

STRAIGHT ANSWERS

to

**TOUGH
QUESTIONS**

by Keith S. Andrews

Tough Questions

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QUESTION 1

What is so special about the Bible?

POSSIBLE ANSWERS:

1. The Bible is special because it is the basis of our heritage as a people. Much of our great literature has its roots in the characters and figures of the Bible. The Bible served as the inspiration for our cultural "heroes." There is much in the art and history of Western civilization that can not be understood unless one is familiar the Bible. Knowledge of the Bible is a necessary ingredient in the background a liberally educated person.

2. The Bible is more than a literary and historically significant document. The Old and New Testaments serve as the basis for two of the great religions of the world, Judaism and Christianity. The Bible is a religious document and must, therefore, be given its proper place among the other great religious books of the world.

3. Even though the Bible was written by various men over a period of over 1,600 years, it does contain much truth about God. The men who wrote these words had real experiences with a true and living God. This book stands alone as the first-hand record of their interpretations of those events. No other book can make this claim. The books in the Old and New Testaments were carefully selected because of their inspiring message and their historical accuracy.

4. The sixty-six books of the Bible's Old and New Testaments, in their original autographs, are the infallible inspired Word of God. All the Scripture and every word of Scripture is "God-breathed, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness." The whole counsel of God is either explicitly expressed in or may be deduced from the Scripture which is, therefore, our only standard for Christian faith and practice.

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

Ex. 17:14 - "Then the LORD said to Moses, 'Write this on a scroll as something to be remembered . . .'"

Jer. 30:1-2 - "This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: 'Write in a book all the words I have spoken to you.'"

Dan. 12:4 - "But you, Daniel, close up and seal the words of the scroll until the time of the end."

Hab. 2:2-3 - "Then the LORD replied: 'Write down the revelation and make it plain on tablets so that a herald may run with it. For the revelation awaits an appointed time; it speaks of the end and will not prove false. Though it linger, wait for it; it will certainly come and will not delay.'"

2 Pet. 1:21 - "For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit."

Rom. 15:4 - "Everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope."

1 Cor. 10:11 - "These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the fulfillment of the ages has come."

2 Tim. 3:16-17 - "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."

Matt. 24:35 - "Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away."

IDEAS TO CONSIDER:

The Church has confessed throughout the ages that the Bible constitutes sacred Scripture. The early church was convinced that the Old Testament was inspired by the Holy Spirit and was God's Word for them. This attitude is rooted in the church's Jewish roots and in Christ's high view of the Scriptures. In addition, the words of Christ and the writings of the apostles were considered to be on the same spiritual level as the Old Testament Scriptures. That is to say that they too were inspired by the Holy Spirit and were part of God's complete and perfect revelation of Himself and His will to man.

The Bible is unlike any other book. Our approach to reading and understanding and applying it to our lives must, therefore, be different as well.

THE BIBLE MUST BE READ *PRAYERFULLY*. We must trust that the same Spirit who inspired the *writing* of Scripture will illumine our hearts and minds so that we might *comprehend* it. We must pray as the Psalmist prayed, "*Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law*" (Ps. 119:18).

THE BIBLE MUST BE READ *PRACTICALLY*. We must always be ready and willing to respond to the message we read. Our response may range from thanksgiving and praise to confession of sin and repentance.

THE BIBLE MUST BE READ *PERSISTENTLY*. The Word of God is food for our souls. We must feed upon it regularly. To do otherwise is to risk spiritual malnutrition! No one is strong enough to maintain a right relationship with God without regular meditation upon His Word. The Psalmist wrote, "*I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you*" (Ps 119:11).

THE BIBLE MUST BE READ *PERVASIVELY*. There are no unimportant or irrelevant portions of the Scripture. All of the Bible is God's Word, His revelation, to us. Because the Bible is a unity, we can often understand a verse or passage better by comparing it to another passage.

MAKING APPLICATION:

The Bible is God's gift to you. Reading it, meditating upon it and applying it to daily life is not only beneficial but essential for every Christian. Read these passages and see how knowledge of God's Word will prove helpful.

- John 8:31-32 _____
- _____
- Matt. 4:1-11 _____
- _____
- 1 Jn. 5:13 _____
- _____
- Ps. 1:1-3 _____
- _____
- Ps. 119:1, 11 _____
- _____
- Ps. 119:24, 35-37 _____
- _____
- Ps. 119:99 _____
- _____
- Ps. 119:104-105, 127-128 _____
- _____
- Gal. 6:6 _____
- _____

Memory verse

*"Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved,
a workman who does not need to be ashamed
and who correctly handles the word of truth."*

1 Tim. 2:15

QUESTION 2

Do All Religions Lead to God?

POSSIBLE ANSWERS:

1. The important thing is not *how* you worship or even *whom* you worship. Religion has value because it provides a moral and ethical system to live by. No religion leads to God. The benefits of religion are temporal.

2. God is powerful but unknowable. He is the energy and the order behind the universe. Because the physical creation is simply a manifestation of the mind of God, everything is a part of God. Religion is simply a response to the fact that God is. Its particulars, therefore, are unimportant.

3. God is love. What is required of man is that he love as well. Love, not religion, is the answer to man's seeking after God. Because the loving heart is of the same substance as God, it is right and proper for us, when we love, to understand our own God-character. The loving person does not need to find God, the loving person is God.

4. Religion has no value unless it has its basis in the special revelation of God. The finite cannot grasp the infinite. God has revealed both His requirements and His grace to man in the gospel of Jesus Christ. If man is to have a relationship with God, it must be on God's terms.

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

Acts 17:22 - "Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus and said: "Men of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious."

Jer. 10:5 - "Like a scarecrow in a melon patch, their idols cannot speak; they must be carried because they cannot walk. Do not fear them; they can do no harm nor can they do any good."

Hab. 2:18-20 - "Of what value is an idol, since a man has carved it? Or an image that teaches lies? For he who makes it trusts in his own creation; he makes idols that cannot speak. Woe to him who says to wood, 'Come to life!' Or to lifeless stone, 'Wake up!' Can it give guidance? It is covered with gold and silver; there is no breath in it. But the LORD is in his holy temple; let all the earth be silent before him."

Deut. 4:19 - "When you look up to the sky and see the sun, the moon and the stars-- all the heavenly array-- do not be enticed into bowing down to them and worshiping things the LORD your God has apportioned to all the nations under heaven."

Deut. 32:17 - "They sacrificed to demons, which are not God-- gods they had not known, gods that recently appeared, gods your fathers did not fear."

IDEAS TO CONSIDER:

Man was created to have a personal relationship with God. It is his fallen state, his prideful condition that prevents unregenerate man from developing this relationship. Still, the desire remains. Man naturally knows that he is a spiritual being, created and destined for eternity. As Augustine put it, each man has a "God-shaped void." Religion is simply man's attempt to fill that void.

False religion takes on one of several forms: The "I am like God" form, the "Appeasing the Angry God" form, and the "Cycle of Life" form.

Adherents to the "I am like God" form of religion try to find God "within." They may cling to a form of pantheism that sees all things as part of God and God in all things. This is a simple matter of creating God in the image of man and reducing God to a manageable form.

Adherents to the "Appeasing the Angry God" form of religion realize that man has somehow offended God and have built a religion of "good works" and sacrifice that they hope will so please God that He will *forget* their offense. It is interesting that often the works and sacrifices take on forms that are, in themselves, offensive to the true and living God.

Adherents to the "Cycle of Life" form view life itself as sacred. They do not, however, see any purpose in it. Many who cling to this view put their hope in the idea of reincarnation. It is an endless cycle of misery and despair, however, which is a poor substitute for the hope of salvation and eternal life with God.

Christianity is unique among the religions of the world in that it provides a means of salvation that is grounded upon the goodness, the grace, and the power of God Himself rather than on the faithfulness or goodness of man. It is also based on the special revelation of God to man rather than upon man seeking and finding God.

MAKING APPLICATION:

1) What is the "big lie" that is the basis for much false religion and what is its source? (Read Gen. 3:1-5) _____

2) How does man's pride cause him to create religions for himself? (Consider Rom. 1:18-23). _____

3) How is the Christian to view false religions? Is there a place in Christianity for syncretism or religious tolerance? (Consider Deut 18:9-13) _____

4) Is God thwarted, defeated or hindered by false religion? (Consider 1 Sam. 5:1-5) _____

Memory verse

"Fear the LORD your God, serve him only . . ."

Deut. 6:13

QUESTION 3

Are Heaven and Hell real?

POSSIBLE ANSWERS:

1. To seriously consider the existence of heaven and/or hell one must first seriously consider the possibility of an existence beyond this one. There is nothing in the natural world to give evidence of such an existence. We must therefore say, if we are to approach things rationally, that neither heaven nor hell exist.

2. Man is a spiritual as well as a physical being. We cannot see the mind, and yet we know that it exists. We cannot see or measure life and yet we know that it exists. We must consider the possibility that the person's essential nature can survive the death of the body. Given this, we must also consider the abode of such a being.

3. The very ideas of heaven and hell imply some sort of judgment following this earthly existence with heaven being a place of pleasure and reward, and hell being a place of torment and punishment. Judgment of this sort further implies the existence of a being who has both the right and the power to judge humanity.

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

Ps. 33:13-14 - *"From heaven the LORD looks down and sees all mankind; from his dwelling place he watches all who live on earth . . ."*

Ps. 23:6 - *"Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever."*

Dan. 12:2 - *"Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt."*

Job 19:25-27 - *"I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God; I myself will see him with my own eyes--I, and not another."*

Matt. 25:34, 41 - *"Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. . . Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels."*

Php. 3:18-21 - *". . . Many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. Their destiny is destruction . . . But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables him to bring*

everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body."

A SURVEY OF THE BIBLICAL LANGUAGE

Heaven - The words which are translated "heaven" in most English Bibles can refer to one of three places. The common characteristic is that all three are held distinct from the earth and are, generally, considered to be above it. First, "heaven" can simply refer to the air (i.e., the earth's atmosphere). Both birds and clouds are found in the heavens. Second, "heaven" can refer to outer space. The sun, moon and stars are in the heavens. Third, "heaven" can refer to the abode of God and His angels. This "heaven" is eternal and, therefore, existed before God created the "heavens and the earth." It is to this "third heaven" that Paul refers in 2 Cor. 12:2.

Hell - There are two OT and three NT words that are commonly translated "hell" in English Bibles. The first is *Sheol*. This word describes the abode of the dead, both the just and the unjust. It would seem, from its context, to refer to the grave. If so, it applies to the resting place of the body and does not give any information about the destiny of the spirit. (See Job 17:13-16). The second word, *Shachath*, is also found in the OT. This word also refers to a site of interment, but specifically applies to a tomb that has been dug or hollowed out. (See Isa. 38:17-18). The NT word Hades seems to be borrowed from common Greek usage and refers to death or the underworld. Jesus uses this word in Matt. 16:18. The connotation of Hades is one of hopelessness. Hades is the place from which no one returns. The NT word *Tartaroo* is also borrowed from Greek mythology and refers to that portion of Hades which is reserved for the most wicked. It is found only in 2 Pet. 2:4. The most common NT word for hell is *Gehenna*. Gehenna was a real place in the Hinnom Valley on the South side of Jerusalem. It was at this site that the refuse from the city was brought to be burned.

THOUGHTS FOR DISCUSSION:

When most people think of "going to heaven" they think of a spiritual rather than a physical realm. While it is true that, as Paul says, "to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord," the Scripture teaches that the ultimate destination of the redeemed is a renewed heaven and earth. Believers should look forward, then, to everlasting life – never again to deal with suffering, sorrow or death – in a resurrected and incorruptible body on a physical, though Eden-like, earth. The great covenant promise, "My dwelling place will be with them; I will be their God, and they will be my people" (Ezk. 37:27) will have its ultimate and final fulfillment.

According to Scripture, God created hell as a place of ultimate banishment and punishment for the Devil and his angels. The popular view of Satan as the ruler of hell is not biblical. The destiny of the unbeliever is alternately described as a place of extreme darkness and a place of unquenchable fire.

Darkness is often used in Scripture to describe the condition of the unbeliever in this life (see Jn. 3:19-20, 8:12; Col. 1:13; 1 Pet. 2:9). Though they

do not acknowledge God, they still benefit from His mercy and provision (Ps. 145:9; Matt. 5:45). Jesus uses the phrase “outer darkness” (lit. “the farthest extreme darkness”) to describe the place where the wicked are cast in the next life. Extreme darkness would describe and absolute estrangement and isolation from the presence and benefits of God.

Fire is the destiny of that which is no longer of value. The branch that has become detached from the vine is burned (Jn. 15:6), as is the chaff after the wheat is removed (Matt. 3:12) and those who did not serve the King (Matt. 25:41). According to Matt. 13:41-42, all that is evil or causes sin will, at the end of the age, be thrown into the “fiery furnace.” Whether we are to understand the fires of hell metaphorically or literally, they represent misery without hope. The state of the lost is both *final* and *eternal*.

MAKING APPLICATION:

Is it at the judgment that a person’s final destiny is determined? What is the purpose of final judgment? (Consider Rev. 3:5, 20:12; Matt. 3:12, 13:48-50, 25:33).

Do you think that believers will be happy spending the rest of eternity with God? (Consider Rev. 21:1-7; Jn. 14:2; Matt. 6:20).

Memory verse

*" In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you.
I am going there to prepare a place for you."*

John 14:2

QUESTION 4

How Good Do I Have to Be to Go to Heaven?

POSSIBLE ANSWERS:

1. Everybody goes to heaven. Getting there doesn't have anything to do with being "good" or "bad," when people die, their souls go to heaven. You don't have to be good, but you do have to be dead. We can be sure that we will see all our loved ones who have "passed away" in heaven one day.

2. Not everybody goes to heaven. People will be called to account for how they have lived. We are all going to be judged on the basis of how we treat our fellow man. A "good person," i.e., someone who is moral and honest and considerate of others, will be acceptable. People who take advantage of others, who are immoral and dishonest will not be allowed into heaven. A person can hope for heaven, but no one can know for sure if they have been "good enough."

3. There is no way to earn heaven. God requires perfection and nobody is perfect. Heaven is a goal for which humans should strive, but, unless you are some kind of "saint," it is an unattainable goal.

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

Deut. 18:13 - "You must be blameless before the LORD your God."

Matt. 5:20 - ". . . unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven."

Matt. 5:48 - "Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect."

Matt. 7:21 - "21 'Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven."

John 3:5 - "Jesus answered, 'I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit.'"

John 14:6 - "Jesus answered, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'"

1 Cor. 6:9-11 - "Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived . . ."

Gal. 2:21 - ". . . if righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing!"

Eph. 4:22-24 - "You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness."

IDEAS TO CONSIDER:

Jesus makes it clear in His "Sermon on the Mount" that, if one expects to *earn* heaven, he must be perfect – not better than the average person, not a really really good person, not a moral person who tries to do what he thinks is right – PERFECT! If this was all Jesus had to say about it then heaven *would* be unattainable for us because no one is perfect. The truth of the matter is that we have all "sinned and fallen short of the glory of God." No amount of goodness in the present can undo that which was done in the past! The good news is that our sin is not the end of the story. The Bible teaches that acceptance into heaven doesn't depend on *merit*, but upon *grace*. In other words, people become acceptable to God because of something God has done rather than because of something they have done.

But, you might say, Jesus said that it is necessary for people to "do the will of the Father" if they are to enter the kingdom of God. What is God's will? Simply put, it is God's will that we be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth (1 Tim. 2:4). The truth is that Jesus lived a perfect life – being obedient to the Father at every point – in our place. He became our righteousness! Through His death – also in our place – He who had no sin paid the penalty for *our* sin. God wants us to put our trust in His completed redemptive work, to repent of our sin, to ask for forgiveness based on what Christ has done, and to serve Him with a whole heart.

MAKING APPLICATION:

1. How can a sinful person like me (or anyone) become righteous enough to satisfy God? (Consider 1 Jn. 3:4-5; 2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Cor. 1:30, 6:9-11; Php. 3:8-9)

2. If Christians are "in Christ" are they supposed to be perfect now? (Consider Gal. 5:5, Ps. 25:4-5; Eph. 4:22-24; Gal. 5:25; 1 Jn. 1:8-9)

Memory verse

"But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions -- it is by grace you have been saved."

Eph. 2:4-5

QUESTION 5

What does it Mean to be "Born Again"?

POSSIBLE ANSWERS:

1. The phrase, "born again" doesn't mean anything in a practical sense. It is an expression that has been picked up by religious zealots and used to set themselves apart. The phrase is a term of experiential religion and should be avoided because of its divisive character--not every Christian claims such an experience.

2. Being "born again" simply means "starting again," or "having a new beginning." Any time a person begins a new activity or takes a new direction in life he could be said to be "born again." Jesus simply applied this idea to religion. When a person decides to follow the teachings of Jesus, he is "born again."

3. A person who is "born again" surely does head in a new direction. It is not, however, initiated by his decision. While there are very real lifestyle changes that result from a person's being "born again," the actual change is spiritual. That part of man that communes with God--the spirit--is given life by God's decision and power. The man, who was previously dead in sin, becomes alive to God. He becomes able to perceive and to participate in the works of God's kingdom.

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

Eph. 2:4-5 - "Because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions--it is by grace you have been saved."

Tit. 3:4-5 - "When the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit . . ."

1 Pet. 1:23 - "You have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God."

1 Jn. 2:29 - "If you know that he is righteous, you know that everyone who does what is right has been born of him."

Gal. 6:15 - "Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything; what counts is a new creation."

IDEAS TO CONSIDER:

The theological term for being born again is *regeneration*. It simply means having one's life "started over." It is clear from a survey of pertinent Scripture, however, that the old life and the new life are not equivalent. Being born again is

not starting the same kind of life over. The new life is both qualitatively and quantitatively different. The previous life is now referred to as death when compared to the new life (Jn. 5:24). The things that seemed essential in the previous life now fade into unimportance (Php. 3:8). The regenerated man develops new ways of thinking about himself and about the world (Rom. 12:2). His character and nature are changes so thoroughly that he becomes, for all practical purposes, a new creature (2 Cor. 5:17). The new life has one other essential difference from the old; it is eternal in its scope and always includes fellowship with God.

This instrument of change is the Holy Spirit. The new life originates not with man but with God (1 Jn. 5:4). Sinful man will not--can not--choose to put his trust in Christ. It is only the quickening work of God which makes saving faith possible. It might seem to an individual that he has, by his own volition, chosen to "accept Christ as his Savior and Lord." His willingness to do so, however, is evidence that the Holy Spirit has first done His work in that person's heart.

The necessity of such a change of heart is emphatically affirmed in Scripture. As Paul wrote to the church at Rome, "the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so" (Rom. 8:7). It is important to understand that what the Holy Spirit does is to enable the person: to repent of sin, to trust the atoning work of Jesus upon the cross, and to submit to the lordship of Christ.

MAKING APPLICATION:

1) Is this idea of being "born again" really biblical? What did Jesus say about the need to be "born again"? (Consider John 3:1-7) _____

2) Can a person simply decide that he wants to be born again? How does this happen to a person? (Consider John 1:12-13; 3:8) _____

3) What is required of me if the Holy Spirit has motivated me to trust Christ for Salvation? (Consider Eph. 4:22-24) _____

Memory verse

*"Create in me a pure heart, O God,
and renew a steadfast spirit within me."*

Ps. 51:10

QUESTION 6

Does God have a plan for my life?

POSSIBLE ANSWERS:

1. No. God has given each man free will and, therefore, does not interfere with the flow of the individual's life. We are the "captain" of our own ship. There is no such thing as divine "pre-destiny."

2. No. God is involved in human history, but He deals with nations and peoples, not with individuals. An individual is responsible to find his own way in life and his own path to God.

3. Yes. Each man has an eternal destiny which has been preordained by God. The everyday occurrences of life, though, are insignificant on the eternal cosmic scale and are, therefore, left to chance.

4. Yes. Each man has an eternal destiny which has been preordained by God. He is brought step by step to that final destination according to God's plan and by His design and power.

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

Matt. 10:29-31 - "Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from the will of your Father. And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows."

Ps. 33:10 - "The LORD foils the plans of the nations; he thwarts the purposes of the peoples."

Gen. 50:20 - "You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives."

Ps. 139:1-4 - "O LORD, you have searched me and you know me. You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways. Before a word is on my tongue you know it completely, O LORD."

Pr. 16:9 - "In his heart a man plans his course, but the LORD determines his steps."

Pr. 19:21 - "Many are the plans in a man's heart, but it is the LORD's purpose that prevails."

Ps. 127:1 - "Unless the LORD builds the house, its builders labor in vain. Unless the LORD watches over the city, the watchmen stand guard in vain."

IDEAS TO CONSIDER:

The Bible teaches us several things about God and about His interest in and care for the individual. God does have a plan for your life. He cares about the details of your life--even details that you might overlook yourself. Even though God is involved in the lives of His people, it is not correct to think that He "controls" what we think, or say, or do. We make our own decisions and are responsible for the consequences. God; because He understands the character of every person, because He knows the end of everything from its beginning, and because He is able to accomplish anything He sets out to do; is able to bring His plan for our lives to fulfillment without violating our freedom of choice. In short, the free choices of men do not thwart the decrees and purposes of God.

MAKING APPLICATION:

On what basis does God establish a plan for my life? (Consider Jer. 29:11, Rom. 8:28) _____

Can I trust God to do the right thing? (Consider Dan. 4:37, Ps. 145:17)

Does God ever change His mind about how things should turn out? (Consider Isa. 46:10, Ps. 119:89, Matt. 24:35) _____

Am I always going to be able to see and understand God's purposes in my circumstances? (Consider Eccl. 3:1-14, Isa. 55:7-8, Rom. 11:33) _____

Memory verse

*"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
who has blessed us in the heavenly realms
with every spiritual blessing in Christ.
For he chose us in him before the creation of the world
to be holy and blameless in his sight."*

Eph. 1:3-4

QUESTION 7

What benefits are there to being a Christian?

POSSIBLE ANSWERS:

1. The Christian life is a life of sacrifice. It is inappropriate to think in terms of "benefits" when discussing the Christian life-style.

2. There are benefits to being in a right relationship with Christ. Those benefits have their fulfillment in the "next life," however. One should not look to Christ for anything in this life.

3. There are benefits to being in a right relationship with Christ in this life that continue into the next life. These benefits are spiritual and, though they do effect ones attitudes toward material things, there is no direct connection between a person's spiritual condition and the circumstances of his day-to-day existence.

4. The benefits to a right relationship with Christ effect every aspect of a person's life. Since Jesus is Lord, He is given priority in everything; in one's personal life, in his family life, in his finances, on the job, and in his spiritual life. It is, of course, that relationship with Christ which provides the basis of his hope for the next life as well.

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

Ps. 37:23-25 - "If the LORD delights in a man's way, he makes his steps firm; though he stumble, he will not fall, for the LORD upholds him with his hand. I was young and now I am old, yet I have never seen the righteous forsaken or their children begging bread."

Ps. 34:8-10 - "Taste and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the man who takes refuge in him. Fear the LORD, you his saints, for those who fear him lack nothing. The lions may grow weak and hungry, but those who seek the LORD lack no good thing."

Ps. 103:2-5 - "Praise the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits-- who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion, who satisfies your desires with good things so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's."

Php. 4:6-7 - "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

Matt. 6:25, 32-33 - "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes . . . your heavenly Father knows that you need these things. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."

IDEAS TO CONSIDER:

When a person accepts Christ as his Lord and as his Savior he can expect several things to happen. First, his values and his priorities change. Some things, which seemed crucial to life, fade into insignificance in favor of things and activities with which the person was previously unconcerned. Second, the person's trust (his "faith") shifts from self to Christ. Third, his "spiritual eyes and ears" are opened so that he can sense the guidance of the Spirit which Christ gives him. He begins to see everything--spiritual and material--in a new and different light.

The benefits of walking with Christ, then, manifest themselves in all parts of life. God is in the center of everything for the Christian. The Christian looks to Christ, first of all, for eternal salvation; but also for wisdom, direction, provision, and protection here and now.

MAKING APPLICATION:

Does accepting Christ and becoming a Christian really have any effect on who I am as a person? Will my values and priorities really change? Why? (Consider 2 Cor. 5:17, Matt. 9:16-17) _____

My life is OK now. How can walking with God make my life better? (Consider Isa. 30:21; Gal. 5:19-23; Rom. 8:9) _____

Does becoming a Christian ensure a life of ease and contentment? Will I be kept from troubles by the power of God? (Consider Jn. 16:33; Rom. 8:35-39; James 1:2-4) _____

Memory verse

*"Whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ.
What is more, I consider everything a loss
compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord."
Php. 3:7-8*

QUESTION 8

Why is there evil and suffering in the world?

POSSIBLE ANSWERS:

1. There is no reason for evil or for suffering in the world. Things, good and bad, just happen. It is illogical to try to see "purpose" in the events of life and death.
2. Evil, like beauty, exists only in the mind of the beholder. What one person perceives as evil another person perceives as good--actions and their interpretations are relative. Suffering is simply a state of being. Again, it exists only in the mind of the person who so describes the condition.
3. To discount the existence of evil or suffering in the world is to turn a blind eye to reality. Evil and suffering are the natural result of men making choices in life without full understanding of their consequences. A lack of enlightenment is the source of all evil.
4. Evil and suffering are the direct result of man's fallen and sinful condition. Man's natural state (because he is separated from God) is selfish, his every motive self-serving. He is unwilling to submit to God's instruction and, therefore, cannot overcome his fallen world or his own sinful nature.

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

Gen. 1:31 - "God saw all that he had made, and it was very good."

Rev. 4:11 - "You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being."

Gen. 2:9, 16-17 - "And the LORD God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground--trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. . . And the LORD God commanded the man, 'You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die.'"

Gen. 3:16-19 - " To the woman he said, 'I will greatly increase your pains in childbearing; with pain you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.' To Adam he said, 'Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat of it,' 'Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your brow you will eat

your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return."

Isa. 5:20 - "Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter."

Rom. 8:20-22 - "For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time."

Rev. 21:3-5 - "And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, 'Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.' He who was seated on the throne said, 'I am making everything new!'"

IDEAS TO CONSIDER:

One of the difficult things to understand is how God, who is perfect in everything He does, could create creatures who would do evil things. Are we to understand that our perfect and loving God is the author of evil? No! God is the author of freedom, however. God created beings with minds and wills of their own--creatures who had the ability to choose to love and serve God or to reject and disobey Him. God did create the possibility for evil--without that possibility there is no possibility for good. Evil acts, on the other hand, are the result of man exercising his God-given freedom in an ungodly manner (in opposition to God's choice).

Some have proposed that God could have eliminated evil and suffering in one of the following ways:

- 1) He could have decided not to create anything.
- 2) He could have decided not to create anything free.
- 3) He could have created free creatures who had no option but obedience.
- 4) He could have created free creatures and simply accepted them in spite of their disobedience.

Regarding proposal 1: God, who knows the end from the beginning, desired to create the universe. He proclaimed that it was "good" at its beginning. We must believe that its end will, likewise, be "good." God performed the act of creation because it was a good and loving thing for Him to do.

Regarding proposal 2: It is not correct to equate amorality (a lack of any moral standard) with morality (conformity to a moral standard). A universe of creatures who have no freedom is not necessarily better; it is devoid of evil, but it is devoid of good as well

Regarding proposal 3: This option is based on the illogical assumption that a creature can be free while having one, and only one choice. To coerce a free choice is a contradiction in terms. God could have created a garden without a "tree of the knowledge of good and evil." The creatures in it could, however, have only the appearance of obedience.

Regarding proposal 4: For God to overlook evil would require Him to alter His own character. God is holy, righteous and immutable. God's solution was to provide a means by which sinful men might be made acceptable, their sin forgiven and the justice of God satisfied.

MAKING APPLICATION:

Will there ever be an end to sin and the evil acts and suffering that it produces? (Consider Isa. 65:17; 2 Peter 3:10-13; Rev. 21:1-5) _____

Is it right for me to blame God when evil things happen? (Consider James 1:13; 1 Jn. 3:8) _____

Is God going to do anything about those who do evil and cause suffering? (Consider Isa. 3:10-11; Rom. 2:6-8, 12:19; Rev. 20:15) _____

What if I have done things that might have displeased God or caused others to suffer in some way? (Consider Ps. 103:8-12; Isa. 43:25; 1 Jn. 1:7-9) _____

Memory verse

"God saw all that he had made, and it was very good." Gen. 1:31

QUESTION 9

Does Prayer Really Change Anything?

POSSIBLE ANSWERS:

1. People need to look within rather than without for the answers to their problems. Prayer or meditation may serve some purpose in clarifying a given situation or in helping a person cope with a problem but they have no effect on the circumstance itself. People need to learn to rely on self and not on some "higher power."
2. It is unreasonable to think that a Creator God would care about the needs and desires of individual creatures like us. It might be proper to pray for peace in the world, a cure for cancer or something with universal implications; but we shouldn't trouble God with our petty problems.
3. God is in control of everything and all outcomes have been predetermined by Him. There is, therefore, no point in prayers of petition because His will and purpose are immutable. Prayers of praise and thanksgiving are in order, of course.
4. One of the unchangeable characteristics of God's nature is that He is responsive to the cries of His people. Prayers of all kinds are acceptable to God if they are offered to Him in faith and if they are offered in accordance with His Word. Christians should pray in all circumstances.

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

Ps. 145:17- 19 - "The LORD is righteous in all his ways and loving toward all he has made. The LORD is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth. He fulfills the desires of those who fear him; he hears their cry and saves them."

Php. 4:6 - " Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God."

1 Tim. 2:8 - "I want men everywhere to lift up holy hands in prayer, without anger or disputing."

1 Thess. 5:16 - "Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."

Heb 4:16 - "Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need."

1 Jn. 5:14 - "This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us."

IDEAS TO CONSIDER:

Before we try to determine whether or not prayer changes anything, we need to be sure that we know what prayer is. The Shorter Catechism answers the question, "what is prayer?" this way: "Prayer is an offering up of our desires unto God, for things agreeable to his will, in the name of Christ, with confession of our sins, and thankful acknowledgment of his mercies." The Heidelberg Catechism provides the following answer to the question, "Why is prayer necessary for Christians?": "Because it is the chief part of the gratitude which God requires of us and because God will give his grace and Holy Spirit only to those who sincerely beseech him in prayer without ceasing, and who thank him for these gifts."

Prayer, in the simplest sense of the word, is communication with God. It takes various forms that include prayers of praise, thanksgiving, confession, supplication and dedication.

The Scripture teaches us that we should pray and that God not only *hears* the prayers of his people but that He is *moved* by them. Our prayers should be *honest* (Matt. 6:5) and *direct* (Matt. 6:7); they should be prayed in *faith* (Matt. 21:21-22; Mk 11:24); *fervently* (Jas. 5:16b), without *shame* (Lk. 11:8-13) and without *doubting* God's ability to do what He has promised (Jas. 1:6; 1 Jn. 5:14-15). Corporate prayers should be prayed in *unity* of mind and spirit (Matt. 18:19).

We should not forget that pray changes us! We cannot spend time with God and come away unchanged. The purpose of prayer is not to bring God into conformity with our thoughts, but to bring us into conformity with His.

MAKING APPLICATION:

1. How important was prayer in the life of Jesus? (Consider Lk. 3:21-22, 5:15-16, 6:12-13, 9:28-29; Matt. 26:36; Jn. 17:1) _____

2. How can I know how to pray? (Consider Ps. 119: 11, 24, 54, 81, 116-117; 2 Pet. 2:19-21; Rom. 8:26-27) _____

3. How does the Lord's Prayer serve as a model for my prayers? (Compare Matt. 6:9-13 and Lk. 11:2-4 – SEE following page) Notice the explanations and contrasts in the longer version is recorded in Matt.

“Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.”

Matt. 6:9-13

“Father, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come. Give us each day our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who sins against us. And lead us not into temptation.”

Luke 11:2-4

The elements of this prayer are:

- **INVOCATION** (Our Father . . .)
- **PETITION** (Give us this day . . . forgive our sins . . . lead us not . . .)
- **DOXOLOGY** (for Thine is the kingdom . . . [NOTE: this traditional portion of the Lord’s Prayer is not included in the most reliable Gk. texts]).

Memory verse

“Lord, teach us to pray . . .”

Lk. 11:1

QUESTION 10

Can I Worship At Home or Do I Have to Go to Church?

POSSIBLE ANSWERS:

1. The church is just a building. God doesn't live in a building. There is no reason to think that going to church will get a person any closer to God. It is just as valid to worship God on the golf course, on the lake, at the beach or at home in bed. Going to church has nothing to do with being a Christian.
2. Some people have to work hard every day and Sunday is the only day they have to relax and spend time with their children. God would rather have them spend time with their family than waste the day in church. Anyway, what goes on at church doesn't have much to do with the real lives of hard-working people.
3. It is good to go to church on Sundays. The Bible doesn't say that Christians have to go to church, though. Believers want to get together. People who believe in Jesus ought to go to church as often as they can.
4. We can talk about "going to church," but the church isn't a place, the church is people. We don't "go to church," we "are the church"! The Bible teaches that it is important for the church to gather together. Assembling to worship together makes us stronger in many ways.

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

Matt. 16:18 - "Jesus replied . . . I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it."

Matt. 18:20 - "Where two or three come together in my name, there am I [Jesus] with them."

Acts 9:31 - "The church throughout Judea, Galilee and Samaria enjoyed a time of peace. It was strengthened; and encouraged by the Holy Spirit, it grew in numbers, living in the fear of the Lord."

1 Cor. 1:2 - "To the church of God in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be holy, together with all those everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ . . ."

Eph 1:22-23 - "And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him [Christ] to be head over everything for the church, which is his body . . ."

Col. 3:15-16 - "Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God."

Heb. 10:25 - "Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another--and all the more as you see the Day approaching."

IDEAS TO CONSIDER:

The New Testament Greek word *ekklesia*, which our English Bibles translate "church" means, "to call out," or "those who have been called out." It is generally accepted that the church consists of those individuals whom the Lord has called to faith in Himself. This word is also used in the Greek translation of the Old Testament to replace a Hebrew word that refers, first to the people of faith, but secondly to the assembly of the faithful. The church, then, is that group of people whom God has called out of the world and called into communion with one another.

The first Christians were Jews who knew and used the Greek translation of the Old Testament. For them to use a self-designation that was common in the Old Testament for the people of God reveals their understanding of the continuity that links the Old and New Testaments. The early Christians understood themselves to be the people of God, the true children of Israel with Abraham as their father, and the people of the New Covenant prophesied in the Old Testament.

A thorough reading of the New Testament reveals the church from three basic perspectives: First, the church is seen as the body of Christ. This imagery shows us that the church is Christ's; it belongs to Him. He is its head. Second, the church is seen as God's new creation. Its members have been brought from darkness to light, from death to life. Third, the church is described as a fellowship of faith. Its members are saints, faithful witnesses to the truth of the gospel.

The church certainly remains the church when its members are separated from one another. There are situations, of course, where believers are called to solitary service. This is not the norm, however. It is the church's natural condition and desire to be assembled together. The church gathers for the purposes of corporate worship, prayer, instruction and participation in the sacraments. It is through such assemblies that the individual members of the body of Christ are built up and equipped for the work of ministry. The gathering of the church is not a means of salvation. It is, however, a means to increased fruitfulness and service to the Lord.

MAKING APPLICATION:

1) Why do I need to gather with other Christians? (Consider Jn. 13:34-35; Acts 2:42-47; Rom. 12:4-5; Eph. 4:11-16) _____

2) Read the following passages. What do they teach us about the church?
Ps. 100:3; Acts 20:28b _____
Rom. 12:5; 1 Cor. 12:12 _____
1 Cor. 3:16; 1 Pet. 2:4-5; Heb. 3:6 _____
Jer. 31:33; Eph. 5:24-27 _____
Matt. 16:18; Eph. 6:10-18 _____

Memory verse

*"Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts,
since as members of one body you were called to peace.
And be thankful."*

Col. 3:15

QUESTION 11

How Do I Know Which Church is the "Right" Church?

POSSIBLE ANSWERS:

1. There aren't any "right" churches and there aren't any "wrong" churches. It doesn't matter *where* you go to church. The only important thing is that you *go* to church.

2. If you are looking for a church with all the right answers you will be looking forever. Nobody has all the truth. No matter where you go, you will be exposed to both truth and error.

3. Churches are divided because of doctrine. I am not interested in doctrine. For me, the "right church" is the one with people who care about me and about each other. If there is love, I don't care what they believe!

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

Isa. 29:13 - "The Lord says: "These people come near to me with their mouth and honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. Their worship of me is made up only of rules taught by men."

Col. 2:8 - "See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ."

2 Tim. 3:1-5 - ". . . There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, . . .lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God-- having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with them."

Jn. 8:31-32 - ". . . Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

2 Tim. 3:16 - "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."

Matt. 13: 24-30 - "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. But while everyone was sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away . . . Let both grow together until the harvest."

IDEAS TO CONSIDER:

Not all local churches are the same. To begin with, some are biblical and some are not. Some lead people toward a right relationship with God and some, even though they may call themselves "Christian," don't. Some proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ and some proclaim another gospel. Those who gladly preach to "itching ears" are easy to find (See 2 Tim. 4:3).

There is, in reality, only one true church. It is not a denomination. It is not a local church. It is the body of Christ. In every organized manifestation of that body, however, there is an element of corruption. The church is, at present, in the world. Until the end of the age there will be tares (weeds) among the wheat.

Take heart, some local churches are more pure than others. Here are some questions to ask as you attempt to evaluate the "rightness" of a particular congregation:

- 1) Is Christ central in both worship and teaching?
- 2) Is the true gospel being consistently proclaimed?
- 3) Is the Scripture considered inspired, infallible, and authoritative?
- 4) Is a theology of grace consistently evident?
- 5) Are the ministries of the church balanced and real?
- 6) Is the present power of God to change lives acknowledged?

If the answer to each of these question is "yes" then you have found a good church--not a perfect church--but a good church.

MAKING APPLICATION:

1) What does it mean for Christ to be "central"? (Consider Jn. 3:36, 14:6; Acts 4:12, 1 Cor. 3:10-11; 1 Tim. 2:5) _____

2) Should I submit to anyone who claims to be a minister of the gospel? (Consider Matt. 7:15-16; Rom. 16:17-18; 2 Pet. 2:1-2; Mic. 2:11; 1 Jn. 4:1-3) _____

3) How can I recognize the true gospel? (Consider Rom. 3:21-24; Eph. 2:4-5, 8-10) _____

4) What is the false gospel? (Consider Gal. 1:6-9, 3:1-3; 2 Cor. 11:2-4; Col. 2:20-3:1) _____

5) Why would anyone use the name of Christ if they aren't really Christian?
(Consider Matt. 24:23-24; Mk. 13:5-6) _____

Memory verse

*"You are no longer foreigners and aliens,
but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household,
built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets,
with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone."*

Eph. 2:19-20

QUESTION 12

Are Christians really "Better" than Everybody Else?

POSSIBLE ANSWERS:

1. No. Christians think "following the rules -- basically avoiding anything pleasant or fun -- makes them *better*. It may make them different, but it doesn't make them better. There are lots of good moral people who aren't Christians!

2. No. A Christian is a sinner. A non-Christian is a sinner. There is no difference except that the Christian's sin is forgiven. The Christian who says he is "without sin" is just deceiving himself.

3. Yes and no, it depends what you mean by "better." The Christian can't produce goodness in and of himself. In that sense he is not better than the unbeliever. He faces the world differently, however, with additional resources. He has the presence and empowering of the Holy Spirit in his life. He has a new awareness and understanding of God's Word. He has a new heart and nature that is turned toward God and godliness. He is able, therefore, to act better because of Christ in him. (See Gal. 2:20)

4. Yes. The Christian has a new set of relationships, with fellow believers and with non-believers. He is able to love and to serve with a purity of heart that was impossible before. Furthermore, he has an eternal destiny that is infinitely better than that of the non-Christian. The Christian has received -- not earned nor deserved -- the gift of eternal life! He is better because he has been received grace and has been found acceptable in the eyes of a holy and righteous God.

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

1 John 1:7-10 - "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin. If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives."

Gal. 6:15 - "Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything; what counts is a new creation."

Gal. 5:16-18 - "So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature . . . if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under law."

Eph. 4:1 - "As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received."

IDEAS TO CONSIDER:

We must remember that it is not behavior that identifies an individual as belonging to Christ, it is faith. It is not doing good things which makes one a Christian. It is being a Christian, however, which enables one to do things that are pleasing to God. There is no one good enough to *earn* Christ's favor. On the other hand, the indwelling Spirit is working constantly and consistently to make us more and more Christ-like in our ways, our words, and our attitudes. The believer has received Christ, not only as Savior, but also as Lord.

That which is pleasing to God is not always pleasing to man, nor does the court of public opinion necessarily consider it "good". Isaiah draws attention to those who call evil good and who call good evil (Isa. 5:20). The Christian must live to please his heavenly Father and not to please his neighbor.

MAKING APPLICATION:

1. Read Jn. 6:28-29. What does Jesus identify as a required "work?" _____
_____ Is this something that you would
consider a "good work?" Why or why not? _____

2. What is involved in living a life worthy of your calling in Christ? (See Eph. 4:1-3; Col. 1:10-11; Mic. 6:8) _____
_____ Will doing these things make you a better person? Why or why not? _____
_____ Will doing
these things make you seem like a better person to an unbelieving neighbor?
Why or why not? _____

3. How does trusting Christ for salvation effect your daily life? Do you sin less? Should you sin less? Consider Rom. 8:5; Gal. 5:22-25. _____

Memory verse

*"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation;
the old has gone, the new has come!"*
2 Cor. 5:17