

Lessons from Genesis-one

Adam and Eve and the Destiny of Man

As strange as it may seem, the teachings of the Holy Bible and the teachings of what the world calls “Christianity” **are not one and the same**. When we study the teachings of the Book of Genesis, we will see that “Christianity,” like the woman who was deceived, has chosen to listen to, and follow after, the serpent. In other words, the religion that the world recognizes as “Christian” **is not true Christianity**.

We are going to begin with the story of Adam and Eve, which has generally been misinterpreted. According to “Christian” theology, Adam was created righteous and holy, but then fell from grace when he sinned by eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil has been portrayed as somehow representing evil. We are going to show that if you do not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you will not be in the Kingdom of God.

The Destiny of Man

“And God [430, *Gods*] said, Let **Us** make man in **Our image** [6754, *a shadow*], after **Our likeness** [1823, *model, pattern, appearance*]...So God created [1254, *to cut, to carve out, to form by cutting*] man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them” (Genesis 1:26, 27). Man was created in the outward appearance of God, but he lacked the spiritual attributes of God.

Man was created on the **sixth** day. The number six is one short of the number seven, which represents completeness, holiness, and eternity. “And on the **seventh day** God **ended** [3615, *to be completed, finished*] His work which He had made; and He rested on the **seventh day**...And God blessed the **seventh day**, and **sanctified** [6942, *set apart as holy, pure, clean*] it...” (vv. 2, 3).

The seventh day was a purely spiritual creation. You cannot hear it, see it, smell it, taste it, or touch it. Everything that was created on the first six days will be destroyed: “...the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up...Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for **new** [2537, *novel, unheard of, of higher excellence*] **heavens** and a **new** [2537] **earth, wherein dwells righteousness**” (2 Peter 3:10, 13). The only day that will remain is the seventh day, because it represents the kingdom of righteousness, **which is spiritual perfection**.

The number six, which is man’s number, falls short of spiritual perfection. Man lacked God’s spirit, which is essential for entering the Kingdom of God. Jesus said, “...Except a man be born of **water** and of the **Spirit** he **cannot enter** into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit” (John 5:5, 6).

Therefore, in order for man to enter God’s kingdom of righteousness he must take on God’s “...divine [2304, *pertaining to God*] nature [5449, *essence, substance*]...” (2 Peter 1:4). “For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be **spiritually minded is life and peace**” (Romans 8:5, 6).

God, temporarily, made man a little lower than Himself. “What is man that you are

mindful of him, and the son of man that you visit him? For you have made him a little lower than angels [430, **God**], and have crowned him with glory and honor. You made him to have dominion over the works of your hands: you have put all things under his feet: all sheep and oxen, yes and the beasts of the field; the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passes through the paths of the seas” (Psalm 8:4-8).

The destiny of man is to be created in the spiritual image of God. “But we all with open face beholding as in a glass [2734, *mirror, a clear image*] the glory of the Lord, are changed [3339, *metamorphosis, to change into another form*] into the **same image from glory to glory**, as by the Lord the Spirit” (2 Corinthians 3:18). The destiny of man is to be created in the same image as Jesus Christ, “Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God” (Philippians 2:6).

Man was created as a physical representation of God in appearance. Man’s ultimate destiny is to be created in the exact spiritual image as God, which means man is destined to be a member of the family of God, i.e., man will be a god. “For our citizenship is in heaven; from where also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change [3345, *transform*] our vile [5014, *of low estate*] bodies, that it may be fashioned like to [4832, *conformed to*] His glorious body...” (Philippians 3:20, 21).

Is the Soul of Man Immortal?

Genesis chapter two provides us with a detailed description of the creation of man on the sixth day. “And every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb before it grew: for the LORD God had not caused it to rain on the earth, and there was no man to till the ground. But there went up a mist from the earth, and **watered the whole face of the ground**. And the LORD God formed [3335, *to form or fashion, as a potter does clay*] man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living **soul**” (Genesis 2:5-7).

God watered the ground before He formed man, just as a potter uses water to work clay. “But now, O LORD, You are our Father; we are the clay, and you our potter; and we are all the work of Your hand” (Isaiah 64:8). Water is often used as a symbol of the Holy Spirit. It is through the power of God’s Spirit that man is formed into His spiritual image.

The word for “soul” is *Strong’s* 5315, nephesh. It simply means “a breathing creature.” It can be applied to animals as well as to humans. The term “living soul” does not carry the meaning of “immortal soul.” The Eternal God says, “Behold, **all souls** [5315] are Mine; as the soul [5315] of the father, so also the soul [5315] of the son is Mine: the soul [5315] that sins, **it shall die** [4191, *to perish, be destroyed*]” (Ezekiel 18:4). Something that can die is not immortal.

The dead are not conscious of anything. “For to him that is joined to all the living there is hope: for a **living dog** is better than a **dead lion**. For the living know that they shall die: but **the dead know not anything**, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten” (Ecclesiastes 9:4, 5). The dead are dead, and are not conscious of anything.

Eternal life is a gift from God through His spirit. “For he that sows to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption [5356, *perish, destruction*]; but he that sows to the spirit shall of the spirit reap **life everlasting**” (Galatians 6:8). Man does not have eternal life inherent within himself; therefore **he does not have an immortal soul**.

The teaching that man has an immortal soul is the same lie that the serpent told the woman. “And the serpent said to the woman, You shall not surely die” (Genesis 3:4).

The Two Adams

“And so it is written, The first [4413, *first in time, order*] man Adam was made a living [2198, *natural life*] soul [5590, *breath, a living being*]; the last Adam was made a living [2227, *life giving*] spirit. Howbeit **that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual.** The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly” (1 Corinthians 15:45-48).

A clear distinction is made between the natural, which is temporary; and the spiritual, which is eternal. “While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal” (2 Corinthians 4:18). In Scripture, that which is physical precedes that which is spiritual.

“And as we have borne the image of the earthy, **we shall also bear the image of the heavenly**” (1 Corinthians 15:49). Man was first created as a physical likeness of God, but his destiny is to be created in the same spiritual image as the Creator God.

“Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood **cannot inherit the kingdom of God**; neither does corruption [5356, *decay, ruin, mortality*] inherit incorruption [861, *immortality*]. Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all **sleep**, but we shall all be changed [236, *to alter, transform*], in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, **at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound**, and the dead [3498, *a dead body*] shall be raised [1453, *to awaken, exist, to appear*] incorruptible [862, *immortal*], and we [*those who are alive at Christ’s coming*] shall be changed. For this corruptible [5349, *perishable*] must put on incorruption [861, *immortality*], and this mortal [2349, *subject to death*] **must put on immortality**...then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, **Death is swallowed up in victory**” (1 Corinthians 15:50, 53, 54).

At the resurrection, the dead in Christ shall awaken to immortality. If man already has an immortal soul, then why does he have to put on immortality? The plain truth is, “...the wages of sin is **death** [2288, *the extinction of life*]; but the gift [5486, *endowment, free gift, favor*] of God is **eternal life** through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Romans 6:23). You cannot earn eternal life because it is a gift, but in order to obtain the gift **you must obey God**. “Not everyone that says to Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he **that does the will of My Father who is in heaven**” (Matthew 7:21).

The Creation of the Woman and the Bride of Christ

“And the LORD God said, It is not good that man should be alone; I will make a help meet [5048, *corresponding to*] for him. And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and fowl of the air; and brought them to Adam...but for Adam there was not found a help meet for him” (Genesis 2:19, 20).

God obviously knew that Adam was not going to find a helper that was like himself among the birds and animals. Adam is being presented here as a type of Jesus Christ, and the birds and animals represent carnal man, who **is not** an acceptable helper for Jesus Christ. “Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it **is not subject** [5293, *to submit, render obedience*] **to the law of God**, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God” (Romans 8:7, 8). The carnal mind is a mind that is devoid of God’s Holy Spirit.

It is impossible for the spiritual mind and the carnal mind to be in agreement, because the Spirit of God and the flesh “...are contrary the one to the other...” (Galatians 5:17). God asks,

“Can two walk together [3162, *be unified, become one*], except they be agreed?” (Amos 3:3). Man must come into agreement with God—not the other way around.

Now, “...the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept...” (Genesis 2:21). Sleep is often used as a euphemism for death. The “death” of Adam is a type of the death of Jesus Christ. “...For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us” (1 Corinthians 5:7). “[A]nd He took one of his ribs [6763, *the side of anything*], and closed up the flesh instead thereof; and the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made [1129, *built*] He a woman, and brought her to the man” (vv. 21, 22).

Notice that it was Adam’s side from which the rib was taken, while he was asleep. When God opened up Adam’s side, there would have been bleeding. After Jesus’ death, a spear pierced His side, “and came there out **blood** and water” (John 19:34). About four thousand years before the crucifixion of Jesus Christ we have a type of that which was to occur after Jesus’ death.

The woman was brought forth through blood from Adam’s side. Likewise, the bride of Christ is redeemed through the blood that poured forth from His side, “In whom we have redemption [629, *deliverance procured by payment of a ransom*] through His **blood**, even the forgiveness of sins” (Colossians 1:14).

The opening of the side was like the opening of a door. At the Passover ceremony in the land of Egypt, the blood of the Passover lamb was placed on the door frames of the dwellings of the people, in which they ate the Passover sacrifice (Exodus 12:7, 22). The blood of the sacrifice protected the people from death (vv. 12, 13). The bloodied door represented Jesus Christ. Jesus said, “I am the **door**: by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved...” (John 10:9).

The woman that was brought forth from Adam’s side was given life. She was a new creation created directly from the body of Adam, and she is compatible with him, unlike the birds and the beasts, which represent carnal man. Likewise, “...if any man is in Christ, he is a new [2537, *recently made, of higher excellence*] creature [2937, *creation*]...” (2 Corinthians 5:17). If you are a new creation in Jesus Christ, then you are now on a spiritual level in which you can now develop the godly character that makes you compatible with Christ.

“And Adam said, This is now **bone of my bones**, and **flesh of my flesh**: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken **out of Man**” (Genesis 2:23). The woman was created from Adam, and the congregation of God is created from the body of Christ, “For we are members of His body, of **His flesh**, and of **His bones**” (Ephesians 5:30). The man and the woman are of the same flesh, and Christ and the congregation are of the same spirit. Therefore, they can now walk together as one.

Walking With God

It is very significant that the woman was taken from Adam’s side. When two are in agreement, they walk together as friends. “Therefore shall a **man leave** [5800, *to loosen bands, to forsake*] his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his **wife**: and they shall be one [259, *together, united*] flesh” (Genesis 2:24). The physical relationship of the man and the woman is a type of the spiritual relationship between Christ and the church. “For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall be joined to his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. **This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church**” (Ephesians 5:31, 32).

In this relationship, God made the man the head of the woman. “For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and He is the Savior of the body. Therefore as the church is subject to [5293, *to submit, render obedience*] Christ, so let wives be

to their own husbands in everything” (Ephesians 5:23, 24).

Marriage typifies the spiritual relationship that is to exist between Jesus Christ and His spiritual bride. Jesus said, “If any man come to Me, and hate [3404, *to detest, abhor*] not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple” (Luke 14:26).

Jesus was not telling people to literally hate others, but He was using hyperbole to emphasize that you have to love Him above all others. If you do not love Christ more than family and friends, then you will be subject to disobeying Him in order to please others. You show your love for Jesus by obeying Him. Jesus said, “If you **love Me** keep My commandments [1785, *an injunction, precept, commandment*]” (John 14:15). Saying you love Jesus, while disobeying Him, is not acceptable.

Jesus is not going to have a bride that does not obey Him. Obeying “the church,” or some man who claims to be “God’s chosen Apostle,” or anyone else that you put before Jesus Christ is **idolatry!** So-called “Christianity” has rejected Jesus Christ as their head. Jesus said, “This people draw near Me with their mouth, and honor Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. But in vain do they worship Me, **teaching for doctrines the commandments of men**” (Matthew 15:8, 9).

The responsibility of teachers is to “Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they **will not endure sound doctrine**; but rather **after their own lusts** shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears **from the truth**, and shall be **turned to fables**” (2 Timothy 4:2-4). The carnal mind does not want to be ruled over by God, but it does “...that which [*is*] right in his own eyes” (Judges 21:25).

The Sinful Flesh

“And they were both **naked**, the man and his wife, and **were not ashamed**” (Genesis 2:25). The nakedness of the man and the woman has been misconstrued as representing their innocence, but just the opposite is true. Nakedness symbolizes the sinful nature of man. The congregation at Laodicea is “naked,” and Jesus tells them to buy from Him “...white raiment...that **the shame of thy nakedness does not appear**...” (Revelation 3:17, 18). We are told, “But put you on [1746, *be clothed with*] the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the **flesh**, to fulfill the **lusts** thereof” (Romans 13:14). The flesh represents the sinful nature of man.

Jesus came “...in the likeness of **sinful flesh**, and for sin, condemned **sin in the flesh**: that the **righteousness of the law** might be fulfilled in us, who walk **not after the flesh**, but after the Spirit. For they that are after **the flesh do mind** [5426, *to entertain sentiments, or inclinations*] **the things of the flesh**; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is **death**; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: **for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be**. So then they that are in the flesh **cannot** please God” (Romans 8:3-8).

The man and the woman had not yet sinned. Their only contact had been with their Creator. They had not been exposed to anything that was sin, but they had human nature, which is subject to sin, because it is not subject to the law of God. What is the Biblical definition of sin? “Whosoever commits sin transgresses also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law [458, *lawlessness, violation of law*]” (1 John 3:4). Since the Biblical definition of sin is the breaking of

God's law, then the law had to be in effect when the man and the woman sinned.

Satan is "...that old [744, *from the beginning, ancient*] serpent...which deceives [4105, *to lead astray, cause to wander*] **the whole world...**" (Revelation 12:9). The woman was called "...Eve [2332, *life giver*]; because she was the mother of all [3605, *the whole, totality*] living" (Genesis 3:20). Eve had not borne any children yet, but she would be the mother of all of mankind. Therefore, Satan's deception of Eve pictures his deception of "the whole world" (Revelation 12:9).

The Great Deception

The serpent began his deception of the woman by asking her a question based on a false premise. "...Yea, has God said, You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" (Genesis 3:1). This put the woman in a defensive position, which is a position of weakness. She responded, "...We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, You shall not eat of it, neither shall you touch it, **lest you die** [4191, *to perish, be destroyed*]" (v. 2). The woman clearly understood that the consequences of eating the fruit of the tree would result in death.

The serpent then responded with a lie to counter Gods' truth, "**You shall not surely die...**" (v. 4). The serpent emphatically denied the Word of God with a big lie. Satan "...is a liar, and the father of it" (John 8:44). One of the foundational teachings of so-called "Christianity" is "You shall not surely die," i.e. you have an immortal soul, which is a lie that has been perpetrated by the serpent.

The serpent was attacking God, and calling Him a liar. This is a common tactic that is used by those who, when they cannot refute the truth, attack the messenger of the truth. The idea is to put doubt into the minds of the people as to the validity of the message, without having to actually prove the message wrong. The woman fell for this tactic.

The serpent continued, "For God does know that in the day you eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and you shall be as gods [430, *gods, magistrates, judges*] knowing good and evil" (v. 5). A magistrate has the authority to decide matters of law. Here the serpent was playing on her vanity. He was telling the woman that she didn't have to listen to God. She would have the authority to make her own judgments and decisions. To her carnal mind this sounded good.

This is like the church at Laodicea, which is "blind and naked" (Revelation 3:17). Laodicea is *Strong's* 2993. It means, the people judge, or decide. The church at Laodicea is following after the serpent, and making her own judgments based on her own opinions, but not according to the Word.

Because of her pride, the woman could not resist the temptation to be able to make her own judgments. "And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be **desired** [2530, *to covet*] **to make one wise**, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also to her husband with her; and he did eat" (Genesis 3:6).

When the woman ate of the fruit of the tree, she broke the tenth commandment: "You shall not **covet** [2530]..." (Exodus 20:17). Covetousness "...is idolatry" (Colossians 3:5). Idolatry breaks the second commandment: "You shall have no other gods before Me" (Exodus 20:3-6). The woman's covetousness, which led to idolatry, then led to the breaking of the eighth commandment: "You shall not steal" (v. 15). She stole the fruit from the tree from which she was forbidden to eat.

Ultimately she was guilty of breaking all of the commandments, “For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For He that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if you commit no adultery, yet if you kill, you are become a transgressor of the law” (James 2:10, 11).

Sin begins with the evil impulses of the mind. “Let no man say when he is tempted [3985, *proved, tested*], I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempts He any man. But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of **his own lust**, and enticed. Then when lust has conceived, it brings forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, **brings forth death**” (James 1:13-15).

Because of her human nature the woman did not resist the advances of the serpent, and her pride led her into the temptation. “...God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble. Submit yourselves therefore to God. **Resist the Devil, and he will flee from you.** Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you...” (James 4:6-8).

The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil

The man and the woman did not know that they were naked until they ate of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. After eating the fruit of the tree, they suddenly realized that they were naked. “And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked...” (Genesis 3:7). Their sin was revealed to them by the fruit of the tree.

The fruit of the tree **did not commit sin**. The man and the woman committed sin. All the tree did was to reveal their nakedness, i.e. their sin. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil has been misconstrued by nearly everyone as representing something evil. It does not represent an evil way of life or anything that is evil. We are going to show that if you want to have eternal life, **you must eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil**.

“And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man whom He had formed. And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge [1847, *intelligence, understanding, wisdom*] of good [2896, *moral goodness, virtue, righteousness*] and evil [7451, *wickedness, immorality*]” (Genesis 2:8, 9). The purpose of the tree is to reveal the difference between that which is good and that which is evil.

The Word of God teaches us what is good and what is evil. “For every one that uses milk is unskillful in the **word of righteousness**: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongs to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised **to discern both good** [2570, *possessing moral excellence, virtue*] and **evil** [2556, *immoral, corrupt, depraved, wicked, worthless*]” (Hebrews 5:13, 14). Only God can determine that which is good and that which is evil, and He reveals that knowledge in His Word. **The tree of the knowledge of good and evil represents the Word of God.**

Therefore, “What shall we say...? **Is the law sin? God forbid.** Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet” (Romans 7:7). **The purpose of the law is to reveal what sin is**, and that is what the fruit of the tree did.

“...For without the law sin was dead. For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died. And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be to death. For **sin**, taking occasion by the commandment, **deceived** me, and by it **slew** me” (vv. 8-11). It was sin—not the law—that deceived and caused death.

When the man and the woman ate the fruit of the tree, their nakedness, i.e. their sin, was

revealed to them, and placed them under penalty of death. “For the wages of sin is death...” (Romans 6:23). Sin is the “transgression of the law” (1 John 3:4). “Wherefore, by one man **sin entered into the world, and death by sin**; and so death passed upon all men, for that **all** have sinned: (For until the law **sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law**. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses...” (Romans 5:12-14). The apostle Paul is saying that the law was in effect before Moses. It was in effect in the Garden of Eden; otherwise, sin could not have been imputed, and the man and the woman would not have been subject to death.

When a baby is born it has human nature, but it hasn’t sinned. The man and the woman were like newborns. They had human nature, but they had not been influenced by evil, and so they had not committed sin. Once the woman was swayed by evil, sin entered the world. Sin could not be imputed to them before the law revealed it to them.

When sin occurs, the penalty of sin is invoked, which is death. Does that mean the fault lies with the law, or the one who broke the law? “Wherefore the law is holy [40, *pure, sinless, upright*], and the commandment holy, and just [1342, *equitable*], and good [18, *virtuous, upright*]” (Romans 7:12). The problem isn’t with the law, but with the sinner. “Was that which is good made death to me? God forbid. But sin, **that it appear sin, working death in me by that which is good**; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful” (v. 13).

The fact that the law reveals what sin is, is what bothers “Christians.” That is why they call Jesus a liar, and say He came to do away with God’s moral law. Jesus said, “**Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets. I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill**” (Matthew 5:17). “Christians” say that Jesus fulfilled the law by obeying it for us so that we don’t have to obey it. Jesus continued, “...Till heaven and earth pass [3928, *disappear, vanish, perish*], one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass [3928] from the law, till all [3956, *every, the whole*] be fulfilled” (v. 18).

You can very easily prove that Jesus did not do away with the law by looking around you. Have heaven and earth been destroyed? Has everything in God’s Word been fulfilled? The only correct answer is no; therefore the law remains.

The law of God is not the problem, but “The heart is deceitful [6121, *a hill in the sense of restraining those who go up*] above all things, and desperately wicked [605, *sick*]: who can know it? I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings” (Jeremiah 17:9, 10). Because of his carnal mind, man is restrained from walking in the way of the Eternal God. The carnal nature must be changed in order for man to walk **with** God—instead of being in opposition to Him.

God is the Supreme Judge over all creation, and it is He Who determines that which is good and that which is evil. “For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good [2896, *moral*], or whether it be evil [7451, *immoral*]” (Ecclesiastes 12:14). Ultimately, “...we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in the body, according to that he has done, whether it be good [18, *upright, virtuous*] or bad [2556, *wicked, immoral, depraved, evil*]” (2 Corinthians 5:10).

The tree of the knowledge of good and evil is not in any way evil. It does not represent an evil way of life, but on the contrary it discerns between good and evil. Therefore it is a guide to the way in which a believer should walk. “Your word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path” (Psalm 119:105).

The Word of God is a mirror. “But be you **doers of the word**, and not hearers only, **deceiving your own selves**. For if any be a hearer of the **word**, and **not a doer**, he is like a man beholding his natural face **in a glass** [*mirror*]; for he beholds himself, and goes his way, and straightway forgets what manner of man he was. But whoso looks into the perfect law of liberty, and continues therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but **a doer of the work** [2041, *labor, action*], this man shall be blessed in his deed” (James 1:22-25).

What is the work we are to be doing? “Be not overcome with **evil** [2556, *wickedness, immorality*], but **overcome** [3528, *vanquish, conquer, subdue, prevail*] evil with **good** [18, *upright, virtuous, moral*]” (Romans 12:21).

Salvation is a gift that you cannot earn by your works, “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). All are under the penalty of sin which is death. That penalty could only be paid for by the blood of Jesus Christ, “Whom God has set forth to be a **propitiation** [2435, *mercy seat*] through faith **in His blood**, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that **are past** [4266, *previously committed*], through the forbearance [463, *patience*] of God” (v. 25).

You cannot save yourself by your own works. “For by grace are you saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are His workmanship, **created in Christ Jesus to good** [18, *moral, upright, virtuous*] **works** [2041, *actions, labor*], which God has before ordained that **we should walk in them**” (Ephesians 2:10). You are saved by faith, but that faith requires that you walk according to the good works that God has ordained.

Many “Christians” believe that if you just believe on the name of Jesus you will be saved. “You believe that there is one God; you do well: the devils also believe, and tremble. But will you know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?...For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also” (James 2:19, 20, 26).

Obedience to God is an absolute necessity for salvation. **Obeying God’s moral law is not earning your salvation.** “For if we **sin willfully** after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remains no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries” (Hebrews 10:26, 27). Sinning willfully is turning away from walking according to the truth, and returning to your old way of life.

If we are to be saved, we must eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and walk according to the way of truth that it reveals to us. If we turn from that way, then the blood of the sacrifice will no longer cover our sins.

Covering Their Own Sin

In an attempt to cover their sin, the man and the woman “...sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons” (Genesis 3:7). They were attempting to cover their sins by their works, which is impossible. Jesus said, “Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied **in Your name?** and in **Your name** have cast out devils? and in **Your name** done many wonderful works? And then will I profess to them, I never knew you: depart from Me, you **that work** [2038, *to be engaged in, perform*] **iniquity** [458, *violation of law*]” (Matthew 7:22, 23).

These “Christians” were doing all of these works, but **their works** were not accepted by Jesus Christ. Why not? Because they were doing “...that which was right in [*their*] own eyes,” but they were not walking according to God’s law. One of the main tenants of so-called

“Christianity” is that you cannot earn your salvation by the “works of the law,” meaning God’s moral law. In other words, **according to their perverted teaching, you cannot earn salvation by obeying God.**

Those words sound like what Satan would say. “For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles [652, *messengers*] of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel [32, *one sent, a messenger*] of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers [1249, *servants*] also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness...” (2 Corinthians 11:13-15). Satan has pawned himself off as the true messenger of light, and he has his self-proclaimed “Christian” ministers teaching his lies. Do you really believe that Satan, or his minions are going to teach that you need to obey God?

The Biblical definition of the works of the law is the works of the ceremonial law. The ceremonial law, “Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and **carneal ordinances**, imposed on them **until the time of reformation**” (Hebrews 9:10). The ceremonial law “...was a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things...” (c. 10:1).

The physical works of the ceremonial law pointed to the coming of the New Covenant. Among the ceremonies was circumcision which, under the New Covenant, “...is that of the heart, **in the spirit, and not in the letter**; whose praise is **not of men**, but of God” (Romans 2:29). Circumcision of the flesh, like the other physical works under the Old Covenant, is no longer a requirement under the New Covenant.

So-called “Christianity” attempts to justify itself by its own “good” works, which is impossible. “...Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, **as in obeying the voice of the LORD?** Behold, to **obey** is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry...” (1 Samuel 15:22, 23).

The “burnt offerings and sacrifices” symbolize works, which cannot make up for disobedience. “...God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and **walk in darkness, we lie**, and do not the truth: but **if we walk in light**, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another **and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin**” (1 John 1:5-7). If we walk in the light, i.e. in obedience to God’s law, then the blood of Jesus will cover our sins.

Hiding from God

“And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden” (Genesis 3:8). This is the reaction of the carnal mind to the voice of God. “That this is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not **hear the law of the LORD**” (Isaiah 30:15).

“And the LORD God called to Adam, and said to him, Where are you?” (Genesis 3:9). God knew where Adam was, so the question was not about his physical location. The question was posed to Adam to show that he needed to evaluate his condition in relation to his Creator. Adam had removed himself from an association with God through sin. “But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid His face from you, that He will not hear” (Isaiah 59:2).

Adam replied, “...I heard Your voice in the garden, and I **was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself**” (v. 10). Adam’s fear was not a reverential fear, but a fear of his

nakedness being discovered. “He that covers his sins shall not prosper [6743, *succeed*]: whoso confesses and forsakes them shall have mercy” (Proverbs 28:13).

It is human nature to try to hide from the light of the truth. “And this is the condemnation that light is come into the world, and **men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil**. For every one that does evil hates the light, **neither comes to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved** [1651, *exposed, discovered*]. But he that does truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God” (John 3:19-21).

It is impossible to hide from God, “For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and **is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart**. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight: but **all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do** [3056, *give account*]” (Hebrews 4:12, 13).

Separation from God

Because of sin, man was now separated from the presence of God. “Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So He drove out the man; and He placed at the **east** of the garden of Eden Cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life” (Genesis 3:23, 24).

The flaming sword represents Jesus Christ, “...and His name is called the **Word of God**...And out of His mouth goes a sharp **sword**...” (Revelation 19:13, 15). The “...**sword** of the Spirit...is the **word of God**” (Ephesians 6:17). The only way to the tree of life is through Jesus Christ, Who is the Word of God (John 1:1).

The Road Back

Returning to God begins with humility and repentance. The Eternal God says, “...to this man will I look, even to him that is poor [6041, *humble*] and of a contrite [5223, *remorseful, repentant*] spirit, and trembles [2730, *reveres, stands in awe of*] **at My word**” (Isaiah 66:2). It is from that reverential attitude that faith comes. “So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Romans 10:17). But hearing must be followed by action.

“Let the wicked forsake **his way**, and the unrighteous man **his thoughts**: and let him **return** to the LORD, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon. For your thoughts are not My thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, says the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts” (Isaiah 55:7-9). Our attention must be on the truth, which is from above.

Therefore, “If you then be risen with Christ, **seek those things which are above**, where Christ sits on the right hand of God. Set your affection on [5426, *mind*] things above, **not on things on the earth**. For you are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall you also appear with Him in glory” (Colossians 3:1-4).