**A Synopsis of the Way of Life in First Century Christianity**

**Introduction:** When the New Testament is read and believed, one does not find the kind of “Christianity” which is propagated in America today revealed on its pages.

Instead, the Scriptures reveal a dramatically different kind of “Christianity.”

It therefore becomes very important for all who desire to enter into eternal glory to determine from the Word of God what kind of “Christianity” is set forth within the pages of God’s holy Word. The “Christianity” which resembles that which is revealed in the New Testament is that which is true. All others are mere imitations!

This Series will include messages on: Sinners – Sons – Spiritual – Servants – Strangers – Soldiers – Sufferers – and Surrendered.

**First: The Christianity of the New Testament begins with the premise that man is a sinner who is totally unable to change his nature or destiny.**

**Mark 10: 21-27** – “(21) Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me. (22) And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions. (23)And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, **How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!** (24) **And the disciples were astonished at his words.** But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God! \*\*(25) **It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.** (26) And they were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves, **Who then can be saved?** (27) And Jesus looking upon them saith, **With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible**.”

**Ephesians 2:1-3** – “\*\*(1) And you hath he quickened**, who were dead in trespasses and sins**; (2) Wherein in time past **ye walked according to the course of this world**, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: (3) Among whom **also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others**.”

**Second:** **The Scriptures insists that Biblical salvation is a work of God in the heart of the sinner and (at the same time) that the sinner repent toward God and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ to the saving of his soul before he may call himself a Christian.**

**The Sovereign Work of God in Salvation:**

**Matthew 1:21** – “And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for \*\***he shall save his people from their sins**.”

**John 3:3&5** – “(3) Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, **Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God** . . . (4) Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, **Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God**.”

**Note**: Born again can be translated born from above – born of God!

**John 1:12-13** – “(12) But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: \*\*(13) **Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God**.”

**James 1:18** – “**Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth**, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.”

**The Personal Responsibility of the Sinner in Salvation:**

**Acts 4:12 –** “Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”

**Note**: Personal responsibility begins with recognizing God only accepts His Son and what He has done for sinners.

**Acts 10:43** – “To him give all the prophets witness, that **through his name \*\*whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins**.”

**Acts 13:38-39** – “(38) Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: (39) And by him \*\***all that believe** are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.”

The Faith by which a sinner is saved is preceded by the desire to turn from sin to the Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Repentance is the turning from sin – Faith is the turning to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Both Repentance and Faith are commanded by God!

**Repentance: Acts 17:30-31 –** “(30) And the times of this ignorance God winked at; **but now \*\*commandeth all men every where to repent**: (31) Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.”

**Faith: I John 3:23** – “And \*\***this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ**, and love one another, as he gave us commandment.”

**Romans 10:9-13** – “(9) That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and **shalt believe in thine heart** that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. (10) For **with the heart man believeth unto righteousness**; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. (11) For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. (12) For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich **unto all that call upon him.** (13) **For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved**.”

The confession of the mouth comes out a heart that is persuaded of the truth of what Jesus Christ has done for sinners.

**Third: The Christianity of the New Testament teaches that those who are genuinely saved become the sons of God - are called saints - are spiritual minded individuals.**

**A. Sons of God:** We become the sons of God by faith – **Galatians 3:26 and 4:5-7**.

**1. We are adopted into God's family –** **Ephesians 1:3-6** – “(3) Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: (4) According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him **in love: (5) Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will**, (6) To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.”

**2) We are the legal heirs of the inheritance of God - Romans 8:16-17 –** “(16) The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: (17) And **if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ**; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.”

**Colossians 1:12 –** “Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:”

**B. Saints** - **We are Saints (sanctified ones – set aside for God and for His use) by virtue of our position with Jesus Christ:**

**Colossians 1:1-2 –** “(1) Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timotheus our brother, (2) **To the saints and faithful brethren \*\*in Christ** which are at Colosse: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.”

**Philippians 1:1 –** “Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the **saints \*\*in Christ Jesus** which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons:”

**We are Saints (sanctified ones – set aside for God and for His use) by demonstration of the life we live:**

**I Thessalonians 4:3-6 –** “(3 For \*\***this is the will of God, even your sanctification**, that ye should abstain from fornication: (4) That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel **in sanctification and honour**; (5) Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God: (6) That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter: because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified. (7) \*\***For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.**”

**C. Spiritual - We may be called Spiritual because the Spirit of God dwells in us.**

**Romans 8:5-9** – “(5) For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; **but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.** (6) For to be carnally minded is death; **but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.** (7) Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. (8) So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God**.** (9) \*\***But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.**”

**We are also regarded as Spiritual because we live a life which reflects the spirituality found in the Word of God:**

**I Corinthians 3:1-3 –** “(1) And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto \*\***spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ**. (2) I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. (3) For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, **and walk as men**?”

**Galatians 5:22-26 –** “(22) But \*\***the fruit of the Spirit** is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, (23) Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. (24) And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. (25) If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. (26) Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.”

The proof that the Spirit of God lives in the Christian is in the fruit – the evidence – the outward reflection in His life in theirs. It is seen by us and by others. A Christian cannot hide the fact that God lives in them.

**Fourth: The Christianity of the New Testament teaches that those who are true Christians will possess the character of those who are called Servants as well as those who are called Strangers.**

**A. Servants: All are servants of someone or something – see Romans 6:16-18**

**Philippians 2: 5-11 –** “(5) **Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus**: (6) Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: (7) But made himself of no reputation, **and \*\*took upon him the form of a servant,** and was made in the likeness of men: (8) And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. (9) Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: (10) That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; (11) And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

**I Corinthians 7:20-23 –** “(20) Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called. (21) Art thou called being a servant? care not for it: but if thou mayest be made free, use it rather. (22) For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's freeman: likewise also he that is called, being free, \*\***is Christ's servant**. (23) Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men.”

**I Corinthians 9:19 –** “For though I be free from all men, \*\***yet have I made myself servant unto all**, that I might gain the more.”

**B. Strangers:**

**I Peter 2:11 –** “Dearly beloved, I beseech you \*\***as strangers** and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;”

**Pilgrim:** One who temporarily lives in a strange place away from his own people - as one who is passing through - one making a journey - one who is in a place for a short period of time.

**Strangers:** To dwell in a land as an alien to that land.

**Fifth: The Christianity of the New Testament characterizes the true Christian as a Soldier and as one who is a Sufferer in this world.**

**A. Soldier:**

**II Corinthians 10:3-4** – “(3) For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (4) (For the weapons of \*\***our warfare** are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)”

**Ephesians 6:10-18 –** “(10) Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. (11) **\*\*Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil**. (12) For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. (13) Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. (14) Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; (15) And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; (16) Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. (17) And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: (18) Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;”

**B. Sufferers:**

**Acts 14:21-22 -** “(21) And when they had preached the gospel to that city, and had taught many, they returned again to Lystra, and to Iconium, and Antioch, (22) Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and **that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of Go**d.”

**Philippians 1:29-30 –** “(29) For unto you \*\***it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake**; (30) Having the same conflict which ye saw in me, and now hear to be in me.”

**Sixth: The Christianity of the New Testament characterizes the true Christian as one who is Surrendered to the will of God in Jesus Christ for their life.**

**Jesus Christ said: Matthew 11:28-30** – “(28) Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. (29) \*\***Take my yoke upon you**, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. (30) For \*\***my yoke is easy**, and my burden I light.”

**Paul’s testimony: Acts 9:1-6 –** “(1) And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, (2) And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem. (3) And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: (4) And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? (5) And he said, \*\***Who art thou, Lord?** And the Lord said, \*\***I am Jesus** whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. (6) And he trembling and astonished said, \*\***Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?** And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.”

**All Christians – not just the super-Christian or the dedicated Christian: Romans 12:1-2 –** “(1) I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that \*\***ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service**. (2) And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, \*\***that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God**.”