

# **God's Plan For Salvation**

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## Introduction

Luke records in the Book of Acts about Philip teaching an Ethiopian eunuch. The man was very religious, was a reader of Scripture, and had gone to great lengths to worship – but he was still lost. When asked if he understood what he was reading from Scripture, he replied: “How can I, except some one shall guide me?” (Acts 8:31). Many today are just like him. Needing guidance to know how to be saved. If you are a learner: *Be willing to accept some help in learning the gospel!* If you are a teacher: *Be willing to patiently take someone through these lessons.*

During the first few centuries of the Christian era, there were no denominational churches of any kind. Today, religious division has created a need for more teaching before a person understands the truth. *More time will be required to get a person to understand the difference between the church of the Bible and denominationalism.*

These lessons are intended to be simple, yet thorough enough, to bring someone “to the knowledge of the truth” (1 Timothy 2:4). A careful study of the Book of Acts reveals that early Christians “preached good tidings concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ” (Acts 8:12). Therefore, a learner ought to be taught about the kingdom as well as about Jesus before they are ready for baptism. *Learning only about baptism is not enough!* After students learned about the kingdom and about Jesus Christ, “they were baptized, both men and women” (Acts 8:12)!

### Suggestions:

- ***Cover one lesson, in about one hour, once per week.*** When you sit down to eat a meal, you can only digest a certain portion. So also, a student can only process a certain amount of information per class period. Don't try to cover too much too fast. By having a class only one time per week, the student has time to ponder, review, and consider the material. We call this “soak” time. Keeping the class at the same time, on the same day of the week is most likely to keep continuity.

- ***Don't answer questions prematurely.*** If a student has questions, often they will be answered as the study continues. Write down their question and wait to see if it is covered later. We all learn best by progressive learning.
  
- ***Take time to explain.*** An eager teacher may be tempted to rush. Many words and concepts that are second nature to the teacher likely are unfamiliar to the student. Don't just read a verse, and go on. Allow it to be understood.
  
- ***Cover chart lessons left to right.*** Lesson 2 and lesson 3 are chart lessons. It is important for the student to see everything in the proper historical timeframe. Everyone today is living after the death of Jesus. This will help the student see where they fit in historically and what that means regarding the law they live under.
  
- ***Lesson 5 - personal evaluation.*** Before beginning this lesson, each student should be encouraged to answer the questions in the box to the best of their memory. Stress to them that this is not about getting right answers, but trying to recall accurately what they did in the past. This will prove helpful as the lesson continues.
  
- ***Lesson 6 – Counting the cost.*** This lesson should be covered before a student is baptized. Jesus himself stressed that before beginning an endeavor, a wise person first sits down and counts the cost.
  
- ***Conviction before conversion.*** Coercion does not equal conversion. Allow the power of the Word to work on the human heart. Telling someone of their *need* is not the same as them coming to realize their *need*.

***“What must I do to be saved?” Acts 16:30***

***“Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the  
faith. Test yourselves.”  
2 Corinthians 13:5 ESV***

***“And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall  
make you free.” John 8:32***



# Lesson One

## The Bible Is From God

### INTRODUCTION

1. The Bible is either from God or from men.
2. The Bible claims to be the revelation from God.
  - a. Exodus 34:27; Jeremiah 30:2
  - b. 1 Corinthians 14:37; Galatians 1:11,12
3. Why should we believe the Bible is truly from God?

### I. UNITY OF MANY PARTS

- A. There are two main divisions of the Bible:
  1. The Old Testament has 39 Books - Genesis to Malachi.
  2. The New Testament has 27 Books – Matthew to Revelation.
- B. Time span of the writing of the Bible:
  1. The first five books were written by Moses about 1500 B.C.
  2. John, the apostle, wrote the book of Revelation, the last book in the Bible, near the close of the first century A.D.
  3. The writing, therefore, spans a period of about 1600 years!
- C. Writers and languages
  1. Moses and John were only two of about 40 men who wrote down God's words.
  2. Originally, the Bible was written in two main languages – Hebrew for the Old Testament, Greek for the New Testament.
- D. Common themes:
  1. Common theme: Jesus is coming, Jesus came, and Jesus is coming again.
  2. Common need: Man is in sin and needs a Savior, Romans 3:9,23.
  3. Common purpose: To show men in each age how to please God.
- E. How Can This Amazing Unity Be Explained?
  1. The 40 different writers each wrote a part of the Bible and it all fits perfectly together. They could not have worked with each other. Some had been dead for many years before some others began to write. The only explanation is that there was a Master organizer. It was God himself.

2. Human writers alone could not have produced the Bible.

## II. ABSOLUTE ACCURACY

A. Men make mistakes. No human being is without mistakes.

1. If the Bible were only the writings of men, then it would have errors.
2. Writings of men often need to be updated and revised.

B. Prophecies

1. Only God has the power to predict. Isaiah 46:9,10; 48:3-5; Romans 4:17.
2. The test of a prophet: Deuteronomy 18:20-22.
3. Sample prophecies of the Christ:

a. **Prophecy:** Micah 5:2 (c. 740 B.C.) The Messiah would be born in Bethlehem.

**Fulfillment:** Matthew 2:1.

b. **Prophecy:** Daniel 2:31-44 (c. 550 B.C.) Fall of Babylon foretold and the rise of three other empires: the Medo-Persians, Greeks, and Romans.

**Fulfillment:** These kingdoms rose and fell just as predicted.

1) Daniel 2:44: The “kingdom” to be set up during the fourth empire –the Roman Empire.

2) John 18:36: The kingdom of Jesus (the church) is spiritual and was set up during the Roman period (Acts 2; Colossians 1:13).

c. **Prophecy:** Psalm 22:16 (c. 1000 B.C.). His hands and feet would be pierced. This prediction was given in a time when stoning was the way criminals were killed.

**Fulfillment:** Luke 24:39.

C. Bible Details

1. The Bible is filled with thousands of details relating to various times in human history. Places, rivers, trees, rulers, foods, animals, etc. are named in detail.
  - a. King Hezekiah (reigned about 716-687 B.C.) “made the pool, and the conduit, and brought water into the city [of Jerusalem]” 2 Kings 20:20.
  - b. This tunnel was cut through rock for 533 meters.
  - c. As the centuries passed, this tunnel was forgotten and lost.



- d. It was not rediscovered until early in the 1800's.
  2. All this information has been proved to be accurate.
- D. This accuracy can only be explained by accepting the Bible as the message from God.
1. 2 Peter 1:20,21
  2. Do you believe the Bible is the written record of God's words?

### **III. THE BIBLE IS COMPLETE**

- A. 2 Timothy 3:16,17
- B. James 1:25: The New Testament is the "complete law."
- C. 2 Peter 1:3: The Bible has "all things that pertain unto life and godliness."
- D. Galatians 1:6-9: We may not teach anything different or change the message.

### **IV. WE WILL BE JUDGED BY THE BIBLE**

- A. We will **NOT** be judged by:
  1. What seems right to us, Proverbs 14:12.
  2. What we feel is true, Genesis 37:31-33.
  3. What our forefathers, grandparents, or parents have taught us, John 4:20; Acts 5:29.
  4. What we do in good conscience, Acts 23:1; 26:9.
  5. What our preacher or pastor tells us, 1 John 4:1.
- B. We **WILL** be judged by the Word of God:
  1. John 12:48,49
  2. Romans 2:16
  3. Revelation 20:11-15

### **CONCLUSION:**

1. Have you been following what you feel is right, or what your parents think is right, or what your preacher has told you? Have you checked for yourself what the word of God actually says?
2. Matthew 7:21-23: Many will live a religious life, thinking they are serving Jesus, and find out too late that they were not pleasing Him.
3. Are you interested in seeing what the Bible teaches about pleasing God?



## Lesson Two

### Jesus is Divine

**Father**  
**Word (Jesus)**  
**Holy Spirit**

**Psalm 90:2**

“from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.” God is eternal!

**John 4:24**

God is spirit.

**Luke 24:39**

Spirit has not flesh and bones.

**Philippians 2:5-9**

Jesus was equal with the Father.

Jesus was called the “Word” before coming to earth to take a body.

**John 1:1**

Word was and still is God (Divine)

**John 1:14**

Word became flesh\*

Genesis 1:1  
Creation



**Genesis 3:1-6**

Fall of mankind

**Genesis 2:17**

God said if they disobeyed they would die the day they ate. They died *spiritually*.

**James 2:26**

Death = separation

**Isaiah 59:1,2**

SIN separates us from God.

Adam & Eve separated themselves from God (spiritual death) by their sin.

**Romans 3:23**

All of us have sinned! We are separated from God (lost) by our own sins. Our sins remain a barrier (we will remain lost) unless our sins are removed.

**Romans 6:23**

The wages we earn for sinning is death (eternal separation from God = Hell).







## Lesson Four

# Salvation is Only in Christ's One Body

### INTRODUCTION:

1. Mankind's sin problem:
  - a. "For all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God" Romans 3:23.
  - b. "There is none righteous, no, not one" Romans 3:10.
  - c. "Every one that doeth sin doeth also lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness."  
1 John 3:4.
  - d. Adam's sin is **not** passed down from father to son, Ezekiel 18:20.
2. We have already learned that the New Testament is God's law for all people.
  - a. Ignorance **will not** be an acceptable excuse before God, Acts 17:30.
  - b. Your sins separate you from God, Isaiah 59:2.
  - c. Men claim to offer different ways to "be saved". The New Testament offers only one way.

### I. JESUS BUILT JUST ONE CHURCH

- A. John 17:20, 21: Jesus prayed that all who believe on Him would be "one," that is, that they would be united. Denominations (churches of men) are against what Jesus wants.
- B. Matthew 16:18
  1. Jesus promised to build His church ("my church").
    - a. It belongs to Him - church of Christ.
    - b. He would build only one "church" (not churches).
  2. Jesus is the foundation, 1 Corinthians 3:11.
- C. The *church* is also called the *body*.
  1. Colossians 1:18: As a head only has one body, so Christ is the head of his one spiritual body, the church.
  2. Ephesians 1:22,23
    - a. "...the church, which is his body..." church = body
    - b. Ephesians 4:4: "There is one body..."
    - c. The church is His one body; there is one church!

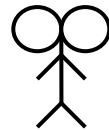
## II. JESUS IS THE SAVIOR OF HIS BODY – THE CHURCH

### A. Ephesians 5:23

1. As a man is to have only one wife (1 Corinthians 7:2), so Christ has only one church.
2. Jesus is the Savior of His body only; the one church.
3. Jesus never promised to save all religious groups – there were no churches of men in the first century.

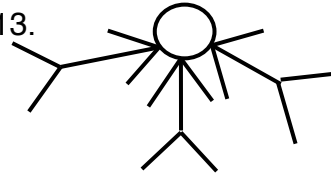
### B. The Catholic church has two heads: Peter, the head on earth, and Jesus is claimed to be the head in heaven.

1. The church is built upon Jesus, not Peter, 1 Corinthians 3:11.
2. *Two heads is not right.*



### C. Denominations are different bodies all claiming to have Jesus as Head.

1. Jesus has only one body, 1 Corinthians 12:13.
2. *Many bodies with one head is not right.*



## III. WHAT ABOUT OTHER CHURCHES?

### A. Today there are hundreds of different religious groups with different beliefs.

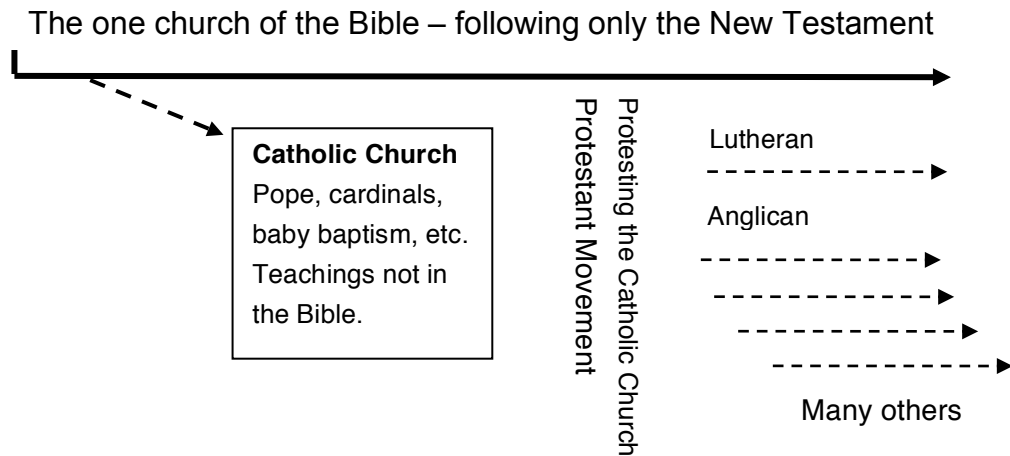
1. How can we choose? Must we learn about each – one by one?
2. We can go straight to the Bible and learn the truth.

### B. Two views about religious division and diversity:

1. Man's view (Caution: This sounds good, but this is wrong)
  - a. "We all have different likes and dislikes."
  - b. "Having many churches gives people a choice. They can choose a church that is best for them."
2. God's view
  - a. 1 Corinthians 1:10: Different teachings are against God's will.
  - b. In the time of the apostles, some began to follow men and be divided. 1 Corinthians 1:11,12: They began to call themselves after men. Paul rebuked such division.
  - c. 1 Corinthians 1:13: Since no man was crucified for us, we cannot follow any man. We must all follow Christ.
  - d. Luke 6:46: Claiming to follow Christ is not enough.



- C. The one church of the Bible and the coming of false churches:
1. The church began in Jerusalem and the Lord adds the saved to His church, Acts 2:47.
  2. God predicted that some would fall away from the faith.
  3. Read 1 Timothy 4:1-5.



4. Matthew 7:21-23: People in man-made churches are doing things “in the name of Jesus.”
  - a. They think they are pleasing Jesus.
  - b. But on the Day of Judgment, Jesus will say: “I never knew you: depart from me.”

**CONCLUSION:**

1. The seed principle: If we plant the same seed (teaching) today, we will get the same fruit.
  - a. Luke 8:11: “The seed is the word of God.”
  - b. If we plant maize seed, then maize will grow. The New Testament is like seed and produces Christians.
  - c. The saved are called Christians, Acts 11:26.
  - d. We can plant (teach) the same seed that Paul planted, 1 Corinthians 3:6.
2. Denominations each have their own special beliefs. They often have some book or document, which states their beliefs - manuals, catechisms, creeds, etc.
3. Acts 20:28: Jesus bought the church with His own blood.
4. Do you want to know how to get into the one body of Christ - his church?



## Lesson Five

### The Way Into the Church

**Please Write Your Personal Answers:**

1. Have you been saved from your sins?    *Yes*    *No*

2. How were you saved?    *Tell briefly*

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3. Have you been baptized?    *Yes*    *No*

4. Were you saved *before* or *after* being baptized?    *Before*    *After*

5. Your baptism was:    *sprinkling*    *pouring*    *submersion*

6. You are a member of what church or religion?

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**INTRODUCTION:**

1. Romans 8:1: There is no condemnation to those who are “in Christ.”
  - a. All who are outside of Christ are lost – condemned.
  - b. We will let the New Testament teach us how to get into Christ - the place of salvation.
2. As we learned in the last lesson, the church is the body of Christ.
  - a. 1 Corinthians 12:27: The saved are the members that make up the body.
  - b. How does a person become a member of the church?

## **I. STEPS UNTO CHRIST: A JOURNEY TOWARDS SALVATION**

### **A. Hearing and learning**

1. John 6:45
2. Romans 10:17: Hearing God's word produces faith.

### **B. Belief**

1. Hebrews 11:6
2. Acts 15:7
3. James 2:17,19,24: Faith only is not enough.

### **C. Repentance**

1. Repentance is a change of mind which causes a change in actions – a turning from evil ways and turning to God's way.
2. You must humbly admit that you have sinned and are separated from God by your sins, Isaiah 59:1,2.
3. Acts 17:30,31
4. 2 Corinthians 7:9,10: Repentance is more than being sorry.
5. Examples:
  - a. If a person has more than one wife, he must repent, and keep only his first wife, 1 Corinthians 7:2.
  - b. If a person has divorced their mate, but not because of fornication, and married another, they cannot remain with the present unlawful mate, Matthew 5:32; 19:9.

### **D. Confession**

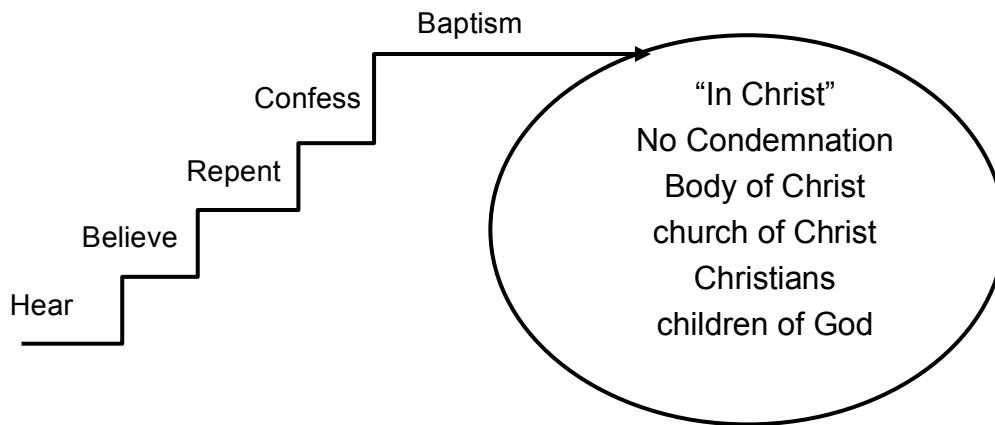
1. Romans 10:9,10: Jesus must become Master, the Lord of your life.
2. Matthew 10:32,33: Jesus will not confess us if we will not confess Him.

## **II. STEP INTO CHRIST: ENTRANCE INTO THE SAVED REALM**

A. Notice that the steps above are getting us closer ("unto") to salvation. None of those steps, however, get rid of our sins. This step puts one "into" Christ.

1. Did you do some of the things above and think that you were saved?
2. Some false things you may have been taught:
  - a. Some people are told: "Just believe in Jesus and you are saved!" Such is not found in the New Testament.
  - b. Others are told to pray the sinner's prayer. Something like: "Oh Jesus, come into my heart and save me!" There is no such prayer in the Bible.
3. Do you believe that Jesus is the Son of God?

4. Will you stop any sins in your life and obey the simple teaching of God so you can be saved?      Yes    No
- B. The Bible makes clear the one step that puts a person **into** Christ. It is the one thing that removes the barrier of sin. Many verses describe this one step.
1. Galatians 3:26,27
    - a. Paul wrote to these people of Galatia.
    - b. They became “children of God” (v.26) by being “baptized into Christ” (v. 27).
  2. Acts 2:37,38
    - a. The Jews heard the word and wanted to know what to do.
    - b. They had to repent and be baptized for the forgiveness of their sins.
  3. Acts 22:16
    - a. Baptism is for the washing away of sins (removal of the barrier of sin).
    - b. So, it is impossible to be saved before baptism, because baptism takes away sins.
    - c. Did you think you were saved before baptism or without baptism?  
*Check the answers you gave.*
  4. Romans 6:3,4
    - a. True baptism is a burial in water.
    - b. If someone dies, would you lay the body on the ground and *pour* or *sprinkle* dirt on them and call it a burial?
    - c. *Pouring* or *sprinkling* water on a person is not a burial in water. Those are practices given by men long after the Bible was written.
    - d. True baptism is for those who are mature.
      - 1) There is no example in the Bible of “baby baptism.” That is a false teaching from men.
      - 2) Adam’s sin is **not** passed down from father to son, Ezekiel 18:20.
      - 3) If you were sprinkled as a baby it did nothing for you. As a baby you were pure.
      - 4) Once you became mature, you sinned and were then lost-separated from God by your own sins.



**CONCLUSION:**

1. Look at the answers you gave at the beginning of this lesson. Compare it with what the Bible teaches.
2. 1 Peter 1:22: Only obeying the truth saves. Maybe you are one of many who were taught wrong.
3. John 8:32: Only the truth can set us free. If you were taught wrong, you must obey the truth to receive forgiveness.
4. Acts 2:47: The Lord adds those who are saved to His church.

## **Lesson Six**

# **Counting the Cost**

### **INTRODUCTION:**

1. Read Luke 14:25-33
  - a. Before building a tower a person should “first sit down and count the cost.”
  - b. Before becoming a Christian, a person should first carefully consider what is required.
2. Acts 26:28,29; 2 Corinthians 5:11: We plead with people to obey the gospel.
3. We must give people a balanced view of both the blessings and the challenges for Christians.
  - a. Blessings for those in Christ are marvelous, Ephesians 1:3.
  - b. There are also responsibilities and challenges to be faced.
4. Our Lord made it clear to those who would follow Him, that serious devotion is required, Luke 9:57-62.
5. 2 Peter 2:20-22
6. Luke 8:4-14: Which soil will you be like?
7. Let’s notice some things required of every Christian:

### **I. DENY SELF**

- A. Luke 9:23
- B. 1 Corinthians 6:19,20: Christians belong to Christ.
- C. Matthew 22:37,38
- D. Romans 10:9,10: Jesus must become your Lord (Master). Will you do as He teaches and not please yourself?

### **II. MAY COST FAMILY FAVOR AND FRIENDS**

- A. Luke 14:26
- B. Matthew 10:34-39
  1. Are you willing to follow Christ even if your father, mother, wife, husband, or friends do not approve?
  2. You must choose to put Jesus first, Galatians 1:10.
- C. Luke 6:26
  1. You will not be able to please everyone.

2. Some may become offended when your devotion to Christ always comes first, Matthew 6:33.
- D. Mark 10:29,30
1. If your present marriage is not lawful according to God's will, it must be ended, 1 Corinthians 6:9-11.
  2. Unlawful marriage is fornication (sin). Repentance (stopping sin) must come before baptism, Acts 2:38.
  3. The only one who may divorce and remarry is an innocent one whose mate has been unfaithful, Matthew 19:9.
  4. Romans 7:2,3
- E. 1 Corinthians 15:33: Some former friendships may need to be avoided.

### III. WORSHIP

- A. John 4:24: Worship must be in spirit (the right attitude) and in truth (the right way – by God's instructions in the New Testament).
1. Colossians 3:17: All we do must be "in the name of the Lord Jesus" - by His authority.
  2. We may not worship anyway we want, but only how God has authorized in the New Testament.
- B. Assemble with the local church that belongs to Christ, every Sunday.
1. 1 Corinthians 16:2: The original Greek accurately translated: "On the first day of every week. . ."
  2. Hebrews 10:23-25: Christians are forbidden from forsaking the assembly.
  3. Are you ready to make the commitment to worship with the true church every Sunday?
  4. It may be a distance for you to travel every week. Will you make the journey every week?
- C. Elements of acceptable worship:
1. Lord' supper – remembering the death of Jesus.
    - a. Matthew 26:26-29
    - b. Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 11:20-29
  2. Give each week from what you have received.
    - a. 1 Corinthians 16:1,2
    - b. 2 Corinthians 9:6-9



- c. Under the Old Law, tithing (10%) was required. We are now under the better covenant.
- d. Hebrews 8:6; Luke 12:48
- e. Surely we can do better under the better covenant.
- 3. Singing
  - a. Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16
  - b. We may NOT bring items from the Old Law. For example:
    - 1) Clapping, Psalm 47:1.
    - 2) Instruments of music, Psalm 150.
- 4. Preaching the word
  - a. Acts 20:7; 1 Timothy 4:13
  - b. 1 Corinthians 14:33,34: Women are forbidden to speak in the assembly.
- 5. Prayer
  - a. Acts 2:42; 1 Corinthians 14:15
  - b. In 1 Timothy 2:8, the word for “men” is specific, meaning males.
  - c. Women are forbidden from leading over men, 1 Timothy 2:11,12.

#### **IV. LIFETIME COMMITMENT AND SERVICE**

- A. The Christian life is like running a race.
  - 1. Hebrews 12:1,2
  - 2. 2 Timothy 4:6,7: Paul’s race was not finished until his death.
- B. Example: Marriage is a lifetime commitment (Romans 7:2), and therefore must be entered into with careful consideration. Becoming a Christian is a lifetime commitment and should not be taken lightly.
- C. 1 Peter 4:2,3: How will you spend the “rest of your time” here on earth?
- D. Life of service: Ephesians 2:10; Acts 8:4; John 15:1-5

#### **CONCLUSION**

- 1. 1 Timothy 4:8: The benefits outweigh any costs! Will you obey God?
- 2. Are there people in your life that will hinder you? What will you choose?
- 3. Are you willing to leave all religions of men, stop any sinful ways, and obey the New Testament?
- 4. Are you ready to be baptized for the forgiveness of your sins and to begin worshipping with the church of Christ?