Simply Lutheran

Introduction to the course

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B. What we will try to learn

1. The nature of the Bible
2. The nature of the LORD God
3. History of the Plan of Salvation
4. Theology of the Plan of Salvation
5. Mission of the Church

C. How to prepare for each session

1. Read the chapters from the book.
2. Consider the issues that are being raised by the readings.

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Chapter 1 – Choosing a Standard

A. Introduction to the course

1. Course particulars
   a. This course discusses the book entitled *Simply Lutheran* chapter by chapter.
   b. It consists of 23 lessons because some longer chapters require two lessons.
   c. This presenter of these lessons is the author of the book, Dr. Arthur A. Eggert.
   d. Class sessions are 20 to 30 minutes long and are meant to be followed by a discussion led by a pastor or teacher.

2. To get the most out of these lessons
   a. Read the chapters from the book.
   b. Consider the issues that are being raised by the readings.

B. Why was this book written?

1. The nature of Lutheranism
   a. Lutheranism is a religion of students of the Scriptures. {"*Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the law of the* LORD*, and on his law he meditates day and night*." Psalm 1:1,2}
   b. Lutheranism is not a religion of mere rituals or mantras we repeat to gain God's favor.

2. Understanding the *gestalt* of Lutheranism
   a. The Scriptures teach many doctrines, but they do not present them in outline form. This is because they were written over a long period of time and needed to speak initially to the people who first read or heard them.
   b. To aid the modern student of the Scriptures, it is useful to group the teachings they present so that they form an interlinked mosaic giving the whole plan of salvation. That is the goal of this book.

C. Why standards are needed

1. To enforce conformity.
   a. A standard is a set of rules that everyone needs to follow to participate in the activity governed by the standard (For example, a game or a profession.)

b. The rules must have an enforcement mechanism so that all participants are forced to meet the standard.

2. Christianity and the need for a standard.
   a. Early Christians realized that there was a need to have a standard so that everyone knew what the correct doctrine was. {"*Built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone.*" Ephesians 2:20}
   b. In particular, they were concerned that writings by false teachers would confuse the church and lead to divisions. {"*Now I urge you, brothers and sisters, to watch out for those who create divisions and obstacles contrary to the teaching that you learned. Avoid them.*" Romans 16:17}

D. Available religious standards

1. Gurus – People who claim to have divine wisdom.
   a. Oracle of Delphi
   b. Buddha
   c. Pope

2. Holy books – All such books, except the Bible, promote "natural religion."
   a. *Book of Mormon* – Joseph Smith
   b. *Quran* - Mohammad
   c. *Talmud* – Numerous Jewish rabbis

3. The Bible as the Christian standard
   a. A primary standard – The Bible is authoritative in itself. It cannot be proven true by any other source or set of logical arguments.
   b. An absolute standard – The Bible is the LORD's revealed truth, and therefore its truthfulness cannot be challenged by any other source.
   c. A reliable standard – What the Bible reveals is correct in everything that it covers, even if the information is not directly part of the LORD's plan of salvation.

Q1. What is a standard?

Q2. The Bible is a "primary standard." What does this mean?

Q3. What are some other types of religious standards?

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Chapter 2 – Structure of the Bible

A. Old Testament ("Hebrew Bible") – Almost entirely in Hebrew

1. Historical books
   a. Pentateuch – Five books of Moses
      Genesis – The patriarchs
      Exodus – The flight from Egypt
      Leviticus – The laws governing Israel as God's people.
      Numbers – The move eastward
      Deuteronomy – The second giving of the Law
   b. Pre-kingdom
      Joshua – The conquest of Canaan.
      Judges – The period when there was no royal dynasty.
      Ruth – The story of one of David's ancestors.
   c. Kingdoms of Israel and Judah
      1 & 2 Samuel – The kingdoms of Saul and David.
      1 & 2 Kings – The kingdoms of Israel and Judah until their collapse.
      1 & 2 Chronicles – The kingdom of Judah from the priestly viewpoint.
   d. Exilic and post-exilic books
      Esther – The Jewess who became queen and saved the Jews.
      Ezra – The priest who restored the law to the returning Jews.
      Nehemiah – The court official who rebuilt Jerusalem.

2. Wisdom literature
   a. Job – A man whom God severely tested.
   b. Psalms – A hymnbook written mostly by David and the sons of Korah.
   c. Writings of Solomon
      Proverbs – Wise sayings and advice, mostly written by Solomon.
      Ecclesiastes – The folly of the things of this life.
      Song of Songs – A romance that some feel foreshadows Christ and the church.

3. Prophets
   a. Major
      Isaiah – Warnings against apostacy, and the foretelling of the Savior.
      Jeremiah – Warnings to a defeated people to surrender.
      Lamentations – A lament over the fall of Judah and Jerusalem.
      Ezekiel – Dramatic warnings to the Babylonian exiles to repent and encouragement to hope.
      Daniel – A faithful Jew in the court of the Babylonians and Persians.
   b. Pre-exilic minor – Warnings to repent or face God's judgment.
      Hosea, Joel, Amos
      Obadiah, Jonah, Micah
      Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah
   c. Post-exilic minor – Warnings to repent and encouragement to await God's mercy.
      Haggai, Zechariah & Malachi

B. New Testament – Greek

1. Gospels
   a. Synoptic gospels
      Matthew – Emphasizes Jesus as the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophesies.
      Mark – Empathizes Jesus as a man of action and compassion.
      Luke – A well-researched presentation of Jesus' life for the educated.
   b. John – Emphasizes the divinity of Christ.

2. The Christian church
   a. Acts – Luke gives a well-researched presentation of the early church.
   b. Paul's congregational epistles
      Romans – A great laying out of Christian doctrine.
      1&2 Corinthians – Help for a troubled congregation in Greece.
      Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians – Advice to congregations in Asia Minor.
      1 &2 Thessalonians – Counsel to a congregation that feared Paul had abandoned it.
   c. Paul's personal epistles
      1&2 Timothy – Counsel to Paul's spiritual son who was a pastor.
      Titus – Counsel to a disciple and fellow worker in the mission field.
      Philemon – Request to a friend to not punish a runaway slave.
   d. Non-Pauline epistles
      Hebrews – A discussion of Jesus as the Great High Priest.
      James – Advice to be doers and not only hearers of God's Word.
      1&2 Peter – Counsel and comfort to the congregations of Asia Minor.
      1, 2 & 3 John – General advice to the Christian congregations.
      Jude – Condemnation of false teachers in the Christian congregations.

3. Prophecy
   a. Revelation – John relates the visions of heaven that he received.

C. Other writings

1. The Jewish Apocrypha
   a. Pseudo-history between the two testaments of the Bible.
   b. Wisdom and stories of various merit.

2. Pseudepigrapha – also called the "New Testament apocrypha"
   a. Pseudo-history about Christ and the early church.
   b. Stories and bad theology for itching ears.

Q1. What are the differences between the Old Testament and the New Testament?

Q2. Why is history so important in the Old Testament?

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Chapter 3 – Understanding the Bible

A. False approaches

1. Jewish
   a. A legalistic interpretation by which the Jews try to justify themselves. The Gospel is hidden under a pile of laws, both given and devised.
   b. A finessing of the Biblical text by the opinions of the rabbis (*Talmud*).

2. Roman Catholic
   a. The interpretation of the Bible is subject to the Magisterium of the church, with the final authority resting with the pope.
   b. Tradition is as important as the Bible in establishing doctrine. It is argued that not everything needed for salvation was written down, but that some was entrusted by the apostles to their successors, the bishops.

3. Rationalism
   a. The belief that all opinions and actions should be based on reason and acquired knowledge rather than on divine revelation or emotional response.
   b. Human reason is the ultimate judge of what is good for human society and what is the basis of morality.

4. Liberalism
   a. The belief that mankind can be perfected through gaining a better understanding of social forces that govern interpersonal relationships.
   b. The Bible must be treated as any other ancient writing and demythologized so that the hidden truths of God can be revealed.

5. Neo-orthodoxy
   a. The use of Biblical terms and traditional church practices but with a differentiation between the spiritual meaning and the physical representation.
   b. The Bible is intended to convey God's eternal truth, but the forms in the Bible do not need to be accepted at face value for that conveyance to occur.

6. Conservative Reformed/Calvinists
   a. There is a firm commitment to the Bible being the inerrant Word of God.
   b. The teachings of the Bible, however, must be judged with reason so as to harmonize them with each other and the physical world.

B. Lutheran **Hermeneutics -** historical-grammatical method

1. Determine the general context (i.e., the setting)
   a. Which testament it is in?
   b. What type of book of the Bible is it in (e.g., narrative, poetical, letters)?
   c. What is the purpose of the book and its historical setting?
   d. Who is the writer? Is he quoting someone else in the words of interest?
   e. Who is the audience?
   f. What verses on the same topic bracket the passage?

2. Identify the literary context
   a. Narrative and letters
   b. Poetical (e.g., Psalms, Proverbs, much of Isaiah)
   c. Comparisons (e.g., parables, similes, metaphors)
   d. Picture language in prophetic revelation (e.g., Revelation, Daniel)

3. Apply the Scriptural constraints
   a. Every acceptable meaning of a passage must be consistent with the Scriptures' own stated purpose for its existence, namely, to teach the wisdom necessary for salvation.
   b. Scripture is the only reliable interpreter of Scripture–the plain passages help to make the difficult clear. Any interpretation which does not agree with all its parallels is unacceptable (analogy of Scripture).
   c. Every doctrine necessary to our spiritual welfare is taught in one or more clear passages (*sedes doctrinae* = seat of doctrine).
   d. *Sola Scriptura* (i.e., the Scripture Alone), not reason, experience, tradition or church practices governs how Scripture is to be understood.

Q1. Explain how Roman Catholics interpret the Bible.

Q2. Contrast Lutheran hermeneutics with the Calvinistic approach to Scripture.

C. **Psalm 1:1-2** {"*Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the ways of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on His law he meditates day and night*."}

1. Determine the general context
   a. Old Testament.
   b. Poetical – part of the songbook of Israel.
   c. Purpose: encourage the study of God's Word and the avoidance of evil environments.
   d. The writer is unknown.
   e. The audience is the believers in Israel.
   f. This psalm is not directly connected to neighboring psalms.

2. Identify the literary context (Poetical)
   a. Terms of progressive commitment – *walk*, *stand,* and *sit* (Picture language).
   b. Stress on the avoidance of being sucked in by evil.
   c. Those who are blessed (happy) do not do these things (Comparison).
   d. Second part of the comparison gives the alternative – instruction from the LORD.
   e. It also presents how the alternative is carried out – constant meditation.

3. Apply the Scriptural constraints
   a. Consistency with the Scriptures? {"*These words that I am giving you today are to be in your heart. Repeat them to your children. Talk about them when you sit in your house and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Bind them as a sign on your hand and let them be a symbol on your forehead. Write them on the doorposts of your house and on your city gates*." Deuteronomy 6:6–9}
   b. Descriptive or prescriptive?
   c. Is this a *sedes doctrinae*?
   d. Is there a *Sola Scriptura* issue?

Q3. Why is identifying the author of the quote important in Biblical interpretation?

D. **John 15:5** {"*I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in Me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.*"}

1. Determine the general context
   a. New Testament.
   b. The book of John is narrative, but this is a parable.
   c. Reports the teachings and actions of Jesus.
   d. The apostle John is the writer, but he is quoting Jesus.
   e. The audience is Jesus' disciples at the Last Supper.
   f. Jesus is discussing the difficulties of ministry.

2. Identify the literary context
   a. Jesus is telling a parable.
   b. Jesus is comparing Himself and His disciples to parts of a grape plant.
   c. The point of comparison is what the vine supplies to the branches.
   d. This sustenance is what permits fruit to be borne by branches.
   e. Fruit cannot be borne by the branches without this sustenance.
   f. By analogy, the disciples cannot bear fruit except with the support of Jesus.
   g. Jesus identifies this support as His teachings which must be accepted by faith.

3. Apply the Scriptural constraints
   a. Consistency with the Scriptures? {"*Without faith it is impossible to please Him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who seek Him.*" Hebrews 11:6}
   b. Descriptive or prescriptive?
   c. Is this a *sedes doctrinae*?
   d. Is there a *Sola Scriptura* issue?

Q4. What is the "analogy of Scripture"?

Q5. What is a *sedes doctrinae*?

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Chapter 4 – The Lord God Almighty

A. Attributes that define God's size and power

1. Definition of attribute
   a. An **attribute** is a characteristic that belongs to and describes an entity. An **essential attribute** is an attribute that an entity must have to be that entity (e.g., a bear must have a head). All God's attributes are essential attributes.
   b. A **non-essential attribute** is an attribute that an entity could lose and still be that entity (e.g., a dog could lose its hair and still be a dog.)

2. God's essence is that of a **spirit**, without a physical component. {"*Where shall I go from Your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from Your presence?*" Psalm 139:7-10}
3. God is **omnipresent**; there is no place where He is not. {" '*Am I a God at hand,' declares the LORD, 'and not a God far away? Can a man hide himself in secret places so that I cannot see him?' declares the LORD. 'Do I not fill heaven and earth?' declares the LORD."* Jeremiah 23:23-24}

4. God is **immutable**; He never changes His mind. {The LORD said, "*God is not a man, that He should lie, nor a son of man, that He should change His mind. Does He speak and then not act? Does He promise and not fulfill?*" Numbers 23:19}
5. God is **omniscient**; He knows everything that was, is and will be. {"*Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.*" Hebrews 4:13}

6. God is **omnipotent**; He has all the power that exists, and nothing has any power unless He gives it to it. {The LORD said, "*Also henceforth I am He; there is none who can deliver from My hand; I work, and who can turn it back?*" Isaiah 43:13}

B. Attributes that define the LORD's holiness

1. God is **holy**; He is wholly dedicated to carrying out His will. {The LORD said, "*You shall make a plate of pure gold and engrave on it, like the engraving of a signet, 'Holy to the LORD.'* " Exodus 28:36}
2. God has a clear intent in all He does; His **will** directs all His actions. {"*Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush Him; He has put Him to grief; when His soul makes an offering for guilt, He shall see His offspring; He shall prolong His days; the will of the LORD shall prosper in His hand.*" Isaiah 53:10}

3. God is **perfect**; all His actions conform to His will. {David said, "*This God—His way is perfect; the Word of the LORD proves true; He is a shield for all those who take refuge in Him.*" Psalm 18:30}
4. God is **faithfu**l and **true**; He never acts contrary to His expressed will. {"*If we are faithless, He remains faithful—for He cannot deny Himself.*" 2 Timothy 2:13}

5. God is **jealous**; He demands the honor due Him. {"*I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate Me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love Me and keep My commandments.*" Exodus 20:5b-6}
6. God is **just**; He punishes wrongs regardless of who commits them. {Angels in heaven said, "*Great and amazing are Your deeds, O Lord God the Almighty! Just and true are Your ways, O King of the nations!*" Revelation 15:3b}

7. He is **wise**; He always knows the best way. {"*O LORD, how manifold are Your works! In wisdom have You made them all; the earth is full of Your creatures.*" Psalm 104:24}

C. Attributes that define the LORD's love

1. God is **love**; His actions toward mankind are solely for the benefit of mankind. {"*Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love*." 1 John 4:8}
2. God is full of **mercy**; He goes beyond His justice to help mankind. {"*But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ–by grace you have been saved.*" Ephesians 2:4-5}

3. God has an attitude full of **grace** toward mankind, requiring nothing in return. {"*All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by His grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.*" Romans 3:23-24}
4. God's **goodness** causes Him to be bountiful to His creatures. {David said, "*Oh, how abundant is Your goodness, which You have stored up for those who fear You*." Psalm 31:19}

5. God is **patient**; He withholds His justice to allow His mercy to have time to work. {"*The LORD is not slow to fulfill His promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.*" 2 Peter 3:9}

Q1. What is an essential attribute?

Q2. What does it mean that God is jealous?

Q3. When God tells us not to take (use) His name in vain, to which of His names is He referring?

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Chapter 5 – The Trinity

A. Nature of God

1. Names
   a. *Yahweh* (***YHWH***) is translated "LORD" in English. It is the name of the Savior God, the proper name of the Biblical God. {"*I AM WHO I AM*." Exodus 3:14}
   b. *Elohim* is a plural form, which is compatible with the LORD being triune. {"*In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth*." Genesis 1:1}
   c. *El Shaddai* means the Lord God Almighty {"*When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am God Almighty; walk before Me, and be blameless.'* " Genesis 17:1}
   d. "Lord of Armies" means the leader of the heavenly hosts. {"*Thus says the LORD of Hosts, "I have noted what Amalek did to Israel in opposing them on the way when they came up out of Egypt.*" 1 Samuel 15:2}
   e. "Holy One of Israel" shows a special bond to Israel. {"*Shout, and sing for joy, O inhabitant of Zion, for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.*" Isaiah 12:6}
   f. "The King of kings and Lord of lords" is the title under which Jesus will reign in heaven. {"*He who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords.*" 1 Timothy 6:15}

2. Substance
   a. The "essence" of God is the inherent attributes that characterize His being, summarized by the word "godliness."
   b. A "person" is some being which has an individual personality and is not a subcomponent of another.

B. The Persons of the Trinity

1. Father
   a. God the Father is the creator and preserver of everything that exists. {"*Thus says God, the LORD, who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread out the earth and what comes from it, who gives breath to the people on it and spirit to those who walk in it.*" Isaiah 42:5}
   b. God the Father is the natural father of God the Son from eternity and of believers in Christ by adoption. {Jesus said, "*I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God*." John 20:17}

2. Son
    a. God the Son is true God, begotten of the Father, from eternity. {"*I will tell of the decree: The LORD said to me, 'You are my Son; today I have begotten you.'* " Psalm 2:7}
    b. God the Son has the same degree of godliness as God the Father, because they are the same essence, although different persons. {Jesus said, "*I and the Father are one*." John 10:30}

3. Holy Spirit
    a. God the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father {Jesus said, "*But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me.*" John 15:26}
    b. God the Holy Spirit also proceeds from the Son because He is the Spirit of the Son. {"*God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, 'Abba! Father!'* " Galatians 4:6}

C. False teaching about the Trinity

1. The bishop Arias and others claimed that the Son, and by extension also the Holy Spirit, was created by the Father at the beginning, before anything else was created. The Son was therefore a lesser God than the Father, although still very powerful. The Apostle John contradicted this by writing "*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God*." {John 1:1}

2. Actors in Greek plays often played several roles, changing masks when they played different characters. Some claim that the persons of God are merely masks that the one essence wore, depending on the role He was playing. The Bible, however, mentions several persons of God in the same verses (e.g., Jesus said, "*Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him*." John 5:23}.

3. Some have dismissed the Holy Spirit from the Godhead and claimed that "the spirit of God" is the force that God exerts when He acts. The Bible, however, gives divine attributes to the Holy Spirit and treats Him as a person {e.g., "*Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption*." Ephesians 4:30}.

Q1. What is the difference between "essence" and "person"?

Q2. What does it mean that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are only "masks" of God?

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Chapter 6 – God and the Universe

A. God the Creator

1. Genesis 1
   a. The beginning – The LORD's creation of the universe brought not only matter and energy into existence, but all space and time as we know them. {"*In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void.*" Genesis 1:1-2}
   b. The day – The six days of creation were like the days that currently exist. There was a light period and a dark period, and they were numbered. Both to the whole assembly of Israel and to Moses the LORD used the word "days" to describe the creation period. {"*And there was evening and there was morning, the third day*." Genesis 1:13 / The LORD said, "*For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore, the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy*." Exodus 20:11}
   c. The order – The Lord showed His independence by creating plants before creating the sun, thus making any evolutionary explanation impossible. {"*And God said, 'Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind, on the earth.'* " Genesis 1:11}
   d. The heavenly bodies – The LORD's creating the sun after the earth and in conjunction with the moon and stars caused many people to assume that the sun had to orbit the earth. This was a case of reading things into the Scriptures. {"*And God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars.*" Genesis 1:16}
   e. The man – This special creature of God was created in His image with special prerogatives. {"*So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them*." Genesis 1:17}
   f. The procreation commands – The LORD told all creatures to procreate more creatures like themselves. However, because "kind" is not defined, diversity within kinds cannot be ruled out. {"*And God made the beasts of the earth according to their kinds and the livestock according to their kinds, and everything that creeps on the ground according to its kind*." Genesis 1:25}
   g. The quality – The LORD created everything so that it was good for the purpose which He had intended. {"*And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good.*" Genesis 1:31}
   h. The age of the earth – The Bible does not tell us the true age of the earth, that is, how long it has been since the creation. On the seventh day everything was less than a week old, yet many of the things of the creation appeared to have great age – the soil, the atmosphere, the sun, the moon and the stars. Even Adam appeared much older than one day.

2. Genesis 2
    a. Man was the purpose of God's creation. {"*And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed.*" Genesis 2:8}
    b. Adam named all the animals. {"*Now out of the ground the LORD God had formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what he would call them*." Genesis 2:19}
    c. Eve was created from Adam. {"*And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man*." Genesis 2:22}
    d. The LORD instituted marriage between a man and a woman. {"*Therefore, a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh*." Genesis 2:24}
    e. The LORD gave mankind a test of loyalty. {"*You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die*." Genesis 2:16–17}

3. Genesis 3
    a. The temptation – Satan's crafty words. {The serpent said, "*For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil*." Genesis 3:5}
    b. The fall – Eve "bit" on Satan's claim. {"*She* [Eve] *took of its fruit and ate*." Genesis 3:6}
    c. The promise – The LORD immediately promised Eve a rescue plan for all mankind. {*"I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.*" Genesis 3:15}
    d. The punishment – Man would die physically even though he would have a chance to live spiritually and eternally. {"*Till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return*." Genesis 3:19}

B. Science

1. Natural science
    a. All science is based on inductive reasoning, where one reasons from examples to a generalized model. The scientists' purpose is to build models that explain what is observed in nature.
    b. The fundamental assumption of the natural (i.e., physical and biological) sciences is that all observations of nature can be explained in terms of the inherent properties of matter, energy, space and time.

2. Limitations
    a. All scientific models are fragile and can be overthrown by contrary evidence (An example of the fallacy of hasty generalization). They can never be proven and are only accepted as provisionally true.
    b. All scientific models are no better than the assumptions on which they are based. A false assumption (i.e., a false premise fallacy) renders a model unreliable.
    c. Simply because a model explains all the observations does not make it the correct explanation of such observations because another model may be the actual cause of the observations (An example of the affirming the consequent fallacy).
    d. Scientists are only aware of such evidence that their senses and their instruments can detect. There may be much in the universe that is undetectable.

C. The LORD as Preserver

1. All creature – The LORD has promised in many places to take care of all those creatures that He has created. {Jesus said, "*Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father*." Matthew 10:29}

2. All mankind – He is especially concerned for His special creature, namely all mankind, for which He send a Redeemer. {Jesus said, "*For He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good and sends rain on the just and on the unjust*." Matthew 5:45}

3. All Christians – The greatest of all His attention, however, is reserved for His elect. {"*We know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to His purpose*." Romans 8:28}

Q1. How do we know that the "days" of creation were common days like we have now?

Q2. What are the major limitations of science?

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Chapter 7 – God's Beginnings with Humans

A. Introduction

1. God's omniscience
   a. Before there was a world, the LORD foresaw all that would happen in His creation. He foresaw what He wanted in terms of creatures, He foresaw how they would disappoint Him, and He foresaw He would have to rescue them. {Peter said, "*This Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men.*" Acts 2:23}
   b. There was no trial-and-error in God's approach to His creation. He always knew how He would act and how things would turn out. He knew of His apparent changes in tactics before the creation. {Under the direction of the LORD, Balaam said, "*God is not man, that he should lie, or a son of man, that he should change his mind. Has he said, and will he not do it? Or has he spoken, and will he not fulfill it?*" Numbers 23:19}

2. Man's total depravity
   a. By the Fall into sin, all of mankind has become totally corrupted so no one can do anything good. {"*The human heart is deceitful above all things, and is incurable; who can understand it?*" Jeremiah 17:9}
   b. No human can do anything to fix the situation. {"*The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned*." 1 Corinthians 2:14}

B. God's special creatures

1. Angels
   a. Angels are spirits of immense power. {"*Are they not all ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?*" Hebrews 1:14 / "*That night the angel of the LORD went out and struck down 185,000 in the camp of the Assyrians*." 2 Kings 19:35}
   b. God created all the angels at the beginning, and the number is fixed. {Jesus said, "*Those who are considered worthy to attain to that age and to the resurrection from the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage, for they cannot die anymore, because they are equal to angels.*" Luke 20:35–36} There is a large number of angels. {Daniel 7:10 & Matthew 26:53}
   c. The angels had a free will to choose to serve the LORD or rebel. {"*The angels who did not stay within their own position of authority*. Jude 6a}
   d. Soon after they were created, Satan led some of the angels in rebellion against the LORD. – {"*Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon....that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan.*" Revelation 12:7–9}

e. God responded by punishing the guilty angels for eternity in hell {"*He has kept in eternal chains under gloomy darkness until the judgment of the great day*." Jude 6b} Also see Matthew 25:41.
f. God responded by sanctifying the faithful angels so that they could no longer choose to sin. {"*In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and of the elect angels*." 1 Timothy 5:21}

2. Man
   a. Man was given a physical form, but it came from the dust of the Earth. {"*The Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.*" Genesis 2:7}
   b. God created only two people and told them to produce more people. {God said, "*Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it*." Genesis 1:28}
   c. God gave man a free will to obey or disobey Him. {The LORD said, "*You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.*" Genesis 2:16–17}
   d. Tempted by Satan (as a serpent), Eve rebelled. {"*The serpent said to the woman, 'You will not surely die."…. She took of its fruit and ate*." Genesis 3:4-6}
   e. God responded with immediate temporal punishment. {"*By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return.*" Genesis 3:16-19}
   f. God responded with a promise to rescue mankind in the future. {The LORD said, "*I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel*." Genesis 3:15}
   g. God left many deep questions for which He did not think we needed the answers. {Jesus said, "*It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority*." Acts 1:7}

C. Man's growing depravity

1. Bad actors
   a. Mankind could not contain its rebellion to small acts of defiance but soon was ready for murder and mayhem. {"*Cain rose up against his brother Abel and killed him.*" Genesis 4:8}
   b. Men even became arrogant about their right for wealth and vengeance. {"*Lamech said to his wives, …I have killed a man for wounding me, a young man for striking me. If Cain's revenge is sevenfold, then Lamech's is seventy-sevenfold.'* " Genesis 4:23–24}

2. Corrupt actions
    a. Men married for lust without regard for serving the LORD. {"*The sons of God saw that the daughters of man were attractive. And they took as their wives any they chose. Then the LORD said, 'My Spirit shall not abide in man forever, for he is flesh: his days shall be 120 years.'* " Genesis 6:1-3}
    b. Their actions were solely driven by selfishness. {"*The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And the LORD regretted that He had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him to His heart*." Genesis 6:5-6}

3. The Flood
    a. When mankind's sins had gotten out of hand, God imposed a just punishment. {The LORD said, "*I have determined to make an end of all flesh, for the earth is filled with violence through them*." Genesis 6:13}
    b. He decided to preserve the human race through His servant Noah. {The LORD said, "*Make yourself an ark of gopher wood*."... "*Noah did this; he did all that God commanded him.*" Genesis 6:14-22}
    c. After the Flood, God restarted the human race. {"*God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth*.' " Genesis 9:1}
    d. Man once again soon fell into rebellion against God's command to spread out. {"*They said, 'Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves.*' " Genesis 11:4}

Q1. What were the two themes the book set out as guiding God's interaction with His people?

Q2. Why were the angels immediately and permanently punished for their rebellion?

Q3. How does man differ from the angels?

Q4. What was the strategic purpose of the Flood?

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Chapter 8 – The Role of Israel (Part 1)

A. The Patriarchs

1. Abram (Abraham)
   a. Abram was called by the Lord to leave his home in Haran and to go to Canaan, which the LORD would give his descendants as an inheritance. {Genesis 12-14}
   b. Abram's name was changed to Abraham, and he was given the promise that his family would be the family through which the Savior would be born. {Genesis 15-16}
   c. Abraham faced trials in his life involving his nephew Lot and the neighboring peoples as he moved through the land. {Genesis 17-20}
   d. Abraham was forced to wait until he was a hundred years old to have the son of promise, and then he was tested by being asked to sacrifice that son to the LORD on Mount Moriah. {Genesis 21-23}

2. Isaac
   a. Isaac received a wife from the branch of his family in Haran so that he did not need to marry into the Canaanite clans and be absorbed by them. {Genesis 24}
   b. Isaac had two sons, Esau and Jacob, but the Lord chose the younger to be heir to the covenant. {Genesis 25}
   c. Isaac, not having been given any inheritance in the land by God, struggled to find a place where he could dig wells and settle. {Genesis 26}

3. Jacob (Israel)
   a. Jacob received the family blessing from Isaac by deceit and was forced to flee to his distant relatives. {Genesis 27}
   b. Jacob became a herdsman for his uncle Laban and was tricked into marrying Laban's two daughters. Subsequent discord between his wives led to Jacob taking their two maid servants as his concubines. Eventually he had 12 sons by these four women. {Genesis 29-30}
   c. After gaining much property, Jacob returned to Canaan. The LORD changed his name to Israel. Numerous family events occurred in Canaan. {Genesis 31-38}
   d. His son Joseph was sold into slavery and taken to Egypt. Later the rest of the family joined him after he had become ruler in Egypt and there was a famine in the region. Jacob's sons became the fathers of the tribes of Israel. {Genesis 39-50}

B. The rescue from Egypt

1. The changed political situation in Egypt
   a. As time passed and the Israelites grew more numerous, the Egyptian rulers began to fear them and reduced them to slavery. {Exodus 1}

b. Moses was born to a Levite family but taken and educated as a prince of Egypt by Pharaoh's daughter. He escaped into the wilderness after killing an Egyptian. {Exodus 2}

2. Moses and the Exodus
   a. The LORD called Moses to return to Egypt and lead the Israelites out of it. {Exodus 3-4}
   b. The LORD sent numerous plagues upon the Egyptians, which were announced by Moses, to force Pharaoh to release the Israelites. Finally, the LORD striking dead all the firstborn in Egypt forced Pharaoh to expel them from Egypt. {Exodus 5-12}
   c. They fled from Egypt, crossed the Red Sea by a miracle and arrived at Mount Sinai, where they met the LORD in a grand display of His power. {Exodus 13-19}

C. The Law as schoolmaster {Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy}

1. The Law of Moses
   a. The LORD repeated the moral law that had been written into the heart of man at his creation. It was in the form of clear commandments.
   b. The LORD gave a civil law that indicated how the moral law was to be implemented in the nation state of Israel when it had its own government.
   c. The LORD gave an elaborate ceremonial law which was to keep them separate from the peoples around them and which told them how they could become reconciled to God if they transgressed one of His laws.

2. The burden of the law
   a. The Law was so detailed and emphatic that no one could claim that he or she did not know God's will.
   b. The Law was so onerous that no one could keep it. Therefore, the only hope of obtaining God's favor for the Israelites was to live a life of repentance. It was only through the work of a mediator bearing a bloody sacrifice that they could receive God's pardon for their sins.
   c. The ineffectiveness of the Law at producing a people worthy to be God's children was demonstrated time and again by the rebellion of the Israelites as they traveled to Canaan. Even though God was visibly present in the pillar of cloud/fire, the Israelites refused to trust Him and took any inconvenience, large or small, as an excuse to claim that God did not love them and that they should find their own way.

Q1. What three promises were given to the Patriarchs?

Q2. What does the phrase "the Law was a schoolmaster" mean?

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Chapter 8 – The Role of Israel (Part 2)

D. The Israelites and the Priests {Judges, 1 Samuel}

1. The rule of the priests
   a. The rule of the priests began after the death of Joshua and after the Israelites had settled in the land of Canaan. They no longer needed a political leader whom God instructed personally.
   b. God had strategically spread the priests and Levites throughout Israel so that they could instruct the people in the laws of the LORD.
   c. The people were expected to come three times each year to the place where the Tabernacle had been set up at Shiloh. There the priests were to make atonement for their sins and to intercede with God on their behalf.

2. The failure of priestly rule
   a. The people did as they pleased, and the priests and Levites were ineffective at curbing their sins, often joining in them, or just lax in their duties.
   b. The priests became corrupt in the administration of their office, taking bribes and perverting justice for their own benefit.
   c. God punished the people for their unfaithfulness to Him by allowing the neighboring nations to overrun and rule them. When the Israelites repented, He sent deliverers, called "judges," who drove out the oppressors and reestablished order.

E. The Israelites and the Kings {1 & 2 Samuel, 1 & 2 Kings, 1 & 2 Chronicles}

1. The united kingdom
   a. When the Israelites craved a king, God gave them Saul, whose erratic behavior showed them that a king was not a magic solution to their problems.
   b. David remained faithful in his heart to the LORD, but his behavior was often troubling and sometimes needed to be punished. He was successful at subduing many of the neighboring countries, which introduced a period of peace for his son Solomon.
   c. Solomon built a permanent Temple in Jerusalem as a worship center for the LORD. Solomon was extremely rich and wise, but he let his position go to his head. He overindulged in women and for a time practiced idolatry.

2. The divided kingdom
   a. The northern tribes revolted under Jeroboam and became an idolatrous kingdom called "Israel," where many kings were murdered. There was frequently war between Israel and Judah and between Israel and Aram, a heathen people to the north of Israel.
   b. God had His prophets anoint new kings to replace wicked kings, but the new kings soon followed in the footsteps of their predecessors. He called the people to repentance, but they resisted His effort to correct them. Finally, He sent them into captivity in Assyria.

c. The southern tribes remained with the house of David, but many of their kings were also unfaithful to the Lord. They fought senseless wars and established treaties with heathen nations.
d. Because of His promise to David, the LORD repeatedly tried to get the kings and the people to understand that deserting Him would lead to His wrath being poured out on them. Eventually, He allowed their misdeeds to fall on their heads and sent them into captivity in Babylon.

F. The Israelites and the Prophets

1. Pre-exilic period {1 & 2 Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and minor prophets}
   a. Prophets like Elijah and Elisha tried to turn the northern kingdom (Israel) from its sins, but were repulsed by the kings and false prophets, who were committed to idolatry.
   b. Prophets like Isaiah and Jeremiah worked in the southern kingdom (Judah), where they slowed the drift toward evil but could not stop it. Even when a king did try to remain faithful to the LORD, many people set up their own altars and had household gods.

2. The exile and the return {Ezekiel, Daniel, Nehemiah, Ezra, Esther and minor prophets}
   a. Prophets like Ezekiel warned the people of their continuing defiance of God, while Daniel represented to his people the rewards of faithfulness to the LORD.
   b. Leaders like Nehemiah and Ezra, with the help of a few prophets, tried to convince the Jews to return to the Law of Moses as well as the land of Canaan. Intermarriage with the heathen, and enslavement of fellow Jews continued to be problems.

3. Israel during the Silent Period {Old Testament Apocrypha}
   a. After Malachi, the LORD stopped giving new revelation. His people had everything they needed to know, and they had to wait until the LORD's time for the Savior to come. It was a difficult period for the faithful.
   b. Religiously, as they became restless in their waiting, the Jews began emphasizing the synagogue where rabbis, who were not always part of the Levitical line, taught in contrast to the temple worship, which was under the Sadducees of the priestly class. An uneasy peace existed between these groups of religious leaders.
   c. Politically, the Jews were caught in a power struggle between the two Greek-led empires, Egypt and Syria, and were also convulsed by periodic nationalist revolts. Eventually the Romans entered Judea at the request of one of the Jewish parties and became the overlords of the local political and religious rulers.

Q3. What three ways did the LORD use to try to lead His people spiritually?

Q4. What is the "silent period"?

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Chapter 9 – The Savior (Part 1)

A. The promise fulfilled

1. The coming of the Savior
   a. God the Father carefully chose the time to send the Savior. {"*But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, to redeem those who were under the Law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.*" Galatians 4:4-5}
   b. The LORD chose to fulfill His promise through a humble virgin rather than with great fanfare. {"*The Lord Himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel*." Isaiah 7:14}
   c. The Savior's earthly parents were directed to give him a name that would indicate His purpose, "He saves." {"*She will bear a son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins*." Matthew 1:21}
   d. Before He began His ministry, Jesus remained out of sight in rural Galilee.

2. Jesus' ministry – message of repentance
   a. Jesus wanted to establish Himself as the one who was taking the sinner's place. Therefore, He went to John the Baptizer to be baptized as the other people who were under the Law needed to be. {Jesus said, *"Let it be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness."* Matthew 3:15}
   b. The purpose of Jesus' ministry was to call people who recognized their sins to repent of their sins. This is the reason He sought out people who were regarded as sinners by others because they were not shocked by being called sinners. {"*I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance*." Luke 5:32}
   c. Jesus complained that people came to Him for the wrong reasons, such as to be entertained by His miracles or receive something for free. {"*So Jesus said to him, 'Unless you see signs and wonders you will not believe*.'" John 4:48}
   d. Not all who followed Jesus were willing to believe His teachings. Some wanted a leader who would say the things to them that would make them feel good or important. {"*When many of His disciples heard it, they said, 'This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?'* " John 6:60}
   e. Jesus recognized the sad truth that all preachers of the Gospel must recognize; they will reach out to many, but few will truly give up their self-centered life to follow Jesus. {"*For many are called, but few are chosen*." Matthew 22:14}

B. Jesus' ministry – methods

1. Jesus' ministry – miracles
   a. The purpose of Jesus' miracles was so that people would believe that He was the Messiah who had been promised. He needed to start with His disciples. {"*This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory. And his disciples believed in him.*" John 2:11}

b. Moreover, Jesus' ministry emphasized those miracles which had been predicted in the Old Testament. {"*Jesus answered them, 'Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them.*' " Matthew 11:4-5}
c. Jesus did not want people to concentrate their attentions on the physical benefits that He could provide, but on the spiritual teachings that He spoke. {"*This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like the bread the fathers ate, and died. Whoever feeds on this bread will live forever.*" John 6:58}
d. He made clear that His miracles were signs for the people to see and recognize as God's work. {"*Jesus said, 'For judgment I came into this world, that those who do not see may see, and those who see may become blind.'* " John 9:39}
e. Jesus pointed out that most of the people were so wedded to their lives of sin that not even the miracles would get His point across. {"*For this people's heart has grown dull, and with their ears they can barely hear, and their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and turn, and I would heal them*." Matthew 13:15}

2. Jesus' ministry – parables
   a. Jesus taught spiritual lessons by using examples from the daily lives of the people of the 1st century. {"*I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter what has been hidden since the foundation of the world.*" Matthew 13:35}
   b. Jesus often used parables that tried to explain the kingdom of heaven by analogy. {*"To what shall I compare the kingdom of God? It is like leaven that a woman took and hid in three measures of flour, until it was all leavened."* Luke 13:20,21}
   c. Jesus used parables to pinpoint those people who did not seek their meaning. {"*This is why I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand*." Matthew 13:13}
   d. Moreover, to those who were self-satisfied with their own religious knowledge, He gave no explanation so that the parables would be a mystery to them. {"*If I had not come and spoken to them* [the unbelieving Jews]*, they would not have been guilty of sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin.*" John 15:22}

Q1. What was the central message of Jesus' ministry?

Q2. Why did Jesus do miracles?

Q3. Why were Jesus' parables often hard to understand?

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Chapter 9 – The Savior (Part 2)

3. Jesus' ministry – claim of divinity

    a. The Holy Spirit had John begin his gospel with a clear declaration of Jesus' divinity. {"*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made."* John 1:1-3}
    b. When the religious leaders questioned Jesus' authority, He pointed out that He had His authority because He was the LORD God. {*Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM." So they picked up stones to throw at Him, but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple*. John 8:58,59}
    c. Jesus told His opponents that if they truly read their holy book, they would see it pointing to Him. {"*You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about Me.*" John 5:39}
    d. Jesus contrasted His concern for souls with the callousness of the religious officials. {"*They* [the teachers of the Law and the Pharisees] *tie up heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on people's shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to move them with their finger.*" Matthew 23:4}
    e. Jesus showed that He had the right to regulate what was done in the temple because it was His building. {*Jesus entered the temple and drove out all who sold and bought in the temple, and He overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who sold pigeons. He said to them, "It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer,' but you make it a den of robbers.*" Matthew 21:12-13}

C. The end of Jesus' ministry

1. Jesus' Passion
    a. Jesus took on Himself the job of clearing the path to the Father. {"*Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.'* " John 14:6}
    b. The plan had been drafted in eternity, and Jesus explained it before He carried it out. {"*Taking the twelve, He said to them, 'See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written about the Son of Man by the prophets will be accomplished. For He will be delivered over to the Gentiles and will be mocked and shamefully treated and spit upon. And after flogging Him, they will kill Him, and on the third day He will rise.'* " Luke 18:31-33}
    c. Jesus carried out this plan because it had been God's plan from eternity. {"*Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him; he has put him to grief; when his soul makes an offering for guilt, he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days; the will of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.*" Isaiah 53:10}

d. He was not the victim of fate, but He willingly gave up His life to accomplish God's plan. {"*The Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again*." John 10:17,18}
e. The gruesomeness of His punishment was described beforehand. {"*Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed*." Isaiah 53:4,5}
f. Then finally, on a Friday afternoon on a hill called Golgotha, His work was completed. {"*When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, 'It is finished,' and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit*." John 19:30}

2. Jesus' Resurrection
   a. On Easter morning the success of God's plan became apparent. {"*He is not here, for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay*." Matthew 28:6}
   b. The death that had come upon mankind through Adam's fall had been removed by Christ's perfect life and His victory over the grave. {" *'O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?' The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the Law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our LORD Jesus Christ*." 1 Corinthians 15:55-57}
   c. After His resurrection, Jesus spent time during the next 40 days helping His disciples to understand His mission in a way they could not have understood it previously. {"*Then he* [Jesus] *opened their minds to understand the Scriptures.*" Luke 24:45}

3. Jesus' Ascension
   a. The final act of Jesus' earthly ministry was to depart and return to His Father. {"*When he had said these things, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight*." Acts 1:9}
   b. Just before Jesus departed, however, He comforted His disciples and instituted the next phase of the plan of salvation. {"*You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth*." Acts 1:8}

Q4. Why were Jesus' claims of divinity rejected?

Q5. What is so unusual about Jesus' suffering and death?

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Chapter 10 – The First Century Church

A. Christ's new creation

1. The Church and its mission
   a. Jesus issued His Great Commission to the church. {"*Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you*." Matthew 28:19-20}
   b. Paul placed the commission in practical terms for new preachers. {"*Preach the Word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching.*" 2 Timothy 4:2}
   c. Paul described the role of those who spread the Gospel. {"*We are ambassadors for Christ, God making His appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.*" 2 Corinthians 5:20}

2. Missionary work among the Jews
   a. The initial goal was to spread the message to the Israelites, the people of promise, who were scattered from Egypt to Babylonia. {"*He answered, 'I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.'* " Matthew 15:24}
   b. Jesus Himself trained the Jewish missionary team that would spearhead this work. {"*Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished*." Acts 4:13}
   c. The missionary work started in Jerusalem, but when persecution became severe in Jerusalem, the believers in Christ fled to other places, and they did not remain silent. {"*Now those who were scattered went about preaching the word. Philip went down to the city of Samaria and proclaimed to them the Christ*." Acts 8:4,5}
   d. The missionary work soon spread outside of the boundaries of Palestine to church communities in major cities of the Roman Empire. {"*Now those who were scattered because of the persecution that arose over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, speaking the word to no one except Jews.*" Acts 11:19}

3. Missionary work among the Gentiles
   a. The message of salvation was for the Gentiles as well as the Jews, as Jesus said and as His apostles proclaimed. {"*He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world*." 1 John 2:2}
   b. The Holy Spirit, therefore, launched a mission to the Gentiles, that is, the people in the Greek and Latin-speaking world. {"*The Holy Spirit said, 'Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.'* " Acts 13:2}

c. Mission work in a new community often started with the missionaries going into the local Jewish synagogue, where they hoped that some Jews would be receptive and become the nucleus of a new congregation. {"*Now at Iconium they entered together into the Jewish synagogue and spoke in such a way that a great number of both Jews and Greeks believed*." Acts 14:1}
d. The apostles and other missionaries often suffered terrible treatment at the hands of fellow Jews. {"*But Jews came from Antioch and Iconium, and having persuaded the crowds, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing that he was dead*." Acts 14:19}
e. They also saw improbable conversions, like the hardened jailor at Philippi. {"*They spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their wounds; and he was baptized at once, he and all his family*." Acts 16:32,33}
f. Even when missionaries were imprisoned, their work continued. {"*He* [Paul] *lived there two whole years at his own expense, and welcomed all who came to him, proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness and without hindrance.*" Acts 28:30–31}

B. The Church and its perpetuation

1. The Apostles trained and appointed leaders in the church to carry on the work. {"*When they had appointed elders for them in every church, with prayer and fasting they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed*." Acts 14:23}

2. The church leaders were to be of good character, as well as dedicated to the correct teachings. {"*Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money*." 1 Timothy 3:2–3}

3. Those appointed leaders were to avoid false doctrine. {"*Avoid the irreverent babble and contradictions of what is falsely called 'knowledge.'*" 1 Timothy 6:20}

4. The apostles wrote the teachings of Jesus down so that people would have a reliable guide to the correct message. {"*Just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures*." 2 Peter 3:15–16}

Q1. What differentiated the missionary teams to the Jews and to the Gentiles?

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Chapter 11 – End Times

A. The end of the world

1. The approaching judgment
   a. The final day and the judgment are approaching, but no human can determine when it will be. {"*But concerning that day or that hour, no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father*." Mark 13:32}
   b. Many people will produce "fake news" about Judgment Day in order to gain followers. {Jesus answered them, "*See that no one leads you astray. For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and they will lead many astray*." Matthew 24:4}
   c. We need to be always ready for Christ's return, even though it has been almost 2000 years since His ascension. {*This is what I mean, brothers: the appointed time has grown very short*." 1 Corinthians 7:29}

2. Judgment Day
   a. He will arrive in glory. {"*When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne*." Matthew 25:31}
   b. He will hold court before the mass of humanity. {"*Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats*." Matthew 25:32}
   c. His judgment will be absolute and not appealable. {"*And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life*." Matthew 25:46}

B. The alternatives

1. Hell
   a. Those who do not accept the full atonement made by Jesus Christ will be sentenced to hell regardless of their good works. {"*Then He [Jesus Himself] will say to those on His left, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.'* " Matthew 25:41}
   b. More than anyone else in the Bible, Jesus referred to hell and its certainty for those do not believe. He often gave graphic details that make avoiding hell an imperative. {"*It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into hell, 'where their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched.'*" Mark 9:47,48}
   c. The conditions in hell will be unspeakably horrible and will last forever. {"*The devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever*." Revelation 20:10}

2. Heaven
    a. All believers in Christ will be awarded heaven. {"*I assign to you, as My Father assigned to Me, a kingdom, that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel*." Luke 22:29-30}
    b. Heaven will be the ultimate in tranquility, joy, and lack of worry. There will be no death and no suffering. {"*He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away*." Revelation 21:4}
    c. The greatest thing about heaven will be that we will always be with the LORD. {"*Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God.*" Revelation 21:3}

C. Efforts to cope with the end times

1. False teachings about the end times
    a. The Millennium is a false belief that Jesus will set up an earthly kingdom in which great prosperity and peace will exist on Earth for a thousand years. There are pre-millennialists who believe that Jesus will return before the Millennium and post-millennialists who believe He will return after it.
    b. Some people teach a "rapture," in which those who believe in Jesus will be snatched from wherever they are and taken to be with Him before He returns in glory. This is a distortion of what the Scriptures say about the resurrection.

2. Feelings about the End Times
    a. Most people, at some level, disbelieve that Jesus will return or that He will justly judge all people. They either do not believe in God or believe that God is so forgiving that He will condemn no one or only a few vile sinners to hell.
    b. Some people are apprehensive about Jesus' return because they fear that they have not been good enough or have committed certain sins that will be regarded as unforgivable. Even many nominal Christians are uncertain about their fate.
    c. Believers should be enthusiastic about the return of Christ. It means that the day of salvation has arrived. To have such enthusiasm, we must realize that nothing which we do here on Earth is really so important that we cannot abandon it.

Q1. What makes Judgment Day so troubling to many but so irrelevant to most?

Q2. What is the Millennium?

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Chapter 12 – Kingdom of God

A. Kingdom of power

1. The LORD is a king.
   a. The Lord is ruler over all the earthly kingdoms, as well as over nature, His church and heaven. {"*He Who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, Who alone has immortality, Who dwells in unapproachable light, Whom no one has ever seen or can see. To Him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen.*" 1 Timothy 6:15,16}
   b. The kingdom of God is wherever the LORD is working, and He is working everywhere for the benefit of His elect. {David said, "*Yours, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is Yours. Yours is the kingdom, O LORD, and You are exalted as head above all.*" 1 Chronicles 29:11}
   c. The rule of the LORD is not always obvious to us as we look at the world around us. {Jesus said, "*The kingdom of God is not coming in ways that can be observed, nor will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or 'There!' for behold, the kingdom of God is in your midst.*" Luke 17:20b-21}

2. Direct governance
   a. The LORD's kingdom of power extends over everything that exists, whether visible or invisible. {"*For the LORD is a great God, and a great King above all gods. In his hand are the depths of the earth; the heights of the mountains are his also.*" Psalm 95:3,4}
   b. The LORD governs with unchallengeable power. {"*I am He; there is none who can deliver from My hand; I work, and who can turn it back?*" Isaiah 43:13}
   c. His rule is over all people and the devils. {Jesus said, "*For He* [God the Father] *makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good and sends rain on the just and on the unjust*." Matthew 5:45}
   d. In hidden ways He directs the world to accomplish His purpose. {"*The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the LORD.*" Proverbs 16:33}

3. Delegated governance
   a. God has delegated some of His authority to officials to govern human societies and nations for the benefit of mankind. {"*Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God.*" Romans 13:1}
   b. The rulers are to administer justice according to natural law. {"*For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad....For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer.*" Romans 13:3,4}
   c. They are to be obeyed unless they require disobedience to God. {"*Peter and the apostles answered, 'We must obey God rather than men.' *" Acts 5:29}

B. Kingdom of grace

1. Nature of the kingdom
   a. The kingdom of grace is not an earthly kingdom, and therefore we cannot see it. {"*Jesus answered, 'My kingdom is not of this world.' *" John 18:36}

b. The only way to enter the kingdom of grace is through faith alone. {"*And he* [Abraham] *believed the LORD, and He counted it to him as righteousness*." Genesis 15:6}
c. The kingdom of grace is only spread through the means of grace, i.e., the Word and sacraments. {"*Preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching.*" 2 Timothy 4:2}
d. Jesus warned people not to get sidetracked by the things of this world because these would lead people away from the kingdom of grace. {"*Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth... For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."* Matthew 6:19,20}
e. Jesus further warned that only a few would make it into His kingdom of grace, even though He would call many to follow Him. {"*Many are called but few are chosen*." Matthew 22:14}

2. Those who are excluded
a. God put people on notice that they would not be found in the kingdom of grace if they were defiant about doing their own thing. {"*The LORD had said to Moses, 'Say to the people of Israel, "You are a stiff-necked people." '* " Exodus 33:5}
b. Jesus warned people about following false teachings. {"*Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written, 'This people honors Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me; in vain do they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.' You leave the commandment of God and hold to the tradition of men.*" Mark 7:6-8}
c. St. Paul warned against falling away by following a pseudo-gospel. {"*I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting Him Who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel*." Galatians 1:6}

C. Kingdom of glory

1. The kingdom will begin with Christ's return in glory. {"*The Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father.*" Matthew 16:27}
2. No one knows or can know when Judgment day will come, and the world will be destroyed. {"*The day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.*" 2 Peter 3:10}
3. The kingdom of glory will be a new realm where things will be very different from the Earth. {"*According to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.*" 2 Peter 3:13}
4. The LORD God will be the focus of heaven, and in Him we will rejoice forever. {"*I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb*." Revelation 21:22,23}

Q1. In what ways does the LORD govern His kingdom of power directly?
Q2. Who is in the kingdom of grace?
Q3. What is the focus of the kingdom of glory?
Q4. Explain God's view of human history.

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Chapter 13 – Predestination

A. Foreknowledge

1. Before the creation
   a. The LORD knew everything about His creation before He created it. {*"Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever You had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting You are God*." Psalm 90:2}
   b. We cannot comprehend how God's foreknowledge works. {"*For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct Him?*" 1 Corinthians 2:16}

2. God's plans within His foreknowledge
   a. God planned all He would do before there was a world in which to act. {Peter said, "*This Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men*." Acts 2:23}
   b. The need for Christ's suffering and death was known to God before He created Adam and Eve. {"*He* [God the Son = Jesus] *was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was made manifest in the last times for the sake of you who through Him are believers in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God*. 1 Peter 1:20,21}

B. Universal love for mankind

1. God's commitment to save mankind
   a. The LORD has no pleasure in condemning people to eternal death. {"*Have I any pleasure in the death of the wicked, declares the Lord GOD, and not rather that he should turn from his way and live?*" Ezekiel 18:23}
   b. He wants all to abandon their sinful lives and to be saved through Jesus. {"*This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.*" 1 Timothy 2:3,4}

2. God's willingness to act on His commitment
   a. He sent His Son to save. {"*God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life*." John 3:16}
   b. He sent messengers to tell everyone. {"*Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you*." Matthew 28:19,20}

C. Election (predestination)

1. The mystery of God's election.
   a. The wisdom of God is not something that we can deduce; we can only learn about it from Him. {"*We impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glory*." 1 Corinthians 2:7}

b. God's election was not based on our works, but only on His grace. {"*Though they [Esau and Jacob] were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad—in order that God's purpose of election might continue, not because of works but because of Him Who calls.*" Romans 9:11}

2. Our predestination and call occurred through Christ because of God's love.
   a. {"*In love he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will*." Ephesians 1:4,5}
   b. {"*For those whom He foreknew He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, in order that He might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom He predestined He also called, and those whom He called He also justified, and those whom He justified He also glorified.*" Romans 8:29,30}

D. Election errors

1. If the LORD chose some to be saved, then He must have chosen the rest to be damned. This is called "double predestination." {"*Say to them, As I live, declares the LORD God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live.*" Ezekiel 33:11}

2. Since Jesus' dying for those who would be damned would serve no purpose, He died only for the elect. This is called "limited atonement." {"*As one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one Man's obedience the many will be made righteous.*" Romans 5:18,19}

3. Double predestination implies that everything must have been preordained, and people are like actors following a script as they move through life. {"*Let no one say when he is tempted, 'I am being tempted by God,' for God cannot be tempted with evil, and He Himself tempts no one. But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire.*" James 1:13,14}

4. Since those who are predestined will certainly be saved, they are converted by "irresistible grace" when they hear the saving message. {"*You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always resist the Holy Spirit. As your fathers did, so do you*." Acts 7:51}

5. So that God would save only believers, He must have predestined those who are saved because of their faith (*intuitu fidei*) rather than predestining them so that they would come to faith. {"*You were dead in the trespasses and sins*." Ephesians 2:1}

Q1. What was the basis of God's predestination of the elect?

Q2. What does *intuitu fidei* mean?

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Chapter 14 – The Law

A. God's dedication to the Law

1. God insists upon perfection
   a. Through His prophets, the LORD pointed out that He is perfect. "*For I will proclaim the name of the LORD; ascribe greatness to our God! The Rock, His work is perfect, for all His ways are justice. A God of faithfulness and without iniquity, just and upright is He.*" Deuteronomy 32:3,4}
   b. God demands perfection, and Jesus echoed that demand. {"*You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.*" *Matthew 5:48*}

2. God instilled perfection into man.
   a. God took counsel with Himself to decide that man was to be in His image, with His devotion to the perfect Law and the behavior that stems from it. {"*So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.*" Genesis 1:27}
   b. God emphasized that man's blessing and ultimate happiness involved learning His will and making it an integral part of his life. {"*Blessed is the man…whose delight is in the teachings of the LORD, and on His teachings he meditates day and night.*" Psalm 1:1,2}

3. God's continual insistence on the Law
   a. The LORD is not blind to the fact that mankind has spurned His Law, but He is still determined to judge man for his failure to obey it. {"*The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually*." Genesis 6:5}
   b. Also, God has not abolished the Law just because it has become useless to man as a way of salvation, but He insists that it be kept. {Jesus said to a lawyer of the Pharisees, "*You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.*" Matthew 22:37-40}

B. Uses of the Law

1. The Curb
   a. Once the Law had been broken, it could no longer save. However, because the LORD did not abolish it, it is still there to remind people that righteous behavior remains God's will, and people are to fear disobeying it. {"*For by works of the law no human being will be justified in His sight, since through the Law comes knowledge of sin*." Romans 3:20}
   b. In fact, the LORD often blesses those people who imperfectly keep it. {"*Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.*" Proverbs 14:34}

2. The Mirror
    a. The Law reminds us that we commit sins, both by showing us the chapter and verse of our offense and by reminding us that God is watching. {"*If we had forgotten the name of our God or spread out our hands to a foreign god, would not God discover this? For He knows the secrets of the heart.*" Psalm 44:20,21}
    b. The Law makes us feel our guilt so that we despair of helping ourselves. {David said, "*Who can discern his errors? Declare me innocent from hidden faults. Keep back Your servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me!*" Psalm 19:12,13}

B. Uses of the Law

3. The Guide
    a. The New Man in the Christian looks to the Law for guidance in how to please God. {"*Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path*." Psalm 119:105}
    b. Nevertheless, the Old Adam in us will not let us rejoice in the LORD and serve Him to the extent that our New Man desires. {"*For I delight in the Law of God, in my inner being, but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members*." Romans 7:22,23}

C. The Law in action

1. Preaching the Law
    a. To advise people of how seriously the LORD takes the keeping of Law. {"*For whoever keeps the whole Law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it*." James 2:10}
    b. To warn people how corrupt they are because of their sin. {"*We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment*." Isaiah 64:6}
    c. To warn us that even when we serve Him in the church, we can be half-hearted. {"*I know your works: you are neither cold nor hot. Would that you were either cold or hot! So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth*." Revelation 3:15,16}

2. The Law and governments (delegated authority)
    a. The government is God's agent to manage the affairs of men so that they can live peacefully together and that society will not degenerate into mayhem. {"*Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work, to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling, to be gentle, and to show perfect courtesy toward all people.*" Titus 3:1,2}
    b. The government therefore punishes those who sin according to its rules. {"*If you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer*." Romans 13:4}
    c. Yet, not even the governments ordained by God can keep sin completely at bay. {"*And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not alarmed, for this must take place, but the end is not yet*." Matthew 24:6}

Q1. Explain the use of the Law as a curb.
Q2. Explain the use of the Law as a mirror.
Q3. Explain the use of the Law as a guide.
Q4. Why must the Law be preached to everyone?

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Chapter 15 – The Gospel

A. God's eternal plan

1. The need and the plan
   a. God's plan to save mankind had been worked out in eternity before the first sin had been committed. The plan required His Son to intervene to save fallen mankind. {"*According to His* [God the Father's] *purpose, which He set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in Him, things in heaven and things on earth*." Ephesians 1:9b-10}
   b. The Son was to accept the whole burden of man's sin and make atonement for it for everyone. {"*He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world*." 1 John 2:2}

2. God's commitment
   a. God bound Himself by a promise immediately after mankind had committed their first sins. {"*I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel*." Genesis 3:15}
   b. He renewed the promise to specific people of His own choosing. {"*I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed*." Genesis 12:3}
   c. He gave more and more details of the plan as the time came closer for its fulfilment. {"*Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel*." Isaiah 7:14} [Progressive revelation]

3. The training with the Law
   a. To prepare the people, he placed them under the guardianship of the Law to show them their hopeless condition. {"*Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.*" Galatians 3:24}
   b. When they rejected Him, He allowed the form of their worship to remain, but He made sure that, for most of them, it was just vain actions with no purpose. {The LORD said, "*Make the heart of this people dull, and their ears heavy, and blind their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed*." Isaiah 6:10}

B. The fulfillment

1. At the appropriate time
   a. When God decided that the time was right, He fulfilled His promise of sending a Savior. {"*But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of woman, born under the Law, to redeem those who were under the Law, so that we might receive adoption as sons*." Galatians 4:4,5}

b. He, however, did not follow the script that most people had anticipated by providing a royal heir born in a palace. {"*And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore, the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God.*" Luke 1:35}
c. Instead, He sent His Son to take on human flesh from a virgin and gave Him the name of "Savior." {The LORD said, "*She will bear a son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.*" Matthew 1:21}

2. The man with two natures
   a. That the Savior would be both human and divine had already been prophesied by Isaiah 700 years before He was born. {"*For to us a child is born, to us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder, and His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace*." Isaiah 9:6}
   b. That He was human was clear to everyone who met Him because He had the same character-istics as other human beings. {"*Then He said to them* [His disciples Peter, James and John], '*My soul is very sorrowful, even to death; remain here, and watch with Me.'* " Matthew 26:38}
   c. Moreover, while He was on Earth, He did not use His divine powers indiscriminately or for His own benefit. {"*Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, Who, though He had the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be flaunted, but emptied Himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men*." Philippians 2:5-7}
   d. Nevertheless, He maintained that He was indeed God and was from and to eternity. {Jesus said, "*And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age*." Matthew 28:20}

C. Active and passive obedience

1. Active obedience
   a. Every person is sinful and therefore cannot stand before God on Judgment Day. {"*All our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment*." Isaiah 64:6}
   b. We have nothing to offer God to earn His favor. All our earthly wealth is worthless before Him. He will destroy everything connected with sin. {"*Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them on the day of the wrath of the LORD. In the fire of His jealousy, all the earth shall be consumed; for a full and sudden end He will make of all the inhabitants of the earth.*" Zephaniah 1:18}
   c. We therefore need a righteousness to offer God in place of our own sin, and that righteousness could only be earned by someone like us who was willing to give it to us in place of our sins. {"*One who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin*." Hebrews 4:15}
   d. It is precisely this type of righteousness which Christ earned for us and is willing to give to those who believe. {"*But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe*." Romans 3:21,22}

2. Passive obedience
    a. The LORD decreed that the sentence of death would fall on all who sinned. Therefore, to be saved, each person needs to be able to transfer the guilt of his or her sin to another. {"*The soul who sins shall die*." Ezekiel 18:4}
    b. Jesus came to take all the guilt of our sins and to offer His life in place of ours as payment for that guilt. {"*But as it is, He [Jesus] has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself*." Hebrews 9:26}
    c. He did so willingly, without raising a fuss about the unjust treatment He received. {"*Like a sheep He [Jesus] was led to the slaughter and like a lamb before its shearer is silent, so He opens not His mouth*." Acts 8:32}
    d. Through this passive obedience of His Son, God the Father became reconciled to mankind. {"*In Christ God was reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation*." 2 Corinthians 5:19}

D. Given to us

1. By grace, through faith
    a. Our salvation comes only on account of Jesus Christ's atoning sacrifice by God's grace through the faith the Holy Spirit works in our hearts. {"*For by grace you [believers] have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast*." Ephesians 2:8-9}
    b. Any other way, no matter by whom, will not bring salvation. {"*For, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and seeking to establish their own, they* [the Israelites] *did not submit to God's righteousness*." Romans 10:3}

2. The great exchange
    a. Jesus gives us His righteousness in exchange for the guilt of our sins. {"*For our sake He* [God the Father] *made Him* [Jesus, His Son] *to be sin Who knew no sin, so that in Him* [Jesus] *we might become the righteousness of God*." 2 Corinthians 5:21}
    b. It is only this righteousness that exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees. {"*For I tell you* [those listening to the Sermon on the Mount]*, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven*." Matthew 5:20}

Q1. When and to whom did God first make His Gospel promise?

Q2. What is progressive revelation?

Q3. Explain the person of Christ.

Q4. How did Christ's active and passive obedience differ?

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Chapter 16 – Work of the Holy Spirit

A. Conversion

1. The call to faith
   a. God calls sinners away from what has no long-term value to the food that will satisfy the soul forever. {The LORD said, "*Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price*." Isaiah 55:1}
   b. Mankind, however, cannot heed the call because it seems to make no sense. {"*The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned*." 1 Corinthians 2:14}

2. Conversion only through the intervention of God
   a. It is only through the work of the Holy Spirit that unbelieving hearts can be changed to accept Christ's atoning sacrifice. {"*No one can say 'Jesus is LORD' except in the Holy Spirit*." 1 Corinthians 12:3}
   b. The Holy Spirit works through the message of the Gospel to change hearts. {"*So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ*." Romans 10:17}
   c. Moreover, that message itself has been recorded through the work of the Holy Spirit. {"*For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit*." 2 Peter 1:21}
   d. The LORD even calls the messengers who will spread the Gospel to the unbelievers. {"*He who had set me apart before I was born, and who called me by his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son to me, in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles*." Galatians 1:15,16}

B. Errors related to faith and conversion

1. "Gospel first" evangelism attempts to snag people without having to discuss their sin up front (and perhaps ever). {"*The healthy do not need a physician, but the sick do*." Matthew 9:12}

2. "Weak Law" is used to avoid turning people off before they get committed to the congregation. It is assumed that they will gradually learn the depth of Law once they are church members, but this is very risky. {"*Therefore I tell you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven—for she loved much. But he who is forgiven little, loves little.*" Luke 7:47}

3. "The Law as the motivation for faith" tries to get repentance based on the Law rather than Christ's promise. {"*By works of the Law no human being will be justified in His sight, since through the Law comes knowledge of sin.*" Romans 3:20}

4. "What would Jesus do?" as the guiding principle of how to be pleasing to God. {"*Jesus answered them, 'This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent.'* " John 6:29}

5. "*Quid pro quo*" means cutting a deal with God for blessings in exchange for good works. {The LORD states that this is folly, "*Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul*?" Micah 6:7}

6. "Synergism" is where man and God supposedly cooperate in some manner to bring about conversion. {"*You were dead in the trespasses and sins*." Ephesians 2:1}

C. After conversion

1. Keeping the faith
   a. Keeping the faith means remaining in the Word because the Holy Spirit works through the Word. {"*Now these Jews* [in Berea] *were nobler than those in Thessalonica; they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so.*" Acts 17:11}
   b. Keeping the faith means staying alert for the attacks of Satan which must be met from the Word. {"*Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.*" 1 Peter 5:8}

2. Sanctification
   a. The Holy Spirit progressively develops a sanctified life in us. {"*But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.*" 2 Peter 3:18}
   b. The Holy Spirit teaches us to shun those things which will endanger our faith. {"*But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh*." Galatians 5:16}
   c. The Holy Spirit gives us gifts which enable us to serve the LORD. {"*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control*." Galatians 5:22,23}

Q1. How does conversion work?

Q2. What is sanctification?

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Chapter 17 – Mission of the Church (Part 1)

A. Spreading the Word

1. The first calling of the Christian church is to train its members in the saving message of Jesus Christ, giving them not just a superficial overview, but the whole counsel of God's word. {Jesus said, "*Teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you*." Matthew 28:20}

2. The second calling is to send its members to spread the message to all who have not heard it. {"*As for you, exercise self-control in everything, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry*." 2 Timothy 4:5}

B. Public proclamation

1. Preaching
   a. The preaching of the Word of God is critical because it is through the hearing of the Law and the Gospel that the Holy Spirit works to change hearts. {"*He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one appointed by God to be the judge of the living and the dead*." Acts 10:42}
   b. The preaching must be done in all situations, whether the people hearing the Word are interested in it or not. The Word works God's will, but only when it is preached. {"*Preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; rebuke, correct, and encourage with great patience and teaching*." 2 Timothy 4:2}

2. Teaching
   a. Teaching differs from preaching in that the teacher attempts to organize the material so that the hearers can build it into their framework of knowledge about the whole counsel of God. {"*All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.*" 2 Timothy 3:16,17}
   b. Teaching is essential because without it, faith does not grow but shrinks in on itself and dies. {"*I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for it. And even now you are not yet ready*." 1 Corinthians 3:2}

3. Evangelism
   a. The Word of God has the power to change hearts and also the power to remove the claim that people have that God cannot justly judge them because they have not heard his Word. {The LORD said, "*So shall My word be that goes out from My mouth; it shall not return to Me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it*." Isaiah 55:11}

b. Because the message of God's love and mercy is intended for all people, it is necessary to look for ways to clear the path to their hearts of the obstacles that the devil and circumstance have placed in the way. {"*To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though not being myself under the law) that I might win those under the law. To those outside the law I became as one outside the Law (not being outside the Law of God but under the law of Christ) that I might win those outside the Law. To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some."* 1 Corinthians 9:20-22}

4. Worship Services
   a. The message is important but so is the gathering together to hear that Word and to praise the God who gave it. Worshipping together helps strengthen the commitment of the individual members to their faith and to the mission of the church. {"*Not neglecting to gather together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging each other, and all the more as you see the day approaching*." Hebrews 10:25}
   b. When everyone gathers together and is enthused to do the Lord's work and to praise him, it is natural that there might be disagreements of what to do when, so some rules may be necessary. {"*But all things should be done decently and in order.*" 1 Corinthians 14:40}

C. Sacraments

1. Holy Baptism
   a. Our physical birth makes us citizens of the world, which is the kingdom of Satan. We need to be reborn to become citizens of the kingdom of heaven. {"*Jesus answered him, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God*.' " John 3:3}
   b. To be saved our sins need to be washed away by the only agent that can accomplish this, the blood of Jesus applied by the Holy Spirit. {"*He saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to His own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit*." Titus 3:5}

2. Holy Communion
   a. The body and blood of Jesus Christ give us a direct fellowship with our Lord and Savior, as well as with our fellow communicants. {"*Take, eat; this is my body.*" Taking and blessing the cup, Jesus said, "*Drink of it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.*" Matthew 26:26-28}
   b. Nevertheless, we must be careful that we do not despise this gift of God and take it to our own damnation. {"*Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the LORD in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the LORD*." 1 Corinthians 11:27}

Q1. What is the mission of the church?
Q2. How does teaching differ from preaching?
Q3. If we have the Word of God already, why are the sacraments important?

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Chapter 17 – Mission of the Church (Part 2)

D. Good order in the church

1. The Call and the Ministry
   a. The church needs people with numerous different skills to carry out its mission. The Lord provides and encourages them to work together, taking advantage of the talents of each member of the ministry team. {"*He gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.*" Ephesians 4:11,12}
   b. Before a person can minister in the church, that person must be trained and reach maturity in the doctrines of the faith. He must also have a good reputation for service in his family, his church, and his community. {1 Timothy 3:1-13}
   c. In addition to skills and training, men and women can only assume a role in ministry if they have a call to do so. That call once came directly from God, but now it comes through congregations and governing groups in the church. {"*Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God*." Romans 1:1}
   d. The ordination of a pastor does not give that man any special powers that are not possessed by every member of the Christian church. It merely sets him apart for the work of the Lord. He is not to use his position to lord it over those in his care. {"*Ah, shepherds of Israel who have been feeding yourselves! Should not shepherds feed the sheep? You eat the fat, you clothe yourselves with the wool, you slaughter the fat ones, but you do not feed the sheep.*" Ezekiel 34:2,3}

2. Church Discipline
   a. Church discipline applies to three situations. If otherwise faithful members fall into sin, those who are aware of their sin need to confront them with their sin and try to bring them back to repentance. {"*If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector*." Matthew 18:15-17}
   b. If someone teaches false doctrine, he must be rebuked and quickly isolated from the congregation if he does not recant. {"*For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths*." 2 Timothy 4:3,4}
   c. When people lose interest in the church, they must be advised of the sinfulness of their actions and released if they do not respond to such warnings. {Jesus said in a parable, "*And he said to the vinedresser, 'Look, for three years now I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and I find none. Cut it down. Why should it use up the ground?'* " Matthew 13:5,6}

3. Church fellowship
    a. Those who belong to the body of Christ will want to be unified in their actions. Together they grow in strength by encouraging each other, and they accomplish more as a team than by themselves. {"*They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers*." Acts 2:42}
    b. However, it is important that only those who hold the correct doctrine are allowed into the fellowship of a church. {"*I appeal to you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and create obstacles contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught; avoid them*." Romans 16:17}
    c. Teachers of false doctrine will corrupt the whole church once they are accepted as one of the faithful. "*Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump*?" 1 Corinthians 5:6}

E. General issues

1. Prayer
    a. We are commanded to pray whenever we need the Lord's aid, which is indeed always. While God promises to deliver us from danger, He does not promise to give us everything that we might desire. {"*Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me.*" Psalm 50:15}
    b. The LORD is always eager for us to pray to Him, as well as to praise Him and sing the glory of His name. {"*Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you*." 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18}
    c. However, our prayers are not to be showy. We should never be ashamed to pray, but we should also not try to gain the praise of others for doing it. {Jesus said, "*But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.*" Matthew 6:6}
    d. Prayer is not a means of grace, because only the prayers of the believers are heard. No one can pray one's way into faith or get God's attention when they do not believe. {"*When you spread out your hands, I will hide my eyes from you; even though you make many prayers, I will not listen; your hands are full of blood.*" Isaiah 1:15}

2. Stewardship
    a. Stewardship means taking care of resources for someone else. The steward is not the owner, but only the manager. God began man's stewardship of His creation in the Garden of Eden. {"*The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and keep it*." Genesis 2:15}
    b. We are to be good stewards. God decides how much we are to manage, and He expects more diligence from those to whom He gives more to manage. {Jesus said, "*Everyone to whom much was given, of him much will be required, and from him to whom they entrusted much, they will demand the more*." Luke 12:48}

c. Stewardship is not a means of grace. Many people deceive themselves by trying to earn God's grace through working for the church without believing the Gospel. {Jesus said, "*Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'* " Matthew 7:21–23}
d. Stewardship of God's resources is typically broken into the categories of "time," "talents" and "treasure." All of these are gifts of God which He expects us to use for the work of His kingdom.

3. Adiaphora
   a. Christians are free to do those things which are neither commanded nor forbidden in the Scriptures. {"*Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath*." Colossians 2:16}
   b. Nevertheless, we are to do everything in service to our Lord and not just for ourselves. We are not to greedily follow Pied Pipers who promise us wealth and fame but lead us to abandon our Lord. {"*Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience*." Ephesians 5:6}

4. Congregational organization
   a. As with the worship service, the Lord gave us no directions on how to organize the local congregation. That congregation is to serve its members and act as a base of their operations to evangelize the neighborhood and the world. If it meets these goals, its organization is an adiaphoron.
   b. For the church to run smoothly, it may need different groups to address different needs. Someone or some committee needs to oversee these groups so that they work together for the common good.

Q4. What is the function of ordination in the Lutheran church?

Q5. In what three types of cases is church discipline applied?

Q6. What is necessary for church fellowship?

Q7. Why is prayer not a means of grace?

Q8. What is an adiaphoron?

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Chapter 18 – Civil Estates (Part 1)

A. Church and State

1. The time of the Patriarchs
   a. When there were few people upon the Earth, the ultimate ruling powers, both civil and religious, were clan leaders (sometimes called "kings"), where the clans were composed of a few hundred people who were family members, servants or slaves. {"*When Abram heard that his kinsman had been taken captive, he led forth his trained men, born in his house, 318 of them, and went in pursuit as far as Dan*." Genesis 14:14}
   b. As the number of people grew, the civil and religious power remained in the hands of tribal chiefs, but they became part of larger groups, which were the first true kingdoms. {"*These are the chiefs of the sons of Esau. The sons of Eliphaz the firstborn of Esau: the chiefs Teman, Omar, Zepho, Kenaz, Korah, Gatam, and Amalek; these are the chiefs of Eliphaz in the land of Edom; these are the sons of Adah.*" Genesis 36:15,16}

2. The days of Israel
   a. When the Lord gave the Law to Moses, He established a theocracy in which the high priest had the ultimate religious and civil authority through which He led the people. {"*And in the breastpiece of judgment you shall put the Urim and the Thummim, and they shall be on Aaron's heart, when he goes in before the LORD.* Exodus 28:30}
   b. During the early period of Israel as a nation, the rule of the priests failed, and God was forced to send deliverers as rulers and judges to save His people from their folly. When Samuel, both a judge and a religious leader, led Israel, it looked like God's plan might be back on track, but Samuel's sons were corrupt, and the people demanded a king. {"*The LORD had revealed to Samuel: 'Tomorrow about this time I will send to you a man from the land of Benjamin, and you shall anoint him to be prince over my people Israel.'* " 1 Samuel 9:15,16}
   c. During the period of the kings, the kings were to lead their civil government but were also to enforce the worship of the true God. {"*When he sits on the throne of his kingdom, he shall write for himself in a book a copy of this law, approved by the Levitical priests. And it shall be with him, and he shall read in it all the days of his life.*" Deuteronomy 17:18,19}

3. The early church era
   a. Jesus made clear that the era of unified church and state was over because the state was in the hands of unbelievers. The state and the church had different responsibilities. {Jesus said to them, "*Therefore render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's*." Matthew 22:21}
   b. However, the individual Christian still had obligations to both. {"*Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer.*" Romans 13:3,4}

4. Modern separation of church and state
    a. The Holy Roman Empire was an unholy alliance between the largest empire in Europe and the papacy. Each regularly interfered in the other's business.
    b. The Lutheran Reformation attempted to separate the church and the state. However, the political situation in Europe prevented this from happening for many years. The churches, in general, became captives of the state in the form of state churches, which were obligated to support the state for their subsidy.
    c. Free churches gradually grew in Europe in opposition to the state churches and became established in America under the constitutional guarantee of the separation of church and state.

B. Work and employment

1. God's gift of work
    a. God's expectation that man would work was established at the very beginning. {"*The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and keep it*." Genesis 2:15}
    b. Despising this gift of work also forfeits the right to the rewards from working. {"*For even when we were with you, we would give you this command: If anyone is not willing to work, let him not eat.*" 2 Thessalonians 3:10}

2. Love of riches
    a. Work and its rewards must not become an end in themselves. {Jesus said, "*For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul?*" Matthew 16:26}
    b. Money must be regarded as a tool, not a goal in itself. {"*For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows*." 1 Timothy 6:10}

Q1. What was the relationship of the church and state according to the Law of Moses?

Q2. What are the different roles of church and state?

Q3. What is the underlying purpose of work in this world?

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Chapter 18 – Civil Estates (Part 2)

C. Marriage and sex

1. Marriage
   a. The Lord established marriage on the sixth day of creation. {"*Therefore, a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh*." Genesis 2:24}
   b. Marriage lasts only until the death of one spouse; after that, the other is free to remarry. {"*For a married woman is bound by law to her husband while he lives, but if her husband dies she is released from the law of marriage*." Romans 7:2}
   c. Marriage is not continued, renewed or replaced in heaven. {Jesus said, "*For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven*." Matthew 22:30}

2. Purpose of marriage
   a. God recognized the need for people to have close human relationships. {"*It is not good that the man should be alone*." Genesis 2:18a}
   b. God instituted roles in marriage by immediately establishing an order. {"*I will make him a helper fit for him.*" Genesis 2:18b}
   c. The Lord commanded people to fill the Earth with their offspring. {God said, "*Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it*." Genesis 1:28}
   d. A major purpose of marriage is to raise the next generation in the fear of the Lord. {"*Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it*." Proverbs 22:6}

3. Sexual relationships
   a. Sexual relations are to be kept within marriage. {"*Let marriage be held in honor among all and let the marriage bed be undefiled.*" Hebrews 13:4}
   b. Adultery is an act that destroys marriage and, in the Biblical sense, is committed between a married woman and someone who is not her husband. {The Lord said, "*You shall not commit adultery*." Exodus 20:14}
   c. In the Biblical sense, fornication is a when a man has sex with an unmarried woman. {"*Now the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body*." 1 Corinthians 6:13}
   d. Divorce destroys the union that God established, and He forbids its dissolution except when one person has broken the marriage covenant through immoral behavior or desertion. {"*I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of sexual immorality, makes her commit adultery, and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery*." Matthew 5:32}

Q4. What are the purposes of marriage?

D. Social Responsibility

1. Loving our neighbor means helping the less fortunate. {"*Only, they asked us to remember the poor, the very thing I was eager to do.*" Galatians 2:10}

2. Yet, helping the needy must not be the center of our ministry. {"*For you always have the poor with you, and whenever you want, you can do good for them*." Mark 14:7}

E. Christian Freedom

1. Free from the Law
   a. Jesus made us righteous before God by His life and death. {"*Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, 'Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree.'* " Galatians 3:11-13}
   b. As a result, we are no longer under the demands of the Law. {"*But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian, for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith.*" Galatians 3:25,26}

2. But not free to give offence to others
   a. Because we are free, we should not judge each other by our own standards. {"*Therefore, let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath.*" Colossians 2:16}
   b. Neither should we use our Christian freedom as an argument for disregarding the will of our Heavenly Father. {"*Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God.*" 1 Peter 2:16}

Q5. What is Christian freedom?

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Chapter 19 – Saints, Angels, and Demons

A. Saints

1. Who are they?
   a. They are people who have been justified by Christ's blood and who believe God's Word.
   b. The saints are already identified in the Old Testament as living people who serve the LORD. {Solomon prayed, "*Let Your priests, O LORD God, be clothed with salvation, and let Your saints rejoice in Your goodness*." 2 Chronicles 6:41}
   c. In the New Testament saints are identified as fellow Christians. {"*Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality*." Romans 12:13}

2. What do they do?
   a. Although saints are justified in the sight of the LORD, the best of them are still sinners. {"*For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing*." Romans 7:19}
   b. Either dead or alive, they are not to be worshipped, venerated or prayed to; all glory belongs to the LORD. It is only He who is to be addressed in prayer. {"*I am the LORD; that is My name; My glory I give to no other*." Isaiah 42:8}

B. Angels

1. Where did they come from and when?
   a. Like all of God's creatures, they were created in the first six days, but we do not know when. {"*Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God finished His work that He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work that He had done*." Genesis 2:1,2}
   b. They were ready for service when man first sinned. {"*He* [the LORD] *drove out the man* [Adam], *and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life*." Genesis 3:24}

2. What do they do?
   a. They praise the LORD. {"*One* [angel] *called to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!*" Isaiah 6:3}
   b. They carry messages for the LORD. {"*She saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had lain, one at the head and one at the feet*." John 20:12}
   c. They are agents of the LORD to help His saints. {"*Are they* [the holy angels] *not all ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?*" Hebrews 1:14}
   d. They administer God's vengeance. {"*That night the angel of the LORD went out and struck down 185,000 in the camp of the Assyrians*." 2 Kings 19:35}

C. Demons

1. Who are the demons?
   a. Demons are angels who rebelled against God under Satan's leadership. {Jesus said, "*He* [Satan] *was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies*." John 8:44}
   b. For their rebellion they were condemned to eternal punishment in hell. {"*God did not spare angels when they sinned but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of gloomy darkness to be kept until the judgment.*" 2 Peter 2:4}

2. What do they do?
   a. Demons lead people to sin against God. {"*Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning*." 1 John 3:8}
   b. They are devious, and we must guard against being deceived by them. {"*Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour*." 1 Peter 5:8}

Q1. How does a person become a saint?

Q2. How do the angels differ from humans?

Q3. What is the core strategy used by demons?

D. Epilogue

1. The LORD challenges us to study the Scriptures and know them well.

2. A person is saved only by accepting the message of the Scriptures and believing in the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ.