
LESSONS FOR BAPTISM AND CONFIRMATION

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CHAPTER 1

HISTORY OF BAPTISM AND CONFIRMATION

OLD TESTAMENT BAPTISM

In the Old Testament water was used for initiation, ablution and ritual cleansing of oneself. An example is the washing of Aaron and his sons (Lev.8:6), the cleansing of Naaman (2Kings 5:14-15). Later the Jews baptized people who were not Jews but wanted to embrace the Jewish faith (Judaism) to enable them become members of the Jewish community.

Other types of baptism included the Baptism of Noah and his family (Gen. 7:1-5, 1Peter 3:20, 21) and the Baptism of Moses with the Israelites (Exodus 14:19-22, 1Cor. 10:1-6) which had New Testament baptism interpretations.

NEW TESTAMENT BAPTISM

The Pharisees carried on the practice of ritual cleansing, thereby claiming extraordinary purity, which Jesus criticized as hypocritical (Matt.23:25). John introduced a new form of baptism. He baptized people who repented of their sins in preparing their hearts for faith in Jesus Christ who was later to be revealed.

John baptized Jesus not because Jesus needed to reform his life but to fulfill his Father's mission by carrying the

nature and punishment of sins of the people in his human nature. (Matthew 3:1-10)

John the Baptist introduced Jesus as the Messiah who comes with an additional form of baptism. That is “baptism with the Holy Spirit and with fire,” not only with water. (Matt.3:11-12). Jesus demonstrated this in his baptism (Matt.3:16-17). The voice of ‘confirmation’ from the Father is the basis for Confirmation service in the Church.

Jesus might have baptized his initial followers but on most occasions he left the water baptism of other disciples for his Apostles to do (Jn. 4:1-2). Jesus was interested in preparing his disciples to be baptized with the Holy Spirit. He concentrated much on prayer and teaching the disciples to understand the Word of God, to overcome temptations of life and to do the Will of God, just like he went through after his baptism. (Matt.4:1-4; Acts 10:35-38).

THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH

From the beginning there was a teaching Church. On the first Pentecost, after some 3,000 had been baptized we read that ‘they devoted themselves to the teaching and the fellowship of the apostles, the breaking of bread, and prayer’ (Acts 2:42).

The Gospels themselves grew out of the teaching and preaching of the fellowship. Even before the gospels were written, the apostles used at least five kinds of teachings:

- i. The Christian interpretation of Jewish scriptures for converting and educating the Jews.
- ii. The proclaiming of the Christian tradition in brief Creeds. A similar teaching to the brief confession of faith or catechism learnt as a preliminary to baptism.
- iii. Teachings about life and sayings of Jesus.
- iv. Moral instructions in 'the Way' or 'the two Ways' of Life and Death.
- v. Teachings in the meaning of Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

Christian parents and godparents had the responsibility for educating their families.

"You fathers, again, must not provoke your children to resentment, but give them the instruction, and the correction which belong to a Christian upbringing" (Eph.6:4). The early church was aware of itself as a community of the Spirit's inspiration. Tongues speaking were popular for a while, but soon dropped into the background as extravagance of emotion gave way to disciplined thinking and conduct. Teaching materials were formed in the Gospel writings and Epistles.

THE MIDDLE AGES

In the service of worship, there was the teaching portion known as the 'Mass of the Catechumen' for anticipating

baptism. For several centuries, there was instruction outside the worship services to prepare men and women more carefully for baptism. According to Tydwell, early Christians educated through preaching, and teaching in their church meetings and family meeting, through worship services (in scripture reading, instruction and the Lord's Supper) and through Catechetical school. One's first Communion was prior to Confirmation.

Miller explains that, in the Middle Ages, just after the Dark Ages the Medieval Church leaders and Clergy decided to instruct the church members through learning:

- a. The Lord's Prayer
- b. The Apostles / Nicene Creeds
- c. The Ten Commandments
- d. Ave Maria (Hail Mary)

The Anglican Book of Common Prayer confirmed that all who are to be confirmed should first know and understand the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, and able to answer the other questions in the Church catechism. Confirmation enables those who have been baptized as infants, when they are of age to do so, openly before the church, to take upon them and confirm the promises made on their behalf by their godparents.

THE REFORMATION PERIOD

This system was projected further during the Renaissance or the Reformation period. Rev. Martin Luther (1483-1546) reacted against the downward trend of morality in the Church's hierarchy and the legalism of Rome and its accompanying corruption. The church seemed to replace New Testament faith of 'Salvation by Grace' with "Salvation through Merit".

Luther, a German, translated the Hebrew, Greek and Latin Bibles and others into their vernaculars and printed more Bibles for other Christians to have access, which hitherto, was not accessible to the Laity. By his 'protest' all Churches that are not Catholic are termed 'Protestant Churches' which emphasized on the Bible as the people's book. This led to revolutionary changes in Christian education.

Preaching was also revived and became a most effective tool for education. Teaching in the Christian family was encouraged, and small Catechisms were prepared for children. Luther also thought of Confirmation as for admission to the Lord's Supper.

Topics for Confirmation classes included a. The Gospel of Salvation, b. Water baptism, c. Holy Spirit Baptism, d. The Lord's Supper, e. The Lord's Prayer, f. The Apostles /Nicene Creeds, g. The Ten Commandments, h. Spiritual gifts, i. The Second Coming of Christ, j. Catechism.

Confirmation was done to affirm/strengthen the grace of baptism by conferring an increase and deepening of that

grace as to say ‘to make more sure’. It is an affirmation of one’s baptism, sometimes as a way of renewing one’s baptismal promises. This ceremony sometimes comes with ‘the laying on of hands’ as an essential part of the baptismal ordinance, and to receive baptism without confirmation is to leave the ordinance incomplete.

CHAPTER 2

THE GOSPEL OF SALVATION

PREAMBLE

“Gospel” means “Good News.” Humans turned from God (the Creator) to live disgraceful lives by the influence of sin resulting in death and separation from God. The Good News is that God is giving back this Eternal Life and Righteousness through Christ Jesus for the salvation of all human beings, from the power of sin and hell to those who will receive.

“Salvation” means to help someone out of a problem or danger. Humans also need salvation because their sinfulness and evil doings are leading them to destruction and hell. One becomes saved after rejecting sin, believing in the Gospel of Jesus and receiving the Spirit of God.

ALL HUMANS NEED TO SAVED

Humans were created in the image of God to live according to God's will (in godliness). This makes humans share in the glory, blessing, peace and relationship with God. Human's Sin destroyed this beautiful privilege. That image (glory) of God in Human becomes defaced and corrupted. (Rom.3:23)

WHAT IS SIN?

1. Sin is an action, thought or feeling which is not good. Matt.7:20-23
2. Sin is disobedience and disrespect to the good laws/standards of God, the community, parents and schools authorities. 1Jn.3:4

WHAT IS THE ORIGIN OF SIN?

- a. The origin of sin is the sin of Satan, Adam and Eve challenging God's authority (Rev.12:7-9 Gen.3:1-7 Rom.5:12).
- b. Sin starts with the deception of the heart and mind – from within. Mk.7:21-23.

WHAT IS THE EFFECT OF HUMAN'S SIN?

1. **Spiritual Death** – Adam and Eve became separated from God because their desire for God was corrupted/dead.
This has affected all human beings' relationship with God. Gen.3:7-10 Rom.3:23; 6:23a
2. **Physical Death** --. Human lifespan on earth also shortened because Eternal life is lost on earth. We hate and kill each other. Ps.90:7-10

HOW DOES GOD WANT HUMANS BE SAVED?

- a. God loves humans and gave his Son (Jesus) to die as sin offering to save humans. 1 Pet. 2:24
- b. Humans must repent and pray to God for forgiveness by the sin offering. Acts 2:38
- c. Humans must believe and receive Jesus for Eternal Life/Spirit. Jn. 14:6

HOW DOES ONE PRAY TO RECEIVE CHRIST?

“Lord Jesus, I need you. I know that I have sinned and as a result I am cut off from you. I want to turn from all my sins to follow you. I confess with my lips that Jesus is Lord and I believe in my heart that God raised Jesus from the dead.

Thank you for forgiving my sins. Please come into my life and take control. Thank you, Lord, for hearing my prayers as you promised. Amen”

CHAPTER 3

ASSURANCE OF SALVATION

PREAMBLE

One may have felt or not feel different when one asked Jesus to come into his or her life. However, God caused certain new spiritual conditions to happen in the believer's life as a child of his kingdom. One must accept them, to assure him/ herself of his/her salvation and thank God for them in order to advance in faith.

The following are some of God's promises of transformation for every believer:

1. **All your sins were forgiven** – Some Christian converts believe all their sins have not been forgiven because they sometimes remember their past and feel it still exist, but God's love had already justified them by faith

(Col.1:13,14). Come to God with confidence through the forgiving power of the Blood of Jesus Christ. This grace of God gives Christians a daily privilege to be forgiven of all their mistakes if they confess and repent of them (1Jn.1:8, 9).

2. **Jesus came into your life** – If you sincerely invited Jesus into your life He has come into you by faith through His Spirit. Jesus is now in your heart and life (Rev. 3:20). There is, therefore, no need for one to receive Christ again and again, because His Word promised that He had come into the believer's spirit by faith.

3. **You became a Child of God** -- Some Christian converts don't feel God's holy presence around them so they presume they are not yet children of God. All Christian converts are by faith, partakers of the family of God no matter their church denominational backgrounds because they are all born of God (John 1:12, 13). This is known as the second birth (Jn.3:3-5).

4. **You received Eternal Life** – Through faith in Christ one becomes a partaker of God's eternal life and righteousness.

Eternal life is the Righteous Spirit of God which when a human being receives, makes one to stay with God forever even after death. The Christian must believe he/she is now a candidate of heaven. (Rom.6: 22, 23 1 John 5:11-13)

5. God's Holy Spirit came into you – When one is born again through repentance and faith in Christ, one receives the Holy Spirit (1 Cor.3:16,17). The Holy Spirit is a seal and guarantee that one is a child of God. He is the Eternal Spirit from God through which God enlivened and inspired human beings to live as agents of God on earth (Eph. 1:13).

6. You are a New Creation – Now that you have Christ in your life, you have become a newly sanctified person (2 Cor.5:17). A new Spirit is now controlling your life and desires. Christ has come to set you from your former life of sin, selfishness, wrong passion, disobedience to God and Human authority. We have a moral responsibility to make utmost effort to do the will of God (Gal.2:20; 5:22-24).

Thomas E. Hugh, in his book “Our Methodist Faith” confirmed that all men may know they are saved:

- (a) By the promises in the Word of God (1Jn.5:12)
- (b) By the conviction of the Holy Spirit (Rom.8:14)
- (c) By the believer's changed life. (2Cor.5:17)

CHAPTER 4

GROWING IN FAITH

PREAMBLE

God's salvation is meant to bring transformation of the believer's physical and spiritual conditions. The Spirit of God is interested in affecting the believer's body, soul and spirit positively by his own grace. Generally, there are three stages of Christian Salvation: The Instant, the Progressive and the Final. It is also known as the Past, the Present and the Future salvation.

1. **INSTANT SALVATION** – As Christians, we were saved from the penalty of sin (i.e. Eternal condemnation) when God brought us to faith in the person and work of Jesus Christ. This is the salvation of the believer's Spirit, delivered once and for all from spiritual death, to the blessing and gift of Eternal Life.

This is also known as:

- a. **Regeneration** – This means to be 'Born again' or a 'New birth.' Born from an old Sinful nature of human birth into a new Godly nature. The human's spirit is

given new life to a restored relationship with God in Christ to become a child of God. Jn.3:3,7,16

- b. **Redemption** – This means to compensate for or to exchange. Jesus' death was meant to replace the eternal death sentence for human beings' sins, if they should put their trust in Christ for salvation. Colo.1:13,14
- c. **Justification** – This means to declare someone as righteous and not guilty. The sinner who puts his/her trust in the Righteousness of Jesus, the Son of God, is declared no more a 'sinner' but 'righteous' before God. Rom.3:20 -24
- d. **Reconciliation** – This means bringing people to accept each other. The believer in Christ is brought back into peaceful relationship and fellowship with God. 2Cor. 5:17-20

2. PROGRESSIVE SALVATION – This shows that salvation is continuous. This deals with the perfection of the believer to develop faith and to love God and neighbours daily. By the empowerment of the Holy Spirit the believer becomes master over sin and worldliness (Titus 2:11-13).

This is the salvation of the Soul (will, conscience and desires). This is also termed '**Sanctification**,' where the believer's conscience is washed and transformed into a holy character by the Holy Spirit. Phil. 2:12, 13.

3. FINAL SALVATION – This is the future sense of salvation. It happens when a believer stays in holiness to death, hopes in God's final judgment and blessing when the believer's transformed body is received into the heavenly glory. This stage is termed '**Glorification**'. (1Cor.15:12-22) The believer in heaven becomes a perfect being in God, enjoying eternal life. This is also termed '**Entire Sanctification**'. Matt. 25:31- 43 Jn.14:1-6

5 RULES TO SPIRITUAL MATURITY

1. Live a righteous life

When one receives new life in Christ, it manifests in the way one thinks and does things. When we love God we obey his commandments. Avoid sinful desires and resist temptations. (2Cor. 5:17 Gal. 5:22-23)

2. Pray and Fast regular

God's children talk to God, their Father, daily in prayer. Thank him always and commit all your cares to Him. Fasting helps to kill wrong passion and builds good communication with God and our neighbours. (1 Thess. 5:17 Phil. 4:6)

3. Study the Word of God daily

God's word is the Christian's daily spiritual food and guide for successful life. It is therefore appropriate for to read the Bible and listen to Word of God daily. (Psalm 119:105 James 1:22)

4. Fellowship with other Christians

Wherever believers (the Church) meet, God is present. They meet to pray, study the Word of God, share testimonies and sacraments and support one another socially, materially and spiritually. (Heb 10:25 Gal.6:10)

5. Share your faith with others

Testifying regularly of your salvation and your personal experiences with God builds your confidence in the faith. Those who come to faith in the gospel must also support the spreading of the Word of God. (Matt. 28:18-20 Rom.10:9, 10, 17)

CHAPTER 5

WATER BAPTISM

WHAT IS BAPTISM?

Baptism is an English word from the Greek 'Baptizo' meaning 'to dip, immerse, cleanse or wash.' Baptism is a public declaration and initiation into covenant with Christ,

and spiritual washing of Christian converts from all evil contaminations into God's spiritual renewal. It is a sacrament which is the visible means by which God's grace is sought. It is also a sign or symbol of a Christian experience demonstrating his/her acceptance by God and the receiving of the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2:38-40)

MODES OF BAPTISM

1. **Submersion or Immersion** -- The person is dipped in water and totally covered with it, a symbol of faith in the death and resurrection of Christ. Matt. 3:16 Rom. 6:3-4

2. **Effusion or Pouring** --The person stands in water, and water is fetched and poured on him/her. This is related to the outpouring and infilling of the Holy Spirit on believers. Joel 2:28-29 Acts 2:17,18

3. **Aspersion or Sprinkling** --Water is taken by the hand and poured on a person three times, mentioning the name of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It is related to washing and cleansing of sins in baptism. Eze.36:24-28 Heb. 10:22-23

All these are ecumenically accepted forms of baptism. What is necessary is the genuineness of the candidate's faith and commitment to the service of Christ. When the gospel traveled to far nations there were various geographic environmental and cultural challenges that necessitated the different modes of baptism.

In the Wikipedia, Bigg, C., mentioned that the three modes of baptism were all acceptable practices during the

apostolic age and documented in the Apostolic Didache (the teachings of the Twelve Apostles to the Gentiles Nations, possibly written around A.D. 65-80).

He wrote: “Baptism is to be conferred in the Name of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. In the ‘living water’ (that is, natural flowing water), if it can be had – if not, in cold or even warm water. The baptized and the baptizer, and if possible, anyone else attending the ritual should fast for one or two days beforehand. If the water is insufficient for immersion, it may be poured three times on the head.”

SIGNIFICANCE OF WATER BAPTISM

- a) The water is used to symbolize ‘washing’ and ‘purification’ of the candidate by God’s Spirit by grace through his/her faith in Christ. John 3:3,5 Titus 3:5
- b) The dipping and raising in baptism represents partaking in Jesus’ death, burial, resurrection and glorification. Romans 6:3,4 Gal:2:20-21
- c) Baptism is done for those who make public confession for faith and forgiveness of sins from the heart. One needs to believe in Christ and repents from ones sins before being baptized. Acts 2:38,41 Romans 6:6,12,14

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- d) Jesus set an example of baptism for believers to emulate. It attracts God's Spiritual empowerment. If done deceptively it attracts God's wrath. Luke 9:26 John 3:3,5
 - e) Baptism, unlike Old Testament circumcision, liberates us into a new humanity that transcends all Sexes, Races or Social status. Gal. 3:27-29

CHAPTER 6

INFANT BAPTISM

PREAMBLE

Infant baptism (also termed 'paedobaptism' from Greek 'pais' meaning 'child') is the baptism of babies and children below age seven when the candidate cannot express faith or take responsibility for the baptism. The child is normally initiated into the faith of the parents and god-parents who nurture to grow in the same faith. Prov. 22:6

HISTORY OF INFANT BAPTISM

The Wikipedia affirms that dating back to the 2nd century young children were referred as ‘children of God’ which may indicate that Christians normally baptize children too which was indicated by Bishop Irenaeus (c.130-202) in his book ‘Against Heresies’. Bishop Origen (c.185-254) also mentioned infant baptism as traditional and customary with sponsors/parents speaking for them.

In his manuscript ‘The Apostolic Tradition’, Bishop Hippolytus of Rome (died AD 235) describes how to perform the ceremony to baptism; it states that children were baptized first, and if any of them could not answer for themselves, their parents or someone else from their family was to answer for them.’ However some Christian leaders of the time preferred to postpone baptism until an age of reasoning, so as to ensure forgiveness for all their preceding sins. All three modes of baptism are used in Infant Baptism where applicable.

ARGUMENT AGAINST INFANT BAPTISM

1. There is no expression of repentance and faith by the child. Acts 2:38
2. Jesus himself as an example was baptized at adulthood. Matt. 3:13
3. The child is innocent and not liable for judgement. Matt.19:13-15
4. There is no Biblical evidence of infant baptism in the Bible.

ARGUMENT FOR INFANT BAPTISM

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1. The promise of faith is for all generations (both adults and their children) Acts 2:38, 39.
 2. Baptism of Households and Families (including children) were normal at the apostolic times. Eg. Cornelius' household (Acts 10:1-8, 24, 44-48), Lydia and Jailer's households (Acts 16:13-15, 29-34) and Crispus and Stephanas household. – (1Cor.1:14-16)
 3. Children's baptism replaces children's circumcision covenant of the Old Testament. Genesis 17:10-14 Romans 2:29; 4:11
 4. It replaces the African indigenous child initiation done during naming ceremonies which makes Christian children prone to evil spiritual obsession. Exo. 20:2-6
 5. The preferring of the rites of 'Dedication of Children' to 'Baptism of Children' is not necessarily scriptural. 'Dedication of Children' in Israel was meant for only the first born children. Exo. 13:1-2, 11-16 Lev. 12:1-8 Luke 2:22-24

CHAPTER 7

THE HOLY SPIRIT BAPTISM

PREAMBLE:

Apart from Water Baptism, one needs the Holy Spirit Baptism. It was on the Day of Pentecost that the Church of Christ was formally baptized with the Holy Spirit to complete the redemption of believers and the world. The Believer, therefore, has to understand the purpose of the Holy Spirit for his/her life and ministry. (Joel 2:28-32, Matt. 3:11, John 3:3,5)

WHO IS THE HOLY SPIRIT?

The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Triune God. He is a separated part of God's divinity, even though in one Spirit with the Father and the Son. After the work and ascension of Jesus the Holy Spirit is the one working in this world along with the Father and the Son. Therefore, the human's conversion to Christ, Spiritual holiness and

the preaching and teaching of the Gospel of Christ cannot be done without the Holy Spirit of God. (Acts 1:8,9)

THE HOLY SPIRIT AT CONVERSION

When one repents and receives Christ one receives forgiveness and the indwelling gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38 Rom.8:9, 16 Eph. 1:13). Rev. John Wesley describes this as the “the inner witness and assurance.”

THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE CHRISTIAN’S LIFE

1. The Holy Spirit leads and helps believer to grow in faith. Rom. 8:14, 26-27
2. The Holy Spirit teaches counsels, comforts and guides. John 14:15-16, 26.
3. A believer receives one or more of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. The gifts include Word of Wisdom, Word of Knowledge, Faith, Healing, Miraculous powers, Prophecy, Distinguishing between spirits, Speaking in different tongues, Apostles, Teaching, Giving, Administrator, Serving, Encouraging, Leadership and Showing mercy.
One’s gift is identified with how freely one performs in any of them. 1Cor. 12:4-11, 27-30, Rom. 12: 6-8
4. The Holy Spirit empowers the believer to live as witness for Christ. The moral values include Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, Self-control, Integrity,

Humility, Perseverance, Righteousness and Justice. Acts 1:8 and Gal. 5:22-23

THE HOLY SPIRIT BAPTISM

After the Day of Pentecost other incidents of Holy Spirit baptism took place in Acts 8:17; 9: 17; 10: 46, and 19:6 which confirmed the sequence of events quoted in Acts 1:8. Through this event some spoke in other tongues, some prophesied and others manifested other gifts of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit overshadowed and empowered them for life and mission. Later on the Apostles and early believers continued to pray for the 'infilling of the Holy Spirit'. Acts 4:8; 6:3; 13:9-10.

BAPTISM BY FIRE

The Fire of God brings physical and spiritual renewal. The Fire consumes the evil passions and stirs up into flame the gifts of God in believers. 2Tim.1:6-7

HOW TO RECEIVE THE BAPTISM / INFILLING WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

- i. Repent of your sinful life and receive Christ as your Saviour and Lord.
- ii. Desire and pray for the baptism /infilling, sometimes with fasting.
- iii. Believe God for it.
- iv. Consistently, use your spiritual gifts when you experience it.

CHAPTER 8

THE LORD'S SUPPER

WHAT IS THE LORD'S SUPPER?

The Lord's Supper is a sacrament (symbolic but spiritual meal) about the eating and drinking of the bread and wine representing the body and blood of Christ. The Lord's Supper is also termed The Eucharist, The Holy Communion, The Last Supper, or The Lord's Table.

It is also an opportunity by which God encounters his children at table to bless them with graces such as spiritual gifts, peace and healing from physical and spiritual challenges of the world.

THE PASSOVER AND THE LORD'S SUPPER

There is a relationship between the Lord's Supper and the Jewish Passover. The Passover is a Jewish feast that commemorates the deliverance of the Jews from Egypt. At Passover in Egypt the Jews ate unleavened Bread with bitter leaves and meat of a sacrificed lamb.

At the Lord's Supper Jesus rather chose to eat Unleavened Bread and Wine with his disciples to signify that he represented the sacrificial lamb whose blood

brought salvation to the people of God (Israel) Exo.12:12-13 Matt.26:17, 20-29 Jn.1:29

THE BREAD AND WINE

At the table, Jesus took bread, blessed it, broke it and passed it on to his disciples asking them to eat. Jesus then took the cup of wine blessed it and asked his disciples to drink. The bread symbolized Jesus' body and the wine symbolized his sacrificial blood (1Cor. 11:23-26). Jesus is the bread of Life. (John 6:32-35)

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

- i. **A Sign of sharing in the New Covenant:** We trust in the blood of Jesus for the forgiveness of sins. (Matt. 6:14-15 1Cor.11:25)
- ii. **It predicts a prophetic end-time (eschatological) event:** Christ will dine with his faithful disciples in the Kingdom of Heaven. (Matt. 26:29 1Cor. 11:26)
- iii. **It is a Memorial:** Christ commanded that his followers must celebrate this to remind believers and the world about the redemption in his death. (Luke 22:19)
- iv. **It is a sign of Fellowship and Reconciliation (Communion):**
Christians are reminded to build peaceful relationship with Christ and with each other as one

church shares one loaf. (John 13:34,35 1Cor. 10:16,17)

PREPARATION FOR THE LORD'S SUPPER

In preparing to receive this Holy Meal, the believer is to take it in a worthy manner by confessing all sins, seeking reconciliation with God and with neighbours. Since prayer done over the bread and wine turns them into the body and blood of Christ, we should trust Jesus for cleansing, spiritual renewal and healing (1Cor. 11:17-22, 27-34).

Access to the Lord's Table is not a right conferred upon the worthy, but a privilege given to the undeserving who comes in faith, repentance and love.

CHAPTER 9

GOD – THE TRINITY

WHAT IS TRINITY?

Trinity is from the Latin ‘trinita.’ It is in relation to God in one ‘Essential Being’ revealing himself in three Persons – Father, Son and Holy Spirit. They are not 3 individuals but only 3 personal self-distinctions within one Divine Essence, God. It is not three separate Deities or Gods, but one Godhead. He is the God who testifies of Himself by the Word (Water), the Blood and the Spirit. (1Jn.5:7,8)

HISTORY OF TRINITY

The word ‘Trinity’ is not found in the Bible. However, it was a doctrinal term used in the Fourth Century A.D., to resolve the question on the humanity and deity of Jesus Christ (i.e. whether Jesus was God like the Father) raised by one church Presbyter called Arius and his followers.

In Arius’ view, the term ‘Son of Man’ meant ‘Christ was a creature and not a God.’ His main reason was that there is only one God, else we have two Gods. He inferred from the following quotations: Matt. 20:23, John 14:28,1 Cor.11:3.

HOW WAS THE DOCTRINE OF TRINITY FORMULATED?

Bishop Tertullian, an African Church Father, solved the problem by formulating the doctrine of Trinity. Tertullian’s view was that, ‘if Christ is not God, how could he save

humans? And if Christ is not human how could he have died?' 1Jn.2:22-24; 5:7-8

The aspect of 'the Holy Spirit as God' was added later at the time of Saint Augustine (also an African Church Father). Tertullian illustrated that 'One ear of corn cannot be three ears of corn, but one stalk can have three ears on it.' Christianity remembers his formula, '1 substance and 3 persons'.

THE FATHER AS GOD

God is portrayed as Father of Israel because of his love, provision, counselling and protection for his people just like (but greater than) the love of an earthly father for his son (Deut.8:3-5). The Father is sometimes called El-Elyon (Gen.14:20), El-Shaddai (Gen.17:1) or Jehovah (Exo.6:3), in the Old Testament. He made himself clear to the Israelites by His Word.

According to Louis Berkhof, 'in a deeper sense, the term 'Father' is applied to the First Person of the Trinity, to express His relation to the Second Person'. (John 1:14, 18; 8:54-59; 14:12,13)

JESUS CHRIST AS GOD

Jesus pre-existed as God (existed before Creation); and as Creator (John 1:1-3). He was prophesied as Emmanuel (God with us) and was born in the power of the God's Spirit

through the Virgin Mary without Joseph his foster father (Matt. 1:18-23).

Jesus means 'God our Saviour' and Christ means 'The Anointed of God' (Matt.1:17,21; John 3:34). Jesus Christ therefore means the 'Anointed Saviour' of the World (by His blood) from Sin and Death. Jesus as 'Son of God' means he came out of God, meaning he shares the Spirit of Jehovah.

THE HOLY SPIRIT AS GOD

The Holy Spirit pre-existed in God and was part of the creation process (Gen. 1:3). He was present in Jesus' Birth, Baptism, Temptation, Teaching, Healing and Resurrection (Matt.3:11, 16,17 Lk.4:18). He is the Spirit of Christ in the believer (1 Cor.3:16; Eph. 8:9). He manifested fully to humans after the dispensation of Jesus Christ on earth. He is the Spirit of God which teaches, counsels, comforts and empowers the believers to be able to live according to the will of God and to witness for Christ more boldly (Jn. 16:7,13).

CHAPTER 10

THE CREEDS

PREAMBLE

The word 'Creed' is an English word from the Latin 'Credo', which means 'I Believe'. That is why the creed

starts with 'I believe...' Creed is also defined as essential articles or teachings of the Christian Faith.

THE APOSTLES CREED

The Apostles Creed got its name because it is derived from the teachings of Christ's Apostles. Its main truths were preached to the world by the apostles, which all Christians are to hold on to. Acts 2:42 Eph. 4:4-6

The twelve articles of the Apostles Creed are as follows:

- i. I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth. (Gen.1:1 Ps.14:1)
- ii. And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord, (Matt.1:21-23, Heb.1:1-4)
- iii. Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit. Born of the Virgin Mary, (Matt.1:18-25)
- iv. Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried. Matt.27:50-54 John. 1:29)
- v. He descended into hell, the third day he rose again from the dead. (Matt.27:62 -- 28:4)
- vi. He ascended into heaven and seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. (John.14:1-3 Phil.2:4-11)
- vii. From thence he shall come to judge the living and the dead. (John 5:22,23 Acts 1:9-11)
- viii. I believe in the Holy Spirit. (Acts 1:8; 2:1-4 Eph.1:13-14)
- ix. The Holy Catholic Church; The Communion of Saints, (Gal.1:2 Eph.1:22,23 Phil.1:1)
- x. The forgiveness of sins,(John 20:22-23 1John1:8,9)

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- xi. The resurrection of the body, (1Cor.15:20,21,44,50-52)
 - xii. And Life everlasting. (John10:10 Rev. 20:12-15)

THE NICENE CREED

The name 'Nicene' came from a place called Nicaea where Church Fathers / Bishops held a Council meeting to draw up a statement/creed to resist false teachings of the time including Arianism and Gnosticism.

Arianism is from Arius who believed that 'Christ was not truly God' and Gnostics believe that 'God is perfect and cannot live in this evil world in Christ, therefore, it is not possible for Jesus who is human to be God at the same time'.

How the Nicene Creed was formulated:

Bishop Athanasius, an African Father/Bishop, strongly opposed those false teachings and led to the meeting of the Council of Nicaea to formulate the Creed in AD 325. They concentrated on God the Father and God the Son.

The statement/creed concerning the divinity of the Holy Spirit was made at another Council meeting at Constantinople chaired by Saint Augustine, in A.D.381. It was discussed and officially accepted that the Holy Spirit is 'the giver of Life, who proceeded from the Father and the Son. Who together with the Father and the Son is

worshipped and glorified? Who spoke through the Prophets?' Jn.15:26, 1Cor.12:4-6, 10

They believed that it is through the Holy Spirit that we can come to the saving knowledge of Christ's salvation. The Spirit cannot function this way without being as fully as Christ and the Father, not half divine. Rom.8:9, 14 Gal.4:6

The Eastern Church (including North Africa and Middle East) thought the phrase 'from the Father and the Son' weakened the full truth and preferred to say 'from the Father through the Son', termed 'Filioque'. Matt.3:11b Jn.15:26

CHAPTER 11

THE LORD'S PRAYER

WHAT IS PRAYER?

Prayer is the expression of the soul's sincere desire. It is also a communion with God, a sweet fellowship with emphasis on divine inspiration. According to Quagraine, Prayer is also the soul's communion with God through the mediator Christ Jesus.

WHAT DOES PRAYER CONSIST OF?

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- i. Adoration and Praise to God -- Exo. 15:1-12 Is. 41:9-15
 - ii. Confession of one's sins for forgiveness -- Ps. 51:1-7 Jn.1: 8,9
 - iii. Thanking God for his goodness towards us -- Phil. 4:6 1Thess. 5:17
 - iv. Supplication and intercession be made to God -- 1 Sam. 12:23 Matt. 7:7-11

WHAT IS THE LORD'S PRAYER?

The Lord's Prayer is a model prayer given by our Lord to the disciples for effective prayer life. The Prayer consists of seven petitions. The prayer places God's glory first and human needs in the second place.

"Our Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name; Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. Matt. 6:9-13

Doxology: For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory forever and ever." Amen

The seven petitions are:

God's glory:

We pray for:

- 1. Reverence
- 2. Loyalty
- 3. Obedience

Man's needs:

We pray for:

- 4. Food
- 5. Forgiveness
- 6. Guidance

7. Deliverance

Our Father who art in Heaven (Reverence)

“Father” -- The Lord’s Prayer is addressed to God as Father who has adopted the Church as his family. God is the Father and Creator of all humankind. However, God is called ‘Our Father’ because he protects us and provides our needs when we ask of him.

He is the Father of all believers who in Christ (the Son of God) become Children of God. Matt.7:7-11 1John 3:7-10

Hallowed be thy name (Reverence)

The word ‘hallow’ means to count sacred or holy, or to reverence.

‘Thy Name’ -- When we speak of ‘God’s name’ we are to understand God himself, as revealed to man. For instance, our Lord said, “I have manifested thy name to the men whom you gave me.” (Jn.17:25,26) By the name God we are also to revere the things which concern him, such as his House (the Church), His day (Sabbath), His Word (the Holy Scriptures or the Bible), His Sacrament and His Ministers. (Exo. 20:1-8)

Thy Kingdom Come (Loyalty)

In this petition we pray that God’s rule may be accepted everywhere especially in our own souls. Our Lord said “The Kingdom of God is within you.” (Lk.17:21) Within the soul of every man is a throne upon which either God or sin, sits as king.

He who prays this petition should take a real interest in the church's mission to non-Christian people and in Christ's second coming. (Matt. 6:33)

Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven (Obedience)

God's will is a wise and good will and nothing can really go well until one yield to it and fulfils it. (John 14:15) God's will is the highest good that can come to us, for even the evils we suffer work together for good to them that love God and keep his commandments. Jesus prayed this prayer three times in the Garden of Gethsemane. (Matt.26:41-44)

Give us this day our daily Bread (Food or physical need)

This petition speaks for our dependence upon God; for in it we pray for all things needful for the welfare of soul and body (Matt.6:31-34). We do this day by day. It is a holy practice never to take our food without first asking God (its spiritual source) to bless it to our use, and then returning thanks to him after the meal is over. (Deut.8:3, 10, 17-18)

Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who trespass against us. (Forgiveness)

We are to pray for daily forgiveness. However good we are, we never pass a day without falling into some sin, however small (1Jn.1:8, 9). We pray that God will forgive us as we forgive others. This is the only petition on the 'Our Father' which is conditional upon our doing something.

'As we forgive.' This means 'in the same manner as we forgive'. The Lord has taught this because we are not fit to

receive mercy from God until we have shown mercy to others. (Matt. 5:7)

And lead us not into temptation (guidance)

The sixth petition teaches that, even though past sins are forgiven, we are still helpless and weak; and we need guidance and succour. (Matt.26:41) This petition may mean either “Do not permit us to fall into temptation” or “Do not allow us to be placed in positions dangerous to our spiritual safety”. It is no sin to be tempted. The sin begins when we consent to the temptation. (Jms.1:12-15)

But deliver us from evil (Deliverance)

In this petition we ask God to save us from all manner of harm both to the soul and the body. Our Lord meant us to be delivered from our great enemy, the evil one (Heb.11:23-25).

Here, we are also asking to be delivered from all forms of moral temptations to the soul and physical attacks on the body. It may please him not to answer our prayer yet we should be patient, trusting that he will order all for our highest good. (1Pet.4:12-19)

Doxology

For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen

Doxology is a form of words ascribing praise to God. It is also a prayer of thanksgiving and honour to God believing for an answered prayer. God owns us and whether our prayers are answered or unanswered does not warrant deserting him. (Phil. 4:5-7, 13, 19)

CHAPTER 12

THE 10 COMMANDMENTS

PREAMBLE

The 10 Commandments were instructions given by God to people of Israel through Moses as rules meant for moral training and to guide them to know God's will towards them to lead them successfully to their promised land. This requires faith and the grace of the Holy Spirit. The 10 Commandments were inscribed on Tablets, kept in a Covenant Box at the Most Holy place in the temple.

Believers must inscribe God's Word on Tablets of their hearts and lives. Jesus, the Word made flesh, taught his disciples to obey all the commands to demonstrate their love for God. Matt. 5:17-20 John1:14; 14:15

WHAT ARE THE 10 COMMANDMENTS?

The first four of the Laws of Love are related to our love for God and the last six concerns love for our neighbours. Exodus 20:1-17 Lk.10:25-28

1. You shall have no other gods before me.

Many Traditional Religions invoke deities and lesser gods to meet their spiritual needs, either for good or bad

purposes. The gods are evil and have lesser powers compared to Jehovah, the Most High God. In Christianity, the Almighty God is worshipped through Jesus Christ, in whom we have true and better protection, provision and forgiveness of sins. John 1:29; 14:1, 6

2. You shall not make for yourself an idol.

God pronounces curse on any person and family who worships idols as mediums of communication with God. Idolatry amounts to mistrust in the Jehovah God. This also implies human serving creation instead of creation serving humans – a loss of birthright and authority. Matt. 4:5-10
1John 4:4

3. You shall not mention the name of the Lord your God in vain

“Lord” in Hebrew is ‘Yahweh’ (translated ‘Jehovah’ in English). It is unanimously agreed that this law protects the name of Yahweh from that unlawful use.

To invoke the name of God in substantiation of a claim which was mischievous or fraudulent was to invite the wrathful hand of God Himself. According to Jesus, when swearing it is not very necessary to do it by Jehovah’s name, whether you are justified or not. Lev.24:16, Matt.5:33-37

4. Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.

“Sabbath” is about ‘resting’ from serious or selfish economic and financial transactions except for worshipping God and saving a life. Lack of rest depreciates the human body’s disposition making one’s life expectancy shorter. Mark 2:23, 27, 28

“Remember.... and keep it holy” -- Christian Sabbath should also be kept sacred for worship, contemplation, evangelism and resting. Salvation is also rest from Satanic oppressions. Death is rest from earthly toils. Historically, Jewish Sabbath is on Saturday, and Sunday is an early apostolic and Church practice in honour of Jesus’ resurrected on Sunday. Sabbath must involve all members of our family. Matt.11:28-30 Rev.14:13

5. Honour your father and mother, so that your days may be long

“Honour” means ‘Great respect or high public regard.’

Children must provide for the needs of their parents and vice versa. Spouses respect for each other set a good tone for children to respect them and other adults outside the family. Eph.5:22, 25; 6:1,4

“That your days may be long” – Like earthly parents, the heavenly parent (God) appreciates obedient children and blesses them with long life and prosperity. Prov.20:20

6. You shall not murder

“Murder” is ‘Unlawful killing of a human being on purpose.’

Other forms of murder are Suicide, Illegal abortion, and Slander. Killing needs approval by Law. Matt.5:21-22

Jesus taught that anger mostly lead to murder. Moreover, forgiveness and love overcome anger and murder. One

must also confess his/her wrongs done to another and to forgive one another. Matt.5:43-45; 26: 52 Jms.5:16

7. You shall not commit adultery

“Adultery” is a ‘sexual relationship and intercourse between two legally unmarried partners.’ It is considered as a perverted sexual act against the sacredness of a matrimonial relationship and the sacredness of sex itself. Adultery includes extra marital affair, Concubines, Fornication, Homosexuality, Prostitution, and Defilement. Matt.5:27-32

According to Jesus, anyone who looks at a woman or man lustfully has committed adultery of the heart, and anyone who marries an unlawfully divorced person has also committed adultery. I Cor. 6:16-20; 7:2-5

In the African traditional context a man is allowed to marry more than one wife in the world of polygamous marriages.

8. You shall not steal

“Stealing” is ‘to take a person’s property without right.’

Scripture does not entertain stealing, bribery and corruption to satisfy human needs; rather good planning and hardwork always bring profit to life. God can supply your needs according to His will.

What believers must do is to support their neighbours and fellow believers who are in genuine need, especially the widows, the poor and the orphans in order to prevent them from using wrong means to make ends meet. Acts 2:43-46 Eph.4:28

9. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour

A “Witness” is ‘one who can tell the fact or truth about what one has seen happen or know about someone.’ Believers in Christ are encouraged to live in truth and speak the truth always. 1Tim.5:19-20

Jesus Christ is ‘Truth’ and it is by living Christ-like lives and following his teachings that we can know the ‘way’ to the Father. Do not gossip, nor bear false testimony at the courts, nor peddle false information about a person. This amounts to defamation of character. Satan is the father for all liars. John 8:44-45 Rev.14:5; 21:8

10. You shall not covet your neighbour’s house or wife, his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbour.

To “Covet” is ‘to want very much to have something, especially which belongs to someone else.’ Rom.13:9

The commandment encourages us to be content, to avoid all forms of gambling and not to envy anyone. This is an inward moral law. One cannot be charged in the courts for covetousness, for covetousness is neither an act nor a word, but a disposition of heart. The law of the land is not concerned about our thoughts and motives; but God is. Covetous spirit may lead to stealing, murder, and sexual perversion. Jms.4:1-3, Rom.1:29

CHAPTER 13

INTRODUCTION TO THE OLD TESTAMENT

PREAMBLE

The Bible consists of Two Testaments – The Old and New Testaments.

WHAT IS “TESTAMENT”?

It means “Covenant.” It is “Apam” or “Ahyem” in Ghanaian Akan Language. A Covenant is an agreement to do something, where sometimes each party has a role to play. “Testament” may also mean a “Will” or a “Proof.”

SOME “OLD COVENANTS” BETWEEN GOD AND HUMANS

- (a) The Noahic rainbow Covenant – Gen. 9: 9 –12
- (b) The Abrahamic Covenant of Circumcision – Gen. 17:9-14
- (c) The Mosaic Blood Covenant – Exodus 12: 21 – 23

The Old Testament was known as the Jewish/ Hebrew Bible. It was used by the Jews and by Jesus Christ himself and the Early Christian Church. It was originally written in the Hebrew language. Its central theme is on Jehovah’s

relationship with the Israelites as a model for His relationship with all the people of the world.

BOOKS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

There are 66 Books in the Bible out of which 39 are of the Old Testament.

A) Divisions of the Hebrew Old Testament:

The Jewish Bible has three main divisions:

- (a) **Torah** (The Law),
 - (b) **Nabiim** (the Prophets),
 - (c) **Kethubim** (the Writings).
- (Mt. 17: 3 Lk.16 : 29; 24: 27,44)

B) Divisions of the English Old Testament

The English Old Testament Bible has five divisions.

- i. **The Law** -- Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy
- ii. **History** -- Joshua, Judges, Ruth, I and II Samuel, I and II Kings, I and II Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther.
- iii. **Poetry** -- Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs.
- iv. **Major Prophecy** -- Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentation, Ezekiel and Daniel.
- v. **Minor Prophecy** -- Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi

THE BOOKS OF THE LAW

The “Law” presents the general story of the Israelites. This includes the Laws of Moses which are ‘guides for living’ in one’s dealings with God, and to order one’s social inter – relationships and political lives. The Law was given by God through Moses. Moses died on Mount Nebo and Joshua succeeded him. (Exo. 20: 1-7, 34:10-21, Deut. 34: 1 – 12)

MEANINGS OF THE BOOKS OF THE LAW

Genesis – Beginning (Gr. – ‘geneseos’ meaning ‘Birth’, ‘Geneology’)

Exodus – “Out of the way” (‘Exo’ means ‘Exit or out’; ‘odus’ means ‘way’)

Leviticus – Relating to Levites or ministerial work.

Numbers – Relating to counting the people of Israel.

Deuteronomy – Repetition of the Law or the Second Law - giving. (The Greek ‘Deuter’ means ‘Second’ or ‘Double’, and ‘Nominus’ means ‘Law’)

The Books are believed to be written by some scholars and some by Moses himself. They reveal the fulfillment of God’s promises to Abraham about

(i) Land (Canaan),

(ii) Descendants,

(iii) Divine- Human Relationships with Israel. (Gen.12:1-3; 17:1-8)

THE BOOKS OF HISTORY

The books talk about the things that happened to the people of Israel.

Joshua -- He led the Israelites to settle on the Promised Land of Canaan.

Judges -- The author of Judges is believed to be Samuel. God raised judges to defend the Israelites from the enemies. Some of their Judges were Othniel, Ehud, Deborah and Barak, Gideon, Tola, Jair, Jephthah, Ibzan, Abdon and Samson. Samuel is considered the last Judge.

The Monarchy – Samuel enstooled Kings like Saul and David. The kingdom of Israel divided into two -- the Northern (Israel) and Southern Kingdoms (Judah) -- during the time of King Rehoboam, Solomon's son. (1Sam.8-10, 16 2Sam.1-5 1Kgs.1-3, 11-12)

The Exile of Israel --During the reign of King Hoshea in Israel (the Northern Kingdom) due to Israel's sins against God, an Assyrian King called Shalmanezar attacked Samaria the capital of Israel and took many into exile. (2Kings 17: 1-23)

The Exile of Judah -- During the time of King Jehoiakim he did evil things and God's caused the Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar to attack him and took him including some Temple articles to Babylon. (2Kings 23:36-24:6, 2Chron 36:5-8 Jeremiah 1:1-3)

Life in Exile -- The Jews worshipped in small groups and synagogues with Ezekiel as an instructor. He carried into exile some scriptures. (Psalm 137).

The Levites (teaching Priests) also taught them the Torah and proper Jewish worship life. (2Chron.36:21-23 Dan. 9:1-6)

Return From Exile – After Jeremiah's 70 years prophecy of exile was fulfilled, Cyrus (King of Persia) helped Zerubbabel, Ezra and Nehemiah to return many Israelites to Jerusalem to rebuild the State of Israel. (Ezra 1:1-11, 6:3-5; 8:1-14 Neh.2:1; 8-9; 12:26, 36)

THE BOOKS OF POETRY

These are books showing devotion to God, dependence on God, and the true meaning of life. They include Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs.

THE BOOK OF PSALMS

'Psalms' ('Tehillim' in Hebrew) means 'Praises'. It is used for public or Temple worship and individual devotions. Its content gives account of Israel's history from the time of David to the close of the Old Testament.

5 Main Collections of the Psalms:

Book 1: Ps. 1- 41; Book 2: Ps. 42 – 72; Book 3: Ps. 73 – 89; Book 4: Ps. 90 – 106; Book 5: Ps. 107 – 150

THE BOOK OF JOB

It is a wisdom literature which flourished in the exilic and post-exilic. It deals with the 'problem of evil' also called 'Theodicy' i.e. "Why should the wicked prosper whilst the

righteous suffer? Or why does a just and righteous God allow evil to exist in a world under his supreme control?” – A question of divine justice. The solution is found in building a peaceful relationship with God and knowing the will of God for one’s life.

Job, as a model of piety, suffered misfortune but patiently endured keeping faith with God, and was rewarded twice as much as he was before. However, it contains words of faith in the God of the covenant.

THE BOOKS OF THE PROPHETS

1. Who Is a Prophet?

In religion, a prophet is an individual who is claimed to have been contracted by the supernatural or the divine, and to speak for them, serving as an intermediary with humanity, delivering this newfound knowledge from the supernatural entity to other people. The message that the prophet conveys is called a prophecy.

The prophet’s authority lay in the one who had sent him. Prophets made prediction by God’s direction and they gave information about events of the distant future. The term ‘Major Prophets’ is used for prophetic books which contain greater chapters/messages.

Other names used for Old Testament Prophets are (i) Man of God, (ii) Seer, (iii) Fortune-teller, (iv) Soothsayer

2. Why the Prophets?

During their settlement, the law became inadequate because it did not touch every possible situation of Israel's life. They needed direct revelations from God.

Early prophets support or oppose Kings. For example, Samuel vrs. Saul (I Sam. 13), Nathan vrs. David (II Sam. 12), Elijah vrs. Ahab (I King 18: 27)

The latter prophets also spoke on national issues. For instance, they advised Kings (Is. 37: 39). Amos spoke about the fall of Israel and its restoration (Amos 9).

The Prophets continuously criticized wrong lives of the people and reminded them of faith in Yahweh and maintain social concern for the poor. Hos. 4:10, 11 Is. 58: 3-11 Micah 6: 6-8

CHAPTER 14

INTRODUCTION TO THE NEW TESTAMENT

PREAMBLE

It is a part of the Bible believed and used by Disciples of Christ. Its central theme is the proclamation of human salvation and eternal life with God through the life, death,

resurrection, ascension and second coming of Jesus Christ.

Jesus means “God Saves” and Christ means “The Anointed One” Some “Old Covenants” between God and Human with New Testament interpretation includes:

- (a) The Noahic Covenant (1Peter 3:20, 21)
- (b) The Mosaic Covenant (Hebrews 9:22)
- (c) The Abrahamic Covenant (Romans 2:29; 4:11)
- (d) The Jesus/New Covenant (John 1:12, 29)

DIVISION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT:

There are 26 books of the New Testament.

- (i) **The Gospels** -- Matthew, Mark, Luke and John
- (ii) **Acts of the Apostles**
- (iii) **The Epistles**

a. Paul's Epistles -- Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon and Hebrews. (The writer of Hebrews is however uncertain)

b. Other Epistles – James, 1 and 2 Peter, 1, 2, 3 John and Jude

- (iv) **The Book of Revelation**

THE GOSPEL WRITINGS

‘Gospel’ is from the Greek ‘Euangelion’ meaning ‘The Story’ or ‘Good News.’ Among the Gospel books Matthew,

Mark and Luke are believed to have common characteristics so they are termed 'Synoptic Gospels' (Greek, 'Synoptikos') meaning "seeing together".

Biblically, Gospel is about the life and ministry of Jesus Christ our Lord: His birth, his lifestyle, teachings, death for our sins, his resurrection, and ascension. From these books, we also learn how Jesus commissioned His disciples to carry his message of salvation to the entire world.

THE BOOKS OF ACTS

It is a book of History. It tells about the beginning of Christ's spiritually renewed church and gives us a brief history of the church and the spread of the gospel of Christ under the preaching of the gospel until about 70 years A.D.

THE EPISTLES

Epistles means letters. Paul the Apostle wrote letters to churches and to individuals, containing instructions for the organization and the work, and worship of churches of Christ.

It is believed that the other letters were written by those whose names they bear. They are addressed to Christians and to individuals, with the same sort of material as the letters of Paul.

BOOK OF REVELATION

It is a book of prophecy. It was written by the Apostle John and contains visions granted to John about his time and the future. It is written in symbolic words, yet it should not

be given any meaning that is opposed to other plain teaching in the Word of God.

CHAPTER 15

THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

PREAMBLE

After Jesus died and resurrected for the salvation of humankind, he went to heaven. He will come back to the earth again someday. He will return not to die again to save but to hold the world to account and reward them for how they valued and benefitted from the life Christ has given to all mankind.

WAS IT MENTIONED IN THE BIBLE?

1. It was mentioned by Jesus to his disciples. – John 14:1-3
2. Angels of God assured the believers about it. -- Acts 1:9-11
3. The Apostles of Christ taught it. For instance Paul (Titus 2:12, 13), Peter (2 Pet.3:8-15) and John (1John 3:2-3) taught about the second coming of Christ.

WHEN WILL CHRIST COME AGAIN?

No one knows nor can tell the day or the hour the Lord will come again.

However, there are signs of events to show when Christ will come. Some of the signs the Bible mentioned are that:

- a. The Holy City of Jerusalem and its Temple will be built where sacrifices be made to atone for the sins of the Israelites.
- b. However, there shall be abominable practices in the Temple of God
- c. Knowledge will increase on earth. Many will travel to seek knowledge.
- d. Many will announce falsely that they are Christ.
- e. There will be wars and rumours of wars.
- f. Nations will rise against nations, and Kingdoms will rise against kingdoms.
- g. There will be famines and earthquake at various parts of the world.
- h. Some believers will be persecuted and killed.
- i. Christianity will be hated across the world because Jesus' name would become unpopular.
- j. Many people will turn away from Christ.
- k. Many false Prophets will arise and deceive many people.
- l. Wickedness and Sinful behavior will increase towards each other, which will make the love of God in most people grow cold.
- m. Those who will stand firm for God to the end will be saved.
- n. The Gospel of the Kingdom of God will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations.

(Dan. 9:24,25; 12:4 Matt. 24: 3-14,36 2Tim.3:1-5)

HOW WILL CHRIST COME AGAIN?

A. Jesus will come suddenly and unexpectedly. It will be like the blinking of the eye. With a loud shout of Heavenly Trumpets. Matt. 24:29-31, 44-51; 25:31-46

B. Christ will first pick his faithful believers. He will start with believers who are dead, followed by believers who are alive on earth, into the Paradise of his kingdom. 1Thess.4:13-17

C. Those left behind will be persecuted by the devil, demons, and anti-Christ leaders before the second gathering of believers who will live righteous lives in spite of the persecution. 2Thess. 2:4-10

WHAT WILL CHRIST DO WHEN HE COMES?

A. Then final period of judgement will come to reward all humans for their good or bad deeds on earth according to the graces given to humans. 2 Pet.3:10-14

B. Those who followed Christ faithfully will inherit Heaven. John 14:1-6, Rev. 21:22-27

C. Those who did not believe and follow the way of Jesus Christ will end in suffering and hell. Rev. 20:11-15

CONCLUSION

Jesus, therefore, advised that since we do not know whether Christ will come to meet us dead or alive, we should always live in his righteousness. (Matt. 5:22-30)

We must guard our lives carefully according to the Word of God and pray that we do not fall away from Christ due to the temptations of the world.

CHAPTER 16

CHRISTIAN OFFERING AND TITHING

PREAMBLE

"And when the LORD your God brings you into the land

...and when you eat and are full, then take heed lest you forget the LORD, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.” Deut. 6:10-12

WHAT IS AN OFFERING?

Offering (‘zevah’ Heb. and ‘thysia’ Gk.) according to Douglas (1987) Offering is “a religious act of worship or sacrifice offered to God, of some material object belonging to the offerer.”

An offering may be in the form of an act, prayer, object or money given to the church, the needy, widows and orphans in the respective local churches, communities or homes. An offering may also be freewill (Exo.23:19; 35:20-21, 28-29 Prov.3:9, 10 Romans 12:1,2)

Offering is based on solemn heart and obedience, not just about the sacrifices (Exo.19:4-8 1Sam.15:22).

WHAT IS TITHING?

According to Douglas (1987), the English word ‘Tithe’ meaning ‘a Tenth’ is from the Greek ‘Dekate’ and the Hebrew ‘Ma’aser’.

Tithe is the giving of a 10% or one-tenth of our produce (Farm Harvest, livestock, Fruits), or our earnings (profits, salary) or of gifts we receive.

SOME OLD TESTAMENT OFFERINGS

a. Cain and Abel’s Offering: This was based on faith and moral character in the fear of God. (Gen.4:1-12)

b. Noah's offering: The Burnt Offering of Noah after the flood is a Sacrifice of Thanksgiving. (Gen. 8:20-21)

c. Abraham's offering: The covenant sacrifice of Abraham to demonstrate his faithfulness and love towards God. (Gen.12:7- 8; 15:4ff)

d. Moses' Offering: The Mosaic sacrifice of the Passover was to appreciate God's covenant and deliverance for Israelites as children of God. (Exo.12:3-11)

SOME OLD TESTAMENT TITHING:

a. **Abraham's Tithing:** The First Tithing Bible recorded was given by Abraham to Melchizedek, a Priest of God. (Gen.14:17-20)

b. **Jacob's Tithing:** The next person to give tithe was Jacob who sacrificed a tenth of his possession to God as a vow to strengthen his fellowship with God. (Gen. 28:20-22)

c. **Mosaic Tithing:** God formally instituted the sacrifice of tithing and offering for Israel at the time of Moses to affirm God's institution of the Priesthood. (Num.18: 20-29)

d. **Prophetic Era:** God warns against wrong Tithing and Offering. This amounts to defrauding God and his ministry. (Haggai 1:2-11 Mal.3:6-12)

NEW TESTAMENT OFFERING AND TITHING

(a) Jesus' attitude to Tithes, Offerings and Taxes:

Jesus and his disciples believed in the Jewish principle of offerings and tithing to the Temple, and the payment of taxes to the State. Jesus himself paid Temple and State taxes. (Matt. 6:3, 4; 17:24-27; 22:21)

(b) The Early Church and the Apostles

(i) Pastoral duties replaced Priestly duties. Pastors and their families are therefore eligible to be supported with parts of tithes and offerings of the church (John 21:15-19). The Tithes and Freewill Offerings of Church members were brought to the Apostles feet instead of sending them to the Temple Priests. The apostles shared them to those who were in need and some for the Ministry. (Acts 2:42-46)

(ii) The Apostle Paul requested financial, material and spiritual support for the ministry of God (1Cor.16:2 2Cor. 8:1-8 Phil.2:25; 4:14-19).

Pastors are also expected to pay tithes on their earnings. (Num. 18:26)

(iii) By the graces of God in Christ believers are to give as much as they can afford and according to the convictions of the Holy Spirit. We must do good to all in need. (Luke 10:36-37)

WHY SHOULD OFFERINGS AND TITHES BE GIVEN?

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1. God commands it. Humans are only Stewards of their possessions. - Exo.23:15
 2. To shows we love God's work and workers. - Mark 9:38-50
 3. It is a means to great blessings from God. - Malachi 3:10-12

WHAT IS THE BEST ATTITUDE TO OFFERING AND TITHING?

1. The blessings we have are by God's grace. - Deut. 8:17,18
2. Dedicate your life first to God, then your possessions. - Matt. 5:23-24.
3. Give whole-heartedly to the needy and to God. - 2Cor.9:6-11

CHAPTER 17

CHRISTIAN MISSIONS IN GHANA

PREAMBLE

Christianity came to Ghana through the European missionaries. We shall take a look at the state of the nation and some of the Christian churches that were established in Ghana.

THE REPUBLIC OF GHANA

The name 'Ghana' was adapted from an ancient state in the southern Sahara, which flourished in the 11th Century, by Dr. Kwame Nkrumah (the first President) in 1957 when the Gold Coast became independent. 'Ghana' means 'Warrior'. There is yet no proof that the people of the Gold Coast were the same people the Old Ghana.

The coastal area and the country west and south of the Volta were dominated in the 15th Century by the Akans. The eastern boarder was shared with the people of Togo and the western with La Cote D'Ivoire.

THE CHRISTIAN MISSIONS

1. THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

In 1471 the Portuguese sailors reached the West African coast and on 19th January 1482 they set up a trading station at the Elmina Castle. Roman Catholic priests

accompanied the earliest Portuguese traders, from the late 15th century onwards, and the Moravians reached the Gold Coast with the Gospel in the mid-18th century.

Eleven Missionaries died from sickness in thirty-five years. Various Catholic missions started work independently among the Fantis and Ewes in the 1880s, in the Northern Ghana in 1906.

2. THE PREBYTERIAN CHURCH

In 1828 the Basel Mission started ministry in Ghana among the Akuapem, Ga and Twi speaking people in the South – east of the country. Six of the first seven Basel missionaries died within few months after arrival. Andreas Riss, one of the survivors who lived longer, taught craft and improve methods of agriculture.

He introduced six West Indian Christian families who survived the climate much better than the European missionaries. J. G. Christaller translated the entire bible into Twi, collected 3600 proverbs and produce a Twi Grammer and a Twi Dictionary neither of which has been surpassed in this day.

3. THE METHODIST CHURCH

Rev. John Wesley (1703-1791) and Rev. Charles Wesley (1707-1783) were the founders of the Methodist Church in England. In 1835 the Methodist Church of Gold Coast begun among the Fantis at the request of a student leader

of a Christian group in the Cape Coast Castle School. He is called William Degraft. All three of the first Methodist foreign missionaries to Ghana died within the first three years of arrival along with their wives. They included Rev. Rhodes Dunwell, Rev. George Wriggley and Rev. Peter Harrop.

The fourth missionary, Rev. Thomas B. Freeman, an English Methodist of African origin, who arrived in January 1838, lived longer to work in Ghana and West Africa. He was the first missionary to visit Kumasi; he travelled as far as Lagos and Abeokuta to preach the Gospel.

On 28th July 1961 Rev. Francis C. F. Grant became the first Ghanaian President of the Methodist Church Ghana. The Methodist Church Ghana adopted its Episcopal system of Church Administration in 1999 and formally proclaimed on Sunday 23rd January 2000, at the Wesley Cathedral, Accra. The title of the President of the church is now Presiding Bishop who works with the Lay President. The Districts are now Dioceses, headed by Bishops and Lay Chairmen.

4. THE EVANGELICAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

The Bremen mission started work in 1847 among the Ewe people of Eastern Ghana, in what was then the German colony of Togoland. Schlegel B., during the last four years of his life, produced the first Ewe Primer Grammar Dictionary, Bible history, life of Christ and translation of the four Gospels. Out of this church has now come a break-away church called “**Global Evangelistic Ministry**”

5. ANGLICAN CHURCH

Through the “Company of Adventures of London Trading of Africa” which established their forts at Kormantse and Cape Coast, came the two English missionary societies – the “Society for Proclaiming the Gospel (SPG)” and the “Society for the Propagation of Christian knowledge (SPCK)”.

In 1751 Rev. Thomas Thompson was selected to come on a missionary work in the then Gold Coast. In the course of their work in Ghana they chose Philip Quaque for ministry. He became the first Ordained Black Anglican. He started his ministry in 1766 and formed a Castle School before his death. In 1904 the SPG group in Ghana changed its name to the ANGLICAN CHURCH.

6. THE BAPTIST CHURCH

The Church was formed to deepen the doctrine of baptizing professing believers as opposed to infant baptism. It begun in Amsterdam, in 1609, with an English separatist called John Smith. The National Baptist Church was founded by the Rev. Dr. Mark Christian Hayford in 1898, and was the first African church to be founded in Gold Coast.

The National Baptist church was part of the West African Baptist Church movement and it was linked in aspirations with the National congress of West Africa. The importance of this church was that it provided a link with other religious

separatist movements in the main traditional churches of West Africa. Today there are many forms of Baptist denominations.

7. THE A.M.E. (ZION) CHURCH

The African Methodist Episcopal Church (AME) was founded in 1787 by Bishop Richard Allen as a protest against racial discrimination that went on in the St. George Methodist Church in Philadelphia.

The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church (AMEZ) was founded by Bishop Walters in the United States and was brought to Ghana by Bishop Bryan Small. The Ghanaian promoters of the Church were Rev. Egyir Asaam and Rev. Thomas B. Freeman, who started a branch of the church at Keta.

In the book “The Rise of Independent Churches in Ghana” it is evidenced that the A.M.E. and A.M.E. ZION were considered churches run by Africans for Africans. At the beginning were indigenous, nationalistic churches which stood for “native effort, self-reliance, independence and self-respect,” and this brought it in line with nationalist aspirations. Their foreign origins were believed to account for the current failure for the church to attract the mass support expected of it.

8. THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD

The Assemblies of God originated from the world Pentecostal revival meeting of the early 20th Century through Charles Parham's Azusa Street mission in Los Angeles, U.S.A. (1906-1909). Foreign missionaries led by Rev. Lloyd and Margaret Shirer who were then in Moshiland, Ouagaadugu now Burkina Faso crossed over to the Northern Region of Gold Coast on horse backs in the early 1931 to start the first Assemblies of God congregation in Yendi.

They were the first Pentecostal mission to work in Ghana. They have gradually moved toward the coast. This has, therefore, attracted significant members of the Northern origin.

9. THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH

In 1935 some African congregation in Asamankese area of Southern Ghana led by Apostle Peter Newman Anim (1890-1984) requested the Apostolic Church of Bradford, England, to send some Christian Literature and a missionary. Pastor George Perfect (of Britain) was asked to visit them alongside the Nigerian church. Later the Bradford church sent to the Ghana church a resident pastor in the person of Pastor James Mckeown (an Irish) with his wife Sophia in March 1937.

They formed 'THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH, GOLD COAST' removing the old name 'Faith Tabernacle Church'. Mckeown served the church until there came some factions, namely (a) 'The Christ Apostolic Church'

(b) 'The Church of Pentecost' (c) 'The Apostolic Church, Gold Coast (Ghana)

10. THE CHRIST APOSTOLIC CHURCH (C.A.C.) – The name came in 1939 from Apostle Peter Newman Anim out of disagreement with Pastor James Mckeown, who had taken ill in May 1937 and applying orthodox medicine (from Ridge Hospital, Accra) instead of seeking only divine healing. After the separation the church 'Apostolic Church, Gold Coast (Ghana)' was re-named 'Christ Apostolic Church'

11. THE CHURCH OF PENTECOST – Mckeown's separated group named themselves '**Ghana Apostolic Church**' However, after 1957 it adopted a new name 'Church of Pentecost' upon the intervention of the government of Ghana to avoid conflict of names with Anim's church 'Apostolic Church of Ghana'.

12. THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH – GHANA – This is a different Apostolic movement which was established in Ghana in 1935 due to the Pentecostal movement that flowed from the Welsh Revival in 1904. One of its foreign proponents is Mr. D. P. Williams. It is self-governing in any part of the world and has many local congregations in Ghana.

13. THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

The church is the largest of the several Adventist groups. William Miller started the Millerite movement of the 1840s in New York, termed 'The Second Great Awakening'. He

predicted that upon the basis of Daniel 8:14-16 and the day-year principle, Jesus Christ would return to earth between 1843 and 1844.

People came together to study Bible Prophecy. However, they were disappointed as the year came and passed. Many left for their former churches while others rejected the Bible leaving only a handful continuing to search the Word of God. Among these was a young woman known as Ellen G. White (born at Gorham Maine in Nov. 1827). She claimed to have received divine understanding of Daniel 8:14 as meaning the fore-telling of Christ's entrance into the most Holy Place of the Heavenly Sanctuary rather than his Second Coming.

She then formed another movement called the 'Seventh-Day Adventist Church' to propagate her findings. Other founding members were Joseph Bates, James White and J. N. Andrews. They also developed a Sabbath-keeping and Health principle yet they maintained their Evangelical protestant Christian teachings.

14. AFRICAN "INDEPENDENT" CHURCHES

The break-away syndrome affected many Orthodox and Pentecostal local churches from the 1960s as a reaction against the cold, unemotional form of Western style of worship in the Orthodox (Mainline) and mismanagement of members with spiritual gifts in the Pentecostal churches. These were termed 'Independent Churches' because they were privately managed by local leaders. They reflect the desire for concrete results –

Understanding of scriptures, Healing, Success, Prosperity, Prophecies, and Fertility – which were characteristic of the traditional religions of Africa.

Some of these independent churches base their beliefs, discipline and practice on biblical standards (termed “Charismatic Churches”), while others incorporated African Traditional Cultures (known as “Spiritual Churches”) such as the use of traditional medicine for healing, playing and dancing to traditional drums, and use of traditional titles for their leaders.

Some Charismatic Churches include Christian Action Faith Ministries, International Central Gospel Church, Royal House Chapel International, Word Miracle Church International e.t.c.

Some of the early Independent-Spiritual Church leaders are as follows:

a. Prophet William Wade Harris

He led for the establishment of the “TWELVE APOSTLES CHURCH” in Ghana. He was a Liberian who was once imprisoned for advocating for British instead of American rule in Liberia. While in prison he received a vision to become a preacher and began after he was released. Dressed in a white gown with a turban on his head, he held a bamboo cross, a calabash for baptism, and a Bible, and went about preaching to people to abandon fetishism. He converted over 150,000 people in Ivory Coast and

Ghana. Many burned their “fetishes” as they joined the existing Methodist and Catholic Churches.

The Twelve Apostles Church in Ghana was believed to have started by two of his baptized converts. They were Grace Tani a native of Ankobra Mouth and John Nackabah of Essuawa near Enchi.

b. Prophet Samson Oppon

He emerged in 1920 in Ashanti and brought great enthusiasm to the work of evangelism of the area. Within two years 10,000 people were converted, this was a great achievement, when it is recalled that up to 1920 there was as considerable distrust of Christianity in Ashanti. The Methodist church wholeheartedly accepted him and he even accompanied the Rev. Waterworth on a tour of Ashanti in 1920. The converts were absorbed into the Methodist Church and this led to the firm establishment of the Wesleyan Mission in Ashanti. That even convinced the Methodist Synod by then to open their Wesleyan Training College in Kumasi.

c. Joseph William Egyanka Appiah

He was one of the founding fathers of the ‘Musama Disco Christo Church’ meaning ‘The Army of the Cross of Christ Church’ in Ghana in 1922, with his wife Hannah Barnes. Joseph W. E. Appiah was a native of Abura Edumfa and was formerly a Methodist Teacher / Catechist. He later took the name Prophet Jernisimham Jehu-Appiah. His title is Akaboha (King) and his wife Akatitibi (Queen), probably Egyptian terms.

It was first started as a prayer group known as the Faith Society in the year 1919, at Gomoa Oguan in the Winneba District of Ghana. They are now settled near Gomoa Fomena, built a community and named it “Mozano” meaning “My Town”. After his death in 1982 Mozano has still been their Headquarters till today.

d. Opanin Samuel Brako

In 1924 he founded “THE SAVIOUR CHURCH OF GHANA” at Osiem in the Eastern Region. The church was nick-named ‘Memeneda Gyidifo’ meaning ‘Saturday Worshippers’ because they met on Saturdays for Sabbath. He died in 1946 and Opanin Isaac Asirifi Dadeako took over leadership and under his leadership the Church spread across the length and breadth of Ghana. Opanin Isaac’s son, Opanin Elia Asirifi Dadeako is now the Head of the Church.

e. Prophet James Kwame Nkansah

He founded the “AFRICAN FAITH TABERNACLE CHURCH”. He was formally a Presbyterian. Even though he had no access to formal education, he was open to learning through non-formal education.

His style of leadership fit into the indigenous culture of his people; he welcomed the indigenous practices of drumming and dancing and the use of Ghanaian languages/songs other than English language in his church, known as ‘ebibindwom’. This gave him great success in the ministry to the spiritual (worship life), and healing needs of the indigenous Ghanaian.

CHAPTER 19

CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE

What is marriage?

- a. It is the life long union of body mind and spirit of one man and one woman.
- b. A valid marriage consists in the consent, before witnesses, of a man and a woman who are competent to marry to live permanently one with another as husband and wife. (The Methodist Church Ghana Constitution S.O. 742)
- c. Christian marriage is a lifelong partnership of one man and one woman, excluding all others, in mutual acceptance, respect, trust and service, and in a joint endeavour to provide and maintain a household of which Christ is the head.
- d. In our traditional set up, marriage is customised by the man's family and the woman's family, when mostly their parents give their blessings upon their marriage.

What is not marriage?

i. When a man and a woman find themselves in love and co-habiting but not performed customary marriage rights their union is not acceptable.

ii. If a man and a woman make love and have children but they have not officially performed the customary right by their two families their marriage is not recognised.

Types of Marriage: (S.O. 742)

1. **CUSTOMARY MARRIAGE:** The customary or traditional marriage is defined and regulated by local customs and tradition it may either be monogamous or polygamous. It can be registered at the District Municipal Assembly.

2. **ORDINANCE MARRIAGE:** This is CAP 127 of the Laws of Ghana, owing to its safeguards against polygamy and its protection of the rights of the wife and children. Ordinance marriage offers more support to the ideal Christian marriage however it is not necessarily Christian.

3. **ISLAMIC MARRIAGE:** Islamic or Muslim marriage may either be monogamous or polygamous. The man is, however, permitted to marry not more than four (4) wives by which proper marriage rights are done on the individuals in marriage and by the concern of the previous wife. It is allowed by PNDC law 112.

What is the Church's way of marriage?

Family approval and blessing in Church is the Church's way of ensuring, by means of a special form of service, that her members acknowledge the Christian understanding of marriage and vow to live by it, while invoking the blessing of God upon their union.

What is a Christian requirement in marriage?

- i. Members of the church wanting to marry should inform their Parents, Guardians or Family Heads. They then approach their Church Class/Cell Leaders.
- ii. The Class Leader in turn informs the Minister and leads the couple about to marry to the Minister who interviews them.
- iii. The members to be married are then invited to the Leaders Meeting, where the Class Leader informs the meeting members for approval.
- iv. The couple to be married is then given to Church Counsellors to be counselled for a certain number of time, possibly not less than three (3) months.
- v. Any Member who dissolves his/her marriage against the advice of the Parents, Minister and the Leaders Meeting becomes an Adherent.

What are the requirements for Church Leaders in marriage?

- a. All Ministers and Leaders shall, if they marry or are already married bring their marriage under their ordinance, either in Church or with blessing in church.
- b. They must obey the Christian rule of long-life monogamous loyalty in marriage and shall be exhorted to seek blessing in their marriage in Church.

Who is an adherent in marriage?

- i. When a person is married to two wives, he is an adherent. Also, if one is or has a concubine.
- ii. When a woman marries a man as a second wife, the second wife is adherent to the Church's requirement.
- iii. Such a man or woman in this situation does not have the right for the Lord's Supper and cannot be offered any leadership position.
- iv. Another requirement of the Church is that where two members of the Church are marrying according to Customary law, the marriage shall be witnessed by at least one leader of the church as a prelude to the blessing of the marriage in a Church.

v. Members of the Church shall not enter into polygamous marriage or encourage such marriages for their children or dependents.

vi. When persons in the Church are living in wrong sexual relationships when they are not married. Members below eighteen (18) years are not to engage in sexual relationships nor marry.

vii. S.O. 702.5 indicated that adherents are to be spiritually nurtured to accept the full discipline of the Church, to be restored to Full Membership.

CHAPTER 20

RECITALS AND CATECHISM

Candidates for confirmation and other Church members are to learn to recite the following as much as possible:

1. THE 10 COMMANDMENT (Exo. 20:1-17)

1. You shall have no other gods before me.

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2. You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below.
 3. You shall not mention the name of the Lord your God in vain for the Lord will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name.
 4. Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labour and do all your works, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God.
 5. Honour your father and mother, so that your days may be long on the land the Lord your God is giving you.
 6. You shall not murder
 7. You shall not commit adultery
 8. You shall not steal
 9. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor
 10. You shall not covet your neighbour's house or wife, his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbour."

2. WORDS OF THE APOSTLES CREED

I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord, Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit. Born of the Virgin Mary, Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and buried. He descended into hell, the third day he rose again

from the dead. He ascended into heaven and seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence he shall come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and Life everlasting. AMEN

3. WORDS OF THE NICENE CREED

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of Heaven and Earth, and all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of his Father before all worlds. God of God, Light Of Light, Very God of Very God. Begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father.

By whom all things were made. Who for us men, and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary and was made man, and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.

He suffered and was buried, and the third day he rose again according to the scriptures, and ascended into heaven, and seated at the right hand of the Father. He shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead, whose kingdom has no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life, who proceeded from the Father and the Son. Who with

the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, who spoke through the Prophets.

And I believe in one Holy and Apostolic Church. I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins. And I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the Life of the world to come. AMEN

4. WORDS OF THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name; Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen

5. WORDS OF THE BEATITUDES

Blessed are the poor in Spirit; For theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven

Blessed are those who mourn; For they shall be comforted

Blessed are the meek; For they shall inherit the earth

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness; For they shall be satisfied

Blessed are the merciful; For they shall obtain mercy

Blessed are the pure in heart; For they shall see God
Blessed are the peace makers; For they shall be called
sons (children) of God.
Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness'
sake; For theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven

THE CHRISTIAN CATECHISM

1. Who created you and me?

Answer: God created us and everything in the world. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."
(Genesis 1:1)

2. Who is God?

Answer: God is our Heavenly Father and King. "Our Father who art in Heaven, hallowed be thy Name. Thy Kingdom come..." [Recite the Lord's Prayer] (Matthew 6:9-10)

3. Why is he called King?

Answer: He is King because he controls creation. "The LORD reigns; let the earth rejoice; let the many coastlands be glad!" (Psalm 97:1)

4. Why is he called Father?

Answer: He is called Father because he loves his children and takes good care of them. “Your heavenly Father knows that you need them all.” (Matthew 6:32)

5. How do we know God loves us?

Answer: We know God loves us because he sent Jesus Christ to the world. “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.” (John 3:16)

6. Who is Jesus Christ?

Answer: Jesus Christ is God’s only Begotten Son who became man. “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father.” (John 1:14)

7. What did Jesus do for humans?

Answer: Jesus lived on earth, died and rose again for humans. “...Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day.” (1 Corinthians 15:3-4)

8. Why did Jesus live on earth, died, and rose from the dead for humans?

Answer: He did these to save us, because we could not save ourselves. “The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.” (1 Timothy 1:15)

9. What is Salvation?

Answer: God forgives our sins and gives us the Holy Spirit to live as his children. “But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God.” (John 1:12)

10. What is Sin?

Answer: Sin is the thought, speech and actions which does not please God. “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” (Romans 3:23)

11. How are we forgiven?

Answer: We repent of our sins and believe in Jesus our Savior. “Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God and saying, ‘The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent, and believe in the gospel.’ ” (Mark 1:14-15)

12. Who is the Holy Spirit?

Answer: The Holy Spirit is God’s Spirit working in the Church. “And I will pray the Father, and he will give you another Counselor, to be with you for ever.” (John 14:16)

13. What does the Holy Spirit do in our lives?

Answer: He makes us live daily as God’s people who have been brought into the fellowship of the Church. “For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.” (Romans 8:14)

14. What is the Church?

Answer: The Church constitutes Christ's followers who are dead or alive. "There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all, who is above all and through all and in all." (Ephesians 4:4-6)

15. What shows we are members of Christ's Church?

Answer: The sign is our Baptism, Worship and lifestyle. "So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls. And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers." (Acts 2:41-42)

16. How are we to Worship God?

Answer: We worship God when we pray to him, praise him and fellowship with believers to study God's Word and partake in Christian sacraments. "What shall I render to the LORD for all his bounty to me? I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the LORD, I will pay my vows to the LORD in the presence of all his people." (Psalm 116:12-14)

17. What is Prayer?

Answer: Prayer is communicating with God. And he said to them, "When you pray, say: "Father, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come...." (Say THE LORD'S PRAYER) (Matthew 6:9-13)

18. What are Sacraments?

Answer: Sacraments are ceremonies of the Church that invoke spiritual blessings to the believers. The Lord Jesus gave us the sacrament of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. "And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you." (Matthew 28:18-20)

"And as they were eating, he took bread, and blessed, and broke it, and gave it to them, and said, 'Take; this is my body.' And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, and they all drank of it. And he said to them, 'This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many'." (Mark 14:22-24)

19. Where do we learn about Jesus Christ?

Answer: Jesus Christ is learnt in the Scriptures. "You search the scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness to me." (John 5:39)

20. What is the Holy Scriptures?

Answer: The Holy Scriptures are the Old and New Testaments. In them we know God's Laws and promises. "Thy word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." (Psalm 119:105)

21. What does the Old Testament teach us?

Answer: The Old Testament teaches how God, through the elect reveal the coming of His Son the Saviour. “In many and various ways God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets; but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.” (Hebrews 1:1-2)

22. What does the New Testament teach us?

Answer: The New Testament teaches how Jesus Christ lived, suffered, died, resurrected, reigns and His second coming to judge the world. “Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross. Therefore, God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” (Philippians 2:5-11)

23. What is the summary of the commandment of God?

Answer: The summary of God’s commandments is to love God and love our neighbour. “Jesus answered, ‘The first is, ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one; and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart,

and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.’ The second is this, ‘You shall love your neighbour as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.” (Mark 12:29-31)

24. How do we love God?

Answer: We love God by trusting and obeying Him in all things. "And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and to keep the commandments and statutes of the LORD, which I command you this day for your good?" (Deuteronomy 10:12-13)

25. How do we love our neighbours?

Answer: We love our neighbours by not doing any harm against them but like Christ we help them, pray for them, and forgive them even when they wrong us. "Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you." (Ephesians 4:32)

26. What are the promises of God?

Answer: God promises believers that nothing would separate them from his love; that if we are faithful we shall attain heaven. "Blessed is the man who endures trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life which God has promised to those who love him." (James 1:12)

27. What is Heaven?

Answer: Heaven is God's glorious kingdom where there is no sin; and where believers fellowship with God forever. "Then the King will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, O blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.'" (Matthew 25:34)

THE CHRISTIAN SEASONS

30. What is the Christmas Day?

Answer: On Christmas Day we celebrate the birth of Christ. "She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." (Matthew 1:21)

31. What is Good Friday?

Answer: On Good Friday we celebrate the day Jesus Christ was crucified on the cross for us. "When they came to the place which is called The Skull, there they crucified him, and the criminals, one on the right and one on the left." (Luke 23:33)

32. What is the Resurrection Day?

Answer: On Resurrection Day we celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from death for us. "He is not here; for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay." (Matthew 28:6)

33. What is the Ascension Day?

Answer: On the Ascension day we celebrate the day Jesus Christ was raised to heaven to share the glory of the Father. “So then the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God.” (Mark 16:29)

34. What is the Holy Spirit Outpouring Sunday?

Answer: The Holy Spirit outpouring Sunday (Pentecost Sunday) is the day God empowered the disciples with the Holy Spirit. “And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit enabled them.” (Acts 2:4)

35. What is the Trinity Sunday?

Answer: On Trinity Sunday, we proclaim that the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit are one God. “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” (Matthew 28:19)

36. What do we believe about God the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit?

Answer: I believe in God the Father, Almighty, maker of Heaven and Earth [Recite the words of THE APOSTLES CREED or THE NICENE CREED

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