



"Lifting Up the Standard"

NEW HOPE MINISTRIES NEW MEMBERS CLASS

NAME: _____ PHONE: _____
 ADDRESS: _____

COURSE #	COURSE NAME	CHECKLIST	DATE
Synopsis	About NHCM & Summary	{ }	_____
Course 1	What Is Sin	{ }	_____
Course 2	Except Ye Repent	{ }	_____
Course 3	Why We Baptize In Jesus' Name	{ }	_____
Course 4	The Gift of the Holy Ghost	{ }	_____
Course 5	Why Did God Choose Tongues?	{ }	_____
Course 6	After Death: What?	{ }	_____
Course 7	Divine Healing	{ }	_____
Course 8	Modesty In Dress	{ }	_____
Course 9	Giving	{ }	_____
Cours 10	The Way We Worship	{ }	_____

Note: Each course must be checked off by the instructor. In the event that you should miss a course, you can make up that course in the next session of New Members Class. The instructor will make a note of which one was miss and will contact you to let you know the date that particular course will be taught in the next session.

Please feel free to keep your course book with you for your convenience and study or the instructor will keep it upon your request.

Upon completion of New Members class, the instructor will take up the checklist and a feedback request sheet. Each participant (new member) will receive a certificate of completion/membership and the right hand of fellowship will be extended at such time.



NEW HOPE CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES

ARTICLES OF FAITH NEW MEMBERS COURSE

The Apostle's Doctrine

We pray that these teachings will not fall on deaf ears. That they are distributed with a sincere prayer that it may strengthen and establish the believer and that it may enlighten the perplexed and bewildered souls who are earnestly seeking to find the true doctrine of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Pentecost:

The day of Pentecost was observed in Jerusalem fifty days after the celebration of the Passover, which commemorated Israel's deliverance out of Egypt. It is significant that this day was chosen by the Lord to begin the fulfillment of Joel 2:28: "I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh..."

Syllabus:

About New Hope Christian Ministries (formerly New Hope Church of God)

The New Hope Christian Ministries, Inc. is of non-denominational faith, believing in God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost (Spirit). The ministry has been flourishing since its establishment in July 2001, with a handful of members. In full operation of Sunday School, Worship Service and Bible Class. The ministry is gifted with prophets, prophetess, ministers, teachers, evangelists and deacons.

1. What Is Sin?

This question is of vital importance because of the fearful judgment against those who commit sin. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die;" thunders the Old Testament (Ezekiel 18:20). In like tones, the New Testament declares: "The wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). The one who lives in sin throughout his earthly life and faces God without having obtained divine forgiveness will be sentenced to eternal perdition.

2. Except Ye Repent

The three words of this title come from Luke 13:5, which reads, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish". Plainly, then, the tragic alternative to repentance is eternal perdition.

In view of this fact, it is extremely important that everyone knows what repentance is and how it is accomplished.

3. Why We Baptize in Jesus' Name

The subject of water baptism has long been called a great issue and no doubt has been made such by many church leaders of the past and present. In our study of it, let us first consider its importance, or the necessity of being baptized

4. The Gift of the Holy Ghost

The gift of the Holy Spirit has become the topic of much discussion in our day. Men and women of all persuasions and from all walks of life have become interested enough to search for greater understanding of this phenomenal spiritual experience. Capturing headlines, dominating the content of many religious periodicals, and generally creating excitement, this canon of apostolic faith deserves a sincere appraisal.

5. Why Did God Chose Tongues?

He was a deacon in a fashionable church, but he did not believe in the Pentecostal doctrine relative to the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Yet he had been exposed to that belief through members of his immediate family. One night, at the close of an Evangelistic service in an Apostolic church, he went forward to pray and was overwhelmingly filled with the Spirit of God. He spoke in other tongues fluently and was so inundated in the Spirit that even hours later he could not speak English. Definitely, this was a biblical experience accompanied not only by speaking in another tongue, but also by the joy and peace of the Holy Ghost.

6. After Death: What?

Can anyone think of a more relevant question? All of us pass through the narrow passageway leading from this life to the next—the passageway we call death. We shall all experience the transition into a new realm, another existence beyond this life and world we know today.

7. Divine Healing

God is the Great Physician. His knowledge of the human mind and body is complete. He can do more for the sick and the diseased than can all earthly doctors and surgeons combined. He created us; is it not reasonable, then, to believe that He can heal us when we are sick?

8. Modesty In Dress

In ancient times, as throughout many countries today, a person's social rank could be determined by his dress. Similarly, dress is a significant measurement of Christian conduct and practice. Christians can often be identified as such by their outward appearance.

9. Giving

We believe that every Christian, as a steward of that portion of God's wealth entrusted to him, is obligated to support his local church financially. We believe that God has established the tithe (the first ten percent of all our increase) as a basis for giving, but that every Christian should also give other offerings sacrificially and cheerfully to support the church; the relief of those in need, and the spread of the Gospel. We believe that the tithe should be given only to and through the local church of which we are a member. We believe that a Christian relinquishes all rights to direct the use of the tithe or offering once the gift has been made (Gen 14:20; Prov 3:9-10; Acts 4:34-37; 1 Cor 16:2; 2 Cor 9:6-7; Gal 6:6; Eph 4:28; 1 Tim 5:17-18; 1 John 3:17).

10. The Way We Worship

If you have never had the opportunity to be in a Spirit-filled service before, you will discover that Biblical expressions of worship are still practiced today. Join in with us as we praise God together in spirit and in truth.

ABOUT NEW HOPE CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES ORIGIN

- Introduction
- History of New Hope
- Doctrinal Views
- Importance of Family Unit

Introduction

The New Hope Christian Ministries, Inc. is of non-denominational faith, believing in God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost (Spirit). The ministry has been flourishing since its establishment in July 2001, with a handful of members. In full operation of Sunday School, Worship Service and Bible Class. The ministry is gifted with prophets, prophetess, ministers, teachers, evangelists and deacons.

History of the New Hope

The NHM started its ministry in July 2001, at the home of Pastor and Founder, Minister Richard Leaphart and First Lady Leaphart. In January 2002, the Lord blessed us to move from their home into Chapel Hill Elementary School. The ministry continued to grow and God continued to pour out his blessings of approval and favor upon the ministry. In December 2003, we were blessed to purchase our first place of worship, 2999 Flat Shoals Road, Decatur, GA 30034. Within six years, New Hope was able to pay off the church mortgage within 6 years of purchase. As the church membership grew, it was necessary to obtain more classrooms and sanctuary space, the church body began to fast, pray and beseech God for direction on the next move. Within months God blessed New Hope to march into our current place of promise, 1738 Fairview Road, Stockbridge, Georgia, on April 24, 2011.

The basic governmental structure of the NHCM is: being spiritually lead by the Pastor, the ministry owns its property, decides its budget, establishes its membership and conducts all necessary business.

Doctrinal Views

The doctrinal views of the NHM, Inc. reflect most of the beliefs of the Holiness-Pentecostal movement, and the historic doctrine of the Godhead, and the

traditional formula in water baptism. It embraces the Pentecostal view that speaking in tongues was the initial sign of receiving the Holy Spirit.

The NHM, Inc. holds that salvation is by grace through faith in Jesus Christ, not by works. Faith in Jesus is the means by which a person is justified. At the same time, a sinner must believe the gospel; he is commanded to repent of his sinful life, to be baptized in water in the name of Jesus and to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38; 8:12-17; 10:43-48; 19:1-6). Thus the various aspects of faith and obedience work together in God's grace to reconcile us to God.

Thus, Jesus Christ was and is God. In other words, Jesus is the one true God manifested in flesh, for in Him dwells all the fullness of the God head bodily (John 1:1-14; 1 Timothy 3:16; Colossians 2:9).

While fully God, Jesus was also fully man, possessing a full and true humanity, He was both God and man. Moreover, the Holy Spirit is God with us and in us. Thus, God is manifested as Father in creation and as the Father of the Son, in the Son for our redemption, and as the Holy Spirit in our regeneration.

Importance of the Family Unit

The NHM stresses and supports the family unit as God's primary institution and teaches that the church is God's redemptive fellowship for all believers.

Course 1: What Is Sin?

- Introduction
- Sin Is Not Necessarily Crime
- Sin Is Not Unbelief Alone
- Sin Is Transgression of the Law
- All Unrighteousness Is Sin

Introduction

This question is of vital importance because of the fearful judgment against those who commit sin. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die," thunders the Old Testament (Ezekiel 18:20). In like tones, the New Testament declares: "The wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). The one who lives in sin throughout his earthly life and faces God without having obtained divine forgiveness will be sentenced to eternal perdition.

Sin sprang full-grown among men. Adam and Eve sinned by disobeying God. The first boy born on this earth grew to manhood and murdered the second-his own brother! And sin has existed in every generation since.

In our time, however, there is one difference: many no longer know what sin actually is. Things evil are sometimes designated as good; things good, as evil. Isaiah condemned such a practice, declaring, "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil" (Isaiah 5:20).

Since this confusion exists, and since a person will not seek forgiveness for sin until he knows what sin is, a clear-cut definition, both negative and positive, is urgently needed.

Sin Is Not Necessarily Crime

Some equate sin with crime, feeling that to commit sin one must be a murderer, robber, rapist, or the like. Once, an evangelist passing out revival circulars was told that he should go to the local jail and try to convert a woman who had recently murdered her father. Certainly this woman needed forgiveness, but no more so than other sinners who had not committed a crime.

A crime is a sin, but not every sin is a crime. Crimes are committed against people; sin is committed against God. As an example, David wronged Bathsheba, and committed the crime of murder against Uriah her husband, but he affirmed, "Against thee [God], thee only, have I sinned" (Psalm 51:4).

Sin Is Not Unbelief Alone

Near the end of His ministry, Jesus told His disciples that the Holy host would "reprove the world of sin . . . because they believe not on me" (John 16:8-9). Misinterpreting His meaning, some have concluded that sin is nothing more than unbelief. But Jesus meant that unbelief would form the basis of sin. People sin because they do not believe on Jesus Christ. Unbelief is sin, but it leads to further sin.

"Sin Is the Transgression of the Law"

This definition is given in I John 3:4. By law, the apostle meant the Word of God, which originally was the Old Testament but which now includes the New Testament as well. Sin, then, is the transgression (breaking) of a commandment found in the Bible.

Sins of Commission. Someone is guilty of such a sin when he does something that the Word of God forbids.

Sins of Omission. He who fails to do what he knows God has commanded is guilty of a sin of omission. "To him that knows to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (James 4:17).

"All Unrighteousness Is Sin"

I John 5:17 declares this truth. A person is unrighteous when he does what is wrong. According to this verse, then, when someone does wrong, he commits sin.

We should note that all unrighteousness is sin. Men are prone to classify sin as little or great, black or gray, mortal or venial. But to God, all sin is offensive and objectionable. As an example of the difference between man's and God's judgment of sin, man classifies the sin of lying as one of the lesser evils, but God places "all liars" in the same category as the abominable, murderers, whoremongers, sorcerers, and idolaters (Revelation 21:8). Moreover, He pronounces the same judgment upon all of these sinners. Eternal perdition in the lake of fire and brimstone.

What then is sin? Simply put, sin is doing what God forbids or failing to do what He commands.

Course 2: Except Ye Repent

- Introduction
- Repentance Is More Than Reformation
- What Is Repentance?
- The Basis of Repentance
- Repentance and the Holy Ghost Baptism
- Time For Repentance Is Limited

Introduction

The three words of this title come from Luke 13:5, which reads, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish". Plainly, then, the tragic alternative to repentance is eternal perdition.

In view of this fact, it is extremely important that everyone knows what repentance is and how it is accomplished.

Repentance Is More Than Reformation

To reform is to "improve one's character or conduct; to become better; to behave better; to give up misconduct; to make better by removing faults or defects." One who genuinely reforms will, from that moment on, live a better life. And certainly this is to be desired.

However, reformation falls short in at least one vital particular - it does nothing about the past. It leaves upon the pages of God's record all the sins that a person has committed. Consequently, it leaves the sinner still under the sentence of death.

Suppose that a criminal who has been guilty of many and various offenses against the law decides to reform. From that moment on, he determines to be a law-abiding citizen. This would be commendable, but it would not absolve him from the guilt of his past crimes. If he is apprehended, or if he surrenders himself, he will still be called upon to pay for his past crimes, unless he is given a pardon.

The same is true of the sinner in relation to his past sins.

What Is Repentance?

Repentance is, first of all, a turning away from all sin. And, so far as this first aspect is concerned, it closely resembles reformation.

But repentance further involves turning to God, in believing prayer, for forgiveness and cleansing from all sin. Such prayer is not necessarily vocal, but it usually is. The repentant person confesses to God that he is a sinner and asks for forgiveness. If he obeys the gospel, he can rest assured that God will forgive, for His Word promises, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins" (1 John 1:9).

The Basis of Repentance

How is genuine repentance brought about? Paul explained, "For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation" (2 Corinthians 7:10). Before a person can repent, he must feel sorrow for his sins. And this must be godly sorrow. For someone to be sorry merely because they have brought trouble upon themselves is not enough. He must be sorry because he has broken the commandments of God, spurned His gospel, and thereby grieved Him days without number.

Such godly sorrow is the only motivating force for real repentance.

Repentance and the Holy Ghost Baptism

A person cannot receive the Holy Ghost before repentance. Jesus said that the "world" could not receive this experience (John 14:17). He meant that those who were unwilling to give up the carnal things of the world, through repentance, could not receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Peter made this plain in Acts 2:38 - "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost". It was no accident that he mentioned repentance first. In God's divine order, repentance must precede water baptism and receiving the Holy Ghost.

The requirements for receiving the Holy Spirit are repentance and faith. In many cases, those who tarry for this spiritual experience without receiving it simply have not repented. If and when this is true, it is useless for such a one to praise God with the expectation of receiving the Holy Ghost. He should first repent and claim God's promise of forgiveness. As his burdens lift because of confession of sin and as he feels God's love and mercy, he will naturally begin to worship God. And God will pour out His Spirit upon this repentant, believing, worshiping soul!

Time for Repentance is Limited

The time to repent is strictly limited by the extent of earthly life. There can be no repentance after death. Since in the normal course of events no one knows how long he will live, it is perilous indeed to procrastinate. The Bible declares, "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Hebrews 9:27).

The time of repentance is further limited by the duration of a person's capability of being impressed by conviction. A continued refusal to repent when called by God's Spirit brings hardness of heart. Paul spoke of people who were "past feeling" (Ephesians 4:19). Such people no longer feel God's Spirit leading them to serve them. They have lost all desire for repentance.

The apostle also asked this question: "Despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?" (Romans 2:4). Think of the goodness of God to you, and surely your heart will be inclined toward repentance.

The Lord is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9).

Course 3: Why We Baptize in Jesus' Name

- Introduction
- The Importance of Water Baptism
- The Mode of Baptism
- The Formula for Baptism

Introduction

The subject of water baptism has long been called a great issue and no doubt has been made such by many church leaders of the past and present. In our study of it, let us first consider its importance, or the necessity of being baptized.

The Importance of Water Baptism

Christian water baptism is an ordinance instituted by Jesus Christ. If it is not important in the plan of God, why did Jesus command it in Matthew 28:19? And why did Peter follow up by saying, "Be baptized every one of you," and by commanding the Gentiles to be baptized (Acts 2:38; 10:48)? We must remember two points about the importance of water baptism. First, whatever Christ definitely established and ordained cannot be unimportant, whether we understand its significance or not. Second, Christ and the apostles showed the importance of this ordinance by observing it. Jesus walked many miles to be baptized, though He was without sin, saying, "For thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness" (See Matthew 3:13-16.)

It is true that water itself does not contain any saving virtue, but God has chosen to include it in His plan of salvation. Peter explained, "Baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 3:21). According to Luke 7:30, "the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized."

The Mode of Baptism

According to the Scriptures, the proper mode of baptism is immersion. "And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water" (Matthew 3:16). "And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him" (Acts 8:38). "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death" (Romans 6:4). A corpse is not buried by placing it on top of the ground and sprinkling a little soil on it, but by covering it completely.

According to the World Book Encyclopedia, "At first all baptism was by complete immersion" (vol. 1, p.651). And the Catholic Encyclopedia states, "In the early centuries, all were baptized by immersion in streams, pools, and baptisteries" (vol. 2, p.263). Immersion was not convenient after the Catholic church instituted infant baptism; thus the mode was changed to sprinkling.

Repentance identifies us with the death of Christ, and baptism identifies us with His burial. Coming forth from the watery grave of baptism and receiving new life in the Holy Spirit identifies us with His resurrection.

The Formula for Baptism

Jesus commanded His disciples to "teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Matthew 28:19). He did not command them to use these words as a formula, but He commanded them to baptize in "the name." The word name is used here in the singular, and it is the focal point of the baptismal command. The titles Father, Son, and Holy Ghost describe God's relationships to humanity and are not the supreme, saving name described here, which is Jesus. "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

Jesus is the name in which the roles of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are revealed. The angel of the Lord instructed Joseph, "She shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21). Jesus said, "I am come in my Father's name," and, "The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, ...the Father will send in my name" (John 5:43; 14:26). Thus by baptizing in the name of Jesus, we honor the Godhead. "For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" (Colossians 2:9).

Luke 24:45-47 records that just before His ascension, Jesus opened the disciples' understanding. It was necessary that their understanding be opened, and many today need this same operation in order to understand the Scriptures. Then Jesus said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day." The disciples had their understanding opened so that they could grasp the vast importance of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. Verse 47 describes the commission that Jesus then gave: "And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations [Jews and Gentiles], beginning at Jerusalem."

Peter was one of that number to whom Jesus had spoken and whose understanding had been opened. After having listened to these instructions, a few days later he was inspired by the Holy Ghost to preach on the Day of Pentecost. The hearts of the hearers were pierced and, feeling condemned, they cried out to Peter and the other apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (Acts 2:37). Peter did not hesitate but boldly answered, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38). "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized, and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls" (Acts 2:41).

Some say that Peter told them to be baptized in Jesus' name because they were Jews and this baptism was to make them acknowledge Jesus Christ. But let us go with Peter to the house of Cornelius several years later. Cornelius and his household were Gentiles, yet there again Peter "commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord" (Acts 10:48). (Most translations actually say, "In the name of Jesus Christ.") If Peter was wrong on the Day of Pentecost, he surely had ample time to be corrected before he went to the house of Cornelius.

Was Peter wrong on the Day of Pentecost? When the hearers were pricked in their hearts, they spoke to Peter and to the rest of the apostles (Acts 2:37). This included Matthew, who wrote Matthew 28:19. Moreover, when Peter preached, he stood up with the eleven (Acts 2:14). Matthew was there, yet we find no words of correction from him. He surely would have spoken up if Peter had disobeyed the Lord. But all the apostles understood and carried out the Lord's commission. As Jesus said in prayer, "I have manifested thy name unto the men [the apostles] which thou gavest me out of the world...and they have kept thy word" (John 17:6).

The Samaritans, who were not Jews, were also baptized in the name of Jesus. Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them...."But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.... They were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 8:5, 12, and 16).

The church is "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone" (Ephesians 2:20). The apostles not only preached baptism in Jesus' name, but they practiced it. Nowhere can we find that they baptized using the words "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Instead, we find them baptizing in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. In baptizing in Jesus' name, they fulfilled the command of the Lord in Matthew 28:19.

Paul said, "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed" (Galatians 1:8). Let this be a solemn warning to us.

Some say that they will accept the words of Jesus in Matthew 28:19 but not those of Peter in Acts 2:38. But Peter spoke on the Day of Pentecost under the anointing of the Holy Ghost. Peter was one of the apostles, and to him had been given the keys of the kingdom, so we have no right to discredit his words.

In Mark 7:8 Jesus said, "Laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men." History tells us that it was not until many years after the apostles that the mode and formula of baptism in the name of Jesus Christ were changed. (See Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible, vol. 1, p.241.) Which means more to you, the command of the Lord or the tradition of men?

Course 4: The Gift of the Holy Ghost

- Introduction
- The Facts
- The Privilege
- The Evidence
- The Promise

Introduction

The gift of the Holy Spirit has become the topic of much discussion in our day. Men and women of all persuasions and from all walks of life have become interested enough to search for greater understanding of this phenomenal spiritual experience. Capturing headlines, dominating the content of many religious periodicals, and generally creating excitement, this canon of apostolic faith deserves a sincere appraisal.

The Facts

The Holy Spirit is God. "God is a Spirit" (John 4:24). "There is . . . one Spirit" (Ephesians 4:4). To become a subject in the kingdom of God, Jesus said a person must be "born again," or "born of water and of the Spirit" (John 3:3-5). The birth of the Spirit and the baptism of the Spirit are synonymous terms. The Apostle Peter understood this truth as he spoke to the multitude in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38). This experience was received by the Jews on Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4), the Samaritans (Acts 8:15-17), and the Gentiles (Acts 10:44-48), plainly indicating that it was meant for all people, regardless of race, creed, color, or station in life. The new birth, consisting of water and Spirit, was never set forth as being optional or unessential. "Ye must be born again" are the words of Jesus in John 3:7. Until a person is born of the Spirit, he cannot be called a "son" of God.

The Privilege

But why concentrate only on the absoluteness of the command? It is a blessed privilege to experience a release of spirit, finding freedom of soul and expression in the baptism of the Holy Spirit. There is no other experience similar to it.

"Incomparable" is the only adequate description of this filling. The transition is to an entirely new realm and way of life. A complete transformation takes place. The soul has an empty place "in the shape of God" that nothing else will fit or satisfy. The baptism of the Spirit completely satisfies every longing of the soul. In this experience is fulfillment.

The Evidence

There are two major evidences of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The initial, outward evidence is speaking with tongues, which means speaking miraculously in languages the speaker does not know.

Speaking with other tongues has been connected with Spirit baptism since the beginning of the church age. On the birthday of the New Testament church, the Day of Pentecost after Christ's ascension, approximately 120 disciples of Christ were inundated by the Spirit of God and "began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:1-4). The household of an Italian centurion received the same spiritual experience, which the Jewish Christian onlookers readily identified, "for they heard them speak with tongues" (Acts 10:44-48). In Acts 19:1-6, a group of John the Baptist's disciples heard about the Holy Ghost from the Apostle Paul; they too were filled with the Spirit, "and they spake with tongues."

We cannot adequately express with our own words the ecstasy experienced in the baptism of the Spirit. Only through unaccustomed words of heavenly coherence can we utter what our souls would express.

There are perhaps several other reasons why God chose speaking in tongues as the initial evidence of this spiritual baptism. It is an objective, external evidence that recipients and onlookers can both identify with certainty (Acts 10:46). It is a uniform evidence—all the disciples on Pentecost, all the household of Cornelius, and all the believers in Ephesus spoke in tongues. "So is everyone that is born of the Spirit" are the words of Jesus in His description of this spiritual new birth (John 3:8). Speaking in tongues also indicates the complete control of the Spirit over our human wills. The tongue is the most unruly member of the body (James 3:8), and its being tamed by God is evidence of His complete control.

Further evidence of the Spirit's abiding presence in our lives is the fruit of the Spirit, which Paul mentioned in Galatians 5:22-23: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."

The Promise

Was the baptism of the Holy Spirit for the apostles or early disciples only? Is it today available to only a select few who are "super spiritual"? The obvious answer to these questions is no.

The Apostle Peter made it very plain in his message on the Day of Pentecost that the gift of the Holy Ghost is for everyone: "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call" (Acts 2:39). (See Luke 11:13.) Our faith, obedience, and submission to the Lord Jesus and His gospel qualify us for this most joyous of all experiences. (See Acts 5:32; 11:15-17.) As Isaiah 12:3 states, "With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation."

Seek Him today, for "he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Hebrews 11:6). "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters" (Isaiah 55:1). This means you!

Course 5: Why Did God Choose Tongues?

- Introduction
- The Sovereignty of God
- An Immediate, External Evidence
- A Uniform Evidence
- A Symbol of Complete Control
- Humanity's Greatest Expression
- Conclusion

Introduction

He was a deacon in a fashionable church, but he did not believe in the Pentecostal doctrine relative to the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Yet he had been exposed to that belief through members of his immediate family. One night, at the close of an Evangelistic service in an Apostolic church, he went forward to pray and was overwhelmingly filled with the Spirit of God. He spoke in other tongues fluently and was so inundated in the Spirit that even hours later he could not speak English. Definitely, this was a biblical experience accompanied not only by speaking in another tongue, but also by the joy and peace of the Holy Ghost.

Millions have experienced this same baptism in the Spirit. Wherever this message is proclaimed, the question is asked, "Why did God choose speaking in tongues as the initial, physical evidence of the baptism of the Holy Ghost?" There may be many answers to this question, and perhaps we do not know them all. Several key points are apparent, however.

The Sovereignty of God

First, we must recognize that God is not accountable to us for what He chooses to do. Isaiah asked, "Who hath directed the Spirit of the LORD, or being his counselor hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and shewed to him the way of understanding?" (Isaiah 40:13-14). We have no license to question God's ways or to dispute His actions. His purposes are supreme, His promises sure, His performances sane and sensible. The following passages of Scripture, when studied prayerfully with a hungry heart and an open mind, show

that there is a definite connection between speaking in tongues and the baptism of the Holy Ghost: Isaiah 28:11-12; Mark 16:17; Acts 2:4; 10:44-46; 19:6; Romans 8:15-16; Galatians 4:6.

Why did God choose blood as the basis for atonement? Why did God choose water as the element in baptism? Why did God choose gold as the overlaying metal for the ark of the covenant? Why did God choose stone as the material upon which to record the Ten Commandments? Why did God choose Jerusalem as the site for the Temple? Why did God choose dust out of which to form mankind? There is divine purpose behind these choices, although we may not understand all the reasons. We certainly cannot deny or disavow God's sovereign right to do as He pleases and to choose what He wishes.

An Immediate, External Evidence

One vital reason why God chose other tongues as the initial sign of receiving the Holy Ghost is that speaking in tongues is an immediate, external evidence. There are many other evidences of the operation of the Spirit of God in a person's life, but it is a matter of time before they are manifest. For example, the fruit of the Spirit mentioned in Galatians 5:22-23 follows in the wake of the spiritual infilling.

Peter and the six Jewish Christians who went with him to Caesarea knew that the Gentiles had received the Holy Ghost, not because of longsuffering, gentleness, meekness, or temperance, but because they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God (Acts 10:46). Peter specifically pointed to speaking in tongues as the irrefutable evidence (Acts 10:46-47).

Speaking in tongues is an outward, external evidence, instantly observable and heard. By contrast, peace, joy, righteousness, and spiritual fruit are inward, internal results of the infilling that become evident with the passing of time.

A Uniform Evidence

Another reason why God chose other tongues as the initial sign of receiving the Spirit is that speaking in tongues is a uniform evidence. It applies to everyone, regardless of race, culture, or language.

Some people quote I Corinthians 12:30 in an attempt to prove that not all speak in tongues when they are filled with the Spirit: "Do all speak with tongues?" However, this verse refers to the *gift* of tongues, that is, speaking a public message in tongues to be interpreted for the congregation, which is a spiritual gift that a person may exercise subsequent to the infilling of the Spirit. Though both tongues as the initial evidence of the baptism of the Holy Ghost and tongues as a later spiritual gift are the same in essence, they are different in administration and operation. For example, the regulations regarding the gift of tongues in I Corinthians 14:27-28 did not apply to the conversion accounts in Acts, where

many people spoke in tongues simultaneously, without interpretation, as the sign of being filled with the Spirit.

Some people may question this distinction between the initial use of tongues at the baptism of the Holy Ghost and the later use of tongues as a spiritual gift in a Christian's life. But the same distinction is apparent with regard to faith. To be saved, everyone must have faith (John 3:16; Romans 10:9; Ephesians 2:8). Yet 1 Corinthians 12:9 reveals that there is a special, supernatural gift of faith that can operate in a Spirit-filled person's life over and beyond the faith necessary for salvation. Saving faith and the spiritual gift of faith are the same in essence but different in administration and operation.

In speaking about the birth of the Spirit, Jesus emphasized the uniformity of the experience: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit" (John 3:8). Moreover, Jesus placed emphasis upon the accompanying sound, not on sight or feeling. The *sound* of the wind blowing is evidence of its presence.

Some people conclude that Jesus referred only to "the sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind" on the Day of Pentecost. But this sound of wind is never mentioned again in the later accounts of receiving the Holy Ghost, while speaking in tongues is. Speaking in tongues by itself caused the Jewish Christians to recognize that the experience of the Gentiles at Caesarea was identical to theirs on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 10:44-47; 11:15-17). Hence, the important, conclusive evidence of the Spirit's manifestation at Pentecost was speaking in other tongues. The sound of wind was *impersonal*, but the speaking was *personal*. Speaking in tongues was the first evidence of each individual infilling.

At Caesarea all who heard the Word were filled, and all who heard the Word spoke in tongues. If some of them had not spoken in tongues, would the Jewish Christians have accepted their experiences? Clearly not. All twelve men mentioned in Acts 19:6 had a uniform experience. If ten of the twelve had spoken in tongues and the other two had not, would Paul have believed that the two had received the Holy Ghost just as the ten? Certainly not. Paul would not have accepted their experience if they have failed to exhibit the uniform evidence.

A Symbol of Complete Control

Speaking in tongues symbolizes God's complete control of the believer. Perhaps this is one of the strongest reasons why God chose speaking in tongues as the initial evidence of the baptism of the Holy Ghost. This symbolism becomes apparent when we study James 3, which provides more information on the tongue than any other chapter in the New Testament.

First, the tongue is capable of defiling the whole body. If so, is it incredible to claim that the tongue is also capable of symbolizing the sanctification of the whole body?

Second, though the tongue is a smaller member, it has never been tamed by humanity. It is the most unruly member of the body. If so, is it not necessary for the tongue to be tamed before the whole body can be consecrated to God? James illustrates the importance of the tongue by comparing it to the bit in a horse's mouth, which gives the rider complete control over the horse, and to the helm of a large ship, which gives the pilot full command of the vessel. In other words, whoever controls the tongue of a person controls him. And a person cannot tame his tongue by himself; only God can tame it for him.

According to Matthew 12:29, before someone can enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, he must first bind the strong man. The strong man of our house is the tongue. We can tame every member of the body but this one. When God tames a person's tongue, that person comes under God's full control. He is in the hands of the Almighty. He has been conquered by Christ, endued with a spiritual force from on high, and empowered for God's service.

Humanity's Greatest Expression

The tongue provides the greatest expressions of the human spirit. We humans are spiritual and emotional beings, and as such we must give expression to our emotions. The ability and power to coordinate thought and tongue into intelligent speech is one of our highest prerogatives, elevating us above the beasts of the field. This ability makes us superior to the rest of God's creation on earth, and it is the most distinguishing feature of our being.

The tongue becomes the vehicle of expression for the spirit. All of the emotions--such as love, hate, anger, sorrow, joy, happiness, relief, serenity--are communicated through the tongue. The tongue is the gate way to the heart, feelings, attitudes, and spirit.

Conclusion

In light of these truths, it is not difficult to see why God has chosen speaking in tongues to express the greatest, most wonderful experience that we mortal humans can receive. In the baptism of the Holy Ghost, His Spirit and our spirit become one. He uses our tongue and voice to express this union. It is a wonder of wonders, chosen not by humans, but by God, the sovereign ruler of the universe.

Why fight against Him? Believe His Word, accept what He says, and you too can be baptized with the Holy Ghost, for God will give the Holy Spirit to all who repent and ask in faith (Luke 11:13; Acts 2:38-39).

Course 6: After Death: What?

- Introduction
- Beyond Life...What?
- Final Reward to the Righteous
- The Fate of the Wicked
- The Present Determines the Future

Introduction

Can anyone think of a more relevant question? All of us pass through the narrow passageway leading from this life to the next—the passageway we call death. We shall all experience the transition into a new realm, another existence beyond this life and world we know today.

Let us for a moment consider the personal experience we shall have with death. One day our hands will be folded across our lifeless breast and our eyes will be closed as our body takes its last ride to the cemetery. The purple curtains will be drawn. "The black camel of death," said one, "will kneel for each of us at our door, and we shall have no choice but to mount and ride off into the desert of darkness." Death is no respecter of persons.

Beyond Life...What?

We may only speculate on certain aspects of the future, not knowing much that it holds, but we do know the One who holds the future in His hands. And it is He who has revealed much of the future to us.

He who knows the end from the beginning, the future as well as the past, reveals in His Word that at death the body returns to the earth, while the soul goes to a temporary destination to await final judgment. Each of us determines in this life what our destiny will be; it will depend upon our response to the redemptive plan that God designed for the sinner's deliverance from eternal doom.

We may ascend to a place of peace in the presence of God, as Paul declared in II Corinthians 5:8. It is possible for us to dwell eternally in a place of happiness, bliss, and contentment, knowing that our redemption has been completed, that we have finished our course in faith, and that we are being rewarded. Or we may descend into a place of suffering, there to be detained until the final judgment and then to be sentenced to the everlasting punishment of the lake of fire. (See

Matthew 25:46; Luke 16:22-26; Revelation 20:11-15.)

Both places are, in a sense, temporary, for we shall wait until our souls are reunited with our bodies in the resurrection. Jesus described the resurrection in John 5:28-29, and Paul spoke in detail of the first resurrection in I Thessalonians 4:16-17.

The resurrection of the just and the resurrection of the ungodly are separated by one thousand years of peace on earth (Revelation 20:2-7). The just of the present age will be those who have been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb-baptized in His name and filled with His Spirit; the ungodly will be those who have refused to surrender to the terms of the gospel.

Final Reward to the Righteous

For those who are saved, there will be the city not made with hands-the New Jerusalem. This city is described in Revelation 21 as the eternal home of the redeemed.

Missing in this city will be the evil things that are found in every large earthly city. Gone will be all crime and violence. God's people will walk the golden streets without fear of molestation.

Revelation 21:18 describes the wall of this city as jasper and the city itself as pure gold. There will be no need for the sun or moon there, for the Lamb will be the light of the city (Revelation 21:23).

And, wonder of wonders, the redeemed will enjoy the blessings of this city eternally. The poet exulted:

When we've been there ten thousand years, Bright shining as the sun, We've no less days to sing God's praise Than when we'd first begun.

The Fate of the Wicked

In contradistinction, for unbelievers there is "the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone" (Revelation 21:8). The only emotions there will be agony and regret, and from that place there will be no escape.

The Present Determines the Future

Eternity-never-ending ages! A person's state there is totally dependent upon the present-what he does during time. His eternal destiny will be decided by whether or not he trusts in the redeeming blood of Christ and avails himself of its merits through faith and obedience.

Let us consider today the nearness of our souls to the rendezvous with death. David solemnly declared, "There is but a step between me and death" (1 Samuel 20:3). Death is a certain step, and yet it is an uncertain step as to time, place, and manner. It is, further, a solitary step so far as other human beings are concerned. Only Christ can go with us through that dark valley.

Are you ready for that moment and for the eternity to follow?

The Bible proclaims how to prepare for eternity and enjoy eternal life with Christ: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38).

Course 7: Divine Healing

- Introduction
- The Provision of Healing
- Healing in Bible Times
- God Heals Today

Introduction

God is the Great Physician. His knowledge of the human mind and body is complete. He can do more for the sick and the diseased than can all earthly doctors and surgeons combined. He created us; is it not reasonable, then, to believe that He can heal us when we are sick?

The Provision of Healing

Christ's suffering and death purchased healing for us-physically, mentally, and spiritually. "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows...With his stripes we are healed" (Isaiah 53:4-5). This promise definitely includes physical healing, for the Gospel of Matthew says this passage was fulfilled by Christ's healing of people who were sick: "He cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaiah the prophet, saying, "Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses" (Matthew 8:16-17). (See also 1 Peter 2:24).

The healing ministry of Christ did not end with His earthly life; it is part of His work in the church today. He promised, "These signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils . . . they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover" (Mark 16:17-18). Listed among the gifts of the Spirit for the present-day church are "the gifts of healing" (I Corinthians 12:9).

James 5:14-15 presents God's plan for divine healing: "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up." Laying on of hands and anointing with oil usually accompany prayer for healing, in accordance with God's Word and to focus faith.

Faith in the Lord is the key to receiving healing. The Gospels record that Jesus healed people according to their faith. (See Matthew 9:29; 13:58; Mark 2:5; 5:34, 36; 9:23-24; 10:52.) By the power of God the Apostle Paul was able to raise up a

lame man at Lystra because he perceived that the man had faith to be healed (Acts 14:8-10).

Prayer for healing, like all prayer, must be offered by faith in the name of Jesus, with proper motives, from a repentant heart, and in submission to the will of God (Acts 3:16; James 4:3; I John 3:21-22; 5:14-15). God does not always answer in the manner and time that we expect, but we must always keep our trust in Him, even when we do not understand circumstances. Moreover, whatever healing or release from handicaps and weaknesses that Christians do not receive in this life, they will obtain in the resurrection, for their mortal bodies will be glorified and given immortality, and death itself shall be destroyed (1 Corinthians 15:26, 49-57).

Healing in Bible Times

God gave the first recorded promise of divine healing soon after He brought the Israelites out of Egypt. He told them, "I am the LORD that healeth thee" (Exodus 15:26). Psalm 103:3 describes God as One "who healeth all thy diseases".

The Old Testament records a number of miracles of healing and even raising of the dead. For example, God used the prophet Elijah to restore a dead child to life (1 Kings 17:22). Through the prophet Elisha He raised a child to life and brought cleansing to Naaman the leper (2 Kings 4:32-35; 5:1-14). God healed King Hezekiah in response to his prayer and added fifteen years to his life (2 Kings 20:5).

The New Testament records many healings in the earthly ministry of Jesus, and He performed many that are not individually recorded. "Jesus went about all Galilee...healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people" (Matthew 4:23). He gave sight to the blind, unstopped deaf ears, cleansed lepers, made the lame to walk, and raised the dead (Matthew 11:4-5).

After Christ's ascension, He continued His ministry of healing through His apostles and other disciples. Working through Peter and John, He healed a lame man who had never walked (Acts 3:6-8). Many miracles occurred in Stephen's ministry, and many people were healed during Philip's revival in Samaria (Acts 6:8; 8:7). Through God's power, Peter raised Dorcas from the dead (Acts 9:36-42). And God worked special miracles of healing in the ministry of Paul (Acts 19:11-12). Comparatively few healings of that time were recorded, for Acts 5:16 states, "There came also a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits; and they were healed every one."

God Heals Today

God still heals today.

The good that medical doctors and medicines do is to be appreciated, for God is the ultimate source of all healing. It is He who has given doctors skill and intelligence, and it is He who created the substances from which medicines are extracted or manufactured.

Doctors and medicines, however, can only assist the human body in renewing the natural healing power invested in it by the Creator. Even when a person receives medical assistance, he can still look to God for divine healing. God can heal with medical help, but He also can and often does heal miraculously without any human assistance.

Many people in our churches can testify to being miraculously healed by God. And what God has done for others, He will do for you. Whatever your sickness or disease, He can make you whole. Look to Him today for your healing.

Course 8: The Scriptures Decree Modesty in Dress

- Introduction
- New Testament Teaching for Women
- Distinction Between Male and Female
- Scriptural Guidelines Summarized

Introduction

In ancient times, as throughout many countries today, a person's social rank could be determined by his dress. Similarly, dress is a significant measurement of Christian conduct and practice. Christians can often be identified as such by their outward appearance.

Our people predicate their practices and beliefs upon the Bible. In baptism, we practice immersion in the name of Jesus as the apostles did. We teach and preach the baptism of the Holy Spirit as a definite experience evidenced by speaking with other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance.

Since we adhere as carefully and closely to the Scriptures as possible in matters pertaining to salvation, we also measure the standards of Christian practicalities such as clothing, by the same rule.

New Testament Teaching for Women

The New Testament makes several specific statements pertaining to women's dress in the epistles of Paul and Peter.

"I will that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting. In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with braided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works" (1 Timothy 2:8-10).

"Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; while they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear. Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in

the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands" (1 Peter 3:1-5).

To be modest means to be decent and respectful. The Christian woman seeks to emulate all the fine virtues of Christian womanhood, so she carefully and prayerfully selects her attire in order not to unduly expose her body to the stares of the public. She is not so old-fashioned as to look like a monstrosity, but she is deliberately methodical in choosing clothing that will dignify her womanhood without provoking the stares of the opposite sex.

Her hair style is again predicated upon the Word of God, which teaches her to let her hair grow uncut: "Is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered? Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him? But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering" (1 Corinthians 11:13-15).

Distinction Between Male and Female

Moreover, the Scriptures teach a great difference between femininity and masculinity as to dress. "The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do so are abomination unto the Lord thy God" (Deuteronomy 22:5).

The desire to emulate men in dress has seriously affected the fine and noble characteristics of womanhood. Often it takes a second glance to determine the sex of a woman today, due to the distorted and strange garb she wears and the close proximity of her attire to that of a man. The Scriptures call this practice an abomination unto God, or something God hates.

Scriptural Guidelines Summarized

Holy women of old concentrated on adorning their spiritual life by developing the character of the heart. This is the major concentration and beautification of the Christian woman. Thus, the Apostle Peter used the great dedication of women of another age to impress the women of the first century with the need for the ornament or adornment of a meek and quiet spirit.

By the same token, we are within reasonable and scriptural rights to insist that Christian women today heed the influential, sensible, and divinely inspired advice of the apostles.

Here are the biblical guidelines concerning Christian example in dress for women.

1. Modesty
2. Moderation in cost.

3. Inclination toward godliness (decency).
4. Distinction between male and female.

Guidelines for Men

The New Testament does not provide instructions expressly for men's clothing. Apparently immodest dress was not as much of a problem for men in those days, even though it often is today. However, in many instances it may well be said, "What is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander."

We can honestly proclaim that the basic principles of godly appearance that apply to Christian women should also apply to men; namely, modesty, moderation, decency, and distinction between male and female in hair and dress.

Course 9: Giving

- Introduction
- Tithe

Introduction

We believe that every Christian, as a steward of that portion of God's wealth entrusted to him, is obligated to support his local church financially. We believe that God has established the tithe (the first ten percent of all our increase) as a basis for giving, but that every Christian should also give other offerings sacrificially and cheerfully to support the church; the relief of those in need, and the spread of the Gospel. We believe that the tithe should be given only to and through the local church of which we are a member. We believe that a Christian relinquishes all rights to direct the use of the tithe or offering once the gift has been made (Gen 14:20; Prov 3:9-10; Acts 4:34-37; 1 Cor 16:2; 2 Cor 9:6-7; Gal 6:6; Eph 4:28; 1 Tim 5:17-18; 1 John 3:17).

TITHE. The tithe means ten percent. By comparing Gen. 14:20 with Heb. 7:2 we see that the tithe is ten percent of one's income.

Old Testament Giving. There were at least nine different occasions for giving in the O.T. economy under the Law of Moses. All giving and sacrifice is a way of honoring and worshiping God (Pr. 3:9). Consider the following types of offerings Israel brought to God:

Tithes (Le. 27:30; De. 14:22; Ne. 12:47; Mal. 3:8-12). Apparently there were two tithes in Israel: The first tithe was given to sustain the priests (Nu. 18:21-24; De. 12:19). The second tithe was eaten before the Lord by the offerers (De. 12:17-18; 14:23-27). This second tithe was taken out of that which remained after the Levites were satisfied, and was given every third year (De. 14:28-29).

Redemption money (Le. 27:3-7).

Firstborn (Ex. 13:2, 12; 22:30; 34:19; Le. 27:26). The firstborn animals were not to be worked or sheared, but sacrificed before the Lord (De. 15:19-20).

Tithing and the Christian. The following is from ABCs of Christian Growth by Robert Sargent:

Is tithing to be practiced by the N.T. Christian? Abraham Commenced it (Ge. 14:18-20). Jacob Continued it (Ge. 28:20-22). Moses Confirmed it (Le. 27:30). Malachi Commanded it (Mal. 3:10). Jesus Commended it (Mt. 23:23). God Commissioned it (1 Co. 9:14). Paul Conformed it (1 Co. 16:2). A study of these Scriptures shows that tithing is a scriptural principle. Abraham and Jacob tithed 500 years BEFORE the Law was instituted. Moses, Malachi, and Jesus spoke of tithing DURING the period of the Law. The Apostle Paul explained tithing AFTER the Law. Christians ought to tithe!

How should Christians practice tithing? Under the Law tithing was commanded. Under Grace, we do not tithe legalistically, but because we love the Lord (2 Co. 5:14). Do you think God would ask less love, less faith, and less cheerful giving from a N.T. Christian than from a Jew under the Law? Tithing, for the Christian, is not a matter of bondage.

Where should a Christian place his or her tithe? (1) According to Mal. 3:10, the tithes were to be brought into the storehouse. For the Jews, this storehouse was the Temple at Jerusalem. (2) According to Acts 4:35,37 and Acts 5:2, the Christians brought their tithes and offerings to the Apostles' feet. (3) According to 1 Co. 16:2, we are to lay up our giving in store. Subsequent verses show this store was the Church at Corinth, to whom the Epistle was first addressed. (4) Today the storehouse for your tithe is your CHURCH. It is not God's plan for you to give your tithe wherever you decide.

What does God call us if we refuse to tithe? "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings" (Mal. 3:8).

What is the promise God gives to those who faithfully tithe? "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there should not be room enough to receive it" (Mal. 3:10).

Whose is the tithe? The tithe is the Lord's (Le. 27:30). Ten percent of your gross income is not yours—it belongs to God.

Why are we to place our tithe into our Church? The tithes and offerings in the O.T. were used for the Temple and the Temple ministry (i.e., the priests, etc.) (Mal. 3:10). 1 Co. 9:13-14 applies this principle to the N.T. church. "Do you not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? EVEN SO hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel." Verse

13 relates to the O.T. practice. Verse 14 carries this practice over to N.T. churches. Your tithes and offerings are for the support, upkeep, and ministry of your Church. Tithes should never be designated--they are to be left free for use as the church body decides.

How can I please my Lord when tithing? (1) Give the Lord first place in everything (Mt. 6:33). (2) Honor the Lord with your first fruits (Pr. 3:9-10). This means to set aside the tithe first--before all other bills and expenses. If you leave the tithe until last, God usually misses out. (3) Bring the tithe on the Lord's day (1 Co. 16:2).

Course 10: The Way We Worship

• Introduction

• Biblical Expression of Worship

Introduction

If you have never had the opportunity to be in a Spirit-filled service before, you will discover that Biblical expressions of worship are still practiced today. Join in with us as we praise God together in spirit and in truth.

Biblical Expressions of Worship

- We pray together aloud because in the Bible we read, "They lifted up their voice to God with one accord" (Acts 4:24).
- We lift our hands in praise because in the Bible we read, "Lift up your hands in the sanctuary, and bless the Lord" (Psalm 134:2).
- We sing with all our hearts because in the Bible we read, "Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all the earth: make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise" (Psalm 98:4).
- We play musical instruments because in the Bible we read, "And all the house of Israel played before the LORD on all manner of instruments" (2 Samuel 6:5).
- We clap and shout unto God because in the Bible we read, "O clap your hands, all ye people; shout unto God with the voice of triumph" (Psalm 47:1).
- We dance before the LORD because in the Bible we read, "Praise Him with the timbrel and dance: praise Him with stringed instruments and organs" (Psalm 150:4).
- We testify publicly because in the Bible we read, "I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee" (Psalm 22:22).
- We anoint with oil for divine healing because in the Bible we read, "Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord" (James 5:14).
- We allow the operation of the spiritual gifts because in the Bible we read, "When ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation" (1 Corinthians 14:26).