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1959-1960

My Confirmation

*A Guide for
Confirmation
Instruction*



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Contents

<i>Introduction: A New Venture</i>	1
Part I—The Christian Guidebook	
1. What Is the Bible?	5
2. How We Got Our Bible	10
3. The Bible Story	19
4. Using the Bible	25
Part II—Christian Beliefs	
5. About God	29
6. About Jesus	36
7. About the Holy Spirit	50
8. About Ourselves	53
9. The Apostles' Creed	59
Part III—The Christian Way of Life	
10. Trust in God as Jesus Did	66
11. Care for Others as Jesus Did	73
12. Master Yourself as Jesus Did	80
13. Seek the Kingdom as Jesus Did	89
Part IV—The Christian Church	
14. The Story of the Christian Church	94
15. What Protestants Believe	110
16. The Story of Our Denomination	113
17. The Story of My Own Church	121
18. The Church Service of Worship	124
19. The Sacraments	130
Part V—Christianity in Action	
20. The Work Our Denomination Is Doing	139
21. The Church as Teacher	150
22. The Church as Friend	155
23. The Church as Missionary	160
Part VI—Some Questions to Face	
24. My Decision—What Shall It Be?	165
25. Why Do I Need the Church?	169
26. Why Does the Church Need Me?	175
27. What Does Confirmation Mean?	181
<i>Resource Section</i>	187



COME UNTO ME

Eugene Burnand

*Lord Jesus, for thee I live, for thee I suffer, for thee I die! Lord Jesus,
thine will I be in life and death! Grant me, O Lord, eternal salvation!
Amen.*

Introduction

A New Venture

You have joined this year's confirmation class. You are starting out on a new venture and you don't know just what to expect. What is confirmation anyway? Why does our church have it? Some churches don't.

What Is Confirmation?

Confirmation is one of the most important steps you will ever take. Through it you will enter into the great world-wide fellowship of the Christian Church. You will give yourself wholeheartedly to God and his will for your life. You will take Jesus as your Lord and Master, whom you will follow with all your strength. You will let God's Holy Spirit guide you in all you do.

The word *confirm* means to make firmer or stronger, to agree to. When you are confirmed:

1. You will make firmer or stronger the sacred vows your parents took for you and you will agree to live by them all your life.
2. God will make firmer and stronger his claim upon you.
3. Your membership in the church will be made firmer and stronger. You will become a *full* member, and will join in the Lord's Supper with all who have been confirmed before you.

A good summary of confirmation is found in the answer to question 122 in the *Evangelical Catechism*: "Confirmation is the renewal of the baptismal covenant. The baptized children, having been instructed in the Christian faith, publicly confess their faith in their Savior Jesus Christ, promise obedience to him until death, and are received by the church into active membership."

Why Does Our Church Have It?

The act of confirmation is very old and very sacred. For many centuries boys and girls and men and women have become full members of the Christian Church very much as you will when you are confirmed. Confirmation goes back to the time of the first-century Church, when Christians were being persecuted in Jerusalem. Many left and went to other cities. Philip went to Samaria. There . . . (but you might as well read the story in your Bible. Turn to Acts 8:9-17). Peter and John "confirmed" the baptism given by Philip, and the people "confirmed" their faith in Jesus Christ.

In the early Church confirmation came right after baptism, and there were two parts to the rite. In the first, the confirmand was anointed with oil; in the second, the minister prayed for the confirmand and laid his hands on the confirmand's head. As the years went by confirmation was usually separated from baptism, and the first part of the rite was used less and less. Our own church uses only the second part.

Most of you were baptized when you were babies. Your parents probably brought you to the church and there dedicated you to God. It was then that you "joined the church." But you were too young to make your own promises of loyalty, so your parents made them for you. Now you are old enough to make them for yourself.

As the *Heidelberg Catechism* puts it, confirmation "is our way of receiving persons into full membership." Our Evangelical and Reformed Church uses this way of helping you to grow up as a Christian and as a member of the Church.

Getting Ready for Confirmation

This book has been planned to help you get ready for confirmation. Look at the table of contents. As you read the chapter headings you will see that this book deals with some mighty important subjects. Take good care of it and study it well. You will need to know its contents if you want to be a good church member.

In addition to *My Confirmation* you will need the following to help you get ready for confirmation:

1. *A Bible*. The Revised Standard Version is recommended.
2. *A Catechism*. Evangelical and Reformed churches use two catechisms (small books in which leaders of the Church have put down in question-and-answer form the basic beliefs of the Christian Church). Your pastor will tell you which of the two catechisms to get.
3. *The Hymnal*.

4. Other books that your pastor will suggest from time to time for study.

Going to Church

Getting ready to be confirmed includes more than study, as you will discover as we go along. But one matter needs to be mentioned now. That is going to church. You may or may not have been taking part in the church service of worship every Sunday. If you have not, now is the time to begin to form the habit of worshiping God in the company of other Christians. You should not miss a Sunday unless you are ill or have some equally good reason for being absent. But it is not enough just to be in attendance. You must go to church for the purpose of worshiping God and of getting from the service as much as you can for your daily living. The following suggestions may help you to achieve this purpose.

Enter the church reverently. This is not the time or place for talking to others. It is the time and place for worshiping God. When you have taken your place, bow your head and pray. Make up your own prayer, asking God to help you be attentive so that you may hear him speak to you as you worship; or use a prayer from the Bible such as,

“Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart
be acceptable in thy sight,
O LORD, my rock and my redeemer” (Psalm 19:14).

Participate in every part of the service. To do this you will need to know the meaning of each part.

1. If there is a *confession* near the beginning, think over the words one by one. Think also of the wrong things that you have done during the past week, and ask God to forgive you for failing to do his will.
2. In the *prayers*, turn your thoughts toward God and make the prayers your own. Use moments of silence, as well as the time when the organist plays the prelude and the offertory, to think about God and to pray to him in your own words.
3. Sing the *hymns* thoughtfully. Think of the meaning of the words. When they are joyous, sing the hymns joyfully. If they form a prayer, sing the hymn quietly and prayerfully. If they are words of courage and faith, let them fill you with courage and faith as you sing.
4. Try to get the main point of the *Scripture* when it is read by the pastor or as a responsive reading. Notice how often Scripture is used throughout the service and how helpful it is as a call to worship, as a prayer, as a hymn, or as a blessing.

5. During the *offering* service, think of the good the money will do, but as you give your money let it be a symbol of yourself. The giving of self to God is the heart of the offering service. Money is a real part of our life. As such it is a suitable symbol for us to use in our offering to God. If you are not now giving regularly to the church out of your own money, this is the time to begin. Remember that you are learning to stand on your own feet as a Christian, and that includes making your own offering.

6. Let the *special music* bring you its message. Anthems and other vocal numbers are prayers or hymns of praise to God, the words of which are often taken from the Bible. Sometimes they carry to the listener a special message that will help him to become a better Christian. Organ music or other instrumental music is chosen to arouse a certain mood: praise, adoration, prayer, or meditation. Look upon those who sing or play as Christians who dedicate their talents to the service of God. Their singing or playing is another form of the offering of self to God.

Look for something in the sermon that will help you to be a better Christian. Not everything the minister says will apply to you. He must preach to all the people there; he cannot talk to you alone. Nevertheless you can find, if you listen for it, something in the sermon that will help you to become more Christian.

Remain reverent throughout the service. There should be no let-down when the anthem is being sung or when the offering is being taken. When you truly and sincerely participate in the whole service you will find that one hour is not too long to spend in worshipping God and in learning of his will for your life.

PART I
The Christian Guidebook

CHAPTER 1

What Is the Bible?

All over the world at this moment people in many lands are reading the Bible in more than a thousand languages. In our own country each year it is listed as the best seller among books. What is this book that commands the attention of so many people?

The Bible Is a Library

Most people think of the Bible as *a* book, even though they know that it has many parts written by many people. When the *Revised Standard Version of the Bible* was brought out a few years ago in three volumes, many people for the first time really *saw* that the Bible is more than one book. The three volumes helped them to visualize the nature of the Bible.

The Bible is not one book, but sixty-six books bound together between two covers (or between six in the one edition of the Revised Standard Version). The name "Bible" tells us, if we know what it means, that this book is really a library of smaller books. The word *bible* comes from a Greek word, which is plural and means "little books" or "booklets."

Turn to the page at the beginning of your Bible that lists the names of the books in the Old Testament. Hold your finger at this place and then find the list of names of the books in the New Testament. Now look at the two lists.

You will notice that some of the books have strange names that have no meaning for you, such as Deuteronomy and Ecclesiastes. Others are named after the chief character in the book, as Joshua or Ruth. Still others are named for the writer, as Amos, Jeremiah, or Luke. Some are named for the people to whom they are written, as Romans or Timothy.

Now look at the bookcase pictured on the next page. You will notice

The Bible Library

- GENESIS
- EXODUS
- LEVITICUS
- NUMBERS
- DEUTERONOMY
- JOSHUA
- JUDGES
- RUTH
- I SAMUEL
- II SAMUEL
- I KINGS
- II KINGS
- I CHRONICLES
- II CHRONICLES
- EZRA
- NEHEMIAH
- ESTHER

17 Historical

- JOB
- PSALMS
- PROVERBS
- ECCLESIASTES
- SONG OF SOLOMON

5 Poetic

Books in Old Testament

39

- ISAIAH
- JEREMIAH
- LAMENTATIONS
- EZEKIEL
- DANIEL
- HOSEA
- JOEL
- AMOS
- OBADIAH
- JONAH
- MICAH
- NAHUM
- HABAKKUK
- ZEPHANIAH
- HAGGAI
- ZECHARIAH
- MALACHI

17 Prophetic

Books in New Testament

27

- MATTHEW
- MARK
- LUKE
- JOHN
- ACTS
- ROMANS
- I CORINTHIANS
- II CORINTHIANS
- GALATIANS
- EPHESIANS
- PHILIPPIANS
- COLOSSIANS
- I THESSALONIANS
- II THESSALONIANS
- I TIMOTHY
- II TIMOTHY
- TITUS
- PHILEMON
- HEBREWS
- JAMES
- I PETER
- II PETER
- I JOHN
- II JOHN
- III JOHN
- JUDE
- REVELATION

5 Historical

21 Letters

1 Revelation

that the books of the Bible group themselves into certain classifications. First you will notice that there are two main sections—the Old Testament and the New Testament. Then you will see that each of these sections is divided into subdivisions. In the Old Testament, there are three subdivisions: history, poetry, and prophecy. In the New Testament there are four subdivisions: biography, history, letters, and revelation.

The Bible Is a Book

But, you say, this statement contradicts what was said on page 4. It doesn't, if you know the heart of the Bible. Even though many people have had a hand in writing the sixty-six books that we call the Bible, there is a reason for putting them all between two covers and thinking of them as one.

There is a continuous story in the Bible, for all the books and all the writers show us how God from the very beginning has sought men to be his own, and how men have tried to reach true fellowship with God—their Creator, Savior, and Guide. Furthermore, the story of the Old Testament builds up to a real climax, which comes in the New Testament, as it tells of the birth of Jesus Christ into the world, of his good news of the coming of the kingdom of God among men, of his sacrificial death upon the cross, of his resurrection from the dead, and of the working of the Holy Spirit in the lives of men as they formed his holy Church. You will read more of this story in chapter 3.

The Bible Is the Word of God

When we say this we are saying that God speaks to us through the Bible. But how does he speak to us through this book?

1. *Through his actions.* One of God's chief means of talking to us, both to show us what he is like and to tell us what he wants us to be like, is by the way he acts—the way he runs the world, the way he treats people. The Bible tells us that he made the world to be a *good* world. Read the first chapter of Genesis and underline lightly in your Bible the word "good" each time it is used. Write here the number of times you find the word.

The Bible tells us that God is good, just, forgiving, kind, loving, fatherly, and self-giving in nature, and that he wants us, his children, to be like him. So the Bible contains God's word to us.

2. *Through people who have lived close to him.* Because they came to know God well through their own experience they could tell others about him and his will. Moses was such a person. The prophets were such people. But it is Jesus who has told us most about God and his

will. His whole life, as well as his death and resurrection, speak to us of God, for he was the Son of God and so could be the perfect expression of God's nature. Jesus has given us a clear picture of what God is like, and he has told us how we must live if we want to be citizens in the kingdom of God.

These people—who wrote parts of the Bible, like Amos, or about whom parts of the Bible were written, like Jesus—were inspired people. This means that God's Spirit was very close to them. (The words "inspired" and "spirit" look very much alike, do they not?) It also means that God could speak through them to his other children. Through them God continues to speak to people. So the Bible contains God's word to us.

Facts You Should Know About the Bible

- ✓ 1. The word *bible* means
- ✓ 2. The word *gospel* means
- ✓ 3. The word *epistle* means
- ✓ 4. The Bible is divided into parts: the
..... and the
- ✓ 5. The Old Testament has books, the New Testament
..... books, which makes
books in the Bible.
- ✓ 6. The Old Testament contains all the biblical books written
..... Jesus lived.
- ✓ 7. The New Testament contains all the biblical books written
..... Jesus lived. *after*
- ✓ 8. The story of the creation of the world is in
- ✓ 9. The story of Jesus is in
- ✓ 10. The story of Paul is in

Match These

Place the letter of each name in the right-hand column before the correct statement in the left-hand column.

- | | |
|--|-------------------------|
| ✓ <u>2</u> A great king of the Hebrew people | a. Matthew |
| ✓ <u>1</u> The last book in the Bible | b. Amos |
| ✓ <u>9</u> A great missionary of the early Church | c. Genesis |
| ✓ <u>8</u> A book that tells of the life of Jesus | d. Revelation |
| ✓ <u>7</u> The songbook of the Hebrews | e. David |
| ✓ <u>10</u> The book that tells of the "beginnings" | f. Psalms |
| ✓ <u>6</u> The prophet who said that God wants justice and righteousness above everything else | g. Paul |
| ✓ <u>5</u> The first king of Israel | h. Sermon on the Mount |
| ✓ <u>4</u> The book that tells the story of the early Christian Church | i. Saul |
| ✓ <u>3</u> Laws found in the book of Exodus | j. The Acts |
| ✓ <u>11</u> A sermon given by Jesus | k. The Good Samaritan |
| ✓ <u>12</u> A parable of Jesus | l. The Ten Commandments |

CHAPTER 2

How We Got Our Bible

There was a time when there was no Bible at all—no Ten Commandments, no twenty-third psalm, no Lord's Prayer. It was about three thousand years ago that the Bible began to be written. At that time there was no English language, no paper as we know it, no printing press. A thousand years or more passed by before the Bible was fully written, and even then much remained to be done before we could have an English Bible on our tables. It is a wonderful story. Many men had a hand in it. God also had a hand in it.

Our Bible's Long Story

We can grasp the story best by breaking it up into periods of time. These periods are not all of the same length. Sometimes they overlap. The chart on page 11 will help you to follow the story.

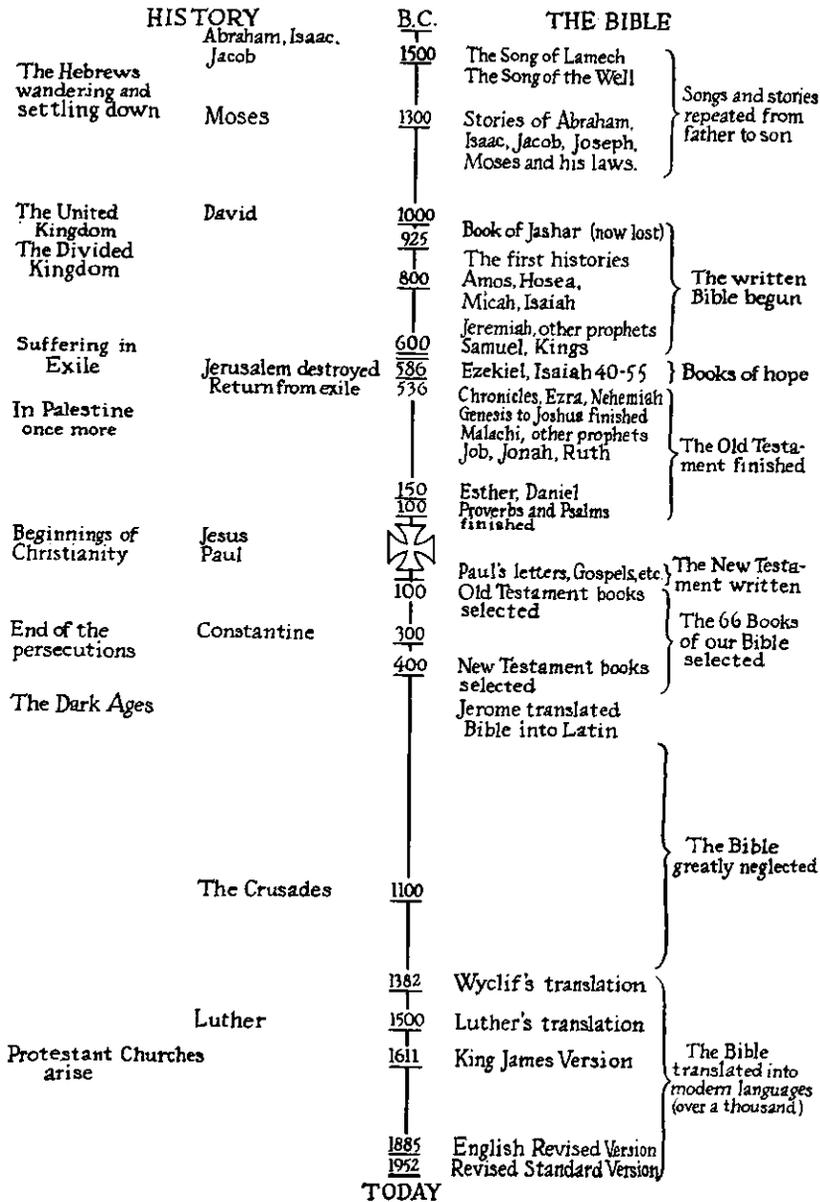
PERIOD I



SONGS and stories were repeated from father to son. We must try to put ourselves now in the days from 1500 to 1000 years before Christ. When this period opened, the Israelites were not as yet settled in Palestine. They were nomads, wanderers. They lived in tents pitched near an oasis. Around them was the desert. They knew little or nothing about writing as yet. At nighttime they would gather around the campfire and sing songs they had heard from their fathers before them. What would they sing? It may be that we still have some of their songs. Perhaps they sang the Song of Lamech (Genesis 4:23-24), or the Song of the Well (Numbers

Our Bible's Long Story

(Most dates are approximate)



21:17-18). The little children would listen, and gradually learn these songs. Years later they would sing them to their children.

The early Israelites told stories also, stories they had heard from their fathers. About whom did they tell? Why, Abraham, of course, and Isaac, and Jacob, and Joseph. The children remembered the stories, and told them later to their children. In Egypt some of these stories may have been written down on papyrus. (We get our word "paper" from this Egyptian word.)

As the Israelites made their way with much fighting into the Promised Land, they kept on singing old songs and telling old stories, and they added new ones. For example, they would surely tell again and again of Moses and his laws, or they would sing songs like the Song of Miriam (Exodus 15:21). In it all a careful listener would hear again and again the name of the Lord their God. For they believed that he was with them in their going out and in their coming in.

What little writing was done in the days of desert wandering and while settling in Canaan was on stone. (See Exodus 24:12; 31:18; 34:1, 28; Deuteronomy 27:2-3; Joshua 8:30-32.)

PERIOD II



HE written Bible was begun. This period covers almost another five hundred years, 1000-586 B.C. As it opens, we find the Hebrews fairly well settled in Palestine. David was their king, and he was uniting them into a strong nation. Not long afterward they began to make considerable use of writing. They wrote in Hebrew. They did not divide their writing into words as we do, nor did they write vowels. If we wrote as they did, the opening words of the twenty-third psalm would look like this:

THLRDSMSHPHRDSHLLNTWNT

Much of the Bible was written on skins, but some was written on papyrus.

A "book" in those days was not like those you know. It was a roll or scroll that was made by pasting sheets of skin or papyrus together. On this the scribes would write in narrow columns with a reed pen sharpened to a point and dipped in ink made from soot or charcoal. Turn to Jeremiah 36:18-23, 27-28, 32. This gives a good picture of how that book of the Bible was written. (The penknife referred to in verse 23 was the knife used to keep the point of the reed pen sharp.)

The Bible does not contain all the books that were written in those days. Joshua 10:13 refers to one such book, and Numbers 21:14 to an-

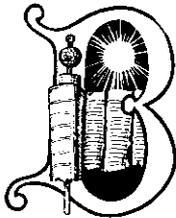
other. Write the names of these books here:

Around 800 B.C. two men, the one living in the south of Palestine and the other in the north, wrote two histories of Israel. These were later put together with some stories and law books to make the opening five or six books of our present Bible.

About 750 B.C. a prophet named Amos wrote down the message he believed God had given him for the people of Israel. This was the first book of our Bible to be written in its present form. A little later the prophet Isaiah spoke his messages and then wrote them down. At about the same time Hosea and Micah did the same.

A hundred years later, around 600 B.C., Jeremiah wrote his prophetic message. (You read about this in Jeremiah 36.) Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah were written at about the same time. Around this time, too, some men (or one man) decided to teach their people a lesson through history. They used the facts they got from existent history books (see 1 Kings 11:41; 14:19, 29) to write a history of their nation in order to show how God had a hand in it. So 1 and 2 Samuel and 1 and 2 Kings were written. The Bible was growing.

PERIOD III



BOOKS of hope appeared. In 586 B.C. Jerusalem was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar. Many Hebrews were sent to Babylon into exile. Here they remained for about fifty years, and they were bitter years. It was hard for the exiles to keep up their hope and faith. It seemed that God had deserted them. Ezekiel and the writer of Isaiah 40–55 tried to encourage their people with preaching and writing. So the Bible continued to grow in these troublous times.

PERIOD IV



HE Old Testament was finished. After the Jews returned to their war-scarred homes in Palestine, they had much to do to rebuild their nation, but the writing of the Bible went on. The last eleven chapters of Isaiah were written. The opening six or seven books of the Old Testament were finished—four hundred years after they were started. The last history—what is in 1 and 2 Chronicles, Ezra and Nehemiah—was written.

The prophetic books—Malachi, Joel, Zechariah, Haggai—were added, as were stories of Job, Jonah, Ruth, Lamentations, the Song of Solomon, and Ecclesiastes took on their final form.

Two books, made up of several collections of previous books—Proverbs and Psalms—were arranged as we know them today. Both of these had been taking shape for hundreds of years, from the times of David and Solomon.

Last of all, only about a hundred and fifty years before our Lord was born, Esther and Daniel were added, and everything we now have in the Old Testament was finished.

PERIOD V



HE *New Testament was written.* The only Bible Jesus had was the Old Testament, but from his life came a new group of people, called Christians, who added a whole new part to the Bible. The books poured forth so fast that the New Testament was written in only about one-fifteenth the time it took to write the Old Testament.

The New Testament was begun when Paul sat down in Corinth one day around A.D. 50 (only twenty or so years after the close of Jesus' earthly life) to write a letter to the Christians of Thessalonica. We know this letter as 1 Thessalonians. From then until his death (probably in A.D. 64) Paul wrote many other letters to the churches that he established and to his friends and co-workers.

In the meantime, people who had known Jesus personally had been writing down for those who had not been with Jesus some of the things that Jesus said and did. (See Luke 1:1-2.) But it was not until somewhere around the year 70 that the first of our Gospels was written to give a complete story of the life of Jesus. This was the Gospel According to Mark. Matthew, Luke, and John followed within the next thirty years.

Luke decided to add a history of the early Church and the story of Paul to his life of Christ. We know it as *The Acts of the Apostles*.

The books we have mentioned thus far make up a large part of the New Testament. By about one hundred years after Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection everything we now have in our New Testament was written. So far as actual writing was concerned, the Bible was now finished.

PERIOD VI



SIXTY-SIX books were selected for our Bible from a large number of religious books written by the Hebrews and the early Christians. These books had stood the test of time and use. Through them people of all ages had come to know God and his will. Through these books God had spoken to them.

So far as the Old Testament was concerned, the business of selecting began long before Jesus. About 400 B.C. the five opening books had been agreed upon. But it was not until A.D. 100 that the thirty-nine books of the Old Testament were finally chosen.

As the early Christians met in little groups for worship, they read from the Old Testament, but in time they began to read from the new Christian writings. As more and more books were written, it was clear that some selection would have to be made in order to be sure that the churches had writings that were truly God-inspired and worthy to become part of the sacred Scriptures. The four Gospels were probably selected first. There was considerable doubt about including 2 Peter and 2 and 3 John. But by A.D. 400 the church was fairly certain that our present twenty-seven books—no more and no less—were worthy of belonging in the New Testament.

Some of the books that were rejected contained such useful and good information that many editions of the Bible have carried them in a separate section called "The Apocrypha." You may have heard of 1 and 2 Esdras, Judith, Baruch, the History of Susanna, 1 and 2 Maccabees, or of some of the others. If you have a copy of *The Complete Bible—An American Translation*, look between the Old and New Testaments for the Apocrypha. Your church's pulpit Bible may also include these books.

✓ PERIOD VII



THE Bible was greatly neglected. This was a long period of about a thousand years. Though called the Dark Ages, work on the Bible continued. A man named Jerome, living at the beginning of this period, translated the Bible into Latin. (The Old Testament had been written in Hebrew and translated into Greek. The New Testament had been written in Greek.) This translation was called the Vulgate (meaning "common") because it was in the language that was common at that time.

PERIOD VIII



MODERN-LANGUAGE Bibles appeared. In time Latin was no longer the language in use by the common people, and they could not understand what was being said in the church services. So men began to translate parts or all of the Bible into the language which the people could understand. Luther translated it into German. Others have translated it into other languages until now parts of the Bible can be read in over a thousand tongues.

The man who first put the whole Bible into our own language was John Wyclif. This he did over a hundred years before Columbus discovered America.

Another great English translator was William Tyndale. In 1525 he gave us the first *printed* English New Testament—but what a price he paid! He was driven from England to the continent of Europe, hunted from place to place, and finally both strangled and burned in Belgium. You might be interested to see how he translated Hebrews 1:1-2:

“God in tyme past diversly and many wayes, spake vnto the fathers by prophets: but in these last dayes he hath spoken vnto vs by hys sonne, whom he hath made heyre of all things: by whom also he made the worlde.”

Note that this passage is not divided into verses. The division into verses came soon after Tyndale's day.

The English translation that has been used by the largest number of people is the *King James Version*, so called because King James of England appointed fifty scholars to prepare a Bible that would suit the different churches in England at that time and correct inaccuracies in the current versions. These men worked three and a half years, and brought out their version in 1611.

By the middle of the nineteenth century, it became apparent that changes were needed in this version. It had to be brought up to date in language. Archaeology had revealed new facts about the times in which the Bible was written. Ancient Hebrew and Greek had come to be understood better. So in 1885 the *Revised Version* was published. In the United States, scholars made further changes and published the *American Standard Version* in 1901.

Since then a number of scholars have brought out modern-speech translations. Among the best known are: *The New Testament in Modern Speech* by Richard F. Weymouth, 1903; *The Bible: A New Translation* by James Moffatt, 1926; *The Complete Bible—An American*

Translation, New Testament by Edgar J. Goodspeed, Old Testament edited by J. M. Powis Smith, 1927.

Because of the many discoveries of ancient biblical manuscripts and other archaeological findings, and because modern Americans cannot always get the real meaning of the Bible when old English is used, the churches in the United States authorized the preparation of a new translation for our times. Thirty-two scholars with an Advisory Board of fifty denominational representatives were set to work on the colossal task. (Our Evangelical and Reformed Church representative was Professor Allen G. Wehrli of Eden Seminary.) For years this committee worked, bringing out the New Testament in 1946 and the whole Bible in 1952. And so the *Revised Standard Version of the Bible* came into being.

Within the first eight weeks 1,600,000 copies of the Revised Standard Version were sold. Many people began to read the Bible with new understanding and appreciation.

Does this close the long story of our Bible? Not by any means. In a sense the Bible is still growing, not in size, but in our understanding of it. Just before the Old Testament in the new version was published some very ancient scrolls were discovered in a cave near the Dead Sea. These scrolls were older than any other manuscripts that we have of the Bible. They had been placed in this cave one hundred years before Jesus was born. The Isaiah scroll was especially helpful to the members of the Old Testament Committee as they tried to make their translation as accurate as possible. But since the publication of the new version even more valuable findings have been made.

The Hand of God Is Still Writing

Someone remarked how strange it was that so many archaeological discoveries should be made of ancient Bible manuscripts and of other items throwing light on the Bible just when a new version of the Bible was being prepared. "Not at all strange," was the reply of one of the scholars who had a hand in deciphering the Dead Sea scrolls; "the hand of God is still writing the Bible."

What has been said in the last few pages about the part that men have played in writing, selecting, copying, translating, and studying the Bible does not mean that God did not have a hand in it. He was guiding and directing these men through his Holy Spirit as they worked to interpret to each generation the will of God.

God wants us to have a Bible through which he can speak to us and in which we can learn of him and his work in the world. Reread "The Bible Is the Word of God" on page 7.

The Story of the Bible

1. There was no Bible years ago.
2. The Bible was first spoken by people in the form of
..... and
3. The books of the Bible were written on of
animals and on
4. The first book in the Bible to be written was
5. The book of is known as the hymnbook
of the Hebrews.
6. Wise sayings of men like Solomon are in the book of
.....
7. The Old Testament was written in the
language.
8. The first book of the New Testament to be written was a
.....
9. The New Testament was written in the
language.
10. The first of our four Gospels to be written was by
11. The Bible was written by men who were
by God.
12. The man who translated the Bible into Latin was
13. copied Bibles by hand in monasteries
during the Middle Ages.
14. The man who first translated the whole Bible into English
was
15. The man who printed the first Bible in English was
.....
16. The Bible translation that was made by fifty scholars in 1611 is
called the
17. The version of the Bible that was published in 1952 is the
.....
18. Other versions and translations of the Bible into modern English
are:
-
-
-

CHAPTER 3

The Bible Story

If someone were to ask you to give a brief summary of the Bible, how would you do it? Perhaps you would simply say that it cannot be done. After all, in our English versions the Bible comes to well over a thousand pages, and there are sixty-six different books bound within its covers. These were written in various languages, in various places, and over a period of at least a thousand years. It would be easier perhaps to give a summary of each of the books than to try to summarize them all together.

The Bible Tells a Story

But there is a continuous story that runs through the Bible, a very dramatic story. Although the plot may not be too clear in some of the books, most of the biblical writers seem to be aware of the great drama of which they are writing. When an ancient Israelite wanted to say his creed, he told a story of how God had brought Abraham out of Mesopotamia, and had led his descendants down into Egypt; when harsh treatment came, God delivered them from Egypt and brought them into a land flowing with milk and honey. This was the God in whom he believed. If you want to read this very early confession of faith, you will find it in Deuteronomy 26:5-9 and in Joshua 24:2-13.

When the first Christians wanted to confess their faith, they also told a story. It was the story of how God had come to them in Jesus. You will find it in Acts 10:36-41. As you read it you may be struck by the fact that when we join in the Apostles' Creed today, we tell pretty nearly the same story.

The Story of Salvation

We see, then, that the men in both the Old Testament and the New

Testament told a story, and that the leading character in each story was none other than God himself. But it was not a story about God alone. It was the story of the way God had acted to save men. In the Old Testament he had saved them from oppression and slavery in Egypt. In the New Testament he had saved them from slavery to sin and from fear of death. For this reason, we can say that the story which the whole Bible tells is the story of salvation. As a matter of fact, we can divide it into a two-act drama with a prologue and an epilogue. The prologue is in the first three chapters of Genesis. We find Act I in the Old Testament. Act II covers the New Testament. And the epilogue, or conclusion, is in the last book of the New Testament.

In this chapter we can suggest only the major scenes in the Bible story. But once we have clear in our minds the whole sweep of the biblical drama, then we can begin to see how each part fits into the whole story. This in turn may help us to fix in our minds the part of the story contained in the major books of the Bible.

PROLOGUE

Genesis 1-3. In the opening chapters of Genesis we have two accounts of creation, one written about 900 B.C. and the other about 500 B.C. But both tell us that "in the beginning" God created the world of nature and made man in his own image. We see here that the scene of the biblical story is the world. More than that, the chief characters are also introduced, namely, God and man. The story of the garden in chapters 2 and 3 suggests that God created man to be in close fellowship and personal relationship with him. But man rebelled against God by disobeying him. The story which the rest of the Bible tells reveals how great man's separation is from God and how God acts to restore man to fellowship with him.

ACT I

The Old Testament tells the story of how God called a people to be his own in a special sense. He chose them so that they might serve him in three ways:

1. By obeying his commandments,
2. By receiving and cherishing his revelation of himself through the prophets, and
3. By being "a light for revelation to the Gentiles."

But Israel disobeyed God's commandments; she persecuted the prophets; and she despised the Gentiles. Because of this, both the northern and southern kingdoms were destroyed, and the people were taken to

Babylon in exile. After nearly fifty years of captivity, a remnant of the people returned and attempted a new beginning. As Act I comes to a close, even the remnant had failed to grasp God's purpose for Israel. She had become a nation in search of a soul.

SCENE 1. *God and the Early Beginnings of Mankind.* In the story of Cain and Abel and in the account of the flood we see that from the very outset of human history, it was sin that separated man from God. The story of Noah reveals that God desires to enter into a covenant relationship with men. (Genesis 4-11.)

SCENE 2. *The Forefathers of Israel.* This part of the story tells of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. It ends with the settling of the house of Jacob in Egypt after Joseph had risen to high position under the reigning Pharaoh. (Genesis 12-50.)

SCENE 3. *Oppression and the Deliverance From Egypt.* After years of oppression and slavery God sent a deliverer whose name was Moses. Under his leadership the people escaped. (Exodus 1-15.) At Mt. Sinai they entered into a covenant with God. The terms of the covenant are the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:1-17). As the people wandered in the wilderness and prepared to enter the Promised Land, Moses gave them more laws. (Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy.)

SCENE 4. *Entering and Settling the Land of Canaan.* Joshua led the Israelites to victory over the Canaanites, and the people settled down. For a while there were voluntary leaders like Deborah, Gideon, and Samson, who were called judges. (Joshua and Judges.)

SCENE 5. *The Rise of the Monarchy: Samuel, Saul, and David.* In this period there was an attempt to unify the people of Israel, not only politically, but also religiously. Both Saul and David tried to rally the people around the Lord. (1 and 2 Samuel, 1 Chronicles.)

SCENE 6. *The Division Into Two Kingdoms.* Although Solomon built a beautiful temple to the one God, he oppressed the people and tolerated the worship of foreign gods. The northern tribes revolted and the people were divided into two nations: Israel in the north, and Judah in the south. Despite the warnings of prophets like Isaiah, Amos, Hosea, and Micah, the kings and people of the northern kingdom deserted God

and worshiped Canaanite deities. The prophets saw that God had no alternative but to destroy Israel. Judah alone remained of this once great people. Jeremiah and Ezekiel attempted to lead Judah back to trust in God. But she put her trust in chariots of war and was also destroyed. The history of this period is to be found in 1 and 2 Kings and 2 Chronicles.

SCENE 7. *God's People in a Strange Land.* Taken into exile in Babylon, many of the people gave up hope of ever returning. Some even gave up their faith. But men like Ezekiel and the unknown prophet who wrote chapters 40-66 of the book of Isaiah spoke words of promise and encouraged the people to return and build a new Israel.

SCENE 8. *The Return From Exile and the Rebuilding of Jerusalem and the Temple.* When the opportunity presented itself, the Hebrews returned from exile and began the arduous task of rebuilding. The prophets Haggai and Zechariah encouraged them. The psalms were collected for use in the worship of the temple. Later on, Ezra and Nehemiah led the people in rebuilding the city wall and in adopting the Law.

SCENE 9. *A Nation in Search of Its Calling.* The nation was re-established under Persian domination. The temple became the center of Jewish life and the Law its guide. Nevertheless, the people still failed to see why God had called them. There was a great debate over the Gentiles. A few people, like the writers of Ruth and Jonah, believed that God cared even for Israel's enemies and that some good could come from Gentiles. But Ezra, Obadiah, and the author of Esther looked down on non-Jews and urged the nation to separate itself from foreigners. Some thinkers in Judah had begun to wonder whether God had really chosen Israel after all.

ACT II

The second act in the story of salvation (the New Testament) tells how God fulfilled his own purpose and the hope of ancient Israel in Jesus and the Church. Israel's search came to an end. By sending his only Son, God made clear how great his love is and what his will is. His children are not to come from any particular nation, but from all nations and races. They are to come together into the Church and by their love and worship show all mankind the way to God. Thus we find ourselves taking part in the drama of salvation. Just as those who

first heard the preaching of the apostles responded in faith and entered the new relationship with God (the new covenant), so we hear them speaking to us today, reminding us of our responsibilities as members of the Church of Jesus Christ.

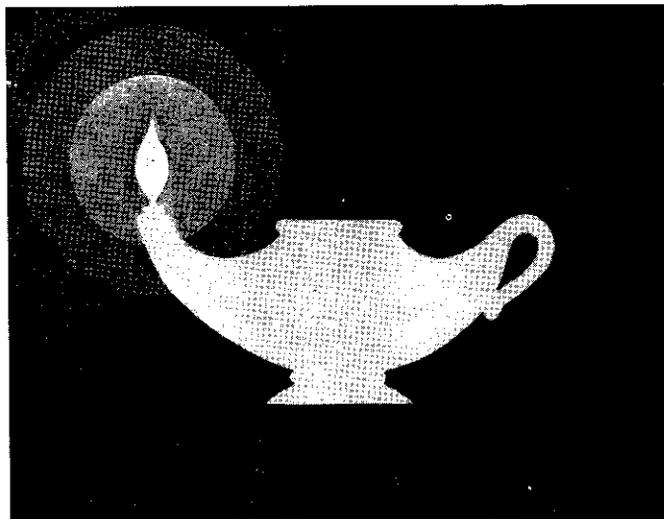
SCENE 1. *Jesus With Men.* This is the climax of the Bible story, for it tells of the coming of the long-awaited Redeemer. The prophets had dreamed of him, and the people had longed for him. But the Jews who lived during the reign of Caesar Augustus did not recognize him. He was born in an obscure village of Palestine. He grew up as any village boy might. For just two years of his life he went about preaching, teaching, healing, and seeking followers. He got into trouble with the religious authorities and was crucified. But then something happened that electrified his followers. They discovered that the Jesus who they thought was dead was risen and was present with them. They recognized him as God's Son, sent by God to establish his kingdom of love among men. (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John.)

SCENE 2. *The Church of Jesus Christ.* The early Christians firmly believed that in Jesus' life and teachings and in his death and resurrection God had shown his love for men and had called a new people to serve him. Therefore it was important to tell the story of his life to those who were not members of the Christian community, and to challenge them to follow him as their Savior and Lord. The book in the Bible entitled "The Acts of the Apostles" tells how apostles and missionaries like Peter, Stephen, Philip, and Paul laid the foundations of the Church and helped to spread Christianity from Jerusalem to Rome and beyond. The story of salvation was being told by missionaries; through letters by such men as Paul, James, Peter, and John; and through the lives of courageous Christians as they lived and died in the sure knowledge that their sins would be forgiven and they would live forever if they put their trust in God and in his Son Jesus Christ.

EPILOGUE

The conclusion of the drama is found in the book of Revelation. This is not an easy book to understand, but it is clear that the writer was saying that just as history began with God (Genesis 1-3), so God will be at the end of history. To be sure, no one knew exactly when

it would end or how it would end, but all Christians agreed that history would not just run down as a clock runs down, but that God's kingdom would come in all its fullness and that the king who would reign over it for the Father would be none other than the Christ who gave his life for them. You will find John's vision of this kingdom in Revelation 21.



CHAPTER 4

Using the Bible

Benjamin Franklin once said to a young man, "My advice to you is that you cultivate an acquaintance with and a firm belief in the Holy Scriptures."

Oliver Cromwell, the great English Puritan, when quite ill, read Philippians 4:11-13, after which he remarked, "That Scripture did once save my life, when my eldest son Robert died."

These two men had evidently learned how to use the Bible in the everyday affairs of life. Through it God could speak to them and guide them. People who have learned to use the Bible correctly have always been strong characters, strong in the knowledge that they were doing God's will and that his spirit was working in them.

How Much Do You Use the Bible?

If all the Bibles were to be taken out of your home, your neighbor's home, your pastor's home, your church, your community, the nation—would it make any difference? Could you get along just as well without the Bible as with it? Many people think they do.

If you don't read the Bible regularly, or if you don't get much help from your reading, why don't you?

Is it because the language seems odd to you and you can't understand what it says? Maybe you need a copy of the Revised Standard Version, which is in modern American English.

Is it because it talks about people who lived two or three thousand years ago in lands on the other side of the earth and you can't see any sense in studying about them? You ask, How can what they do help me in this modern atomic age? They learned many lessons about life and about God that we need to know if we are to live abundant lives in our time.

Is it because the Bible was written by grown men and women, to grown men and women, and for the most part about grown men and women? How can such a book help *you*, a teen-ager, get along with your crowd? The principles for good living are the same for all ages.

Is it because you don't know how to find your way through the Bible to get the parts you need at a particular time? A first step toward being able to use the Bible intelligently is to memorize the names of the sixty-six books in their proper order and to know in general what they contain. You will find a brief statement of the contents of each book on pages 187 and 189. Underlining passages that have special meaning for you is helpful too. Making a list of passages for use when you feel blue or discouraged, when you are afraid, when you are extremely happy, when you are sad, and so forth, may aid you in your devotions.

Is it because the Bible looks so big, and the usual way to read a book is to begin at the beginning and continue to the end? Remember that the Bible is made up of sixty-six books and, while it is good occasionally to read a whole book through in one sitting, smaller parts of the Bible may be read to great advantage.

How to Read the Bible

There are many ways of reading the Bible. Seven are mentioned below. Which of these ways are best for you?

1. *Read the Bible through from start to finish.* There are 1189 chapters in the Bible. If a person reads three chapters a day and five each Sunday, he will finish the Bible in a year with a few days to spare. Most people think that this is not the best way to get help from the Bible. It is too mechanical.

2. *Read it a book at a time.* The Gospel of Mark in the Revised Standard Version takes only twenty-three pages (double-column and large print). It can be read through easily in part of a Sunday afternoon. Amos, Philippians, and other books are much shorter. To get the most out of such reading, one really ought to know when the book was written, where, by whom, to whom, and the like.

3. *Read its beautiful and helpful passages.* This is probably the way most people read the Bible. They have favorite passages to which they turn again and again. Some of the finest are the following:

Exodus 20:1-17	The Ten Commandments
Psalms 23	"The Lord is my shepherd"
Psalms 46	"God is our refuge and strength"
Psalms 121	"I lift up my eyes to the hills"
Isaiah 53	"Surely he has borne our griefs"
Matthew 5, 6, 7	The Sermon on the Mount

John 14
1 Corinthians 13
Romans 12

"Let not your hearts be troubled"
The great "love" chapter
"I appeal to you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God"

Many Christians know large parts of these passages by heart and so have them ready to use when they want or need them.

4. *Read it along with your church school courses.* If done during the week, each class session will mean a great deal more. Studying according to plan with the help of your teacher and your textbook will give you a knowledge and an understanding of great portions of the Bible that will stand you in good stead in your life.

5. *Read it along with some such books as The Story of the Bible* by Walter Russell Bowie. Books like this one help to open up the Bible for us and make it far more interesting than it was before.

6. *Read it along with a plan of daily prayer.* Such books as *Windows of Worship, Gates of Beauty, Pathways of Prayer* suggest a Bible reading for each day of the year. *Venture*, your weekly church school paper, prints daily devotions, including Bible readings.

7. *Read it for the help you need at the moment.* This is probably the best way of all, for you will get from its pages what so many Christians before you have got—help, strength, guidance, comfort, faith, hope, and love. Jesus himself used his Bible for this purpose. Read Matthew 4:1-11 and see how he used Scripture to help him in time of temptation. Read also Matthew 27:46. Here Jesus was quoting the first verse of Psalm 22 in his agony on the cross. Read this psalm and see why he would use this psalm at such a time.

Bible Passages That Help

The following passages may help you—

In time of trouble

Psalm 42:5

Romans 8:28

When you have done something wrong

Isaiah 55:7

1 John 1:8-9

When someone you love has died

John 11:25-26

John 14:1-2

When you are tempted to do something wrong

Hebrews 4:14-16

James 1:12-15

When you have an enemy you don't like

Matthew 5:43-46

Matthew 18:21-22

When you are very thankful and happy

Psalms 103

Psalms 150

When you are not sure what the right way of life is

Micah 6:8

Matthew 25:31-46

PART II
Christian Beliefs

CHAPTER 5

About God

The next several chapters have to do with what we as Christians believe. Some people say that it doesn't matter what we believe; we need only to live good, true, and useful lives. It is what a person does, not what he believes, that counts. But this is hardly true, for what a person truly believes has much to do with how he lives. If you believe that Jesus stands for something finer than Napoleon, you will live one way; but if you believe Napoleon was the finer, you will live another way. Suppose that of two men living side by side the one believed in a God who was a loving Father caring for all people, and the other believed in no God at all. Do you think you could tell which



was which by watching how they treated their children? their neighbors? With which one would you rather live?

God

This is a very simple word of three letters, which we say quite easily. Do we know what it means? Who is God? What does he look like? Can he be seen at all? Where is he? Is he above the earth somewhere? Is he inside us speaking to us in our consciences? Is he in the trees making them put forth leaves in springtime? What does he do? Does he do anything? Does he care about us at all? Does he hear us when we pray to him? Does he know that we are thinking about him now?

What the Bible and the Catechisms Say About God

God has been trying to show himself fully to his children for a long, long time, and they in turn have been thinking about him. We may well begin by trying to find out what they have said. Write in your own words the ideas about God in the following:

Psalms 25:8 _____

Psalms 90:4 _____

Psalms 139:1-4 _____

Psalms 139:7-12 _____

Isaiah 42:5 _____

Matthew 6:8-9 _____

Luke 12:6 _____

John 4:24 _____

John 14:9 _____

Ephesians 4:6 _____

James 1:17 _____

1 John 3:1 _____

1 John 4:8 _____

1 John 4:12 _____

Question 26 in the *Heidelberg Catechism* and Question 6 in the *Evangelical Catechism* _____

What, Then, Do We Believe About God?

There are many, many true ideas about God. Perhaps we can gather up the most important ones in six statements.

1. *God is spirit.* You cannot see him. But neither can you see your mother. Her hands and face you can see. She is in the body that you see, but your mother you cannot see. So it is with God. We can see him at work in his world. He shows himself in the beauties and marvels of nature and in the lives of Christlike men. These we can see, but God himself no man has seen. Being spirit, God is everywhere. As someone has put it, we cannot talk about God behind his back, because he is present everywhere.

2. *God is the Creator of all things.* Everything was made by him. It did not just happen—that we can't imagine. God made it and, we believe, made it for our happiness and well-being. Everything we have comes from him. There is nothing of which we can possibly think that did not come from him. He is a great God, and very powerful. Only such a God could have made this universe, and could govern it day by day. His knowledge is as great as his power. He knows all things.

3. *God is good.* Because he himself is good, he wants us to be good like him. When men are bad, sooner or later their badness does not work. The reason for this is that a good God has made our world, and goodness will work in it but badness will not. It takes a long time for this to prove itself in some cases, but it always does.

4. *God is a loving Father.* This is our finest name for him. Jesus used it time and time again. We can go to him as children go to their father. We can talk to him, and he listens. He loves us and cares for us each one—more than the best father who ever lived. He has the same kind of plans and hopes for our world that a good father has for his family. He wants us all to be happy and good, and to live together as brothers.

5. *God is like Jesus.* This is our finest Christian belief about God. When we want to know what God is like, we stop first to recall what Jesus was like—brave, kind, caring for all men, sorry when they went wrong. Then we say that God is like that.

6. *God is more than we can know or think.* He is very great and we are small. When we have done our best to imagine how great he is, he is beyond that. When we have done our best to imagine how good he is, he is beyond that. There is only one fitting way to speak to God, or to speak about him—and that is with deep reverence.

Some Questions About God

Where is God? A little boy once said to his mother that God came down a ladder into their backyard to make the roses grow. Was this

right? Can God come "down"? Is he "up"? Or is he everywhere all the time, just as you are all through your body all the time? What do you think?

Why does God allow people to suffer? This is a question which has been troubling men for many centuries, and it is hard to answer. The book of Job in our Bible is about this question. If God is really good, why does he let people, especially good people, suffer?

In a church school class of a junior high department some boys and girls were wondering about this question. John said that a lot of suffering is caused by people themselves. A man becomes drunk, drives his car into a tree alongside the road, and spends painful months in a hospital. God did not do that. The man brought it on himself.

Dick wasn't satisfied with this. He said he believed God deliberately sent suffering at times to punish people for their sins. He had heard of a man who was as dishonest as anyone could imagine, and—sure enough!—his house burned down one night. Wasn't that God's doing?

But this didn't satisfy Mary at all. She said, "What about the thousands of innocent people who suffer? The women and children in a city raided from the air—they suffer terribly. They did nothing to bring on this suffering. Neither have they deserved that God should send such a punishment upon them. Why should they have to suffer? If God is a loving Father, why does he allow it?"

"Well," said Ruth, "their suffering is caused in the long run by the hatred and selfishness in people's hearts which makes them go to war. And God can't stop that right off, so long as he leaves us free to choose between right and wrong. I can more or less understand that. But what gets me is the suffering caused by an earthquake, or by cancer. Why does God allow that? Is it because we need some hardships for our own good?"

What do you think?

What is meant by "God in Three Persons, blessed Trinity"? We sing these words every time we use the familiar hymn, "Holy, Holy, Holy." What do they mean? How can there be three Persons in one God? Quite likely your pastor opens the Sunday morning service by saying, "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" (or "Holy Ghost"; *ghost* is an old English word meaning "spirit"). What does this mean? Is the Holy Spirit different from God?

To answer these questions is not easy. Perhaps the best answer is this: God meant so much to the early Christians that they could not put all he did mean into one word or statement. They knew God as the Creator of all the earth and the Father of all mankind. That was God the Father. But then this same God who had made all things

showed himself to them most clearly in Jesus Christ. That was God the Son. But after Jesus' earthly life was over, the Spirit of God who had made everything and whom they had seen in Jesus was still with them—they were sure of it! That was God the Spirit.

When they used the word *trinity* they didn't mean three Gods at all. The Latin *trinitas* means "three in one." When they spoke of three persons they did not mean three separate individuals. The word *person* comes from the Latin word *persona*—which was first the mask an actor wore on the stage in those times, then the actor himself, and finally came to mean a separate individual. So when they first used the word *person*, a part at least of their meaning was that the one God had come to them in three different roles, just as one actor can play three different parts, or as one man can be a son, husband, and a father at the same time. They meant more than this, but they did not mean three separate gods. All of this is clearly stated in the Athanasian Creed, which was drawn up about six hundred years after Christ, and reads in part as follows:

So the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God.

And yet they are not three Gods, but one God.

So likewise the Father is Lord, the Son Lord, and the Holy Ghost Lord.

And yet not three Lords, but one Lord.

And in this Trinity none is before, or after another: none is greater, or less than another.

But the whole three Persons are coeternal together, and coequal.

Both the *Evangelical Catechism* (in question 10) and the *Heidelberg Catechism* (in question 5) speak of the Trinity. Look at the answers to these questions.

So when you come upon some mention of the Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, it can mean to you that Christians believe in one God who as Father made all things, as Son showed himself clearly to men in order to lead them away from their sins into a full life, and as Spirit is even now at work in the world and in our own hearts.

How the Bible Describes God

Fill in the following blanks with one or more words from the Scripture passages listed.

- Genesis 17:1
..... Deuteronomy 33:27
..... Psalm 99:9
..... Psalm 119:137
..... Ecclesiastes 12:1

..... Isaiah 63:16a
 Nahum 1:7
 John 4:24
 1 John 1:9
 1 John 4:8

True or False?

Indicate with a T if the statement is true, with an F if false.

- 1. Man cannot see God because he is spirit.
- 2. God created everything in the world except man.
- 3. God is all-powerful and knows all things.
- 4. God can do no wrong.
- 5. God loves only those who do his will.
- 6. Whatever Jesus is like, God is like also.
- 7. God loves and cares for us all the time.
- 8. God gives us everything that we pray for.
- 9. God always sends suffering to punish people for their sins.
- 10. God allows us to choose between right and wrong.

The Trinity

You will find in each of the pairs of Scripture passages one or more words that are the same. Write these in the blanks.

GOD IS	{	Isaiah 64:8a	}		}	YET ONE.
		Matthew 6:9				
		Matthew 16:16	}			
		John 1:34				
		John 14:26	}			
Acts 1:8						

How — Why — How

Answer the following questions in your own words.

How is God like Jesus?

Why does God allow people to suffer?

How can we live the kind of life that God wants us to live?

CHAPTER 6

About Jesus

Unfortunately, we have no photographs of our Lord. There were no cameras in those days. None of the artists who have painted him ever saw him or even a photograph of him. Some of them have probably given us the wrong idea of him, without meaning to do so. They have been so anxious to show him as being kind and gentle (which of course he was), that they left out of his face and his body the manly strength that must have been there. But more and more artists are showing us this kind of picture. Do you think that Jacques Barosin, who painted the picture on the next page, succeeded in showing Jesus' manly strength?

Knowing About Jesus

The first step in coming to love and follow Jesus is to learn to know him as a person. We can't love someone unless we know him. One way in which we learn to know Jesus is to read about him in the Bible. Sometime before you are confirmed you should read each one of the Gospels. These contain his life story. Then test yourself on the facts of his life. Turn to page 41 and fill in the blanks in the story. Check your answers with the Bible references given. Make sure you know the story of Jesus well.

Then imagine what his life would be like if he were walking the earth today. Let us ask some questions with all reverence.

Would he look strong, or weak?

Would you be afraid to go near him?

With what kind of people would he spend his time? Good people? Bad people? White people? Black people? Rich people? Poor people? Americans? Foreigners?

How do you think he might earn his living today?
What would his face and manner make you think about? God?
Money? Success? Being good?
What would he like most about your community? your church? your
nation? yourself? Would he dislike anything in any of these?
What are some of the things he would spend his time on?
Are there any things you can't picture him as doing?

Names by Which Jesus Is Known

Two verses in the New Testament contain five important names for Jesus. Mark 1:1: "The beginning of the gospel of *Jesus Christ*, the *Son of God*"; John 13:13: "You call me *Teacher* and *Lord*; and you are right, for so I am."

Jesus. This was the name given him as a baby. It was given to other babies also. It is the Greek way of writing "Joshua," which means "Jehovah is salvation," or more simply "God saves us." So when we call Jesus *Savior*, we are only saying what his name means.

Christ. This means "the anointed one." The Hebrew word *Messiah* means exactly the same. For a long time the Jewish people had looked for the Messiah, the deliverer who would set them free from their



THE GREAT COMMISSION

Jacques Barosin

enemies and bring in a better day of righteousness and peace. When they called Jesus "Christ," they meant that he was the Deliverer at last, and was set apart to this task just as a king is anointed with oil. He was and is the Messiah, the Christ, the Deliverer, but not quite the kind the Jews had expected. They wanted a military leader, but Christ was a spiritual leader who came not to establish an earthly kingdom like David's but to bring in the kingdom of God on earth.

Son of God. Perhaps we can get close to the meaning of this name through some words Jesus himself spoke. Once Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father." Jesus answered, "Have I been with you so long, and yet you do not know me, Philip? He who has seen me has seen the Father" (John 14:9). How near he must have felt to God to be able to say that! Can you think of any other person who ever lived who would dare to say it? Jesus is as close to God as a son can be to his father, and as much like God as a son can be like his father. All through the years Christians have called him "Son of God." To say it another way, in Jesus God walked the earth as in no other person.

Teacher (or Master). Jesus was the teacher, and the twelve disciples were his pupils. ("Disciple" means "pupil.") When we become his followers he becomes our teacher, that we may learn how to live as citizens in the kingdom of God.

Lord. This was the word that Greek-speaking people generally used when they wanted to say "God." So you can see what the early Christians meant when they called Jesus "Lord." They were lifting him up on a level with God himself.

You cannot read long in the Gospels without realizing that Jesus' favorite name for himself was *Son of man*. Through this name he was binding himself to humanity, and yet his use of the name set him apart from other men. "The Son of man came to seek and to save the lost" (Luke 19:10). "The Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins" (Mark 2:10).

What Jesus Has Meant to Some of His Followers

The names we have been thinking about show a part of what Jesus meant to the early Christians, as well as later ones. For nineteen hundred years the pages of Christian history are full of tributes to him. These are to be found in many places.

In the Bible. We cannot begin to mention them all. One of the finest is found in Philippians 2:5-11. It was written by Paul.

In Christian Literature. Here too there are many tributes to Jesus Christ.

In prose we read such tributes as this one by Georgia Harkness: "In

Jesus . . . we see God manifesting himself in a human life. Jesus' name for God was Father, and uniquely beyond all other men he lived as a son of God ought to live. In Jesus we have the world's supreme revelation of God. Jesus lived like God; prayed to God; triumphed over temptation and pain in Godlike mastery; gave himself like God in love and suffering for men."¹

Poets have written much about what Jesus meant to them, and they have helped others to express their own thoughts. For instance, the following poem by Harry Webb Farrington expresses beautifully what many people have thought.

I know not how that Bethlehem's Babe
 Could in the God-head be;
I only know the Manger Child
 Has brought God's life to me.

I know not how that Calvary's cross
 A world from sin could free;
I only know its matchless love
 Has brought God's love to me.

I know not how that Joseph's tomb
 Could solve death's mystery;
I only know a living Christ,
 Our immortality.²

One of the most beautiful hymns is "Fairest Lord Jesus" (No. 182 in *The Hymnal*). Notice how the thought runs in the second and third stanzas. There are many things that are fair in the earth below and in the heavens above—meadows, woodlands, sunshine, moonlight, twinkling starry host, angels. But Jesus is fairer, brighter, purer than them all. This hymn is well worth committing to memory.

What Jesus Can Mean to Us

It is hard to put this in a few words, but we can try.

Through him we can find the way to live. He has showed us how to live. He has made it clear. There is no excuse for our not knowing what the way is. He has gone before us in that way. He says to us, as he said to his disciples again and again, "Follow me."

Through him we can find God. We can find God revealed in other places, of course. He is revealed in the beauties of tree and flower and sky and sea. He is revealed in the great prophets of the Old Testament

¹ From *Understanding the Christian Faith* by Georgia Harkness. Used by permission of Abingdon Press.

² From *Valleys and Visions* by Harry Webb Farrington. Used by permission of Mrs. H. W. Farrington.

and other religious leaders both before and after Jesus. But nowhere is God to be found revealed so clearly as in the life, the death, the resurrection, the teachings, the person of Jesus. The other places are like cloudy panes of glass, but here is one that is as clear as can be where the love of God can shine straight through. So when we want to know what God is like, we who are Christians turn to Jesus. First we ask ourselves, "What was Jesus like?" Then we say, "God is like that."

Through him we can be saved from sin to an endless life of goodness and happiness. There are two ways in which this is true.

1. Jesus saves us from our sins and leads us to a better, fuller life by helping us to find the way to live. He points it out to us. He beckons us to follow him in it. He shows us what we ought to be.

2. But he also saves us by helping us to find God. Sometimes, when we are deep in wrongdoing, nothing will lift us out but to remember that someone still loves us and believes in us. It can be a father, a mother, a teacher, a pastor. For countless people it has been God. Jesus shows us how much God loves us, even when we have done wrong. He shows us God's love by his teachings and his life, but most of all by his death on the cross. There we see how much he loved us. Since God is like him, that is the way God loves us all the time whether we deserve it or not, and that is the way God suffers when we sin. Jesus suffered on the cross six hours. Year in and year out with just that sort of love God is trying to draw us to the way of goodness and happiness. In the life and death of our Lord the love of God lays hold of us to save us from our sins.

One of the words that the Christian Church has used to describe what we have been talking about is "atonement." It really means "at-one-ment." When we have strayed away from God, and he and we have become two, then through Jesus we can be made one again.

This salvation is not just for this life. Since we believe that we live on after the death of our bodies, the life of goodness and happiness to which Jesus saves us is endless. It is eternal life.

All of this is put in one verse of the Bible, John 3:16: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."

Through him the world can be saved from sin to goodness and happiness. It is only as the nations follow his way of love and turn to serve his Father, that wars and hatred and suffering will cease.

We have said that Jesus *can* mean all this to us. That is the right way to put it. None of this will happen automatically, but only as we come to know him, love him, and follow him as Lord and Master.

The Life of Jesus

(A Completion Test)

His family were Jews. The mother's name was Mary ✓ (Matthew 1:16), and the father's name was Joseph ✓ (Matt. 1:16). There were at least two girls and four boys besides Jesus. The boys' names were: James ✓, Judas ✓, Josee ✓, and Simon ✓ (Mark 6:3).

Jesus was probably born in the year 6 B.C. in the town of Bethlehem ✓ in the province of Judea ✓ (Matt. 2:1). His boyhood home was the town of Galilee ✓ (Luke 2:39) in the province of Nazareth ✓.

The only fact we know about his boyhood is that he took a trip to Jerusalem ✓ (Luke 2:41) when he was 12 ✓ years old (Luke 2:42).

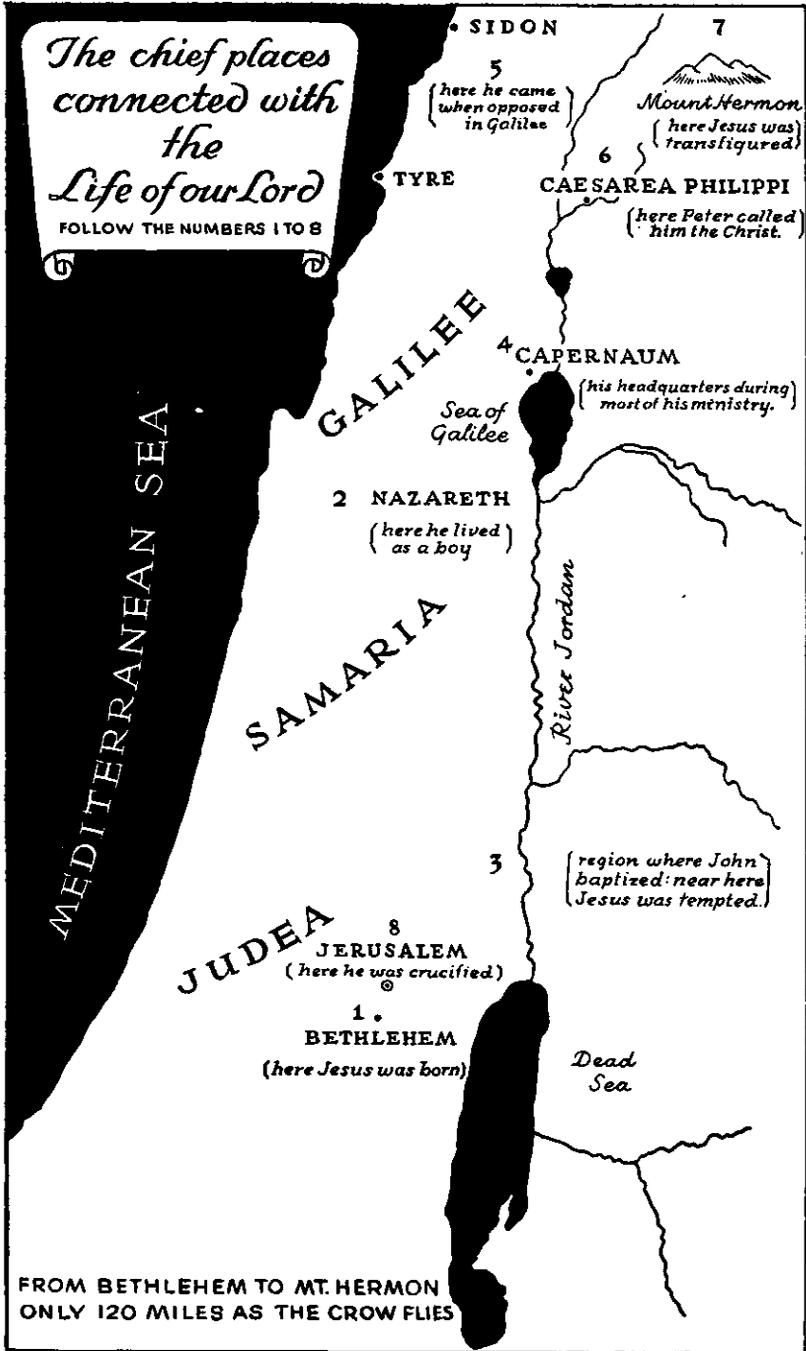
Joseph was a carpenter ✓ (Mark 6:3) by trade. We think that Joseph died in Jesus' youth. So Jesus probably had to support the family by his own hard toil for many years.

When Jesus was a man, a prophet named John ✓ (Mark 1:4) was baptizing people to the south in the river Jordan ✓ (Mark 1:5). Jesus left the carpenter's bench, and was baptized. He heard God's voice saying to him, I have art my beloved son with thee I am well pleased. ✓ (Mark 1:11). This was the beginning of his short ministry of about two years. He was now to give all his time to his heavenly Father's business.

First he went into the nearby wilderness ✓ (Mark 1:12), where he spent 40 ✓ (Mark 1:13) days in what we call the Temptation. He was wrestling with the question of the best way of doing God's will in bringing in the kingdom of God.

For a few months he worked in the land of Judea ✓ (John 3:22). But soon John the Baptist was arrested ✓ (Mark 1:14), and it seemed best for Jesus to return to his home province of Galilee ✓ (Mark 1:14).

Here he spent most of his ministry. His headquarters were in the town of Caper'na-um ✓ (Mark 1:21) on the Sea of Galilee. Quite soon he called three pairs of brothers to be his first followers.



Their names were: Simon and Cephas (Mark 1:16),
..... and (Mark 1:19),
and (John 1:43 and 45).

His ministry consisted first of teaching the great truths of God the Father and his kingdom of love and righteousness. Some of his finest teachings are gathered together in Matthew 5-7. We call these teachings the Sermon on the Mount. In 5:3-11 are nine verses called the Beatitudes. Each one begins with the word "blessed," which really means "happy." These verses tell who are the truly happy persons, the meek, the poor in spirit

In 5:44 he taught that men should love their enemies. In 6:9 he called God our Father. In 6:25 he taught that men should not worry about what they shall eat and drink, or clothing, because the heavenly Father will provide for them (6:32). Rather they should seek first the kingdom of God. In 7:24 he said that everyone who hears his sayings and does them shall be like a man who

Luke has saved for us two beautiful parables or stories which Jesus told. The one is about a good son (10:33), and the other is about a younger son (15:13) who left his father's home and wasted his inheritance and part of his life. Just as the father joyfully welcomed him back when he repented, so God welcomes us back into fellowship with him when we are truly sorry and ask his forgiveness for any wrong we have done.

Jesus' ministry consisted of more than teaching. He also healed (Mark 1:34) many sick people, who found in him new strength and hope.

At first he was quite popular. So many people flocked to follow him that he had to flee to the desert (Mark 2:2). Soon, however, opposition arose, particularly among the scribes and Pharisees (Mark 2:6) and the elders of the synagogue (Mark 2:24). Among other things, they did not like it that he refused to be bound by their narrow laws about the Sabbath (Mark 2:24).

Sometimes he took side trips, as for example across the Sea of Galilee into the country of the Decapolis (Mark 5:1).

Meanwhile he had gathered about him 12 (Mark 3:14) disciples. These he taught and then 2 x 2

..... (Mark 6:7).
When the opposition grew too strong he slipped away north into the neighborhood of Caesarea and Capernaum (Mark 7:24).

Later he went north again, this time to Caesarea..... (Mark 8:27). Here it was that Peter made his great statement of faith in Jesus, calling him for the first time Son of God..... (Mark 8:29).

Jesus now saw the end of his life drawing near. He began to tell his disciples that the Son of man must suffer..... (Mark 8:31).

About this time he took his closest friends up on a high mountain, and he was transfigured (Mark 9:2). That is to say, he looked different to them. It was a sort of second temptation. He wrestled with the problem of facing death, and he won. No wonder that he looked different. From now on he steadfastly set his face toward Jerusalem (Luke 9:51), where he would be put to death.

He made his way there on the Eastern (Mark 10:1) side of the Jordan River. This, we think, was in the year A.D. 29, when Jesus was thirty-five years old.

On the first Palm Sunday, the beginning of the last week of his earthly life, he made a triumphal entry into Jerusalem, while those who followed shouted, "
....."

(Matt. 21:9). That night he spent in the nearby village of Bethany..... (Mark 11:11).

On Monday morning he went into Jerusalem into the temple and cleansed it (Mark 11:15).

On Tuesday and Wednesday he taught in Jerusalem, and probably spent some time in quiet outside the city.

On Thursday he gathered his disciples together for a last supper in an upper room (Mark 14:15). Here it was that he said that the bread and wine should remind his followers ever after of the sacrifice of his body and blood.

After the singing of a hymn they went outside the city to Gethsemane (Mark 14:26). Here at a place called Gethsemane (Mark 14:32) he prayed in great earnestness to his Father. And here one of the twelve disciples, named Judas (Mark 14:43), betrayed him into the hands of his enemies with a kiss.

Sometime that unhappy Thursday night or early Friday morning Jesus' captors led him to the high priest's palace (Mark 14:53) to be questioned. As though Jesus did not have enough to bear, Peter, one of the inner circle of disciples, denied that he knew Jesus (Mark 14:71).

Friday morning the religious leaders took him before the Roman governor, whose name was Pontius Pilate (Mark 15:1), to be tried and—they hoped—sentenced to death. They charged him with claiming to be king of the Jews, which would not sound good to a Roman governor. After much maneuvering, Pilate, to satisfy the crowd, had Jesus whipped and ordered him to be crucified (Mark 15:15).

The soldiers took him outside the city wall to a place called Golgotha (Mark 15:22), and nailed him hand and foot to a wooden cross. This was about the third (Mark 15:25) hour (9 A.M. in our reckoning). While on the cross, Jesus spoke seven times. His words revealed his greatness. In the agony of the cross his first thoughts were for others, and only toward the end did he think of himself. These "Seven Words from the Cross" are:

1. Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. (Luke 23:34).
2. I surely say to you today, you will be with me in Paradise. (Luke 23:43).

3. Jesus (John 19:26-27).
4. Jesus (Mark 15:34).
5. I thirst (John 19:28).
6. My God, My God, why have you forsaken me? (John 19:30).
7. Father (Luke 23:46).

Soon after the 6th (Mark 15:34) hour (3 P.M.) he died. Two friends, Joseph and Nickodemus (John 19:38-39), buried Jesus in a rock-hewn tomb.

On Sunday morning three women named Mary Magdalene, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Salome (Mark 16:1) had their sorrow turned into joy by the glad assurance "....." (Matt. 28:6). Their Lord was not dead. He was alive! They hurried to tell the good news to the (Matthew 28:8).

For forty days Jesus showed himself to many people, even to as many as at one time (1 Cor. 15:6), and then men saw him no more. But Jesus Christ still lives. In the presence of his Father whom he served so well he lives forevermore, and some day he will rule over all the earth.

The Names Jesus Called Himself

- ✓ 1. Matthew 8:20.
- ✓ 2. John 8:12.
3. John 10:7.
- ✓ 4. John 10:11. Shepherd
- ✓ 5. John 11:25. Resurrection and Life
- ✓ 6. John 14:6. I am the Light of the World
7. John 15:1.

How Jesus Showed He Was Human

- ✓ Luke 2:40. He grew
- ✓ Matthew 8:24. I see the sea
- ✓ John 19:28. He thirsted
- ✓ 1 Corinthians 15:3. he died

How Jesus Showed He Was Divine

- ✓ Matthew 11:27. He knew God's Father
- ✓ Luke 4:43. He preached
- ✓ John 10:30. He + the Father are one
- ✓ John 12:49. He spoke with authority
- ✓ John 16:28. he came from God

Jesus' Purpose in Life

- ✓ Luke 19:10. He came to seek and save the lost

The Twelve Disciples

Write as many names as you can from memory. Then copy the rest from Mark 3:14-19.

- ✓ Peter
- ✓ Judas
- ✓ Simon
- ✓ Andrew
- ✓ Philip
- ✓ Bartholomew
- ✓ Matthew
- ✓ Thaddeus
- ✓ James
- ✓ John
- ✓ James
- ✓ Judas

Jesus' Appearances

To whom did Jesus appear after his resurrection?

- ✓ Matthew 28:1-10. the women
- ✓ Matthew 28:16-17. the disciples
- ✓ Mark 16:9. Mary, Magdalene

- ✓ Luke 24:15-31. *Resurrection*
- ✓ John 20:19-24. *Resurrection*
- ✓ John 21:1-24. *Resurrection*
- ✓ John 20:26-28. *Resurrection*
- ✓ 1 Corinthians 15:6-8. *Resurrection*

Jesus' Character

List as many traits as you can that describe Jesus' character.

kind
merciful
loving
gentle

Passion Week

Write here the main happenings on each day of the last week of Jesus' life.

- ✓ Sunday *He was crucified* Mark 11:1-11
- ✓ Monday *He was in Gethsemane* Matthew 21:12-13
- ✓ Tuesday *He was crucified* Mark 12:28-34
- Wednesday *He rested in Bethany* Luke 22:1-6
- ✓ Thursday *He ate the passover* Matthew 26:17-29
- ✓ Friday *He gave up his spirit & was crucified* Mark 15
- ✓ Saturday *He was buried* Matthew 27:62-66
- ✓ Sunday *He was resurrected* Mark 16:1-9

Your Favorites

✓ 1. Write here in your own words your favorite story about Jesus.

2. Check your favorite parable of Jesus if it is listed here. If not, write in your favorite. Then write why the one you indicated is your favorite.

Matthew 7:24-27.

Matthew 25:14-30.

Mark 4:1-20.

Luke 10:25-37.

✓ Luke 15:11-32.

✗ Another. *The Lord's prayer*

Why is it your favorite?

Everyone should know

What Jesus Teaches Us To Do

✓ Matthew 5:44 *Love your enemies*

✓ Matthew 6:9a

✓ Matthew 12:50

✓ Matthew 18:21-22

Matthew 22:37-39

Matthew 25:14-30

Matthew 25:31-40

Mark 1:15

John 3:16

John 15:12

CHAPTER 7

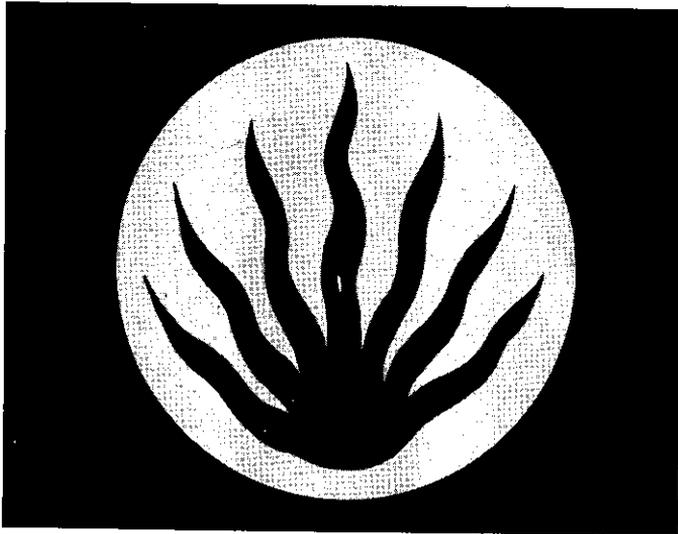
About the Holy Spirit

Jesus said, "God is spirit," and so we may say that there has always been a Holy Spirit. In the very beginning of the Bible we read that "the Spirit of God was moving over the face of the waters." In Job 33:4 Elihu says:

"The spirit of God has made me,
and the breath of the Almighty gives me life."

Isaiah was conscious that God's Spirit was speaking and working through him. In Isaiah 48:16 we read, "The Lord God has sent me and his Spirit."

All through the centuries some men have been conscious of God's



Spirit working in them and through them, guiding their thoughts, giving them power to do great things for him. We often say that such people are inspired. The Latin word from which our English word comes means to "breathe into." In other words, God breathes his Spirit into these people and they become God-inspired, able to do and to say things that they were not able to do or to say by their own power.

At the time of Jesus' baptism, the Spirit of God came upon him and filled his whole being so that from this time on Jesus was able to live such a wonderful life and do such mighty works that people were conscious of an overwhelming power working through him.

When Jesus realized that he did not have long to live, he began to prepare his disciples for the time when he would no longer be with them in person. He promised them, "I will pray the Father, and he will give you another Counselor, to be with you for ever" (John 14:16); and again he said, "The Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you" (John 14:26). At another time he said, "You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

The Holy Spirit and the Christian Church

But it was not until Pentecost that his followers understood what Jesus had meant. As they prayed behind locked doors they too were "filled with the Holy Spirit." Their mood was changed from one of defeat to one of victory. Their lives were changed through the power of the Holy Spirit working in them and through them, so that they were able to go out and do all the wonderful things about which we read in the New Testament.

But this giving of the Holy Spirit was not a one-time affair. As people joined the fellowship of the followers of Jesus Christ they too "received the Holy Spirit." They too were conscious of God's Spirit leading them, teaching them, counseling them. In 2 Corinthians 2:10-13 Paul testified to the work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of Christians. Read this passage thoughtfully.

The Holy Spirit has been the guiding spirit of the Christian Church down through the centuries. He is at work in the Church today. He has been at work through your church school teachers and your pastor, teaching you what Jesus demands of his followers and helping you to understand what is good and true.

When you promise to accept Christ as your Savior and Lord, he will become your Counselor and will guide you through life if you will listen

to his voice; he will strengthen you and give you the power necessary to overcome difficulties and fears as you carry out the will of God in your life; he will comfort you in times of sorrow or trouble. Jesus said, "Lo, I am with you always," and he will be if you let his Holy Spirit lead you. Pray that you may be ready to receive him into your life, and that you may henceforth be led by him.

For Further Study

1. Reread what was said about the Holy Trinity on page 32.
2. It will help you to understand the character and work of the Holy Spirit if you will study hymns and questions in your catechism dealing with the third Person in the Trinity.

In the *Evangelical Catechism*, see questions 76-86; in the *Heidelberg Catechism*, questions 1, 21, 53. What further information do you get about the Holy Spirit from the answers to these questions?

In *The Hymnal*, look in the Topical Index for the hymns dealing with the Holy Spirit. Read these, and notice what each poet has said about him. See also the "Gloria Patri," No. 492.

3. Read in Galatians 5:16-25 what Paul said is meant by living by the Spirit. What are the fruits of such living?

CHAPTER 8

About Ourselves

What do you think of when you say "human beings"? Here are some answers that have been given. Look them over and see if you think they are true.

A human being is a collection of chemicals, worth a dollar or two.

A human being is a high type of animal.

A human being is a spirit, part of God's Spirit.

A human being is a social being. He likes to be with others.

A human being is the "temple of God."

A human being is a creative person who can express himself through sounds that form words or beautiful music, through color and lines that make beautiful paintings or drawings, through scratches on paper that tell a story, and through inventions that make life easier and more meaningful to him.

A human being is a moral being who can tell right from wrong and can feel sorry for having done wrong.

A human being is eternal. He does not die when his body dies, but lives on forever.

You may never have thought about this before, but it makes a great deal of difference how we think of ourselves. If we think of ourselves only as a collection of chemicals, what difference does it make what we do? But if we think of ourselves as the "temple of God" it makes a great deal of difference what we think and do. So let's think of ourselves for a while.

What Do We as Christians Believe About Ourselves?

1. *We are children of God.* Perhaps we have said this, or heard it said, so often that we have forgotten the wonder of it. We ought to repeat over and over to ourselves the words of 1 John 3:1: "See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God."

If we are God's children, then we are somewhat like him. Children generally resemble their parents. It is not that our bodies look like him, but that our spirits are somewhat like his. God is keenly aware of the difference between right and wrong, and so are we—to some extent. God is interested in righteousness and goodness, and so are we—to some extent. We can think God's thoughts after him—to some extent.

If we are God's children, we are very precious in his sight. Any father worthy of the name cares for each of his children. God is interested in what happens to each one of us. He earnestly wants the best for us.

2. *All men everywhere are children of God.* If we are God's children, we must believe that all men are also God's children. It is not the color of our skin or eyes that makes us children of God; nor the amount of money we have; nor the church we belong to; nor the fact that we were born in America. It is merely his love for us as human beings. So, then, Negroes are children of God. And Jews. And Japanese. And Hindus. And Roman Catholics. And Methodists. And millionaires. And labor union leaders. And men lying drunk in a gutter. And criminals in the penitentiaries. And those whom we dislike most.

3. *We often sin.* (Read questions 4 and 5 in the *Heidelberg Catechism*, or questions 52 and 55 in the *Evangelical Catechism*.) These state clearly that all of us do sin. It is true, is it not? Even though we are God's children, we often do things contrary to the Father's will. And that is what sin is.

Sometimes we take too narrow a view of what sin is. Sinful people, we say, are those who get drunk, or steal, or lie, or kill. Undoubtedly this is all sinful. But Jesus found much sin among the "good" people of his time. The truth is that sin is broader than stealing and lying, and all of us sin at one time or another.

You remember that in the Garden of Gethsemane our Lord said, "Not my will, but thine, be done" (Luke 22:42). Sin is just the opposite of that. It is saying, "Not thy will, but mine, be done." Sin is putting what we want ahead of what God wants. God wants only good for all his children. We want something for ourselves, and go after it regardless of what happens to other people. God wants the good of our souls or characters. We want pleasure for our bodies, and go after it regardless of what happens to our souls. Sin is following our own selfish wills, instead of trying to follow God's will. That is why sin shuts us up in ourselves, cutting us off from other people and from God as well.

4. *We need God's forgiveness.* When we have done what is wrong, we do not feel right inside until we have sought and found God's forgiveness, and sometimes the forgiveness of people we have wronged, as well. The parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32) teaches about

our need of God's forgiveness and his willingness to forgive. In this story the father stands for God. The younger son (the prodigal) stands for all of us who stray so far from our Father's home that we are "lost." The older son stands for all of us who think we are doing our duty to God and yet cannot forgive a brother who has strayed away. Such a person needs God's forgiveness too.

Notice what Jesus was saying in this parable.

The father was sitting, waiting for his son to come back, watching anxiously for him. So God is anxious and eager for us to come back when we have sinned.

The father could not make the son come back. Neither can God make us come back.

The son was made to turn back home partly by the unhappiness that came to him in the far country, and partly by the remembrance of his father's goodness. So we are made to turn away from sin partly by the fact that sin doesn't pay, and partly by the thought of our Father watching for us to return.

When the son came back home, he immediately confessed his sin, and because he was so evidently sorry the father forgave him gladly. So God forgives us gladly when we confess our sins and come to him in true repentance, asking him to forgive us.

But the father could not forgive the son until "he came to himself," and started back home. Neither can God forgive us, until we recognize our sinfulness and seek his forgiveness.

When the "good" son refused to come in and join in the joy of the return of the wayward brother, the father came out to him and pleaded with him to see his point of view. So God seeks us out and pleads with us not to shut ourselves out of fellowship with him and with our brothers. If we do, then we too need to seek the forgiveness of God and of our brothers.

The Christian Church believes that it is through Christ that we are saved from our sins. Through faith in him we can turn our backs on the old life and begin anew, knowing that our fellowship with God has been restored. Read John 3:16-18.

5. *We find true happiness only by losing ourselves in something good.* Here is a strange thing. We cannot be happy by trying to be happy. If we look for happiness in eating and drinking, all we find in the end is indigestion. If we look for happiness in money and success, all we find in the end is restlessness and wanting more of the same. But if we forget ourselves, and become interested in other people, or the work of the church, or some good cause like helping white and colored people to get along together well—suddenly we find that we are happy! As Jesus

put it: "He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for my sake will find it" (Matthew 10:39). This is one of the strangest facts about us human beings. It must be that God has made us this way.

6. *We are meant to live forever.* This is an important part of our belief about ourselves. We do not understand altogether how we can live on after our bodies die. Neither can we picture very clearly just what the life beyond this one is like. But it is not necessary to know all about these matters. We only need to be sure that God is our Father and cares for each one of us. If this is so, he will not care for us seventy years, more or less, and then forget us. His care will continue. His love is not limited to this life on this little planet we call the earth. His love goes everywhere. Therefore we can face death for others or for ourselves, knowing full well that it cannot separate us from God's love or take us out of his hands.

Some Questions to Think About

1. In war military leaders must sometimes calculate how many lives it will cost to capture a certain fort or position. If it takes 100,000 lives, the attempt may not be made. If it takes 50,000, it is worth it, they say. Does this fit the Christian belief that human beings are children of God?

2. We have said that *all* men everywhere are children of God. Does this mean that we should never go to war, because all the "enemy" are children of God as truly as we are?

Does it mean that white and colored people in America should have the same schools, or equally good schools, or only as much education as each can use?

Does it mean that the people of India should have as high a standard of living as the American people (as much money, as good homes, as many automobiles)?

Does it mean that a hard-working laborer in a factory should receive as much pay as the hard-working president of the firm, or one-half as much, or one-tenth as much, or one-hundredth as much?

3. Why didn't God make us so that we *could* not sin?

4. Why can't God forgive us until we want to be forgiven? When God forgives, does that wipe out the harm we have done? Does it guarantee we will not sin again? What does God's forgiveness do to us?

5. Who are the happiest people you know? Do they try to be happy? What is it that makes them happy?

6. We believe that we are meant to live forever. Do you think God will give us a chance to grow and learn and do interesting and useful things after our bodies die?

Draw Up a Class Statement of Belief

A good way of summarizing the last four studies is for your class to prepare its own statement of belief. You might plan it in four parts, each beginning, "We believe . . ." and saying:

1. What you believe about God—who he is, where he is, what he is like, how he deals with us, and the like.
2. What you believe about Jesus Christ—who he is, what he is like, what he means to you.
3. What you believe about the Holy Spirit.
4. What you believe about yourselves and all people.

In each of these use your own words as much as possible, and write only what you *really* believe.

A Completion Test

Underscore the right statement which will complete the sentence.

1. All human beings
 - a. are not children of God.
 - b. are children of God only if they are Christians.
 - c. are children of God.
2. We sin against God when we
 - a. try to do what he wants us to do.
 - b. do things which are not according to his will.
 - c. follow the teachings of Jesus.
3. God will forgive us if we
 - a. confess and repent of our sins.
 - b. continue to seek our own desires.
 - c. give a lot of money to the church.
4. We can best keep from sinning by
 - a. putting our faith in Christ.
 - b. keeping away from bad people.
 - c. reading the Bible.
5. Jesus tells us that we can be happy if we
 - a. will just do whatever we want to do.
 - b. will forget ourselves and work with him.
 - c. will work and get a lot of money and become successful.

6. Jesus teaches us
 - a. to ask God for anything.
 - b. to ask God to give us what we need.
 - c. to ask God, "Not thy will, but mine be done."
7. As a human being we have
 - a. a spirit like God's.
 - b. a body like God's.
 - c. a home like God's.
8. It is wrong for us
 - a. to show forgiveness to our friends.
 - b. to show hatred toward those who hurt us.
 - c. to show love toward our enemies.
9. God means for us to live
 - a. only till our body dies.
 - b. just so many planned years.
 - c. forever.

CHAPTER 9

The Apostles' Creed

Through all the centuries of Christianity—even today—people have tried to express their beliefs in writing. The most famous of such statements of belief are the Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed. Most of the statements have begun with the words "I believe." This was true back in the days when Latin was the common language. In Latin, "I believe" was *credo*. And so we now call our statement of belief creeds.

This chapter deals with the Apostles' Creed. But before we look into it further, you may find it interesting to compare the statement of belief that your class has written with the Apostles' Creed. (If you do not already know this creed, you will find it under question 23 in the *Heidelberg Catechism* and under question 11 in the *Evangelical Catechism*.) What does your statement stress that the Apostles' Creed does not mention? What does the Apostles' Creed stress that yours does not mention? What points do the two have in common?

How the Apostles' Creed Started

When you are confirmed, you will be asked to confess your Christian faith before the congregation in the words of the Apostles' Creed. For many centuries Christians have stated their faith in these words. They are sacred with age. When and where and how were they first used?

The answer is that they grew slowly over many years. They were not written by the twelve apostles. You cannot find the Apostles' Creed anywhere in the Bible. Of course the ideas it contains are there, and the apostles believed these ideas with all their hearts. But the Creed itself came later.

The only statement of belief that was asked of the very first Christians was that they assert that "Jesus Christ is Lord." See Acts 16:31; Romans 10:9; 1 Corinthians 12:3; and Philipians 2:11.

The earliest form of the Apostles' Creed was probably drawn up about A.D. 150 at Rome. The language in which it first took shape was probably Greek. It was not so long then as it is now. A man who has studied the matter carefully thinks that this is the way it was written at that time:

I believe in God the Father almighty and in Christ Jesus his son, who was born of Mary the Virgin, was crucified under Pontius Pilate and buried, on the third day rose from the dead, ascended into heaven, sitteth on the right hand of the Father, from whence he cometh to judge quick and dead; and in Holy Spirit, resurrection of flesh.¹

And how was it used? It was part of the service of baptism, by which new members were taken into the Church. It would be quite natural to ask new members to say publicly what they believed. To help them express their beliefs this brief creed was taught to them, and they were asked to repeat it when they were baptized.

You will notice that the statement falls into three parts—a short part on God the Father, a long one on God the Son, and a short one again on the Holy Spirit. The seed from which they come is probably to be found in Matthew 28:19: "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." You can easily see that these words could be added to until they became the Apostles' Creed.

The earliest form of this creed was planned at almost every point to guard against the wrong ways of thinking that were current at that time. The man whose ideas seem to have been feared most was Marcion. Marcion had the strange belief that the God of the Jews and the God of the Christians were two different gods. The one was to be found in the Old Testament, and the other in the New Testament. The second was the father of Jesus and was altogether good, but he was not almighty. He did not make the world, and he did not rule the world. It was the Old Testament God who did these things. Therefore, to make sure that new Christians would not fall into such a wrong way of thinking, the Apostles' Creed was started with the statement: "I believe in God the Father Almighty."

Marcion and some others could not bear to think that Jesus actually lived and suffered on this earth. They said he just seemed to. So the Apostles' Creed comes out boldly and says that Jesus was really born, crucified, and buried.

¹ Reprinted from *The Apostles' Creed* by McGiffert, by permission of Charles Scribner's Sons.

How the Creed Grew to Its Present Form

The earliest form of the Apostles' Creed is only a part of our present one. Many familiar phrases are missing. How did they come to be added? The answer is that they were added little by little, as they were needed.

"The forgiveness of sins" was added shortly after A.D. 200. Everybody believed that baptism washed away all a person's sins up to that moment. But what about sins committed after baptism? Could they be forgiven? Some said they could not, but the main body of the Church said they could. And so a phrase was added to the Creed to make sure that new Christians would have the right belief on this point.

"Holy church" was probably added about the same time. The word "catholic" was put in during the fourth century. It does not mean Roman Catholic, but merely "universal." That is why some of our churches prefer to say "the one holy universal Christian Church."

"Descended into hell" (or hades) was added about the year 400. It did not mean a place of punishment, but simply the place where the dead were thought to be.

And so it went. By the sixth century Christians in western Europe were repeating the Creed exactly the way we do (not in English, of course), and it has lived on ever since.

When you say the Apostles' Creed, then, either at your confirmation service or in an ordinary service, think back to all the people who have used these words in centuries past, and think out to all the people who are using it now around the world. You will value it more highly, if you do this.

Its Meaning for Us

When you say the Apostles' Creed, do you always think of what you are saying? Do you understand what you say? Without trying to explain every word, let us try to see what, in general, each part means, so that the Creed can help us to grow in the Christian life, as it has helped millions before us.

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth. When we say these words, we mean that we believe in an unseen Spirit who is in and through and behind everything we see. He is all-powerful. He made everything there is in the heavens above and on the earth beneath. And—most wonderful of all!—he is our Father. Since this is true, we need fear nothing in life or death, for this is our Father's world.

And in Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son, our Lord. We believe also in Jesus. We believe that he is the Christ, the anointed one set apart to do God's will. We believe that he is God's only begotten Son. All of us

are sons of God, but he alone is so fully and completely God's Son that we can know what the Father is like by looking at him. And this same Jesus is our Lord, whom we will follow and serve to the end.

Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,² born of the Virgin Mary. We believe that Jesus' life came both from God and from men. It came from men, because Mary his mother—for all her goodness—was a human being like any other. But it came also from God. It was so fine that it must have had its source in him.

Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried. We believe that Jesus' love for people and his obedience to God's will were so great that he could not stop short of the cross. So he suffered many things in body and in spirit under the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate. He hung in agony upon the cross. His body died, and was laid to rest in a tomb.

He descended into hell (hades). We believe that Jesus' spirit went where all our spirits go, so that there is no place in this world or the world to come where he has not gone before us.

The third day he rose again from the dead. We believe that Jesus lives, and is alive today and forevermore.

He ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. We believe that throughout all the ages Jesus has the foremost place of honor and love in the presence of the Father whom he served so well.

From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. We believe that all men, those now living and those who have died, are judged by the way they think and feel about Jesus.

I believe in the Holy Spirit.³ We believe that God's Spirit is even now at work in us, and in the world, to fulfill God's plans for his kingdom.

The holy catholic church (or the one holy universal Christian Church), the communion of saints. We believe in one great Church extending throughout the world and through every age, made up of Christians of every denomination and race and nation. We believe that at the communion table, as well as other times, we can feel near to them all, including those who are no longer present in this life.

The forgiveness of sins. We believe that God our Father will gladly forgive our sins, if we turn to him in all sincerity.

The resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. We believe that the life we now live is not for a few years but forever, and that our Father will supply us with the body we may need in the life to come.

² Or, Holy Ghost.

³ Or, Holy Ghost.

Some Questions to Consider

1. Why, do you suppose, did the early Christians devote almost two-thirds of their statement of belief to Jesus Christ?
2. Why did they say nothing about the greater part of his life, but go straight from his birth to his crucifixion?
3. Have you ever noticed that Christians sometimes use another creed, the Nicene? You can find it in "The Order for Holy Communion" in our *Book of Worship*, or in *The Hymnal*. It has the same three divisions as the Apostles' Creed, but each is somewhat longer. Compare the two.
4. If you could keep only one part of the Apostles' Creed, which would you keep? Why?
5. How can a person repeat the Creed Sunday after Sunday and not fall into the habit of merely saying words with little thought of what they mean?

Some Things To Do

1. Try to fit a hymn to each of the phrases of the Apostles' Creed.
2. Take your catechism and see how it explains the various parts of the Apostles' Creed. If you are using the *Evangelical Catechism*, read questions 12-15, 59-71, 75-99. If you are using the *Heidelberg Catechism*, see questions 24-58.

Test on the Apostles' Creed

1. What does the word *creed* mean?
2. The Apostles' Creed tells what Christians have believed about:
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
 - d. _____
 - e. _____
 - f. _____
 - g. _____
 - h. _____
3. What is the difference between a creed and a prayer?
A prayer is _____
A creed is _____
4. What does the first paragraph of the Apostles' Creed say about God?
That he is
a. _____ b. _____ c. _____

5. What does the second paragraph of the Apostles' Creed say about Christ? That he

- | | |
|----|----|
| a. | e. |
| b. | f. |
| c. | g. |
| d. | h. |

6. What is "the Holy Spirit"?

Your Beliefs

1. Do you believe that God is present in life today?

Why do you think so?

2. How does God work in the world today?

3. Why do you call Jesus "Lord"?

4. In what ways does the Holy Spirit work in your life?

5. How do you know that the Holy Spirit is with you?

6. To be forgiven of your sins, what must you do first?

7. What do you believe about eternal life?

PART III

The Christian Way of Life

CHAPTER 10

Trust in God as Jesus Did

We begin now four studies of "The Christian Way of Life." In each of the four chapter titles you will find the words, "as Jesus did." That *is* the Christian way of life, to live as nearly as possible as Jesus did. That means that we are to trust in God, to care for others, to master ourselves, and to seek the kingdom as Jesus did.

How far we fall short of this! We do not trust and love God with all our hearts. Instead, we worry and fret over little things as though there were no God to trust. Sometimes we actually go along day after day without thinking about God at all. Neither do we love other people to the point of suffering for them, as Jesus did. Instead, we are selfish and self-centered a good part of the time. At every point there is all the difference in the world between Jesus and us.

Even if we try all our lives, we will still fall short. But we must try nevertheless, and keep on trying. With God's help, we can make some headway. Paul was speaking for us all when he wrote to the Philippians (3:13-14): "Brethren, I do not consider that I have made it my own; but one thing I do, forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."

How Did Jesus Trust in God?

To Jesus God was more real than anything else—more real than the Sea of Galilee, or the hills around Jerusalem, more real than Peter, or even his mother Mary. Jesus trusted God absolutely. He loved God. He did God's will. He lived in God's presence constantly. All this is seen time and again in his life.

The following passages tell, in our Lord's own words, how he lived

with God. They run from the time he was a boy of twelve until his death. As you copy the main thought of each verse out of your Bible, try to picture Jesus when he said it, and try to imagine how he felt toward his Father at the time.

- ✓ Luke 2:49 *How is it that you were here? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?*
- ✓ Matthew 6:30 *But what about the grass that grows today and is mowed down tomorrow, will it not much more clothe you, O Father, in the sky?*
- ✓ Matthew 11:27 *I have known the Father, but no one else knows Him except the Father and I.*
- ✓ Matthew 22:37 *You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart with all your soul with all your mind.*
- ✓ John 5:17 *My Father is still working, and I am working.*
- ✓ Matthew 26:39 *My Father, if you will, take this cup from me, but not as I will, but as thou wilt.*
- ✓ Luke 23:46 *Father into thy hands I commend my spirit!*

We Too Should Trust in God

God is our Father. He cares for us. He is alive and at work in the world today, just as he was when Jesus walked the earth. As Christians we are to trust him, obey him, love him, worship him, live in his presence constantly. This is the Christian way of life.

It is easy to trust in God when we are well, and the sun is shining, and the world is at peace, and everybody is happy. But in the hard times of life it is not always easy. In each of the following instances what would it mean truly to trust in God?

1. A girl came to her church school teacher at a time when thousands of men were out of work, complaining bitterly that her father had not been able to find a job. She said that her father was a good man, a faithful member of the church. She herself had prayed and prayed that God

would find a job for him, but nothing had happened. If you had been her teacher, what would you have told this girl? Should she trust God to find a job for her father without her father's help? With his help? Should she be told that God is trying his best to provide for all his children, and it is not God's fault, but men's, that her father was out of work? Should she be taught to trust God to care for her family in the life to come, if some of them should die from hunger or disease?

2. In the Second World War forty thousand children lost their lives during the fighting in northern France. Terrible things happen in war. Sometimes it looks as though there is no God in whom we can trust. What does it mean to trust in God when the world seems to be falling to pieces? Does it mean that we can sit quietly by, and wait for God to set things right? Does it mean that if we pray earnestly enough, he will grant victory to our side? Since war is caused by men, then God has nothing to do with starting it or stopping it. Does that mean that God is surely suffering with his children?

3. A boy is trying to decide what vocation to follow. He is about to enter senior high school, and must make up his mind soon so that he can choose the right courses. Can he trust God to give him an exact answer if he prays earnestly about it? Or should he believe rather that God has given him a good mind and wise friends, and that God expects him to secure guidance through these? Or is there some other way in which he can show his trust?

4. The members of a church school class were talking about being saved from sin to an endless life of goodness and happiness. John was of the opinion that we do not need to trust in God for help in this matter, that we can save ourselves by doing the right and avoiding the wrong. Mary did not agree. She said that of course we should try our level best to do the right, but sometimes we fail so badly that only a firm trust in God's unchanging love can do us any good. Who do you think was right? (Question 21 in the *Heidelberg Catechism*, or question 80 in the *Evangelical Catechism*, is worth studying and memorizing on this point. "The grace of God" means God's gracious love for us even when we do not deserve it.)

Jesus kept his trust in God unbroken, even in the hardest places. So did Paul. His life was filled with persecutions and hardships, but through it all he could write: "For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:38-39). (It might be helpful to commit these grand words to memory, and carry them with you so long as you live.)

Showing Our Trust in God Through Prayer

One of the chief ways of showing our trust in God and of making that trust still deeper is prayer. When we truly pray, we are truly living in God's presence. Prayer is not mainly asking God for something. We often think it is, but we should know better from our Lord's own example in the Garden of Gethsemane. In the midst of great agony of soul, this was his prayer: "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt" (Matthew 26:39). The last is the important part. He was striving to know God's will and to do it. So prayer is not so much bringing God to do something for us, as bringing ourselves to do something for God.

One of the early leaders of the Church, Clement of Alexandria, has given us an illustration that helps us to think about prayer in the right way. He said that when men in a ship pull on a rope fastened to an anchor, they do not pull the anchor toward them but themselves toward the anchor. In the same way, when we pray, our words are not to pull God toward us but to pull us toward him.

Someone else has said that prayer is a time exposure of the soul to God. In a time exposure the shutter of the camera is opened and held open steadily until the image is imprinted on the film. In the same way in prayer we open our souls toward God and hold them open, thinking about him and his will, until something of his image is imprinted on our lives.

When Jesus prayed in Gethsemane his soul was exposed to the Father until the image of God's goodness was stamped upon it perfectly. When he rose to his feet and went out to be crucified, God's will was his will. God's goodness was his goodness. God's love was his love. The image of God was stamped upon his soul.

Our Prayer Life

A good part of our praying, then, ought to consist of:

1. Thanks to God for all he has done for us.
2. A request for knowledge and strength to do something for him.
3. Silent waiting for God's direction.

These steps might well serve as an outline for our individual devotions. *First*, we would praise God for food, clothing, friends, beauty all around us, Jesus Christ, the Church, and God's never-failing love in which we put our trust no matter what the future may bring. *Second*, we would seek earnestly for his will for our lives at home, at school, at play, at work, and for strength to do it. The words we say are not so important as what we think and feel about God. *Third*, we would hold

ourselves open to his direction. We would thus be making a time exposure of our souls to him.

Do you make a practice of daily devotions, either morning or evening, or both? Do you feel that it is worth while to do so? How long should such a period be? What should it include?

Many young people, as well as some older people, have found much help in *Windows of Worship*, *Gates of Beauty*, and *Pathways of Prayer*—books containing a page of devotional suggestions for each day in the year. Have you used any of these? Or have you used the suggested daily devotional readings in *Venture*? If so, have you found them helpful? If not, do you think guides of this sort might be helpful?

What do the *Heidelberg Catechism* and *Evangelical Catechism* say about prayer? (See questions 116-118 in the former, and question 101 in the latter.)

The Lord's Prayer

This prayer is so called because our Lord himself gave it to us. This makes it very precious—more precious than any other. You can find it in Matthew 6:9-13, and a shorter form in Luke 11:2-4. It is also given under question 119 in the *Heidelberg Catechism* and question 102 in the *Evangelical Catechism*. Compare the prayer as given in the Bible and in the catechism. What difference do you find?

Doubtless all of us have known the Lord's Prayer as it is in the catechism for a long time. And we probably understand it fairly well. Nevertheless, it may mean even more to us if we make a special study of it. Notice first of all how it is made up. It has the following parts:

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| 1. The <i>address</i> , naming the One to whom we pray | { | Our Father who art in heaven |
| 2. <i>Petitions</i> or requests centering in God | { | Hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. |
| 3. <i>Petitions</i> or requests centering in ourselves | { | Give us this day our daily bread;
And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors;
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. |
| 4. A <i>conclusion</i> of praise to God | { | For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen. |

A few of the words and phrases need some explanation.

"Hallowed be thy name" means "May thy name be made holy (or kept sacred)."

"Bread" stands for our bodily needs.

"Debts" does not mean a sum of money, but rather "sins." (In the Aramaic language, which our Lord spoke, the same word meant both "debts" and "sins.") But why is the next phrase added, "as we also have forgiven our debtors"? This means that we are not fit to be forgiven, unless we forgive others. We are not big enough. We are not loving enough. We are not unselfish enough.

Rather puzzling also is the phrase, "And lead us not into temptation." Would it be good for us to have no temptation? Could we ever become strong without it? The real meaning is that, since we are so weak, we cannot stand too much temptation. We hope and pray, therefore, that we will have no more of it than need be.

One thing very important about the prayer as a whole is that it never speaks of "me" or "mine." It is always "us" and "our." When we pray the Lord's Prayer, we do not come to the Father alone. We take with us all his children everywhere.

For further study on the various parts of the Lord's Prayer, see questions 103-111 in the *Evangelical Catechism* and questions 120-129 in the *Heidelberg Catechism*.

The Lord's Prayer is the finest prayer we know. It is worth understanding. We should always say it reverently, and give careful thought to the meaning of all the words.

A Fill-in Test on Prayer

- ✓ 1. What is prayer?
a communication of the heart with God.
- ✓ 2. Why do we pray?
To thank God and to receive His grace.
- ✓ 3. In what ways does God answer our prayers?
He answers us by His Holy Spirit, by His Word, and by His providence.
4. Most prayers consist of two parts. What are they?
 - a.
 - b.
- ✓ 5. List as many times as you can when Jesus prayed to his Father. (If you can't remember any, scan through the Gospels.)
In the Garden of Gethsemane, on the cross, and in the tomb.

- ✓ 6. Write a brief prayer in your own words, using the Lord's Prayer as a guide.

Our Father in Heaven, please help us to be like you in what we do and say. We are not worthy to ask for anything, but please help us to be like you in all things.

The Prayers of Jesus

The Bible tells of many times when Jesus prayed, and sometimes even gives his very words. Look up the following prayers of Jesus and indicate with a few words the kind of prayer it is (thanks, personal commitment, prayer for others, etc.):

Matthew 6:9-13. _____

Matthew 11:25-26. _____

✓ Luke 22:42. _____

Luke 23:34. _____

Luke 23:46. _____

John 11:41. _____

John 12:27-28. _____

John 17. _____

Questions on the Lord's Prayer

1. From whom does the Lord's Prayer come? _____

2. For what do we pray in this prayer? _____

3. In whom do the first three petitions center? _____

4. In whom do the last four petitions center? _____

5. What does the word "debts" mean in this prayer? _____

6. Where in the Bible is the Lord's Prayer? _____

✓ 7. Why do we add the conclusion of praise to God to the prayer as it appears in the Bible? _____