind:

And everyone who calls on the **name of the Lord** will be **saved...**

In the four centuries before the coming of **Jesus Christ**, there was a silencing of the **prophetic voice through the Holy Spirit**. **God promised** the Jewish nation that **he** would give them a **new covenant**, and with the birth of **Jesus**, the Old Covenant or Old Testament times rapidly drew to a close.

A new **prophetic voice** arose through John the Baptist. It broke the prophetic silence of centuries and ushered in the **new**

covenant. The Holy Spirit restored the prophetic voice through John the Baptist. From the time of his birth he was filled with the Holy Spirit, as was spoken by an angel to Zechariah his father in Luke 1:15:

...for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He is never to take wine or other fermented drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even from birth.

John's mission and special task is seen in Luke 1:16–17:

Many of the people of Israel will he bring back to the Lord their God. And he will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous – to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

John's father, Zechariah the priest, was also filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied about his son in Luke 1:76-78:

And you, my child, will be called a prophet of the Most High; for you will go on before the Lord to prepare the way for him, to give his people the knowledge of salvation through the forgiveness of their sins, because of the tender mercy of our God.

Through his preaching John proclaimed righteousness to the people and therefore practiced a baptism of repentance – a turning away from sin and the restoration of serving God. This did not directly result in salvation or regeneration, but John was

preparing the way for **Christ** and **the Holy Spirit** who would fulfill all that John had preached.

John the Baptist **prophesied** accurately what **Jesus** had come to **achieve** and how the **new covenant** would result through the coming of **Jesus** and **the Holy Spirit**. Prophetically, with pinpoint accuracy, he described exactly what **Jesus** would do spiritually through **his physical death**, **resurrection** and **glorification**. This is seen in Luke 3:16:

“I baptize you with water. But **one** more powerful than I will come, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. **He** will **baptize** you with **the Holy Spirit** and with **fire...**”

This **prophetic statement** is the key to understanding **regeneration** and the **gifts of the Holy Spirit**. John knew full well what was **prophesied** and **promised** to the Jews, as is shown in Matthew 3:13–17:

Then **Jesus** came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. But John tried to deter **him**, saying, “I need to be **baptized by you**, and do **you** come to me?”

Jesus replied, “**Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness.**” Then John consented. As soon as **Jesus** was baptized, **he** went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw **the Spirit of God** descending like a dove and lighting on **him**. And a **voice** from heaven said, “**This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.**”

John was reluctant to baptise **Jesus** because he knew that **he** had come to proclaim the way to **salvation** and that all mankind needed to be **baptised by Jesus** with **the Holy Spirit** to **seal salvation**.

Why then was this necessary? **Jesus** said it was because all righteousness needed to be fulfilled! This is more profound than may first appear. The baptism of **Jesus** by John is depicting a model of what is yet to come for mankind in his **salvation** through **baptism by the Holy Spirit**.

Jesus showed us that neither **he** nor any of us can accomplish anything without the **empowering of the Holy Spirit**. **Jesus'** baptism, when **the Holy Spirit** empowered **him**, marked the beginning of **his** ministry. **Jesus** and the **Holy Spirit** are inseparable! When **Jesus** ministers, the **Holy Spirit** ministers through **him!** They always minister together!

It is also noteworthy to see how **the Holy Spirit** was involved with **Jesus** at **his** birth when an angel told Mary in Luke 1:35:

“The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of **the Most High** will overshadow you. So the **Holy One** to be born will be called **the Son of God.**”

What happened at **Jesus'** baptism was also to fulfill these three **messianic prophecies** in the book of Isaiah:

The Spirit of the Lord will rest on **him** – the Spirit of

wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the **Lord...** (Isaiah 11: 2).

Here is **my servant**, whom **I** uphold, **my chosen one** in whom **I** delight; **I** will put **my Spirit** on **him** and **he** will bring justice to the nations (Isaiah 42:1).

The Spirit of **the Sovereign Lord** is on **me**, because **the Lord** has anointed me to **preach good news** to the poor. **He has sent** me to **bind up the brokenhearted**, to proclaim **freedom for the captives** and **release from darkness for the prisoners...** (Isaiah 61:1).

There remains another significance to **Jesus' baptism**. The Holy Spirit descending like a dove is similar to when the Holy Spirit hovered over the waters during his involvement in the **creation** of the world. It signified new beginnings, new life and new creation, proclaiming **Jesus** to be the **second man** and the **last Adam** who would be the "**life-giving spirit**." This is clearly stated in 1 Corinthians 15:45-49:

The first Adam became a living being; the **last Adam**, a **life-giving spirit**. The spiritual did not come first, but the natural...The first man was of the dust of the earth, the **second man** from heaven... And just as we have borne the likeness of the earthly man, so shall we bear the likeness of the **man from heaven**.

This action by the Holy Spirit was portraying **Jesus** to be **head** of the **new creation**. The main theme of this occurrence

is, however, the coming of the Holy Spirit on Jesus. This signified that the time had come for the promised ushering in of the kingdom and the triumph of God's promise in the Old Testament that the coming of the age would be fulfilled.

The result is that Jesus was anointed with the Holy Spirit and with power to fulfill his ministry on earth. This signifies that what happened to Jesus at his baptism would later be applicable to all believers. The new covenant (church age) came about through him baptising the believers (the church) with the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost when the disciples and other believers received power.

When Jesus taught his disciples about the Holy Spirit, deep and profound truths were revealed which are imperative to understanding Pentecost and the truly amazing ways in which God interacts in a believer's life. They are revealed in John 16:5–15:

Now I am going to him who sent me, yet none of you asks me, "Where are you going?" Because I have said these things, you are filled with grief. But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.

When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment: in regard to sin, because men do not believe in me; in regard to righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; and in regard to judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned.

I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will bring **glory** to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you. All that belongs to **the Father** is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will take from what is mine and make it known to you.

This passage shows the inseparability of **Jesus Christ** and the Holy Spirit during **Jesus'** earthly ministry. Nothing changed as **Jesus** was **glorified** (lifted from the earth to return to **the Father**). The **Son of God** returned to the right hand of **the Father** and took up **his deity** as it was before **he** came to earth. The Holy Spirit listened to **Jesus** as **he revealed** what was to be given to **his disciples** and **followers**. It is not only through **Jesus** that we come to know **the Holy Spirit**, but actually **in Jesus Christ**.

To make this more understandable to **his** disciples, **Jesus** emphasized that all that belongs to **the Father** is **his**. The following **verses** (John 14:7-21) further underscore this **divine truth**:

If you really knew me, you would know my **Father** as well. From now on, you do know **him** and have seen **him**.

Philip said, “**Lord**, show us **the Father** and that will be enough for us.”

Jesus answered: “Don’t you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has

seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father?’ Don’t you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work.

Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves. I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.

If you love me, you will obey what I command. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever – the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.

Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him.

These verses display the greatest truth about the Trinity and the incredible outpouring of the Spirit of the living God

on all flesh in the accumulation of **salvation** at **Pentecost**. **Father**, **Son** and **Holy Spirit** are **one** and are **three** at the same time in their functionality. When **Jesus** left to return to heaven, it was better for the **disciples** and mankind as **he** came back through the **power of the Holy Spirit** to **dwell** in us. This also means that **the Father dwells** in us in the same manner:

To them **God** has **chosen** to make known among the Gentiles the **glorious riches of this mystery**, which is **Christ** in you, the **hope of glory** (Colossians 1:27).

You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by **the Spirit**, if **the Spirit of God** lives in you. And if anyone does not have **the Spirit of Christ**, he does not belong to **Christ**. But if **Christ** is **in** you, your body is dead because of sin, yet your spirit is alive because of **righteousness** (Romans 8:9-10).

From the beginning of **Christ's** life to **his death** and **resurrection**, **the Holy Spirit** was his constant companion. When **the Holy Spirit** comes to **Christians** to **indwell** them, **he** comes as the **Spirit of Christ**. In other words, they are indwelt by **Christ** through **the Holy Spirit**. In the **Scripture** quoted above **the Holy Spirit** and **Christ** can be seen as interchangeable terms. The functionality on exactly how this happens is key to understanding this **divine relationship** within **believers**.

Without this knowledge of **Scripture**, one's understanding of **Pentecost** would be tainted by one's individual stance or belief.

CHAPTER 15

Pentecost – The Promised New Covenant

God's purposes never happen by chance but by **divine structure and appointment**. The **plan of salvation** and the **fullness of Pentecost both reveal God's structure**. Indeed many New Testament events are directly related to Old Testament events through which a greater fulfillment of **truth** is recognised. This is seen particularly in the Jewish feasts.

To understand **salvation** through **Christ** we first have to go back to the Passover Feast, where the **Lord** instructed Moses to use lambs without defect. Exodus 12:6-13 relates this event in detail:

Take care of them [lambs] until the fourteenth day of the month, when all the people of the community of Israel must slaughter them at twilight. Then they are to take some of the blood and put it on the sides and the tops of the doorframes of the houses where they eat the lambs.

That same night they are to eat the meat roasted over the fire, along with bitter herbs, and bread made without yeast. Do not eat the meat raw or cooked in water, but roast it over the fire – head, legs and inner parts. Do not leave any of it till morning; if some is left till morning, you must burn it.

This is how you are to eat it: with your cloak tucked into your belt, your sandals on your feet and your staff in your hand. Eat it in haste; it is the **Lord's Passover**.

On that same night **I** will pass through Egypt and strike down every first-born – both men and animals – and **I** will bring judgment on all the gods of Egypt. **I am the Lord**. The blood will be a sign for you on the houses where you are; and when **I** see the blood, **I** will pass over you. No destructive plague will touch you when **I** strike Egypt.

This event depicted a type of **salvation** for the firstborn of Israel. They were spared only by the blood of the lambs when **God** came and brought judgment on Egypt.

God brought a greater fulfillment of this **truth** when **he** sent his **only begotten son, Jesus Christ**, to come and **die** for us so that when the final judgment of all mankind comes from **God**, only those who are marked with the **blood of the lamb (Jesus, the sacrificial lamb)** and **sealed with the Holy Spirit** will be spared. This is profoundly quoted in the following Scriptures:

Then I saw a **Lamb**, looking as if it had been **slain**, standing in the centre of the throne, encircled by the four living creatures and the elders (Revelation 5:6).

“**You** are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because **you** were **slain**, and with **your blood** you **purchased** men for **God** from every tribe and language and people and nation. **You** have made them to be a **kingdom** and

priests to serve our **God**, and they will reign on the earth” (Revelation 5:9–10).

In Revelation 5:12 a multitude of angels sing:

“Worthy is the **Lamb, who was slain**, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!”

Then in Revelation 5:13 all of creation sings:

“To **him** who sits on the throne and to the **Lamb** be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!”

In 1 Corinthians 5:7 the Apostle Paul also declares:

For **Christ**, our **Passover Lamb**, has been **sacrificed**.

Without doubt, Passover pointed to the final **sacrificial price** paid for us all at the **cross of Calvary**. To this day, 50 days after the celebration of Passover, the Jewish people celebrate Shavuot, a festival that is indispensable in understanding **Pentecost**. Shavuot celebrates two things. The first is the giving of the law to Moses at Mount Sinai where he received the Ten Commandments. The second is “the day of the first fruits.”

This giving of the law revealed **God’s** ten most essential instructions for life and godliness. Interestingly, before the giving of the law, **God instructed** the Israelites to prepare themselves for his descent and visitation. For two days they had to consecrate themselves and wash their clothes, because on the

third day **God** would come down on Mount Sinai in view of the people.

This immensely significant instruction clearly aligns with **God's** divine pattern of Old Testament events pointing to a promised fulfillment yet to come. One of the most critical understandings of this event was that while the Israelites had to cleanse themselves as best they could, **Christ** now through his **death** and the **shedding of his blood** would **cleanse** those that accept **him** once and for all. The giving of the law foreshadowed the time when, through **Christ's sacrifice**, he would write the law in our hearts.

The first link to the greater fulfillment is found in John 2:19-22. After **Jesus** had cleared the temple of money exchangers, the Jews asked **him** for a miraculous sign to prove **his authority** to do this:

Jesus answered them, “**Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days.**”

The Jews replied, “It has taken 46 years to build this temple, and **you** are going to raise it in three days?” But the temple he had spoken of was **his body**. After he was **raised** from the dead, **his** disciples recalled what he had said. Then they believed the **Scripture** and the words that **Jesus** had spoken.

Luke 24 records that women went to **Jesus'** tomb and were greeted by two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning. John 24:5-7 tells what was said to these women:

“Why do you look for the living among the dead? **He** is not here; **he** has risen! Remember how **he** told you, while **he** was still with you in Galilee: ‘**The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, be crucified and on the third day be raised again.**’ ”

Jesus then **appeared** to the two believers on the Emmaus road. Later the same day **he** also **appeared** to the disciples in John 24:36-39:

While they were still talking about this, **Jesus himself** stood among them and said to them. “**Peace be with you.**”

They were startled and frightened, thinking they saw a ghost. **He** said to them, “**Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your minds? Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see: a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have.**”

As **God revealed himself** to the Israelites on the third day at Mount Sinai, so **Jesus revealed himself** on the third day through his **resurrection** proving **his** identity and ultimate authority.

THE JEWISH SHAVUOT – ANOTHER TRUTH REVEALED

The celebration of Shavuot was “the day of the first fruits.” The Israelites would begin to harvest their barley crop at Passover and continue for seven weeks as other crops and fruits ripened. The first to ripen were not eaten, but offered

to the **Lord**. Shavuot means “weeks.” It covers the seven-week period between Passover and Shavuot during which the Jewish people cleansed themselves and became a holy nation ready to enter into an eternal covenant with **God** with the giving of the Torah. Another meaning for Shavuot is “oaths” and so, with the giving of the Torah, the Jewish people and **God** exchanged oaths forming an everlasting covenant.

Another **truth** of the **fulfillment of Christ** through **his crucifixion** was that **he** came to **fulfill** all the requirements of the law. In Matthew 5:17 **Jesus** says:

“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.”

At **Pentecost** **God** fulfilled his oaths and promises to Israel. The **new and everlasting covenant** was at last firmly established. In this instance, **God** did not come down with the written law but with the **gift of his own Spirit** to write the law in the hearts of **believers** and to enable them, by **his power**, to obey it. This was foretold in Jeremiah 31:31–34:

“The time is coming,” declares the Lord, “when I will make a **new covenant** with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them,” declares the Lord.

“This is the **covenant** I will make with the house of Israel

after that time,” declares the Lord. “I will put the law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. No longer will a man teach his neighbour, or a man his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest,” declares the Lord.

“For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.”

This fulfillment of the law is further confirmed by the first four verses of Romans 8:

Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in sinful man, in order that the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit.

Consider also 2 Corinthians 3:7–11:

Now if the ministry that brought death, which was engraved in letters on stone, came with glory, so that the Israelites could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of its glory, fading though it was, will not the ministry of the Spirit be even more glorious? If the ministry that condemns men is glorious, how much more glorious is the ministry

that brings **righteousness!** For what was **glorious** has no glory now in comparison with the **surpassing glory**. And if what was fading away came with **glory**, how much greater is the **glory** of that which lasts!

The result of **Pentecost** was that a large number of **people** from a wide ethnic representation were **born-again**, therefore being the first fruits of the new messianic age under the **new covenant**. In other words, they were the first to respond to the **gospel of salvation**, purchased through **Jesus' death** on the cross and through the **permanent infilling** of the **promised gift of the Holy Spirit**.

THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT AT PENTECOST

The **coming of the Holy Spirit** at **Pentecost** also has varying symbolic meanings and **truths**. The first is that there was a physical and visible manifestation. This is seen in Acts Chapter 2:

Suddenly a sound like the **blowing of a violent wind** came from heaven and **filled** the whole house where they were sitting (Acts 2:2).

Another manifestation is shown in verse 3:

They saw what seemed to be **tongues of fire** that **separated** and came to **rest** on each of them.

God's promise was fulfilled immediately when:

All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them (Acts 2:4).

A similar manifestation occurred when God, in an awesome manner, descended before the Israelites from heaven to Mount Sinai: A full account is found in Exodus 19.

- God descended on Mount Sinai in fire just as the Holy Spirit descended on the believers
- The mountains trembled violently

Understanding the significance of the fire here further illuminates Luke 3:16 in which John the Baptist declares:

But one more powerful than I will come, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

What is so greatly misunderstood is that not just one baptism was prophesied here, but two. At Pentecost, the disciples were firstly baptised in the Holy Spirit, meaning they received and were filled with the Holy Spirit as was promised throughout Scripture. Secondly, they were also baptised with fire of the Holy Spirit.

Many Bible commentators believe the fire John spoke about was a “judgment fire,” and they do not see a direct link with the baptism of the Holy Spirit. They base their opinion on the fact that it is not specifically mentioned again. This view

is not correct as John knew exactly what he was **prophesying**. At **Pentecost**, **tongues of fire appeared**, resting on each of the **disciples** and resulted in their **speaking in tongues**. Even though it is not stated again, it was specifically visible, thus eliminating the perception that it is unrelated.

The fire of judgment that some **Bible** commentators refer to was taken upon **Jesus** when **he suffered** for us on the cross. What we deserved, **Jesus** took upon himself.

Some commentators have argued that John doubted **Jesus** because of a perceived lack of fire. Their claim stems from Luke 7:18–23:

John’s disciples told him about all these things. Calling two of them, he sent them to the **Lord** to ask, “Are **you** the **one** who was to come, or should we expect someone else?”

When the men came to **Jesus**, they said, “John the Baptist sent us to you to ask, ‘Are **you** the **one** who was to come, or should we expect someone else?’”

At that very time **Jesus cured** many who had diseases, sicknesses and evil spirits, and **gave sight** to many who were blind. So **he** replied to the messengers, “**Go back and report to John what you have seen and heard: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor. Blessed is the man who does not fall away on account of me.**”

If these commentators are correct on this account, then **Jesus**, knowing why John doubted in his heart, answered by explaining how **he** was using the **fire** that was given to **him** through the **Holy Spirit** and that these **giftings** directly correlated with the gifts of the **Holy Spirit** as described in 1 Corinthians 12.

The **fire**, as **prophesied** by John, was not one of judgment, but rather of **grace**. A **grace** so profound and full of **mercy** and **redemption** that not only would it **heal**, **deliver** and **raise** the dead, but it would be a **physical sign** to all that **God** had indeed come to dwell in man. This would **glorify Jesus** and therefore also **glorify the Father**.

A profound **truth** about **salvation** is revealed through Pentecost. **Jesus** came to **purchase salvation** for us through **his obedience** unto **death** on the cross, but our **salvation** is not complete until we receive the **Holy Spirit** who seals it through the baptism in the Spirit. Both **Jesus** and the **Holy Spirit** are the active agents of the **Godhead** who achieve **salvation**.

I am fully convinced that what happens at **rebirth** and what started at **Pentecost** is that we are **baptised in the Holy Spirit**. To **receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit** we need to be **baptised in the fire of the Holy Spirit**. Not only do I believe this **scriptural** discourse proves this, but I know it because the **Lord himself** spoke directly to me, unlocking this mystery.

POPULAR AND CONTRARY BELIEF

Charismatic and Pentecostal circles claim the **disciples**

received the Holy Spirit after Jesus' resurrection, but before he ascended to heaven. They believe the disciples were born-again by receiving the Holy Spirit in this post-resurrection context and Pentecost was the baptism of the Holy Spirit when they received the gifts of the Holy Spirit. The scriptural basis for this stance is found in John 20:21–23:

Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."

It is assumed here that when Jesus breathed on them to receive the Holy Spirit, they were regenerated or born-again. This assumption is not consistent with Scripture in the broader context that has been covered so far. If this view were true, there would be a remarkable inconsistency within Jesus' statement in John 16:5–7:

"Now I am going to him who sent me, yet none of you asks me, 'Where are you going?' Because I have said these things, you are filled with grief. But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you."

These two Scriptures appear to be in contradiction but both are correct and true. John 16:5-7 clearly says Jesus has to ascend to the Father before the Holy Spirit will come. John 20:21-23 states that before Jesus ascends to the Father, he breathes the Holy Spirit into them. Yes, Jesus indeed breathed on them to receive the

Holy Spirit. This was not, however, the **regeneration** of their spirits or their **rebirth**; it was an **anointing** for a special task. As noted earlier, various Old Testament prophets and leaders were **filled with the Holy Spirit** long before **Pentecost**. John the Baptist was **filled with the Holy Spirit** even from birth, however, this was not unto **regeneration**. Like these other Old Testament leaders, John's **infilling** was for a special assignment.

The context of John 20:21-23 reveals a **commissioning** of the **disciples**. They were **Jesus' disciples** before **Jesus' resurrection**, now they are **commissioned** to be **apostles for Jesus Christ**. This is firstly done through **Christ's resurrected appearance** to them and secondly, through **his commissioning** of them by stating clearly that as **the Father sent him**, so **he is commissioning and sending** them.

If they were **already filled with the Holy Spirit** unto **regeneration** they would not have had to wait for the **Counselor**. Even the **apostles**, although **commissioned**, still had to wait for the **Counselor who would come to fill them and permanently indwell them with power**. They were only **filled** previously to undertake their **commission**. The **call** and the **appointment** as **apostles** would now **fully empower** them to accomplish all the **Lord Jesus Christ** had **assigned** them. This **empowerment** was a combination of being **baptised in the Holy Spirit** and **baptised with the fire of the Holy Spirit**. They needed to have the **fullness of the Holy Spirit** in these two aspects to continue the work **Jesus** had done during **his earthly ministry**.

The final say on this came when Peter declared that **Pentecost** is the fulfillment of "what was spoken by the prophet Joel:"

“In the last days, **God** says,
I will **pour out my Spirit** on all people.
Your sons and daughters will **prophesy**,
your young men will see **visions**,
your old men will **dream** dreams.
Even on **my servants**, both men and women,
I will **pour out my Spirit** in those days,
and they will **prophesy**.
I will **show wonders** in the heavens above,
and **signs** on the earth below,
blood and fire and billows of smoke.
The sun will be turned to darkness
and the moon to blood
before the **coming of the great and**
glorious day of the Lord.
And everyone who calls
on the **name of the Lord will be saved.**”

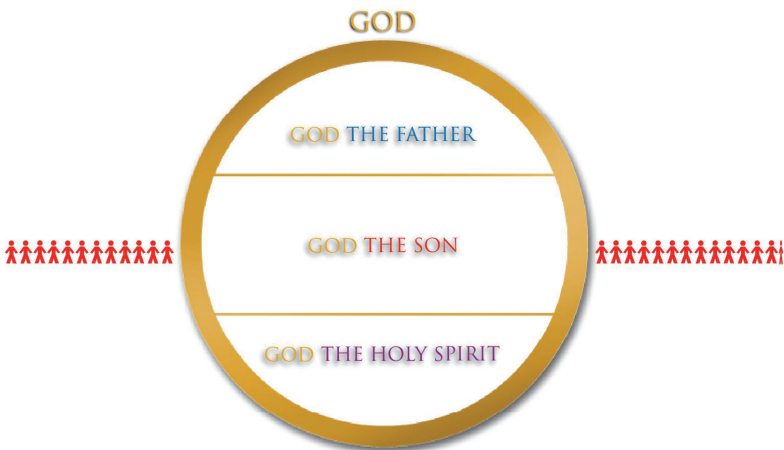
Acts 2:16–21

CHAPTER 16

Lesson on History and the Future

In my early **Christian** years I sometimes wondered why the earth was created. One night whilst praying I asked **God** what the true purpose of life on earth was. To my amazement **God** answered sharply and clearly. **He** said, “**Because Heaven is not perfect.**” I was shocked by this answer. Heaven not perfect, I wondered? How is that possible? Of all the things we believe, how can heaven not be perfect? So I asked **God** what he meant by this. **He** replied, “**Heaven is not yet perfect because I wanted many sons. If you understand this, you will understand the reason to all your questions and the true meaning of life.**”

At this point **God** gave me the following **vision** of the heavenly structure. I cannot accurately reproduce what **he** gave me, however, I have attempted to give the gist of it diagrammatically –



SONS OF GOD

The human figures represent each **child of God** who has been **born-again** and has become a “**son of the living God.**” Yes, each **child of God** will ultimately attain this position when this age concludes, and we go to be with the **Lord** in **heaven**. Please don’t misunderstand. I am not saying that we become part of the **Godhead** as that would be blasphemous. However, through adoption by **salvation** (being **born-again**) we are made “**sons of the living God.**” What a privilege! Oh the **glory** that we never deserved!

Over the years, I have found many **Scriptures** that back the **truth** of what **God spoke** to me. The first is in Romans 8:14–17:

Those who are **led by the Spirit of God** [originates at **salvation**] are **sons of God**. For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you **received the Spirit of sonship**. And by **him** we cry, “**Abba, Father.**” The **Spirit himself testifies** with our spirit that we are **God’s children**. Now if we are **children**, then we are heirs – **heirs of God** and **co-heirs with Christ**, if indeed we share in **his sufferings** in order that we may also share in **his glory**.

Continuing on in Romans 8, Paul says:

I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the **glory** that will be **revealed** in us. The creation waits in eager expectation for the **sons of God** to be **revealed**. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not

by its own choice, but by the will of the **one** who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the **glorious freedom** of the **children of God**.

We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the **firstfruits** of the **Spirit**, **groan inwardly** as we wait eagerly for our **adoption** as **sons**, the **redemption** of our **bodies**. For in this hope we were **saved [born-again]**. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what he already has? But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently (Romans 8:18-25).

Is not **God's** plan incredibly wonderful? Ephesians 1:3-10 explains it so profoundly:

Praise be to the **God** and **Father** of our **Lord Jesus Christ**, who has **blessed** us in the **heavenly realms** with every **spiritual blessing** in **Christ**. For **he** chose us in **him** before the creation of the world to be **holy** and **blameless** in **his sight**. In love **he** **predestined** us to be **adopted** as **his sons** through **Jesus Christ**, in accordance with **his pleasure** and **will** – to the praise of **his glorious grace**, which **he** has freely given us in the **One he** loves.

In **him** we have **redemption** through **his blood**, the **forgiveness of sins**, in accordance with the riches of **God's grace** that **he** **lavished** on us with all **wisdom and understanding**. And **he** made known to us the **mystery** of **his will** according to **his**

good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment – to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ.

MAN'S PRESENT CONDITION

God can see the beginning from the end. He knows who will accept the most precious gift of his Son and salvation during their lives and who will not. Does this mean that some people have no chance? Not at all! As 1 Timothy 2:3-4 says:

This is good, and pleases God our Saviour, who wants all men to be saved [born-again] and to come to a knowledge of the truth.

God presents to every man the truth and makes the way possible through Jesus Christ, who died for our sins, that we might be reconciled to God the Father. God also makes known his plan of salvation in other ways. This can be seen in Romans 1:18–25:

The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness, since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities – his eternal power and divine nature – have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.

For although they knew **God**, they neither **glorified him** as **God** nor gave thanks to **him**, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the **glory** of the **immortal God** for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles.

Therefore **God** gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. They exchanged the **truth** of **God** for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the **Creator** – **who** is forever praised. Amen.

This **truth** can appear harsh because so many seem ignorant of the **ways of God** and even to **his very existence**. However, **God's Word** says the proof of **his existence** is all around us and is undeniable.

When I was an elder in the Presbyterian church, the minister asked me to accompany him to a funeral he was conducting for one of the elderly ladies in the congregation. As I sat listening to the minister preach, I wondered whether this lady had ever really had the chance to know **God** and if indeed she knew the way to **eternal life through Christ**. I asked the **Lord** concerning this, and **he spoke** clearly to me saying, “**Look at the end of every street corner as you travel home.**”

Not sure of the exact meaning of this I did exactly as the **Lord** had asked, observing what was at the end of every street corner as I drove home. To my astonishment, there was a church at the end of every street! I was profoundly impacted by

the fact that not only does **God** allow us to see **his glory** and **his creation** every day of our lives, but **he** also places **his people** and churches around us to reveal **himself** and his **glorious plan** of **salvation to us**.

To those described in the above passages, it is never too late. There is always **forgiveness** through repentance from sin and acceptance of the **Lord Jesus Christ**. Not only is there **forgiveness**, but **God lavishes** us with the right to become **sons of God** and the chance to reign with **him** in **glory** throughout all eternity! How do we ever say thank you for such unmerited favour beyond all earthly understanding?

NEWNESS OF LIFE IN CHRIST

From the time of each person's **rebirth (salvation)** **newness of life** in **God** begins. As 2 Corinthians 5:17 says,

Therefore, if anyone is in **Christ**, he is a **new creation**; the old has gone, the **new** has come!

Spiritual transformation has taken place, and it is now the work of the **Holy Spirit** within a **believer** to move us towards **sanctification**. What is **sanctification**? It is the **Holy Spirit's** work to continually **guide** us towards **holier living**.

At the time of **rebirth** the **Lord forgives** us of all known and unknown sin. We are **cleansed by the blood of Jesus**, and nothing can be added to this "once-and-for-all" defining act of **atonement**. Unfortunately, we are not made

perfect at this time; we are just forgiven. Sin is a relentless force in working its way back into our lives. So, during the rest of our lives on earth, **the Holy Spirit** works to **convict** us of unknown and further committed sin, enabling us to repent of it.

The value systems we have known up until the time of our **salvation** have to be rectified. Fortunately for us, **the Holy Spirit** is the “perfect gentleman” **who** comes alongside us and continually points out sin through our consciences. Sometimes it takes many years to purge it and I honestly doubt whether anyone ever attains full **sanctification** on earth. Nevertheless, the more we yield to **the Holy Spirit** the more blessed our lives become as we inch our way towards this objective.

Many times during our lifetime we are exceptionally poor witnesses to the fact that we are **children of God**. We all make mistakes, but through continued **repentance** and asking for **forgiveness** we edge our way towards greater **sanctification**. 1 John 1:9 says:

If we confess our sins, **he is faithful and just and will forgive** us our sins and **purify** us from all unrighteousness.

Christians are indeed not perfect, just **forgiven**, but is it not wonderful that we have such an **advocate [Jesus]** who sits at the right hand of **the Father** and continually **intercedes** for us? When we fail we can go to **him** and ask for **forgiveness** provided we are truly sorry for what we have done and there is genuine repentance.

THE ATTAINMENT OF OUR NEW BODIES

According to the **Scriptures** quoted in this chapter, when do we attain this **wonderful, new, incorruptible body** that the whole of creation is eagerly waiting to see? I do not believe it is when a **believer** dies, although I know that a **believer** is immediately in the **presence** of **Jesus** in heaven. Why do I say this? If we read 1 Thessalonians 4:13–17, it says:

Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope. We believe that **Jesus died** and **rose again** and so we believe that **God** will bring with **Jesus** those who have fallen asleep [**believers** who have died] in **him**.

According to the **Lord's own Word**, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the **Lord**, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the **Lord himself** will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of **God**, and the **dead in Christ** will rise first. After that, **we** who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the **Lord** in the air. And so we will be with the **Lord** forever.

I would like to point out at this crucial stage that those who loved, believed and followed **God** before the **crucifixion** (Old Testament believers in **God**) are also part of those who have fallen asleep in **Jesus Christ**. They did not go to heaven immediately; they had to wait for the **sacrifice of their Saviour**. Matthew 27:52–53 states that when **Jesus died** on the **cross**:

The tombs broke open and the bodies of many holy people who had died were **raised** to life. They came out of their tombs, and after **Jesus' resurrection** they went into the holy city and appeared to many people.

What a profound **witness** to the **power** and **truth** of who **Jesus** really is! Whether they remained in Jerusalem for one day or for a longer period is unknown, but they would have now been **redeemed by Jesus Christ** and would have gone to be with **him** in heaven just like any **Christian** who has **died in Christ**.

The event spoken of in Thessalonians 4:13-17 when we meet the **Lord** in the air is often referred to by the **church** as the “**rapture**.” It is at this point that we will be **changed** to be like **Christ**. Those **believers** who have already died will return with **him** from heaven and those **Christians** who are still alive on the earth at that time will be **lifted** to meet the **dead** in **Christ**. There, together, we will be **given** our new **imperishable bodies**.

Why do I say this? I believe 1 Corinthians 15:50-54 reveals this clear answer to us:

I declare to you, **brothers**, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the **kingdom of God**, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be **changed** – in a **flash**, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet.

For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised **imperishable**, and we will be **changed**. For the perishable must clothe itself with the **imperishable**, and the mortal with

immortality. When the perishable has been clothed with the *imperishable*, and the mortal with *immortality*, then the saying that is written will come true: “Death has been swallowed up in *victory*.”

CHAPTER 17

The Calling

In 1981, whilst preparing for an examination in my business studies, my wife came into the study and told me she had heard there was a special speaker at the Hatfield Church in Pretoria. I hadn't intended to go to church due to the upcoming examination, but I finally decided to travel through to Pretoria that night.

Whilst waiting for the service to begin, the Lord spoke to me directly, saying, "Open your Bible right in front." As I responded to the Lord's voice, thinking of Genesis, I opened my Bible as instructed. What I saw was not Genesis, but a map of the world. The Lord then illuminated, in a bright emerald green, Hawaii, the South Pacific Islands and parts of Southeast Asia! I was amazed at this demonstration of the Lord's power. I knew God does not do such a thing without good reason, therefore, I asked him for an explanation. But there was no quick response from the Lord.

The service began and before long the guest speaker for the evening was introduced. Pastor Ed Roebert introduced him as Loren Cunningham, founder of Youth With A Mission (YWAM) in Hawaii! I had never heard of him or YWAM. Loren started his sermon by telling us the story of how God led him to Oahu (an island in Hawaii) and then to the Big Island of Hawaii without him knowing why at the

time. Through his obedience to go, YWAM was established there.

Loren's main message that evening was "the need for the **Word** to be taken to every nation, every tribe and every tongue." He mentioned that some of the last places yet to be reached with the **gospel** were in the South Pacific and some parts of Southeast Asia. He then declared, under the **anointing of the Holy Spirit**, "There are people in here tonight who have been prepared by the Holy Spirit to take this final message."

At that moment, I felt as if there were hot pennies rolling up and down my body! I was awestruck at this **revelation** and thoroughly convinced that I was one of those people whom **the Holy Spirit** had prepared that night! Everything cross-referenced with the **vision** I had seen!

When the service ended, I hurried down from the balcony intent on speaking to Loren. Unfortunately, he had been whisked away. When I enquired where he had gone, some people ushered me to where Loren's wife, Darlene, was sitting. After explaining to her what had happened, she said, "Oh, don't worry young man, this is quite normal. You are not the first, and you will not be the last." She suggested I go home and ask the **Lord** what **he** was saying in all of this. This was not really the answer I wanted. However, I did as she said, and thus began a life-setting course!

On arriving home I went to my study, got down on my knees and sincerely asked the **Lord** what **he** wanted of my life. **He spoke** profoundly saying, "I want everything." I asked

where I would go and what I would do. The Lord then gave me a clear vision of his hand reaching down to pick up a handful of sand from a beach. He then lifted his hand and tilted it to drop the sand. As he did this, the sand fell towards the ground and a strong wind came up and blew the sand along the beach, particle by particle.

Amazed, I asked the Lord what this vision meant and he clearly and audibly answered: “These are the last days and in these last days I am raising up an army, and you are to be part of this army. You are like one of those particles of sand you saw blowing in the wind. You are not to be concerned where you will go or what you will do because my Spirit will blow you.”

I thought I would soon depart to fulfill this calling, but it was not to be. One evening in 1987, the Holy Spirit directed me to visit Pastor John Kuhne, who was head of the Hatfield Christian Theological College. I did not personally know John but had heard that he had spent some time with YWAM in Hawaii. After being introduced to him, he asked me why I had come. I could only tell him that the Holy Spirit had sent me, adding that I believed I had a calling to serve in Hawaii, the South Pacific and parts of Southeast Asia.

He first prayed, then started to tell me about the work of IMPACT within the Pacific and Asia Christian University (now the University of the Nations), YWAM’s training centre in Kailua-Kona, Hawaii. One of the goals of IMPACT, he told me, was to encourage Christian businessmen to work in the South Pacific and Asia to help develop these nations through

business expertise and economic enterprise. He did not know my background, however, when he said this it seemed to fit right in with what I felt I was to do.

I sat in amazement that evening, realising that all my business career thus far and the studying I had done was for a good reason after all! I really thought I had been biding my time until I was ready to go into **full-time ministry** in the church. From that moment on, I changed my whole attitude toward business and saw it in a far more positive light.

John also told me, after praying yet again, that it was imperative that I take my family to Hawaii to meet the YWAM people there. At that time it took a miracle to raise the money for such a trip, but **God faithfully** supplied all we needed and so we went.

Although we were well received, getting started in “business as missions” did not work out as quickly as expected. It took further trips and much input from a **Christian business perspective** before I finally launched into the areas I believed **God** had **called** me to.

WALKING OUT THE CALLING

Since that time I have travelled to several countries in Southeast Asia and the South Pacific and have returned to Hawaii ten times at the time of writing this book. This work has not been limited to these designated areas, but it has taken me to other countries around the world.

The Lord has used my economic giftings with the purpose of “impacting and uplifting nations and their people.” In some countries this has been the only motivation where God has asked to show his love and concern for all people no matter what their religion or their beliefs are. In every instance, without it ever being planned previously, I have left for countries where God has said, “Go.” I have worked with senior government officials, including cabinet ministers, as well as leading businessmen of these nations.

I have often worked with missionary groups in these countries as this is where my heart truly lies. On such missions I have always needed to discern what the Lord requires and to be sensitive, ensuring that I do not offend host nations that do not share my faith. In these instances I try to continually show love and be of service to them.

One example is a time I was working in a predominantly Muslim country. After giving a presentation of how a particular industry there could improve, the Minister of this industry stopped me and asked, “Why do you come to help us?” I once again started to explain the benefits to him as represented in the presentation material. He stopped me and repeated the question.

Suddenly, I realised what he was asking and felt unable to answer without offending him and other Muslims within this room. I cried out in my heart, “Help Lord.” The Holy Spirit quickly gave me an answer. I replied, “I once was not a good man, however, God saved my soul and this is why I have come to help your nation.”

On any other occasion, I would have proudly used the name of **Jesus**, but **the Holy Spirit** said, “Use the name of **God**.” He again asked, “So you are a **Christian**?” “Yes,” I answered unashamedly. “So why do you come to help us of another faith then?” he asked. I cried out to the **Lord** for help again, and **the Holy Spirit** defined my reply, “Tell him it’s because I love his people.” I did this, and immediately both the minister and his officials stood to their feet and applauded.

At this meeting also attended by Hindu officials, the Hindu deputy minister stood up and said, “Yes, you **Christians** and Muslims are similar, but why would you help our people and religion?” For a third time I asked the **Lord** for help. Again came the answer from **the Holy Spirit**, “Tell them because I love his people as well.” When I repeated this, this second group arose and applauded. Needless to say, after this incident I was well accepted and enjoyed great favour.

In some countries I have served in both capacities, working with **missionaries** and working to impact their nations through business and economics. A person involved in this ministry has now been labelled “**Businary**,” half business and half missions!

A few years ago I attended a business seminar at the Kona campus of the University of the Nations in Hawaii. The speaker for one of the sessions was a business leader from Southeast Asia. His theme made a profound impression on me. He discussed the reason why we must help people of all faiths and persuasions to improve their lives.

His main point was of deep **revelation**. He asked the audience, “Do you believe that someone who has lived a very sinful life or has followed another faith until the end of his life and then **accepts Jesus Christ** as his **Saviour**, will go to heaven and receive every blessing ordained there?” Yes, of course everyone in the seminar believed that. That is the **truth of the gospel!** He then asked, “Do you believe then, if **God** knew this person would **accept Jesus** late in his life **he** would still want to **bless** him before this decision took place?” In other words to **bless** this person’s life both pre and post **salvation!** This was a very thought provoking question for me!

Some of us at the seminar went on to spend some time in the South Pacific nation of Fiji. While we were there, a **Christian** woman, who had been on the conference with us in Kona, asked us to come and pray for some of her staff in her business. To my surprise many of her staff were people of other faiths. I was not too sure about how to proceed, but as I started to pray **the Holy Spirit** clearly **showed** me things about each person’s life and what I was supposed to tell them. I was absolutely amazed that not only was **the Holy Spirit** so **full of love** for them but **he** was concerned for their general well being and wanted to improve their lives.

One such man, worked long hours with no time for leisure, and this was weighing heavily on him. **The Holy Spirit** showed me a basketball court and said the man should take time out to play and enjoy himself. I wondered how this all fit in, but in obedience I told him what I saw. To my amazement his face showed that this meant a great deal to him. He told me that he would love to do this and there was indeed a basketball

court on his way home. **The Holy Spirit** then **said** that if he took some leisure time he would be a greater blessing to his family!

This experience certainly sealed the point that **God** so **loves** every one of us, even if we have not yet come to **salvation**. This does not excuse us from the final decision that we all have to make or not make, but it revealed the profound and absolute **love of God** for all mankind!

In many countries I meet people of all backgrounds, most often businessmen, who would never enter a church or listen to a **Christian message**. At these times I share the importance of why **God** needs to be in their lives and to present the **gospel of salvation**. Many of these people are hurting, with deep unresolved issues in their lives, and I get the opportunity to **minister** to them. Most often my wife, who has a profound **discerning** and **prophetic gifting**, accompanies me. We often complement each other in all that **God calls** us to do in these nations. Each assignment for the **Lord** is different and unique and we never know what to expect. My wife has **heard** from the **Lord** that, “**We are Ambassadors for him.**”

To write about everything that has happened in these nations over the last 20 years would take another book. I presently continue onward to fulfill this **call** and **destiny God has chosen** to place on my life. This has not been **ordained** or **commissioned** by man, but through the **Lord himself** who chose to **reveal himself** to me. Where I go and what I do is not necessarily at the request of men or **churches** but rather, by the **unctioning of the Holy Spirit** and through the open doors the **Lord** provides.

CHAPTER 18

Conclusion – The Only Way to Heaven

Dear reader, before opening this book, you may not have been aware of **God** or **his plan** of **salvation through his Son Jesus Christ**. You may believe in secular humanism or one of many other spiritual persuasions. You may belong to a church, denomination or **Christian movement** but have never **received salvation** through being **born-again**. You may have been baptised as an infant and even been confirmed in your church. Although these ordinances are well meaning and intentional, they do not substitute for being **born-again**. At best, they may only point you to the **divine** necessity of being **born-again**. This life-transforming step of faith is the only way to truly **receive salvation** and to come into the authentic **body of Christ**. This statement may anger some readers, and it will probably also gladden the hearts of others who were baptised as infants, then made a choice to follow **Jesus**, repented of their sins and were **born-again**.

While there is great meaning in church ordinances, traditions and symbolism, they will not get you to heaven. The only way to **the Father** is **through receiving His Son, Jesus**, who **purchased salvation** for each one of us **by shedding his blood and dying on the cross**. Good works will never substitute for this **ultimate sacrifice** that was **paid** for us so that **his mercy** could be liberally given.

If any seemingly godly authority informs you otherwise, please know that it is not true on account of the **Word of God**. Each of us has to stand alone before **God** and the great judgment to come. The sole responsibility for what you believe rests with you. Others cannot be blamed for your beliefs!

There is no other intermediary between **God** and you except your faith in the **Lord Jesus Christ** and **his salvation in rebirth**. The steps to salvation (as scripturally outlined in Chapter 8) are these:

- There must be recognition and faith in **Jesus Christ**
- There must be recognition of sin in your life
- There must be a willingness to repent and turn away from this present sin
- You must ask **Jesus Christ** to **forgive** you and ask **him** into your heart and life

If this is done sincerely, your **rebirth experience** (being **born-again**) will take place **supernaturally**. There will be evidence within yourself that something wonderful has happened and there will be a positive change in your life. It is a **divine supernatural act!**

APOLOGY TO BELIEVERS IN MAINLINE OR REFORMED CHURCHES

The content of this book shows that I lean more towards

the **Charismatic and Pentecostal movements**. When the **Lord** first revealed the **truth** of the baptism in the Holy Spirit and the baptism of fire of the Holy Spirit to me, **he** asked me, “Do you believe this is the truth?” If **God** said it, then it had to be. So of course, I replied, “Yes.” Then the **Lord** said, “Good, now go and apologise to the Presbyterian minister.”

This was an exceptionally hard request but I had to do it! I said to the **Lord**, “Fine **Lord**, now I can tell him of the **truth** of the baptism of fire of the Holy Spirit.” This would have exonerated me from the continual debates on this subject pertaining to our individual stances. “No,” the **Lord** said, “You are only to apologise and acknowledge that he has received the baptism of the Holy Spirit and that you were wrong. You are not to discuss the **truth** I have shown you concerning the baptism of fire of the Holy Spirit.” Ouch! That was a hard word, nevertheless I went and apologised to the Presbyterian minister.

I may be a lone voice within the Charismatic and Pentecostal movements, however, I would like to sincerely apologise to all readers who have been truly “**born-again**” but do not operate in the **gifts of the Holy Spirit**, who may have been offended by **Charismatic and Pentecostal** followers. I do fully recognise that you have been **baptised in the Holy Spirit**.

THE MANIFEST BAPTISMS

No more is needed, your **salvation** is complete. We are all **one in Christ** and are **true brothers and sisters in the Lord**. The question remains, however, do you want to be more effective in

your personal life, in **ministry** or in **service** fulfilling the **divine plan of God?** The only way to do this is through the **manifest baptisms**, these being:

- **Baptism in water**
- **Baptism of fire of the Holy Spirit**

For the category of **believers** who would consider **water baptism**, their analytical process can be simplified:

- Do you want to **honour** and **glorify Jesus Christ** publicly in your life for what **he** has done for you through **salvation** (your **rebirth**), by forgiving your past life and giving you **new life** now and forever?
- Do you want to obey this **divine** instruction of obedience to the **Word of God?**
- Do you want to follow **God the Father's divine** purposes of **water baptism** to allow the **glorification of his Son (Jesus)** in your **salvation** to a host of earthly witnesses and unto the heavenly hosts?

Consider the implications of this **Scripture** found in Matthew 10:32:

Whoever **acknowledges me** before men, **I** will also **acknowledge** him before **my Father** in heaven.

If you are in a church and have been baptised in water

through church, parent or peer pressure or otherwise, but you have not honestly been **born-again**, then your baptism is really null and void. You first need to **receive salvation** by being **born-again** and then **baptised in water** again based on your own choice.

CHURCH UNITY

Father, make us **one** as **Jesus** prayed and make us **one** that the world may know that **you** have sent **your son** as the only way to **salvation**.

I am aware of some churches that have crossed the great divide that often separates us. They meet and fellowship with each other despite their differences. I fully believe this is what **God** intended and we must always remember the great leveller that unifies us – **salvation in Jesus Christ**.

My appeal to all **Christian leaders** and **Christians**, who may read this book, is that we make every effort to keep unity and understanding between ourselves. Hopefully the content contained in this book will help in some way to facilitate better understanding.

To those church leaders who do not believe in the necessity of **salvation** through individual **rebirth** and rely merely on church ordinances, symbolism and tradition, let me say with compassion, that you are in great jeopardy of going to hell. I plead with you to look again at the **Word of God** in a new light. Another great and unfortunate demise is that you could well be leading your congregations the same way. 2

Timothy 3:5 illustrates this when it says:

...having a form of godliness but denying its **power**. Have nothing to do with them.

THE DECISION THAT LASTS FOR ETERNITY

This life is not only about the present, it is also about how the present affects the future. In order for us to live forever in the ultimate happiness that we all inwardly strive for, we are required to make the most important decision of our lives and that is to accept **Jesus Christ as our Lord and Saviour**.

Our life in **Christ** in this lifetime is all important and although we may face many trials and sufferings, it's all worth it as we will live on with **Christ** and receive the undeserved **glory** that has been destined for us, even before creation began. We will live and reign with **our Lord** throughout eternity. If we do not do this we will still live forever, but in agonising torment in hell's lake of fire.

To every reader and every one of us, a decision is required to accept or reject the **Lord Jesus Christ** and **receive his salvation through rebirth**.

Think deeply. What is your decision? The ramifications of your decision are far-reaching and eternal.