

Denominational Doctrines

AND THE

BIBLE

*THE TEACHINGS OF NINE LEADING CHURCHES IN AMERICA
EXAMINED BY SCRIPTURE*

Including a Special Study on ISLAM and the QUR'AN

WITH CLASS QUESTIONS FOR EACH LESSON

BY

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INTRODUCTION TO DENOMINATIONAL DOCTRINES AND THE BIBLE

“But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear...” (1Peter 3:15).

It is not easy for the average Christian to meet Peter’s challenge. In the modern world we face a vast array of *many* churches from which our questioners may come. The multiplicity of religious organizations, each one different from all the others, has created a confusing and complicated situation for any disciple who wishes to “give an answer” for his personal faith. Not only must we be familiar with what is taught by the various denominations around us but also we must be aware of what the Bible teaches about those doctrines that are in error.

This work is an effort to help familiarize the student with what he needs to know about the beliefs of his religious neighbors and how he may respond with scriptural teaching to those beliefs. It is hoped that a study such as this will assist each student to be effective in teaching others. Furthermore, may the study also serve to strengthen the student’s own faith.

It is not possible, of course, to give attention to *every* church doctrine which a Christian might encounter. Nine of the denominations most likely to be represented in religious conversations are included in this study. One of these, **Islam**, is a fast-growing and increasingly influential movement in our country. It is little understood by the average student and is difficult to understand even with considerable study! Perhaps even a brief examination of this religion will encourage Christians to study further about a belief system that may some day pose a real threat to our relationship to Jesus Christ through His gospel.

Not every doctrine of a denomination will be endorsed by every member of that denomination. However, an effort has been made to present an accurate treatment of each doctrine as it is presented in its particular church creed.

Factual and church data information for the lessons is taken from several sources, including Handbook of Denominations in the United States, eleventh edition, (2001), by Frank S. Mead, and Shaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, twelve Volumes, (1957).

Class study may limit the number of doctrinal points and Bible passages that can be used in the time available. Naturally, the teacher will decide what portions of the material will be used and what portions omitted. The student is encouraged to do his own research in addition to giving careful attention to the lessons included here. *Above all--* may whatever knowledge students gain from the study of Denominational Doctrines and the Bible be used to the **glory of God** and for the furtherance of His kingdom on earth!

-- The author

To the Student:

NOTE ABOUT THE NUMBERING SYSTEM

Each lesson addresses several different doctrines of the church under investigation.

Each denominational doctrine is separated into its several concepts (where applicable), and each concept is numbered to promote clarity.

Each denominational doctrine is followed by the Bible answer(s) to its error(s). Answers appear under the heading, “**THE BIBLE SAYS:**” and are numbered to *correspond* with each doctrinal concept appearing in the section above. This system is intended to facilitate a sharper focus on the various aspects of each doctrine. If a doctrine is stated without being broken into component parts, numbers in the “answers” section are used only to divide the different aspects of the Bible answer to the doctrine.

Prelude Lesson: THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

1. **ORIGIN--** God's eternal plan called for Him to establish a church in the world.
 - a. His "manifold wisdom" was to be made known by the nature of the church (Ephesians 3:10,11).
 - b. The prophets Isaiah and Micah foretold that the Lord's "house" [the church-- see 1Timothy 3:15] would be established in the "last days" (Isaiah 2:4; Micah 4:1-5).
 - c. The prophet Daniel declared that God would set up His kingdom [the church-- see Matthew 16:18,19 and Colossians 1:13, 18, 24] during the time of the [Roman] kings (Daniel 2:44).
2. **SINGULARITY--** God's eternal plan made provision for only *ONE* church to be established.
 - a. Jesus promised to build [only] His church (Matthew 16:18).
 - b. He provided for Jews and Gentiles to serve together in *one* spiritual flock and for all to follow *one* Shepherd (John 10:16).
 - c. He warned that every "plant" [doctrine] not from God would be rooted up (Matthew 15:13).
 - d. The worship of any person or group is *in vain* should that person or group be guilty of teaching the "commandments of men" (Matthew 15:8,9).
3. **ESSENTIALITY--** God's eternal plan intended that His one church would exist as a *necessary* part of His purpose to save the lost.
 - a. God adds all saved people to His church upon their salvation from sin (Acts 2:47).
 - b. Jesus saves His body, which is His church (Ephesians 5:23; 1:22,23).
4. **IDENTITY--** God's eternal plan concerning His church was revealed with such specificity that this church *can be* identified from among the multiplicity of human churches that have since originated [See chart, page 6].
 - 4A-- **CREED--** The Lord's church respected only the revelations of inspired teachers as authoritative to determine its *doctrine* and *practice*.
 - a. Only one faith was recognized by first century Christians (Ephesians 4:5).
 - b. This faith came through inspired revelation to the apostles and other heaven-selected teachers (Galatians 1:11,12).
 - c. This faith was the sole measure of faithfulness to Christ (1Corinthians 14:37).
 - d. Both teachers and followers of any uninspired "gospel" are severely condemned by God (Galatians 1: 6-9; 2John 9).

4B-- NAME-- The Lord's church wore only the names applied to it by inspired teachers.

- a. A "new" [different] name was to be given by God to His people in the New Covenant (Isaiah 62:2).
- b. That new name was "Christian" (Acts 11:26).
- c. "Christian" is an "honorable" name (James 2:7 --ASV). By this name men can glorify God (1Peter 4:16 --ASV).
- d. Collectively, "the church" (Acts 2:47) wore no proper names that honored humans or human enterprises and that divided humans into competing groups (1Corinthians 1:10-12).
- e. Collective designations of the church honored Christ (Romans 16:16), God (1Corinthians 1:2), the sanctity of membership (Hebrews 12:23), etc.

4C-- ORGANIZATION-- The Lord's church was careful to conduct its activities within the simple organization provided to it through inspired teachers.

- a. The local church was the only organizational unit for its members to work together (Acts 13:1; Revelation 2:1,8,12,18; 3:1,7,14, etc.).
- b. Each local church had elders [bishops] and deacons in their specified roles (Acts 14:23; Philippians 1:2; 1Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9).
- c. No organizational superstructure existed by which local churches were governed in any activity.

4D-- WORSHIP-- The Lord's church sought to worship God only in ways specified by Him through inspired teachers.

- a. Acceptable worship was decided only by Jesus' guidance (John 4:24).
- b. When they worshiped, disciples engaged in prayer, gospel teaching, singing, the Lord's Supper, and giving (Acts 2:42; Ephesians 5:19; Acts 20:7; 1Corinthians 16:1,2, etc.).
- c. The Lord's Supper was observed "on the first day of the week."
- d. Music was singing, not playing on instruments (Colossians 3:16).

4E-- WORK-- The Lord's church limited its service to God and man to those activities approved by inspired teachers.

- a. One primary work was preaching the gospel to the lost (1Thessalonians 1:8).
- b. Another primary work was promoting the spiritual growth of all members (Ephesians 4:11-16).
- c. Furnishing the physical needs of members was a third area of work (Acts 11:29,30).
- d. The church [as an entity] did not engage in the entertainment or social stimulation of its members or other persons.

4F-- MEMBERSHIP-- The Lord's church was composed only of those who had conformed to all requirements for salvation that were taught and enforced by inspired teachers.

- a. All were believers in Christ's divinity (Acts 2:36; 16:30,31).
- b. All had repented of their past sins (Acts 2:38; 26:20).
- c. All had confessed Jesus as God's Son (Acts 8:36,37 --NKJV).
- d. All had been baptized for remission [forgiveness] of their sins (E.g., Acts 2:38; 8:12; 9:18; 22:16; 10:48; 16:15, 33; 18:8, etc.).

5. PERPETUITY-- God's eternal plan assured that His church would survive through time despite the contrary efforts of its enemies.

- a. Even Jesus' death could not prevent its establishment (Matthew 16:18).
- b. Once established, it would "never be destroyed" (Daniel 2:44; Hebrews 12:28).
- c. The "seed" of the kingdom [church] Is God's word (Luke 8:11).
- d. God's word can produce the kingdom [church] in honest and open hearts irrespective of time and place (Luke 17:21; Acts 16:13,14).
- e. The everlasting joy of God's church in heaven is assured (1Corinthians 15:24).

The Christian and False Doctrine

There is much false teaching in today's religious world. People are being taught error by many false teachers (1John 4:1). Multitudes in the past have embraced falsehood with the result that now millions are either: (1) in a quandary about how to find the way that is right or, (2) willing to continue thoughtlessly upon a course charted for them by others without much investigation on their part as to whether that course was determined by truth or by the decisions of fallible humans like themselves. Christians have a responsibility to rescue those in religious error as well as in other sins (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15,16; Jude 23).

I. The Christian's attitude toward false *teaching*:

- A. Recognize that only the truth can save man (John 8:32; Proverbs 23:23).
- B. Understand that truth is found only in the Bible (John 17:17; 2Thessalonians 2:13; Romans 10:17).
- C. Realize that truth cannot be mixed with error and still be truth (2Corinthians 6:14-16).
- D. Be convinced that error will condemn those who embrace it (2Thessalonians 2:10-12).
- E. Believe that all can know the truth if they wish to know it (John 8:32; 7:17; Ephesians 5:17; 3:3,4).
- F. Know that truth must be defended by faithful people; error must be opposed (Jude 3,4; Acts 18:24-26).

II. The Christian's attitude toward false *teachers*:

- A. Recognize that some teachers are sincere in their false teaching (Acts 23:1; 26:9; 1Timothy 1:13).
- B. Understand that some false teachers are insincere (Titus 1:10,11).
- C. Realize that false teachers (wittingly or unwittingly) serve Satan (2Corinthians 11:15).
- D. Be convinced that false teachers must not be encouraged (2John 10,11).
- E. Be willing to oppose false teachers in their unsound work (1Timothy 1:3; Galatians 2:4,5).

III. The Christian's attitude toward *deceived people*:

- A. Recognize that deception does not excuse anyone (Matthew 15:14; 2Thessalonians 2:11,12; Acts 3:17; 1Timothy 2:14).
- B. Understand that only truth can correct those deceived by error(Acts 8:9-12; 26:17,18).
- C. Be convinced of the power of truth to change the deceived mind (Hebrews 4:12).
- D. Believe that many will respond to the truth if given the opportunity (Matthew 9:37; Acts 18:10).
- E. Be patient and kind in trying to teach deceived people (2Timothy 2:24-26).
- F. Realize that the need for correction is *urgent* (James 4:14)!

1. What serious warning was given to first-century Christians about false teachers? (1John 4:1)

2. What obligations do Christians have toward the lost? Why? (Jude 23)

3. Contrast the attributes of **truth** with those of **error**:

TRUTH

ERROR

a. As to **salvation**:

(Jn.8:32) _____ (2Thes.2:10-12) _____

b. As to **location**:

(Jn.17:17) _____ (1Thes.2:13) _____

c. As to **purity**:

(2Cor.6:14) _____ (Eph.4:14) _____

d. As to **understanding**:

(Acts 8:12,13) _____ (Ac.8:18-23) _____

e. As to **our reaction**:

(Jude 3) _____ (Gal.2:11-14) _____

4. List the things that Paul warned are “unequal yoking” (2Corinthians 6:14-16):

a. Believers _____ with _____

b. _____ with _____

c. _____ with _____

d. _____ with _____

e. _____ with _____ Idols _____

5. What are the *two* underlying motives that drive false teachers? (1Tim.1:13): _____

_____ (Titus 1:10,11): _____

6. THINK-- How may Christians be guilty of encouraging false teachers in their error? _____

7. What should Christians believe about *deceived* people?
- a. (2Thes.2:11,12) _____
 - b. (Acts 8:9-12) _____
 - c. (Heb.4:12) _____
 - d. (Acts 18:10) _____
 - e. (James 4:14) _____
8. What approach must be taken in trying to teach the truth to *deceived* people? (2Tim.2:24-26)
- _____
9. What fact should motivate Christians in those efforts? (James 4:14) _____
- _____

The Church-- United and Divided

I. The Church defined:

- A. “The called out” (Greek: *ekklesia*): by the gospel (2Thessalonians 2:14); out of darkness (1Peter 2:9); to glory (2Peter 1:3).
- B. The house (family) of God (1Timothy 3:15; Hebrews 10:21; 1Peter 4:17).
- C. The body of Christ (Ephesians 1:22,23; Colossians 1:18; 1Corinthians 12:27).
- D. The temple of God (1Corinthians 3:16; 1Peter 2:5; Ephesians 2:21).
- E. The vineyard of the Lord (Matthew 20:1).

II. The Church purposed:

- A. Included in God’s eternal plan (Ephesians 3:10,11; Romans 8:28-30).
- B. The tabernacle was built as a type of the church to come (Hebrews 9:8-11).

III. The Church promised:

- A. By Old Testament prophets (Isaiah 2:2,3; Daniel 2:44).
- B. By John the Baptist (Matthew 3:1,2).
- C. By Jesus Himself (Mark 9:1; Acts 1:6-8).

IV. The Church established:

- A. By the power of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1-4).
- B. People were “called” (Acts 2:38,39) and “added” to the church (Acts 2:41,47).
- C. Its existence was confirmed following Pentecost (Acts 5:11; 8:1; 11:22, etc.).

V. The Church unified:

- A. Jesus intended its unity in all things (John 17:20,21; 10:16).
- B. Paul commanded unity among God’s people (1Corinthians 1:10; Ephesians 4:3,4).
- C. Singular figures used to describe the church demand unity:
 - 1. The “bride of Christ” (John 3:29);
 - 2. The “body of Christ” (Ephesians 1:22,23);
 - 3. The “family of God” (1Timothy 3:15).

VI. The Church perpetuated:

- A. The “seed” (God’s word) maintains the life potential of the church (Luke 8:11).
- B. The kingdom (church) never loses that life potential (Hebrews 12:28; Daniel 2:44).

VII. The Church warned:

- A. About danger from within its own membership (Acts 20:28).
- B. About the danger of members departing from the truth (1Timothy 4:1-3).
- C. About a “man of sin” who would corrupt the faith of many (2Thessalonians 2:3-12).

VIII. The Church divided:

- A. See the chart: “The Church: Establishment, Falling Away, Restoration.”
- B. Departures from God’s pattern initially were gradual, occurring first in organization, then in doctrine, finally in worship.
- C. Departures were more rapid following the Council of Nicea, 325 A.D.
 - 1. A special priesthood, a church hierarchy, and finally a full-blown Papacy emerged (the first pope [“papa”] was recognized in 606 A.D.).
- D. Numerous innovations in doctrine and worship were introduced through the machinery of numerous councils over the next several hundred years.
- E. Departures from the church’s perfect pattern were multiplied until the pattern was virtually obscured. This period of history is called “The Dark Ages.”

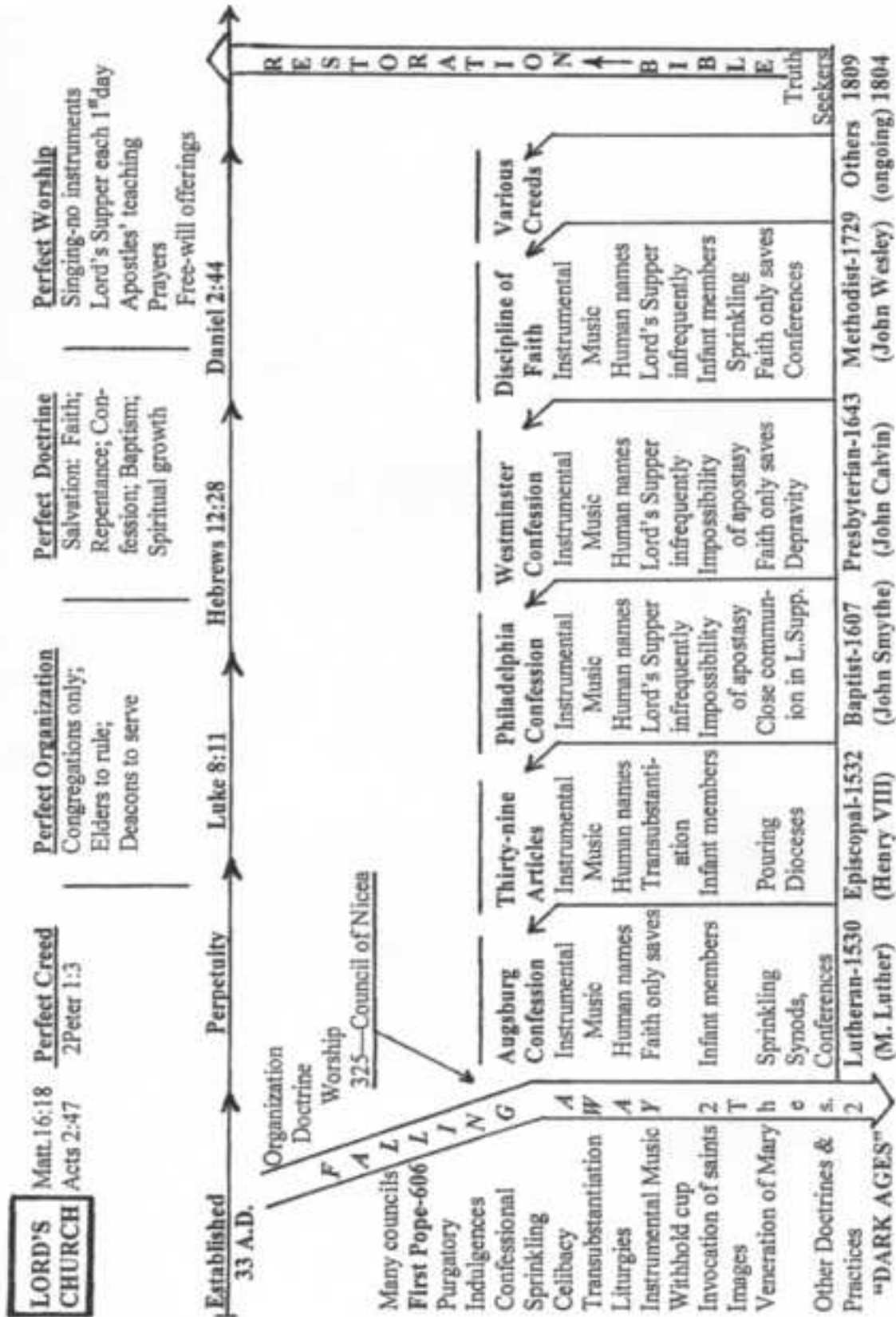
IX. The Church reformed:

- A. See the chart: “The Church: Establishment, Falling Away, Restoration.”
- B. The “Protestant Reformation” was intended to change the abuses of Catholicism and to allow common people to draw nearer to a personal God through personal service.
- C. Efforts to *change* existing churches continue until the present and invariably result in more churches.

X. The Church restored:

- A. See the chart: “The Church: Establishment, Falling Away, Restoration.”
- B. Some truth-seekers concluded that religious division could be remedied only by *restoration*, not *reformation*.
- C. Restoration efforts continue until the present and make possible the uniting of all who wish to “speak where the Bible speaks, and be silent where the Bible is silent” and to “do Bible things in Bible ways.”
- D. Restoration does not seek the establishment of *new* churches, but seeks to lead all people to membership in the one church built by Jesus and perpetuated by a strict adherence to the perfect pattern He gave for the church in the New Testament.

THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH: ESTABLISHMENT, FALLING AWAY, AND RESTORATION



1. By what, out of what, and to what is the church “called”? By: _____
Out of: _____ To: _____
2. What blessings are associated with the church as:
 - a. The “house of God:” _____
 - b. The “body of Christ:” _____
 - c. The “temple of God:” _____
 - d. The “vineyard of the Lord:” _____
3. God’s “eternal purpose” involved the church as a means of revealing something about Himself? What was it? (Ephesians 3:10,11) _____
4. God’s plan for man’s salvation included five actions on man’s behalf (Romans 8:28-30):
 - a. _____ d. _____
 - b. _____ e. _____
 - c. _____
5. What did the prophecies about the church’s establishment say about when it would occur?
 - a. Isaiah 2:2: _____ d. Mark 9:1: _____
 - b. Daniel 2:44: _____ e. Acts 1:6,8: _____
 - c. Matthew 3:2: _____
6. How did the “called” on Pentecost become members of the church? (Acts 2:38,39,41,47)

7. How do these figures which are attached to the church relate to its **unity**?
- a. The “bride of Christ:” _____
 - b. The “body of Christ:” _____
 - c. The “house of God:” _____
8. Why can we depend on the perpetuity of the church/kingdom? _____
9. Give the three major divisions of church history that display three *different* religious goals:
- a. _____ b. _____ c. _____
10. List several practices involved in the “falling away” period:
- a. _____ b. _____ c. _____
 - d. _____ e. _____ f. _____
11. Which popular churches began during the “reformation” period? When did they start?
- a. _____ b. _____ c. _____
 - d. _____ e. _____
12. THINK- - Why was it impossible for the “truth seekers” of the “restoration” period to accomplish their goal while working within the confines of man-made creeds? _____

The Roman Catholic Church

History: “The Roman Catholic Church dates its beginning from the moment of Christ’s selection of the apostle Peter as guardian of the keys of heaven and earth and chief of the apostles, and it claims the fisherman as its first pope.” (Handbook of Denominations, Frank S. Mead, 1990) It became the only entity strong enough to control both the religious and the political landscape following the fall of the Roman Empire in 410 A.D. Its development occurred slowly at first with the abuse of elevating some elders to the office of bishop. Eventually, bishops at Jerusalem, Alexandria (Egypt), Antioch, Rome, and Constantinople were the most prominent. After much intense competition for supremacy, Boniface III (Rome) was proclaimed Universal Bishop by Emperor Phocas in 606 A.D.

The Council of Nicea (Nice), convened in Bithynia in 325, was recognized as the first law-making assembly of the church. It considered pressing questions concerning: (1) the divinity of Jesus; (2) observance of Easter as an official church holy day; (3) the struggle for religious power in Egypt; (4) the baptism of heretics; (5) the status of deserters from the faith during persecutions.

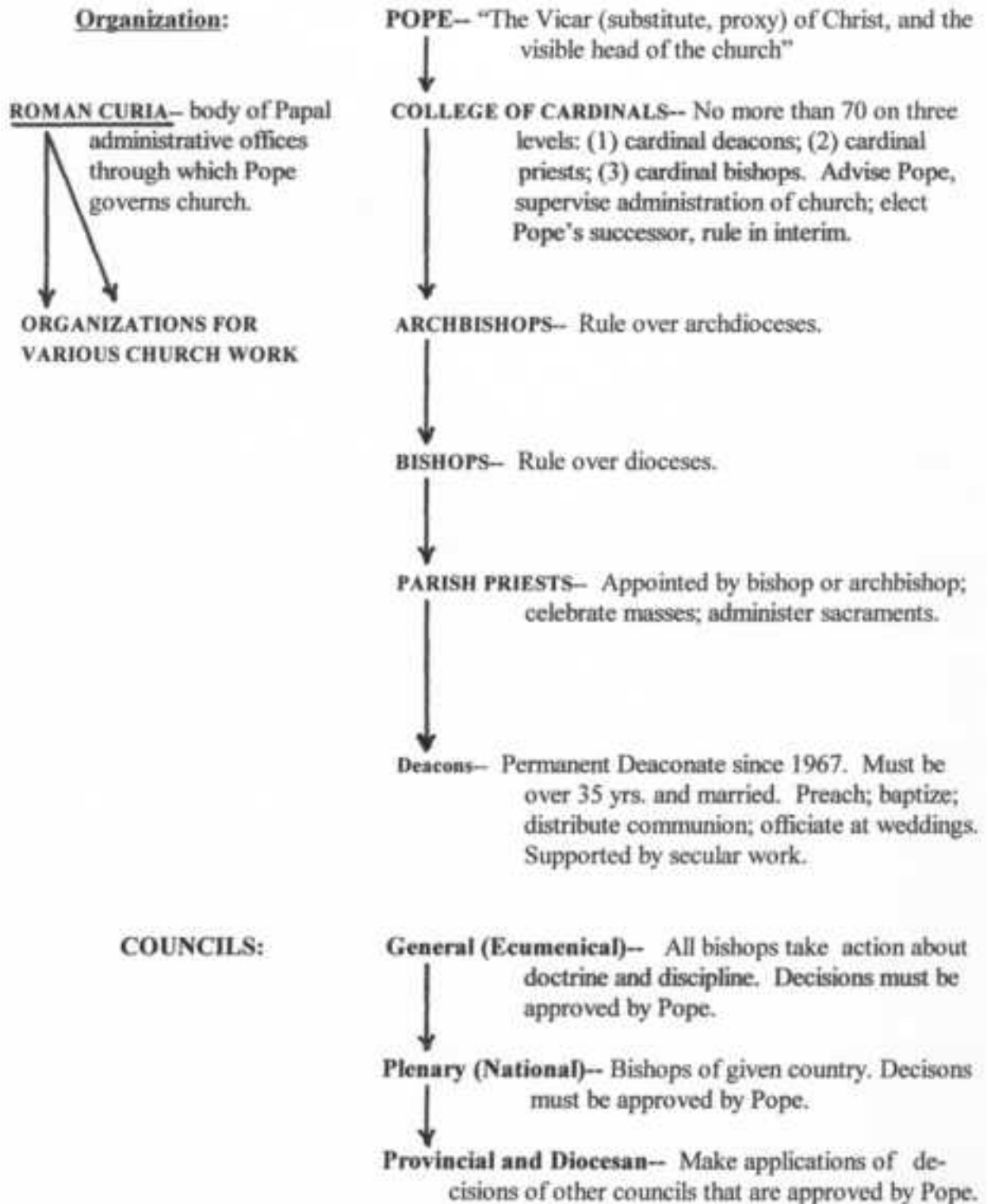
Division within the church occurred in 1054 A.D. between Western (Rome) and Eastern (Constantinople) churches over the supremacy of the pope, the presence of images in places of worship, and other important political and cultural differences. The Eastern (Orthodox) church has four patriarchs who control their respective jurisdictions: Romanian, Russian, Greek, and Syrian. Eastern churches believe the Holy Spirit came directly from the Father (only), but the Roman churches added “filioque” (and the Son) to their version of the Nicene Creed (taking a stronger position that Jesus was always Divine and not created). The Roman Pope and the Patriarch of Constantinople excommunicated each other in 1054, solidifying the break between the two segments of the Catholic Church.

The first diocese of the Roman Church in the New World was established in Greenland, 1125, and the first permanent parish in America was in St. Augustine, Florida, in 1565. The first American diocese was in Baltimore, 1789, and the first archdiocese was 1808.

Organization: The organization of the Roman Catholic Church is very complex. At the apex of its hierarchy is the Pope, who supposedly receives his credentials of pre-eminence through a lineage extending back to the apostle Peter himself. Through the Pope the church is thought to receive divine direction from Christ about the doctrines and conduct of the entire church. The church’s organization may be depicted in this way:

DENOMINATIONAL DOCTRINES---

Lesson Three *Roman Catholic Church*



- Creeds:**
1. **The “Apostles’ Creed”** (Also used by several Protestant denominations). This creed is claimed to have originated with the apostles, being brought to Rome by Peter. It reads: “I believe in God the Father Almighty and in Christ Jesus, his only-begotten Son, our Lord, born of the Holy Spirit and of Mary the Virgin, who was crucified under Pontius Pilate and buried; on the third day he rose from the dead, ascended into heaven, sitteth on the right hand of the Father from whence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead; and in the Holy Ghost, the holy church, the remission of sins, the resurrection of the flesh.”
 2. **The Nicene Creed.** This creed was first formulated by a church council at Nicea in 325 A.D. and modified by the Constantinopolitan Council in 381. This creed was the “baptismal confession of the Jerusalem church enlarged.” (George P. Fisher, History of the Christian Church, p. 132.) It reads: “I believe in the one God the Father Almighty; Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible. And in the Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds (God of God), the Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance (essence) with the Father; by whom all things were made; who, for us men and our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man, and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; he suffered and was buried; and the third day he rose again, according to the Scriptures; and ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father; and he shall come again, with glory, to judge both the quick and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end.
“And (I believe) in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of Life; who proceedeth from the Father [and the Son]; who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified; who spake by the prophets, and (I believe) one Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins; and I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.” (Quoted in Fisher, History of the Christian Church, p. 132.)
 3. **The Athanasian Creed.** This is a statement of the doctrines of Trinity and the Incarnation in the form of a psalm. It reflects the theology of Augustine even more than that of Athanasius (a church deacon who opposed the doctrine of Anus [an elder at Alexandria] who taught that Christ was a created being). It is an urgent demand for loyalty to the Catholic faith and is only used on certain special occasions in the church.
 4. **Credal Statement of the Council of Trent**, Italy, 1545-63, sometimes called the “Creed of Pius IV.” It was solemnly affirmed by the Vatican Council in 1870 as the official doctrine of the church. “For practical purposes, the most important creed-statement of the Roman Catholic Church” (Shaff-Herzog Religious Encyclopedia, Vol. 12, p.14)

DENOMINATIONAL DOCTRINES--

Lesson Three *The Roman Catholic Church*

pedia). Its articles were put into the form of a “binding oath of obedience” to the Pope and made mandatory for those who would hold church offices or teach publicly. It is also required of converts from Protestant persuasion., and is called the “Profession of Converts.” (Shaff-Herzog, Vol.12, p. 14) The twelve articles of faith in which the candidate must affirm belief are:

- (1) The Nicean Creed;
 - (2) All conditions and ordinances of the Roman Catholic Church;
 - (3) Interpretation put on Scriptures by the Catholic Church and no other;
 - (4) Seven sacraments and the mode of administration taught by the church;
 - (5) Every statement of the Council of Trent about original sin and justification;
 - (6) Doctrine of transubstantiation and the sacrificial nature of the mass;
 - (7) Bread and wine as each containing the whole Christ;
 - (8) Invocation of saints, worship of relics, and doctrine of purgatory;
 - (9) Worship of images and virtues of indulgences;
 - (10) Supremacy of the Roman Church and authority of the bishop of Rome as Pope;
 - (11) Condemnation, rejection, and anathematization of everything contrary to the decrees of the general councils as well as all heresies rejected by the church;
 - (12) Solemn oath to hold Catholic faith to the end of life; also, to see that all for whom one is responsible in a particular office also hold that same faith;
- Two *additional articles* have been added by the church since the Council of Trent:
- (13) Preservation of Mary from the stain of original sin;
 - (14) The Pope is infallible when speaking “*ex cathedra*” (from the throne) on faith and morals. His “definitions” are “irreformable of themselves” and “not from the consent of the church.” (Shaff-Herzog, pp.14,15)

Membership: Membership in the Roman Catholic Church in the United States is reported at 60,391,484 in 19,627 parishes. (Data: 2000) Other factions include less than 1 million members. The Roman Catholic Church sent some 5,800 missionaries from this country in 1998-99. It operates: 400+ newspapers and magazines; 441 women’s religious orders and 137 for men; 1,414 homes for the aged and 149 orphanages; 593 hospitals (1 of 3 beds in private hospitals are in Catholic facilities.)[Mead’s Handbook]

DOCTRINES: [Article 11, Council of Trent (CT) upholds the *permanency* of council decrees!]

ON THE CHURCH: The Catholic Church is the church established by Christ (CT, #10).
“She is the one institution that never changes.” (Cardinal Gibbons)
Nicean Creed: “...one Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church...”
“If it is not identical in belief, government, etc. with the primitive church, then it is not the Church of Christ.” (Catholic Facts, page 27)

DENOMINATIONAL DOCTRINES---

Lesson Three *The Roman Catholic Church*

- THE BIBLE SAYS:**
1. The seed of the kingdom is the word of God, and it always produces in kind. (Luke 8:11)
 2. The kingdom (church) could not be “shaken” (changed). (Hebrews 12:28)
 3. Any change in the apostles’ doctrine was a mark of apostasy. (2Thessalonians 2:1-12; 1Timothy 4:1-5)
 4. *Many* changes from the “primitive church” are obvious in the Catholic Church in (1) organization, (2) doctrine, (3) worship, and (4) practice.
 5. Even the doctrine of *essentiality* has been changed by a Pope (Pius IX): “It is to be held as of faith that none can be saved outside the Apostolic Roman Church...but nevertheless, it is equally certain that those who are ignorant of the true religion, if that ignorance is invincible, will not be held guilty in the eyes of the Lord.” **THE BIBLE SAYS:** Ignorance is no excuse for a failure to “believe the truth” (about the church!). (2Thessalonians 2:11,12; Romans 10:1-3)
- ON THE BIBLE:**
1. The Catholic Church gave the Bible to the world: wrote it, gathered the books (canon) together, and then preserved it through the centuries.
 2. The meaning of the Bible can be interpreted only by the Catholic clergy.
 3. Catholic Church traditions are *equal to* Bible teaching.
 4. The apocryphal (“hidden”) books are accepted as inspired. Those books are: First and Second Esdras (Ezra), Tobit, Judith, The Rest of Esther, Wisdom of Solomon, Ecclesiasticus (Jesus Sirach), Baruch, The Epistle of Jeremy (Jeremiah), Song of the Three Holy Children, History of Susanna, Bel and the Dragon, Prayer of Manasses, First, Second, Third (sometimes omitted), Fourth (sometimes omitted) Maccabees. [Apocryphal books were adopted in the Council of Constantinople in 381 A.D.]
- THE BIBLE SAYS:**
1. The existence of truth does not depend on “a church.” (Jude 3; 2Timothy 2:2; Colossians 3:16; Hebrews 13:7)
 - a. The Bible was completed by A.D. 96-- the Catholic Church did not exist (as a discrete entity) until 606 with the recognition of its first Pope.
 - b. The apostles and early disciples were *not* Catholics but only *Christians*. (Acts 26:28; 11:26; Romans 16:16.)
 - c. Early Christians did *not*:
 - (1) Believe in the Pope as head of the church as Catholics do. (Acts 10:25,26; Acts 15 [James is most prominent]; Galatians 2:11; 2Corinthians 11:5)
 - (2) Use mechanical instruments of music in worship as Catholics do. (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16, etc.)
 - (3) Practice infant baptism as Catholics do. (Acts 2:41; Romans 6:4)

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- (4) Have a special, unmarried priesthood. (1 Peter 2:5,9; Hebrews 13:4)
 - (a) All saved persons are priests in the church. (Revelation 1:5,6; 1 Peter 2:9)
- (5) Surely, Catholics would have written a different Bible!
- d. The Catholic Church has never given the Bible to anyone, but rather has suppressed access to the Bible. "If the sacred books are permitted everywhere ...in the vernacular, there will arise more harm than good." (Council of Trent) "The Bible is not to be read by all; the Pope forbids it; all must not read it." (*Catholic Dictionary*, p. 22)
- 2. Anyone with ordinary capacity can understand the truth. (John 7:17; Ephesians 5:17; 3:3,4; 2 Timothy 3:15-17)
- 3. A certain John Cogley submitted this proposition for comment by the New York archdiocese; "The Church guards orthodoxy (including the interpretation of the Scriptures) and passes down essential Christian tradition from one generation to another." This was declared to be a correct statement of Catholic doctrine! "...this truth and discipline are contained in the written books and unwritten traditions...(the church) doth receive and reverence with equal piety and veneration." (Council of Trent) (John 20:30,31; 2 Timothy 3:16,17; Matthew 15:3; Colossians 2:8; Revelation 22:18,19)
- 4. The Jews never accepted the apocryphal books (Romans 3:2), nor is there any reference to them in the New Testament.
 - a. Jerome, who translated the Vulgate (declared by Pope Sixtus V to be a "perfect" translation) rejected the apocryphal books.
 - b. These consistently contradict the books of the Bible accepted as authentic.

ON THE Peter and his successors were given supreme authority in the church. "The Roman
PAPACY: pontiff is the successor of Saint Peter, the prince of the apostles, and the true vicar of Christ, and the head of the church." (Council of Florence, 1438 A.D.)

THE BIBLE 1. Peter called himself: a "servant" (2 Peter 1:1) and a "fellow elder" (1 Peter 5:1).
SAYS: He regarded Jesus as the "chief shepherd." (1 Peter 5:4) He exhibited humility and refused to be worshiped by others. (Acts 10:25,26)

- 2. No other writer recognized Peter as a pope ("papa") or as the head of the church. "Fatherhood" in the gospel was claimed by Paul, not Peter. (1 Corinthians 4:15; 1 Timothy 1:2)
- 3. Jesus is the only head of His church. (Ephesians 1:22,23; Colossians 1:18)
- 4. Paul was not "at all" inferior to any other apostle. (2 Corinthians 11:5)
- 5. Peter was sent to Samaria by the other apostles. (Acts 8:14)
- 6. James, not Peter, pronounced the decision at Jerusalem. (Acts 15:13,19)
- 7. Peter was a married man and did not fit the pattern for the Catholic clergy. (Luke 4:38; 1 Corinthians 9:5)

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ON INFALLIBILITY: The Pope is infallible when he speaks *ex cathedra* on faith and morals (Vatican Council).

- * However, Pope Sixtus V in 1616 A.D. issued a papal bull forbidding any changes in the “perfect” Vulgate translation, in which he himself had made some 2,000 changes. Thirty years later, Pope Clement VIII corrected those changes. Some were of a serious nature. Clement claimed in the preface of the book that Sixtus planned to “undo” the errors in the first edition. If *both* spoke infallibly, why could they not agree on the official interpretation?
- * Also, Pope Paul V condemned Galileo as a “heretic” and his doctrine about the earth not being the center of the universe as “false and absolutely contrary to the Scriptures.” The Pope was speaking about the faith of Catholics in Scriptures that “proved” that Galileo was in error. Science has exposed the error of Paul V. “Infallibility” clearly failed him in this matter!

THE BIBLE SAYS:

1. The truth was once and for all (time) delivered through the written gospel, not given in bits and pieces over many hundreds of years (Jude 3).
2. All truth was embodied in the writings of the first-century inspired apostles and teachers (2Peter 1:3).
3. The truth of Jesus Christ is the *same* “yesterday, today, and forever” (Hebrews 13:8). Infallibility would prevent any changes being made in church doctrine through all ages. However, many obvious changes have been made in Catholic Church doctrine, e.g., the change from immersion to affusion as the accepted form of baptism.
4. Peter warned that scriptural truth does not originate with private individuals, but it was rather the result of Old and New Testament prophets being moved (inspired) by the Holy Spirit (2Peter 1:20,21).

ON FORGIVENESS:

1. Original sin is forgiven by baptism. “Baptism of desire” is obeyed by adults to gain eternal life. Infants are usually the subjects of Catholic baptism. Unbaptized infants at death are in “limbo,” where they do not suffer but enjoy a happiness far less than that of saints in heaven.
2. Auricular (“in the ear”) confession of sins to a priest will give absolution (forgiveness) of the sins confessed.

THE BIBLE SAYS:

1. There is no original sin of which man is guilty today. Each man is guilty of those sins he has *personally* committed (Ezekiel 18:20; 2Corinthians 5:10; Romans 14:10,12).
 - a. Baptism is for the remission of *sins* (plural), not *a sin* [inherited] (Acts 2:38; 22:16).
 - b. Little children were not baptized in the first century. Those baptized had believed in Christ and had repented of their sins (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38). These are requisites which infants and little children *cannot* meet!

2. Confession of sins is to be made one to another, not by many people to one special person (James 5:16).
 - a. God *alone* can forgive the sins of men (1John 1:9; Acts 8:22).
 - b. We must confess our transgressions and ask the forgiveness of *those we offend*. This must not be “short-circuited” through a priest (Matthew 18:21,22),

ON THE SACRAMENTS:

Catholics must accept seven Sacraments (“sacred”) and the way the church administers them. (Council of Trent, Article 4). Each sacrament is a “visible sign by which grace is conveyed to our souls” (Cardinal Gibbons).

1. Baptism is administered by sprinkling and pouring. It is commonly administered to infants.

THE BIBLE SAYS:

- a. There is only **one** baptism, including **one** way to administer it (Ephesians 4:5; Acts 8:38).
- b. Baptism is a burial (only) in water (Romans 6:4; Colossians 2:12).
- c. Only men and women (of accountable age) were subjects of baptism in the New Testament (Acts 8:12).
- d. All who were baptized: (1) believed the gospel of Christ (Mark 16:16), and, (2) received the word of God (Acts 2:41). Infants can do neither!

2. Confirmation is the laying on of the bishop’s hands to impart the Holy Spirit for steadfastness.

THE BIBLE SAYS:

- a. The word of God strengthens us (Acts 20:32; 15:32).
- b. The hands of apostles imparted the Holy Spirit to others (Acts 8:17).
- c. Receiving the Holy Spirit through the apostles’ hands was manifested by the exhibition of miraculous powers (1Corinthians 12:7-11).

3. Penance is an act of physical atonement to avoid punishment for confessed sin.

THE BIBLE SAYS:

- a. God forgives sins completely when we repent of sins and pray for their forgiveness (Acts 8:22; 1John 1:9).
- b. Sin is a spiritual condition that is remedied by a spiritual, not a physical, action (Acts 8:22; Romans 7:17,20).
- c. The only appropriate *physical* response to the guilt of sin is the obedience of an *alien sinner* in baptism (Romans 6:17,18). No physical reaction is prescribed for a *Christian* who has committed sin, except where repentance should involve restitution for a wrong done to another (Luke 19:8).

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4. Extreme Unction (“anointing”) is the anointing of those in danger of death to secure their pardon. The “sign of the cross” is made over the eyes, ears, nose, lips, hands and feet.

THE BIBLE SAYS:

- a. Sins are forgiven only when the sinner acts to be forgiven. (1John 1:9)
- b. There is no teaching in the New Testament to use such a sign for any purpose and no example of such a sign being used among New Testament Christians when they prayed or at any other time! (Acts 15:24b)
- c. This practice originated after the close of New Testament revelation as part of the corrupting of apostolic practice. Turtullian (second century) is the earliest church writer to mention this sign, and then it is not connected with “extreme unction.” He admits: “For these and such like rules, if thou requirest a law in Scriptures, thou shalt find none; tradition will be pleaded to thee as originating, custom as confirming, and faith as observing them” (De Corona Mil., 3, 4).

5. Holy Orders is a ceremony in which priests are ordained for service in the church.

THE BIBLE SAYS:

- a. Faithfulness, not laying on of hands, was required of those who wished to teach the gospel to others. (2Timothy 2:2)
- b. Men ministered (served) in the early church without hands being laid on them by church officials. (Acts 18:24-28; Acts 9:10ff.)
- c. All Christians are priests and are ordained (appointed) to minister in the church. (1Peter 2:9,10)

6. Matrimony is strictly regulated by the church under its own peculiar mandates:
- a. Marriage must be performed by a Catholic priest or it is spiritually invalid for the Catholic party involved.
 - b. Only a “dispensation” (special permission) will allow Catholics to marry non-Catholics, and only then under severe restrictions.
 - c. Remarriage for Catholics is absolutely prohibited for any reason.
 - d. Artificial birth control within marriage is forbidden.
 - e. Catholic clergymen (priests) are not allowed to marry.

THE BIBLE SAYS:

- a. No mention of a priest being involved in any wedding ceremony is found anywhere in the New Testament. (John 2:1ff.; 1Corinthians 7; Ephesians 5:22ff.)
- b. There is no respect of persons with God, and there should be no special favors granted to some but denied to others. (1Peter 1:17)
- c. Remarriage is clearly allowed by Jesus for a person whose spouse is sexually unfaithful during the marriage. (Matthew 19:9)

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- d. No such restriction regarding birth control appears in the Bible (but see 1 Corinthians 7:1-5).
- e. Marriage is *honorable* among all (even “priests”). The Pope’s “predecessor” was a married man. (Matthew 8:14; 1 Corinthians 9:5)

7. The Holy Eucharist (Mass) is the “observance of the unbloody sacrifice of Christ in literal presence of body and blood in the bread and wine” (Lateran Council, 1215 A.D.).
- a. This is the doctrine of “transubstantiation,” which contends that upon being blessed by a priest, the bread becomes the literal body of Christ and the cup becomes the literal blood of Christ!
 - b. The cup, upon being blessed, is withheld from the laity (non-clergy) and drunk only by the clergy (Council of Trent, 1545-63 A.D.) [until Vatican II, 1970].

- THE BIBLE SAYS:**
- a. The Lord “blessed” the bread before the disciples, but it was still bread! His body was still there! There was no merging of the two. (Matthew 26:26-28)
 - b. All New Testament Christians both ate of the bread and drank of the cup. (1 Corinthians 11:26-28)

ON MARI-OLATRY: This doctrine encourages the veneration of Mary, the mother of Jesus.

- a. Prayers are offered through Mary as the Mother of God. The use of the rosary in prayers recites the phrase, “Hail, Mary...blessed art thou...” Mary is held to be a “powerful intercessor.”
- b. Catholics believe that Mary was a perpetual virgin.
- c. They also believe that Mary was the exception to the original sin of all mankind. This phenomenon is called the “Immaculate Conception” (Pope Pius IX, 1854).
- d. Mary supposedly was “assumed bodily” into heaven. “The presence of Mary in soul and body in heaven is a God-revealed truth” (Pope Pius XII, 1950).

- THE BIBLE SAYS:**
- a. Prayers go to the Father through Jesus alone since He is the *ONE* Mediator between God and man. (1 Timothy 2:5) Only Christ and the Holy Spirit are intercessors for God’s people. (Romans 8:26; Hebrews 7:25)
 - b. Mary bore children to Joseph after the birth of Jesus. (Matthew 13:55,56)
 - c. None have “original sin,” and no exceptions to the impossible are possible! (Matthew 18:3.) Mary was not “tied to the nature of Christ at his birth” and never guilty of “actual sin” (Council of Trent). (Romans 3:23; Ecclesiastes 7:20)
 - d. The righteous dead go to Paradise/Abraham’s bosom, not heaven, until the time of final judgment. (Luke 23:43; Luke 16:22,23) Paul said “flesh and blood” (a human body) *cannot* inherit the kingdom of God (heaven). Mary’s body

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cannot be present in heaven today. (1Corinthians 15:50)

*Note 1-- Jesus Himself discouraged the veneration of Mary. All who do His will are the objects of His honor. (Matthew 12:47-49; Luke 11:27,28)

*Note 2-- Mary is never called the “mother of God” but the mother of Jesus. The first term emphasizes the *spiritual* nature of the Son, and the second stresses His *physical* nature.

OTHER DOCTRINES:

1. **PURGATORY**-- A place to “purge those souls who are not yet pure enough for heaven but have not died in a state of serious (mortal) sin” (John Cogley).

THE BIBLE SAYS-- Christ’s blood, not purgatory, cleanses us from all sin. (1John 1:7)
All sin will remain to be finally judged. (2Corinthians 5:10)
Any sin is serious in God’s eyes. (James 2:10)

2. **INDULGENCES**-- Remission in whole or part of temporal punishment for sins. This is based on the “superabundant” merits of Christ and his saints that can be applied to the forgiveness of ordinary people who sin.

THE BIBLE SAYS-- Each man will answer for his own sins in the judgment.(2Corinthians 5:10; Romans 14:12)

3. **MENTAL RESERVATION**-- “A general law permitting Catholics to lie, if by so doing they can further Catholicism” (O.C. Lambert, Catholicism Against Itself).
“So that a false statement knowingly made to one who has not a right to the truth will not be a lie” (Catholic Encyclopedia, IX, p.471).
“However, we are also under an obligation to keep secrets faithfully, and sometimes the easiest way of fulfilling that duty is to say what is false, or to tell a lie” (Catholic Encyclopedia, X, p.195).
“When mental reservation is permissible, it is lawful to corroborate one’s utterances by an oath, if there is an adequate cause” (Catholic Encyclopedia, XI, p. 696).

THE BIBLE SAYS-- “Buy the truth and sell it not.” (Proverbs 23:23)

“Therefore, putting away lying, each one speak truth with his neighbor...” (Ephesians 4:25)

“...why has Satan filled your heart to lie...?” (Acts 5:3) “...NO LIE is of the truth... (1John 2:21)

1. Five prominent bishops competed for supremacy in the developing Catholic Church. In what cities were they located (a-e), and who was ultimately successful (f)?

a. _____ b. _____ c. _____

d. _____ e. _____ f. _____

2. What was the first law-making council of the Catholic Church & date? _____

3. Two differences leading to a final separation between eastern and western Catholics were:

a. _____ b. _____

4. Protestant converts must subscribe to a “Profession of Converts,” which includes _____ original articles of faith and _____ that have been added. Those added specify that:

a. _____ b. _____

5. What claim about “change” is made by the Catholic Church? _____
What *kinds* (categories) of changes have obviously been made in that church over the years?

a. _____ b. _____ c. _____ d. _____

6. If the Catholic Church had written the Bible (as claimed), what are some Catholic practices that would appear in the Bible but do not?

a. _____ b. _____

c. _____ d. _____

7. In *addition to* the Bible, the Catholic Church regards as *equally authoritative* what two *other* sources of religious instruction, and why must the Bible believer reject both?

a. Source (1): _____

b. Source (2): _____

8. Give some facts from the Bible that refute the claim that Peter was the first Pope and head of the Lord's church:
- a. _____ b. _____
- c. _____ d. _____
9. The Bible exposes the doctrines of "Papal infallibility" and "progressive truth" as false. How?
- a. _____ b. _____
- c. _____ d. _____
10. Forgiveness of sin is said by Catholics to be accomplished by two means: Show how both are *related* to Bible truth but have been *perverted* by the Catholic Church:
- a. Baptism: _____
- b. Confession: _____
11. List the **seven "sacraments"** of the Catholic Church and give a Bible fact that exposes the error of each one:
- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____
- e. _____
- f. _____
- g. _____
12. What is the Catholic doctrine of "mental reservation," and why is it wrong? _____

The Baptist Church

History: Many Baptists contend that their fellowship began with John the Baptist's disciples and has existed until the present. However, no organized Baptist churches are on record before 1607/1606 in England, when John Smythe rebaptized himself and his followers, hoping to make them Mennonites. They refused but embraced Baptist principles of Scriptural authority and baptism of believers by immersion. The first churches were General Baptist, holding to a general atonement for all. In 1638, the Particular Baptist church was organized, incorporating the Calvinistic doctrine of limited atonement. The Immersion Baptist church broke away in 1644 and wrote a confession still embraced by many Baptists today and which helped to brand these immersionists as "Baptists" in the popular mind. Roger Williams came to Rhode Island and established the first Baptist church in America about 1639. Early churches were Particular Baptists and were strongly Calvinistic in doctrine. In 1845, the Southern Baptist Convention was organized over issues of slavery, civil war, and evangelism in the southern states.

Organization: Each Baptist church is autonomous in governing its affairs. Ministers are licensed by local churches and ordained by the recommendation of other Baptist churches. Fellowship is provided through local and state associations. Educational and missionary activities are accomplished through national conventions. The local church usually is governed by its pastor, who is given general oversight of its functioning, and by its deacons who are charged with the responsibility for physical matters. Questions of importance are voted on by the local church membership.

Creeds: Baptist churches subscribe to no officially-adopted creed, but a number of creeds have been developed over the years. Among these are the Philadelphia Confession, 1742, and The New Hampshire Confession, 1832. Many statements of Baptist beliefs have also been published, such as The Standard Manual for Baptist Churches (Edward T. Hiscox, 1890) and Church Manual (J. M. Pendelton, 1867).

Membership: The largest group of Baptists (15,851,756 in 41,099 churches) comprise the Southern Baptist Convention. Other large bodies include: American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A. (1,454,388 in 5,775 churches); National Baptist Convention of America (3,500,000 in 2,500 churches); National Missionary Baptist Convention of America (2,500,000); Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc. (2,500,000 in 2,000 churches); National Primitive Baptist Convention, U.S.A. (1,000,000 in 1,530 churches). Lesser groups number more than 1 million in 10,600+ churches. However, no figures are available for the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc., which is the largest black fellowship in America. (Data: 1997-2000)

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DOCTRINES: (These representative doctrines are contained in The Standard Manual for Baptist Churches, Edward T. Hiscox, The American Baptist Publication Society, Philadelphia, 1951.)

ON DEPRAVITY: "...all mankind...being by nature utterly void of that holiness required by the law of God, positively inclined to evil; and therefore under just condemnation, without defense or excuse." (Article III, p. 60)

1. Some Baptists (especially Primitive Baptists) hold to a "particular atonement" and accept completely the Calvinistic doctrines of inherited total depravity, enabling grace, and impossibility of apostasy. Other Baptists choose to modify or to ignore one or more of these positions even though they are so closely related that they must stand or fall together.
2. Baptists generally rely on some mysterious working of the Holy Spirit to "give a holy disposition to the mind" to enable the sinner to give "voluntary obedience to the gospel." (Article VII, p. 63)

THE BIBLE SAYS:

1. There is no "total depravity" in any man.
 - a. Even "evil men" grow "worse and worse" through the practice of sin. (2Timothy 3:13)
 - b. It is possible to be "worse than an unbeliever." (1Timothy 5:8)
 - c. The behavior of some unbelievers belies total depravity, e.g., Cornelius. (Acts 10:1,2)
 - d. Men are guilty only of their own, not inherited, sins. (Ezekiel 18:4)
 - e. Children are born pure and later become corrupted by personal sins. (Matthew 18:3,4; Ecclesiastes 7:29)
 - f. Jesus died to save all who determine to be saved. (Luke 19:10; 1John 2:2; Revelation 22:17; Matt.11:28)
2. No "mysterious working" of the Holy Spirit is necessary for salvation.
 - a. Understanding comes through reading the word of God. (Ephesians 3:3-5)
 - b. Obedience to the gospel follows receiving (accepting) the word of God (Acts 2:47)
 - c. Receiving the Holy Spirit (for miraculous gifts) came *after* receiving the word of God through preaching. (Acts 8:14,15)

ON SALVATION:

1. Salvation is "wholly of grace." (Article IV, p. 61)
2. Justification is dependent on believing in Christ and is "solely through faith in Christ." (Article V, p. 62)

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3. Sinners are justified when their faith causes the righteousness of Christ to be “imputed” to them by God. (Article V, p. 62)
4. Justification secures *every* other blessing needed by the saved man. (Same)

- THE BIBLE SAYS:**
1. Salvation is not wholly by grace if man does *anything*--even believes! (Acts 2:40; Philippians 2:12)
 2. Faith only does not save the sinner. (James 2:24; Romans 1:5; Galatians 5:6)
 - a. Baptists call faith and repentance “sacred duties” but call them “inseparable graces wrought in the soul by the regenerating Spirit of God.” (Article VIII, p. 64)
 - b. Baptists admit that, in addition to believing, man must “turn to God,” “confess,” “supplicate for mercy,” “receive the Lord Jesus as our prophet, priest, and king,” and “rely on him alone...” (Same reference)
 3. Their own righteousness is credited to believers when they have obeyed God’s will. (Romans 4:20-24; James 2:21-24)
 - a. Righteousness is to be *pursued* (See 1Timothy 6:11.), *worked* (Hebrews 11:33), and *practiced* (1John 2:29; 3:7,10).
 4. Saved believers need to grow in Christ after salvation. (2Peter 3:18; 1:5-11, etc.)

- ON**
- PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS:**
1. “...such as are truly regenerate, being born of the Spirit, will not utterly fall away and perish, but will endure to the end...” (Article XI, p. 67)
 2. Faithfulness distinguishes true believers from “superficial professors.” (Same reference)
 3. The saved are “kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.” (Same reference)
 4. Note-- This doctrine often is called “the impossibility of apostasy,” “once saved, always saved,” “security of the believer,” etc.

- THE BIBLE SAYS:**
1. The “truly regenerate” are warned about apostasy.
 - a. A weak brother for whom Christ died can *perish*. (1Corinthians 8:11)
 - b. Those who “have escaped” sin and “have known the way of righteousness” can have a “worse” end than unbelievers. (2Peter 2:20-22)
 - c. Numerous other warnings are intended to keep us from apostasy. (James 5:19,20; 1Peter 5:8; Luke 8:13, etc.)
 2. Some “truly regenerate” actually fell away.
 - a. Simon fell, though as saved as any in Samaria. (Acts 8:12,13; 23)
 - b. Ananias and Sapphira fell in spite of being of “one heart and soul” with

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- all the other believers in Jerusalem. (Acts 4:32,34; 5:1-11)
- c. God's power keeps the obedient believer. (1Peter 1:5,9,13,14)
 - d. The believer can become an unbeliever and place himself outside of God's promise to keep his soul. (Hebrews 3:12; 4:11)

- ON BAPTISM:**
1. Baptism of a believer is to "show forth in a solemn and beautiful emblem his faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Saviour, with its effect, in his death to sin and resurrection to a new life..." (Article XIV, p. 70)
 2. Baptism is "prerequisite to the privileges of a church relation, and to the Lord's Supper." (Same reference)
 3. Baptists deny that baptism is essential to salvation:
 - a. "Then baptism is the outward symbol of the inward washing." (J. M. Pendleton, Church Manual. Judson Press, Philadelphia, 1953, p. 76.)
 - b. "Baptism is not essential to salvation, for our churches utterly repudiate the dogma of 'baptismal regeneration;' but it is essential to obedience, since Christ has commanded it. It is also essential to a public confession of Christ before the world, and to membership in the church which is his body. And no true lover of his Lord will refuse these acts of obedience." (Hiscox, chapter 3, note #8)
 4. *Question--* Is obedience essential to salvation? Public confession? membership in the church? Then why not baptism, too??

- THE BIBLE SAYS:**
1. Baptism is not a *symbol* of washing, but a *washing*. (Acts 22:16; Ephesians 5:26; Titus 3:5)
 2. Baptism is essential to salvation. (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Galatians 3:27; 1Peter 3:21, etc.)
 3. Baptism puts us into the *one* body, which is the church (1Corinthians 12:13) This is not the Baptist church, for Baptists teach that baptism also puts believers into *many* churches (Methodist, Presbyterian, etc.)
 4. Jesus saves His church, making baptism *essential* to salvation in the church. (Ephesians 5:23; Acts 2:47)
 5. Obedience is essential to salvation (Hebrews 5:9; 2Thessalonians 1:8), but one *cannot obey* without being baptized. (Acts 2:40,41)

- ON THE LORD'S SUPPER:**
1. The Supper is observed by "the members of the church assembled for that purpose." This involves only a local Baptist church, since Baptists only recognize local churches. (Article XV, p. 70 and chapter 1, p.11)
 2. "As to the time, place, and frequency of the ordinances (baptism and the Lord's Supper [RG]), no Scriptural directions are given. These are left

optional with the churches. They are usually observed on Sundays, but not necessarily. As to the Supper, our churches have very generally come to observe it on the first Sunday of each month.” (Hiscox, chapter III, p. 20)

**THE BIBLE
SAYS:**

1. “Close communion” (only local church members in good standing are allowed to participate) was not practiced in the New Testament.
 - a. Jesus would eat with church members “in his kingdom.” (Matthew 26:29) No one local church constitutes the whole kingdom.
 - b. Paul ate the Supper with the church at Troas and with the church at Puteoli. (Acts 20:7; 28:14) He was not a member of either local church. All Christians may do as he did. (Romans 2:11)
 - c. Each Christian is to examine himself as to the *manner* in which he partakes. (1Corinthians 11:28) No example can be found of others examining him as to his *fitness* to partake.
2. There is a time specified for observing the Supper-- the first day of the week. (Acts 20:7)
 - a. The implication of the language here and the circumstances involved is that the Supper was eaten *every* first day. (Exodus 20:8; 1Corinthians 16:1,2 [Baptist churches take collections *every* Sunday.])

- ON THE CHURCH:**
1. “...a visible Church of Christ is a company of baptized believers..observing the ordinances of Christ...” (Article XIII, p. 69)
 2. “... its only scriptural officers are bishops or pastors, and deacons...” (Same reference)

**THE BIBLE
SAYS:**

1. The one body (church) is only and always “visible” since it is the members. (Ephesians 4:4; Matthew 16:18; Ephesians 1:22,23)
 - a. Local churches did not *control* the ordinances (Lord’s Supper and baptism) by voting on membership in the local church. (Acts 10:47; 8:36,37; 2:47; 1Corinthians 11:28)
2. The local church is to be ruled by a plurality of “pastors” (elders), not by one as is true in the Baptist Church. (Philippians 1:2; Hebrews 13:17)
 - a. Baptist pastors often are not qualified as “pastors.” (1Timothy 3:2,4,6; Titus 1:6)

1. What are two of the “unofficial creeds” of the Baptist church which state the doctrines that are most widely accepted and taught by Baptist churches?

a. _____ b. _____

2. Why are those Baptists wrong who teach the total depravity of man? (Give scripture[s]):

3. How do we know that salvation cannot be *wholly* by grace? (Give scripture[s]): _____

4. “Perseverance of the saints” is also known by what other descriptive terms?

a. _____ b. _____ c. _____

5. Warnings and examples defy the Baptist doctrine of perseverance. Give scriptures for each:

a. Warnings: _____

b. Examples: _____

6. Show why baptism is *not* a symbol of washing but an **essential** washing from sin:

a. Reason: _____ Scripture(s): _____

b. Reason: _____ Scripture(s): _____

c. Reason: _____ Scripture(s): _____

7. “Close communion” is a common practice in Baptist churches. Tell what it is and why the practice is contrary to (1) teaching and (2) practice in the New Testament (Give scriptures):

a. Teaching: _____

b. Teaching: _____

c. Practice: _____

8. The claim is made that no *specific* time is authorized to observe the Lord's Supper. How do both Scripture and Baptist practice show that this is a false claim?
- a. Scripture: _____
- b. Baptist practice: _____
9. Why is the Baptist practice of voting people into the Baptist church contrary to Bible teaching about the "ordinances" of baptism and observing the Lord's Supper?
- a. Baptism: _____
- b. Lord's Supper: _____
10. How are the functions/ persons of Baptist "pastors" and "deacons" different from those of pastors and deacons in the New Testament church?
- a. Pastors: _____
- b. Deacons: _____
11. Why is it misleading to speak of the "visible" and "invisible" church of Christ? _____
- _____
12. The Baptist doctrine of baptism being by immersion is a **correct** doctrine. Give some scriptures that confirm the correctness of this practice (use a concordance if necessary):
- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

The Methodist Church

History: The Methodist movement began at Oxford University, England, in 1729, with the work of John and Charles Wesley and George Whitefield. Members of the “Holy Club,” impressed with the need for holy living, devoted themselves to preaching and praying among the downtrodden in English society. John Wesley was influenced by the Moravian emphasis on justification by faith and holiness of life. After being rebuffed by the formalistic Church of England, Methodists (so-called because of their methodical approach to Bible study and prayer) formed their own independent societies. The first self-sustaining society was formed in 1740. John Wesley died in 1791 before Methodism in England became recognized as a church. The first conference was called in America in 1773. Methodism prospered in the colonies, despite its English roots. The Methodist Episcopal Church was organized in Baltimore in 1784 and adopted the Sunday Service (Book of Common Prayer) and Articles of Religion as written by John Wesley. The camp meeting became a prime activity to spread Methodism on the American frontier. The movement later divided into several groups. A severe disagreement resulted in a division into the Methodist Episcopal Church (North) and the Methodist Episcopal Church South in 1844-45 over the issue of slavery. These bodies were reunited, along with the Methodist Protestant Church, in 1939.

Organization: Local churches are called “charges.” Each charge elects its own Administrative Board to set goals and policies locally. Its minister is appointed by the conference bishop. The annual conference for each area receives delegates from charges or district conferences. A General Conference meets every four years and receives delegates from annual conferences. It makes laws for the entire church.

Creed: Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Church, Methodist Publishing House, Nashville, Tennessee, 1952.

Membership: The United Methodist Church reports a membership of 8,377,662 in 35,609 congregations (1999). The African Methodist Episcopal Church estimates 2,500,000 in 6,200 churches. The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church lists 1,276,662 in 3,125 congregations. Other groups within the Methodist “family” record more than 900,000 on church rolls. (Data: 1997-99)

DOCTRINES:

- ON DEPRAVITY:**
1. “Original sin.. is the corruption of the nature of every man, that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and of his own nature inclined to evil, and that continually.” (Discipline, Article VII, p. 27)
 2. “The condition of man after the fall of Adam is such that he cannot turn and prepare himself; by his own natural strength and works, to faith, and calling upon God; wherefore we have no power to do good works, pleasant and acceptable to God without the grace of God preventing (preceding-RG) us, that we may have a good will...” (Article VIII, p. 27)
 3. “. . .whereof is one Christ. . .who truly suffered, was crucified, dead, and buried, to reconcile his Father to us, and to be a sacrifice, not only for original guilt, but also for the actual sins of men.” (Article II, p. 26)
 4. Note-- Chapter II, paragraph 127, “Children and the Church,” states: “We hold that all children, by virtue of the unconditional benefits of the atonement, are members of the family of God, and are therefore graciously entitled to Baptism.” (Discipline) This and similar statements obviously resulted from a disagreement about the status of babies in the light of Article VII (above). A compromise in 1910 left Articles 2, 7, and 8 in the Discipline but moderated their implications for children. This has created a clear *clear contradiction between two different positions in the same book about original sin and depravity!*
 5. Summary of the teachings of the Discipline on depravity:
 - a. Men are born with original sin.
 - b. Men, because of this original sin, have a corrupt nature that inclines them toward sin continually.
 - c. Men cannot do anything to turn to God without some special operation on them by God to enable them to have a “good will.”
 - d. The death of Jesus provides relief from both original sin and actual sins.
 - e. Children may be baptized to signify that they are in God’s family.

THE BIBLE
SAYS:

1. Man is made in God’s (spiritual) image, hence is not sinful as a “natural” condition (Genesis 1:27) Since the spirit controls the body, man cannot be “continually inclined” to evil as a natural consequence of Adam’s sin. He must possess a clear choice between doing good and doing evil in every instance.
 - a. Man is *not* born guilty of sin. (Luke 15:8; Romans 7:9)
 - b. Man is responsible only for the sins *he commits*. (Ezekiel 18:4)

- d. Adults are urged to be like children in “malice” (“badness of quality”--Vine, New Testament Words), i.e., imitate their *lack* of “badness.” (1Corinthians 14:20)
- e. Sin results from lust and temptation in adults, not from babies inheriting the guilt of some uncommitted sin. (James 1:14,15)
- 2. Sinners *can* “turn” to good works of obedience without special intervention by God. (Acts 3:19; 1Thessalonians 1:9,10)
 - a. They can *initiate* behavior that pleases God without receiving from heaven a predisposition to do so. (Matthew 19:16-21)
 - b. Unsaved people in the Bible could “know assuredly” that Jesus is the Christ, ask what to do to be saved, obey gospel commands, “save themselves,” and “receive the word”-- all without any divine intervention to produce a “good will” in them. Were not these “good works, pleasant and acceptable to God”? (Acts 2: 36-41)
 - c. The gospel can save without *special* grace. (1Corinthians 1:21; 4:15; John 8:32)
 - d. If special grace *enables* salvation, would not God be at fault for failing to give such a blessing to the lost? (2Peter 3:9; John 3:16,17)
- 3. Christ’s death forgives sins “of the *flesh*” (i.e., sins actually committed with the body) through obedience to His commands. (Colossians 2:11,12)
- 4. The church is God’s family. (1Timothy 3:15) Only believers who obey the commands of the gospel are added to the church. (Acts 2:47) Children do not believe and repent of sins (they have none) before being “baptized,” and therefore do not qualify for family (church) membership.

ON JUSTIFICATION: “Wherefore, that we are justified by faith only is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort.” (Article IX)

- THE BIBLE SAYS:**
- 1. Doctrines are “wholesome” only when they conform to the Lord’s teaching. (1Timothy 6:3) There is *no* comfort in false doctrine. (2Thessalonians 2:11,12)
 - 2. “Faith only” justification is a *false doctrine*! (James 2:24)
 - a. No one really believes it. It would eliminate the necessity of love, repentance, good morals, etc. (Matthew 22:37; Acts 11:18, etc.)
 - b. Believers have the power to become the children of God. (John 1:12)
 - c. Faith *only* would save: devils (James 2:19) and hypocrites. (John 12:42)
 - d. Justification does not occur simultaneously with faith. (Acts 11:21; Mark 16:16, etc.)
 - e. Salvation was always enjoyed after faith *and* obedience were displayed (Acts 2:36-38; 8:37,38; 22:16, etc.)

- ON BAPTISM:**
1. "Baptism is...a sign of profession and mark of difference whereby Christians are distinguished from others that are not baptized..." (Article XVII)
 2. "...it is also a sign of regeneration or the new birth..." (Same reference)
 3. "The baptism of young children is to be retained in the church." (Same ref.)
 4. "Let every adult person, and the parents of every child to be baptized, have the choice of sprinkling, pouring, or immersion." ("Baptism," page 519, Discipline)

- THE BIBLE SAYS:**
1. Baptism is not a sign to differentiate between "Christians" and those "not baptized."
Baptism is administered to *sinners*, not *Christians*. (Acts 2:38; 22:16; Galatians 3:27, etc.)
 - a. Baptism is an integral part of the obedience that is required to become a Christian. (Romans 6:3-5; 17,18; Ephesians 5:26; 1Peter 3:21)
 - b. Note-- Article XVII implies that those "not baptized" are not Christians! This is a *valid* position, but it is in clear opposition to the position taken in Article IX that salvation (peculiar to Christians) is by "faith only!"
 2. Baptism is not a sign of regeneration or new birth.
 - a. Baptism is a *part*, not a *sign*, of the new birth. (John 3:3-5; Galatians 3:27; 2Corinthians 5:17)
 - b. Baptism is not a sign ("a sensible indication of something not apparent to the senses"-- Webster) of anything. It does not *represent* that a person *has been* saved, but it shows that he *is being saved* through obedience to the Lord's command and in trust of His promise. (Mark 16:16)
 3. Infant baptism is not "retained" from the pattern for baptism revealed in the New Testament, for it nowhere appears there. It *is* retained from the traditions initiated in the apostate Roman Catholic Church as it departed from the truth. (See the chart, "The New Testament Church: Establishment, Falling Away, and Restoration," p.6.)
 - a. Obedience requires faith, repentance, and confession prior to baptism. (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 8:35-38) This eliminates the baptism of infants, who are capable of none of these things.
 - b. "Household baptisms" did not *necessarily* include infants, and the actions of those baptized show they *were not included* (Acts 10:33, 46-48; 16:13,40; 16:32,34)
 - c. Baptism does not replace circumcision as a sign of being God's people. If it did, then it would be: (1) essential; (2) for males only; (3) for Jews alone, since circumcision was forbidden for Gentiles under the New Testament (Acts 15:24); (4) inappropriate for anyone to be *both* circumcised *and* baptized (e.g., Timothy [Acts 16:1,3] and Jews on Pentecost [Acts 2:36,38]).
 - d. Note-- Baptism for infants was "retained" in the Methodist Discipline as part of a compromise among differing factions that united in 1939 as the "Methodist Church." In the 1894 Discipline, children were "conceived and

born in sin,” but in the 1910 Discipline, they were “born into this world in Christ the Redeemer...” Infant baptism initially was practiced to accommodate the consequences of the doctrine of depravity. When the Discipline “removed” original sin from babies, it left behind a ritual to be practiced without any need or reason to practice it.

4. The only *baptismal options* afforded to people in the New Testament were:
 - (1) to be baptized in the only way practiced by divine guidance, or (2) not to be baptized at all. (E.g., On Pentecost, 3,000 chose to be, and an unnumbered multitude chose not to be. [see Acts 2])
 - a. The Greek word for “baptize” is properly translated: “to immerse, dip, overwhelm, plunge.” (Consult Thayer, Greek-English Lexicon of the N.T.)
 - b. Baptism is likened to a *burial*. (Romans 6:3,4; Colossians 2:12; Acts 8:38)
 - c. Baptism was administered where there was *much* water. (John 3:23)
 - d. People went *down into* the water to be baptized and came *up out of* the water after being baptized. (Acts 8:38,39)
 - e. There is now only **one** baptism. (Ephesians 4:5) There are **no options** available to anyone!

**ON RECON-
CILIATION:**

“...Christ. . . was crucified, dead, and buried to reconcile his Father to us...” (Article II)

**THE BIBLE
SAYS:**

1. It is *man* who has wandered from God and who needs reconciliation. (Isaiah 59:2. 2Corinthians 5:18,19; Ephesians 2:16)
2. God’s love for man has never diminished in spite of man’s sins. ***God needs no persuasion*** to receive penitent and obedient sinners. (Romans 5:8-11)

**ON THE OLD
LAW**

“Although the law given from God by Moses as touching ceremonies and rites doth not bind Christians. . . yet notwithstanding, no Christian whatsoever is free from the obedience of the commandments which are called moral..” (Article VI)

**THE BIBLE
SAYS:**

1. “The law” included both moral and ceremonial commandments. (Luke 2:39; Romans 7:7)
2. “The law” was abolished for Christians. (Colossians 2:14,15; Romans 7:1-6)
This included both moral and ceremonial commandments.
3. A higher moral standard is set for Christians under the New Covenant. (Matthew 5:20-48; Galatians 5:22-25, Ephesians 4:25-32; etc.)
4. The New Covenant is a **better** Covenant in **every** way! (Hebrews 8:6)

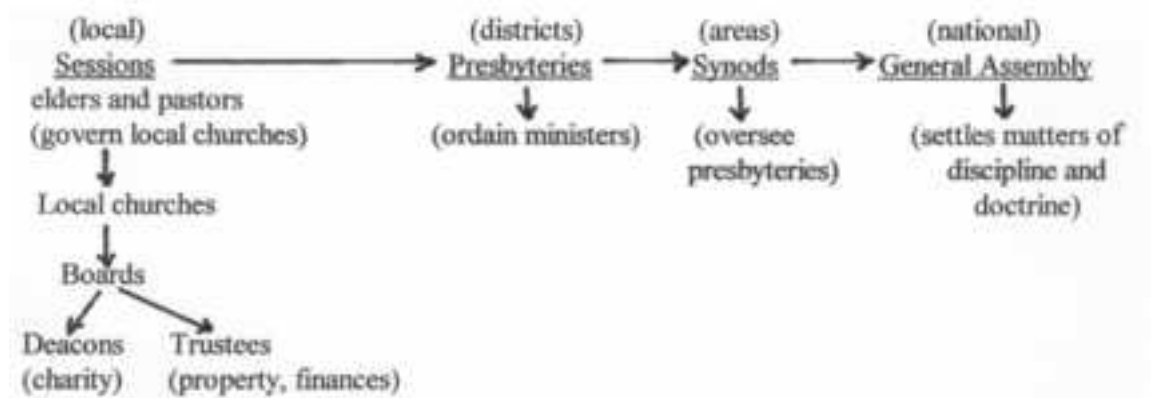
1. A fundamental disagreement about the issue of _____ resulted in a division between northern and southern members within the Methodist Church. Reunion occurred in _____.
2. The Methodist Discipline has taught two *contrary* doctrines about original sin:
 - a. Before 1910 (see page 30, no. 1): _____
 - b. After 1910 (see page 30, no. 4): _____
3. Give three reasons why we know from the Bible that man is *not* born totally depraved:
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
4. Contrary to man's doctrines, people *can* do "good works" that please God without a special operation by the Holy Spirit to enable them to do so. What things were done by sinners on Pentecost that prove man's ability to "please God" without previous divine intervention?
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
5. "Wherefore, that we are justified by _____ is a most _____ doctrine, and very full of _____." (Methodist Discipline, Article IX)
6. List three Bible reasons why we know that the "faith only" doctrine is a **false** doctrine:
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
7. Methodists believe that baptism is a "sign" to show that some have been "born again." How is this unlike what the Bible teaches about baptism? _____

8. Why is it a mistake for any church to “retain” infant baptism in its doctrine?
- a. Its origin: _____
- b. Baptism’s prerequisites: (1)_____ (2)_____ (3)_____
9. If baptism has “replaced” circumcision as a **sign** that infants are connected with the church, then, logically, baptism for infants would be: _____, for _____, for _____, and inappropriate for _____.
10. Give three Bible reasons why Methodists err in “baptizing” by sprinkling and pouring:
- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
11. Explain the error in the Methodist doctrine about “reconciliation.” _____
- _____
12. Why is it inappropriate for a Christian to try to keep the “moral” commands of the Law of Moses but not the “ceremonial” commands?
- _____
- _____
- _____

The Presbyterian Church

History: Presbyterianism began between 1534 and 1560 in Switzerland and France, being founded on the work and teaching of John Calvin. It spread to England and Scotland, where John Knox became its leader. The Presbyterian Church came to be recognized in Scotland as the state religion. The first Presbyterian church was established in America in 1611. Churches separated during the Civil War into the United Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the Presbyterian Church in the U.S. (southern), but these groups reunited in 1983 into the new Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Headquarters of the church are located in Louisville, Kentucky.

Organization:



Creed: The Westminster Confession of Faith, dating from 1647, was the first creed upon which Presbyterianism in America was established. Several revisions and “confessional statements” were adopted over time, the most recent being the doctrinal statement of 1967. The United Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) compiled a Book of Confession in that year and included nine creeds to “trace the development of the great Christian affirmations.” Some Presbyterian groups still follow the Westminster Confession, but most have abandoned any defense of unconditional election, limited atonement, and the inability of sinners to act toward their own salvation. Infants who die are now considered to be “included in the election of grace, and are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit...”

Membership: The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) numbers 3,561,184 members in 11,216 congregations. Other Presbyterian groups list some 535,700 members. (Data: 1997-99)

DOCTRINES:

Traditional Doctrines

(Follow the Westminster Confession of Faith)

- ON DEPRAVITY:** 1. Men are born *totally* depraved. “By this sin they fell...and so became dead in sin, and wholly defiled in all faculties and parts of soul and body” (page 26). “From this original corruption, whereby we are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil, do proceed all actual transgressions” (page 27). “Our first parents sinned... This their sin God was pleased, according to his wise and holy counsel, to permit, having purposed to order it to his own glory” (page 25). “...the guilt of this sin was imputed and the same death in sin and corrupted nature conveyed, to all their posterity, descending from them by ordinary generation” (pages 26, 27). “This corruption of nature, during this life, doth remain in those that are regenerated...” (page 27).
2. Summary of teaching on depravity:
- a. God purposed man’s first sin in Eden.
 - b. From this sin, man became *totally* corrupt and incapable of *any* good.
 - c. Every human is born into this world guilty of the original sin of Adam and Eve through fleshly inheritance.
 - d. The sin of our first human parents is responsible for *all* subsequent sinful deeds of *all* their descendents.
 - e. The Christian retains his corrupt nature *after* salvation.

**THE BIBLE
SAYS:**

- 2a. Man had a choice between doing good or evil in the garden of Eden. (Genesis 3:1-6; James 1:13)
- (1) If that choice was not *free*, God was guilty of deceit. (Genesis 3:11-13) But-- God is incapable of deceit (1Peter 2:22), and He does not even allow guile or hypocrisy in His people. (1Peter 2:1)
 - (2) It was Satan, not God, who beguiled Eve. (Genesis 3:13)
 - (3) Adam was not deceived by *anyone* but sinned by his own choice. (1Timothy 2:14.)
- 2b. Man has never been totally corrupt; he is capable of “good” deeds. (2Timothy 3:13; Luke 8:15; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 1Thessalonians 1:9,10)
- 2c. People are guilty only of those sins in which they are *personally* involved. (James 1:14-16)
- 2d. People commit sin because they choose freely to do so, not because they are irresistibly predisposed toward sinful behavior. (James 1:13-15)
- 2e. Christians enjoy *purity* of spirit and body because they have been completely cleansed from *all* sin. (1Corinthians 6:9-11; Titus 2:14; 1Peter 1:22,etc.)

DENOMINATIONAL DOCTRINES---

Lesson Six *The Presbyterian Church*

- ON ELECTION:**
1. Election to salvation is *unconditional* and *unchangeable*. “By the decree of God, for the manifestation of his glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others are foreordained to everlasting death.” (pages 14,15) “These angels and men, thus predestinated, and foreordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed; and their number is so certain and definite that it cannot be either increased or diminished.” (page 15) “Those of mankind that are predestinated unto life, God, before the foundation of the world was laid...hath chosen in Christ...without any foresight of faith or good works, or perseverance in either of them, or any other thing in the creature, as conditions...” (pages 15,16)
 2. Summary of teaching on election:
 - a. God chose *individuals* for salvation or damnation.
 - b. No man can act so as to *change* his eternal destiny.
 - c. One’s election is *completely unrelated* to any acts of obedience or disobedience on his part during his lifetime.
 - d. Salvation does not depend on faithfulness on the part of the elect.
- THE BIBLE SAYS:**
- 2a. *Classes*, not *individuals*, are chosen to be saved or lost, depending on their choices of obedience or disobedience. (Acts 10:34,35; Romans 2:11; Matthew 11:28-30; Revelation 22:17, etc.)
 - 2b. Lost people were *always* told to *do something* to be saved. (Acts 2:37, 38, 40; 3:19; 16:30,31; 22:16; etc.)
 - (1) Saved people were *always* told to *do something* to remain saved. (1Corinthians 10:12; Galatians 5:19-21; Hebrews 10:39, etc.)
 - 2c. Election by God *is* conditional. (Romans 8:28,29 [conform to image of Christ]; Ephesians 1:4-6 [be holy and without blame]; Ephesians 1:11,12 [trust in Christ]; 1Peter 1:2 [sanctification of the Spirit, obedience, cleansing by blood]; Acts 2:37,38; 16:30,31; Romans 10:10; Galatians 5:4; 1Corinthians 9:27; Philippians 2:12)
 - 2d. Salvation *is* dependent on faithfulness. (1Peter 1:9; Revelation 2:10; 1Timothy 1:19,20; Luke 9:62)
- ON LIMITED ATONEMENT:**
1. Jesus’ atonement for sin is limited to elect individuals; others are excluded. “...Neither are any other redeemed by Christ, effectually called, justified, adopted, sanctified, and saved, but the elect only” (page 17). “The rest of mankind, God was pleased...to pass by, and to ordain them to dishonor and wrath for their sin...” (page 17). “God did, from all eternity , decree to justify the elect; and Christ did...die for their sins; ...nevertheless they are not justified until the Holy Spirit doth, in due time, actually apply Christ unto them” (pages 49,50).

2. Summary of teaching on limited atonement:
 - a. Jesus died *only* for elected individuals.
 - b. The non-elect have no part in the atonement and are *hopelessly lost*!
 - c. The atonement (“Christ”) must “in due time” be “actually applied” by the Holy Spirit to the elect to save them.

**THE BIBLE
SAYS:**

- 2a. Jesus died for the redemption of all men. (2Peter 3:9; Matthew 11:28-30; 1Timothy 2:6)
- 2b. Those who are lost *can* be saved. (Luke 19:10; 1Corinthians 6:9-11; Romans 5:8; Revelation 22:17)
- 2c. The atonement was offered *once for all* (time), not in installments “in due time.” (Hebrews 10:10,14)
 - (1) There is no reference in the Bible to the Holy Spirit “actually applying” the atonement of Christ to the elect.
 - (2) Accessing the atonement occurs through *obedience*, not by heavenly intervention on behalf of someone already saved (elected) (Romans 5:2; Ephesians 3:12; James 2:24)

**ON IRRESIST-
IBLE GRACE:**

1. A miraculous operation of the Spirit on the elect is necessary to make them able to respond to the calling of God to salvation. “All those whom God hath predestinated unto life, and those only, he is pleased, in his appointed and accepted time, effectually to call, by his Word and Spirit, out of that state of sin and death, in which they are by nature, to grace and salvation by Jesus Christ; enlightening their minds spiritually and savingly, to understand the things of God; taking away their heart of stone and giving them a heart of flesh; renewing their wills...and effectually drawing them to Jesus Christ” (pages 43-45). “...man, who is altogether passive therein (the effectual calling--RG), until being quickened and renewed by the Holy Spirit, he is thereby enabled to answer this call and to embrace the grace offered and conveyed in it” (page 45).
2. Summary of teaching on irresistible grace:
 - a. God only “effectually” calls *elect* individuals by the gospel.
 - b. A supernatural operation enables the elect to understand the gospel.
 - c. The elect’s heart (spirit) is made receptive to the gospel by the same direct operation of the Holy Spirit.
 - d. The will is “renewed” to desire the benefits of the calling of God.
 - e. Those being called to justification are *altogether passive* in the process. They are not able until they are enabled by a miracle to obey God.

DENOMINATIONAL DOCTRINES---

Lesson Six *The Presbyterian Church*

- THE BIBLE SAYS:**
- 2a. The “gospel call” is directed toward all sinners. (Matthew 11:28-30; Revelation 22:17)
 - (1) God wants *all* sinners to be saved. (2Peter 3:9)
 - (2) God shows no partiality among men. (Acts 10:34,35; Romans 2:11)
 - 2b. The gospel can be understood *without* a supernatural operation upon men.
 - (1) Understanding is commanded of all (ordinary) men. (Ephesians 5:17)
 - (2) Only hearing is prerequisite to understanding. (Matthew 15:10; 13:15)
 - (3) Reading scripture can give complete understanding. (Ephesians 3:3,4)
 - (4) Uninspired men in the New Testament were *not* dependent on special divine assistance to be able to understand the essentials of the gospel.
 - 2c. The sinner’s heart is able both to understand the gospel and to receive it as the truth without any direct operation of the Spirit.
 - (1) The Spirit operates on the heart through the word. (1Thessalonians 2:13; James 1:21; Acts 2:40,41, etc.)
 - (2) The word may have negative effects on *bad and dishonest* hearts as well as positive effects on *good and honest* hearts. (Acts 7:54; 2:37)
 - 2d. The will of sinners is changed through repentance, not by mysterious means. (Matthew 21:28-31; Acts 2:36-38; 3:19)
 - 2e. *Activity*, not *passivity*, characterized New Testament converts. (Act 2:37, 38; Acts 16:30,31; 22:16) The convert, not the Holy Spirit, acted.

ON PERSE- VERANCE:

- 1. The elect cannot fall from God’s grace but will surely be faithful to the end. “They whom God has accepted in his Beloved, effectually called and sanctified by his Spirit, can neither totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace; but shall surely persevere to the end, and be eternally save.” (page 65). “This perseverance...depends, not upon their own free will, but upon the immutability of the decree of election...and the seed of God within them..”(pages 65,66). “Nevertheless, they may...fall into grievous sins, and for a time continue therein: whereby they ...come to be deprived of some measure of their graces and comforts...and bring temporal judgments upon themselves” (pages 66,67).
- 2. Summary of teaching about perseverance:
 - a. The elect of God *cannot* so sin as to be finally lost.
 - b. Their security in no way depends upon themselves but only upon the immutable will of God.
 - c. The elect may commit sin, but consequences will be suffered in this world and not in the world to come.

- THE BIBLE SAYS:**
- 2a. The saved *can* be lost through sin. (Acts 8:13-22; 2Peter 2:20-22; 1Corinthians 9:27; Galatians 5:4; etc.)

DENOMINATIONAL DOCTRINES---

Lesson Six *The Presbyterian Church*

- 2b. The Christian's continued personal obedience determines his ultimate destiny. (Philippians 2:12; Revelation 2:10; Hebrews 10:39)
- 2c. We are saved by *faith*, but we can *quit* believing. (Ephesians 2:8; Luke 8:13; Hebrews 3:12-14)

Note-- These five doctrines of Calvinistic origin stand or fall together. They may be more easily remembered as a "package" by this acrostic:

Total hereditary depravity;
Unconditional election of the saved;
Limited atonement of Christ;
Irresistible grace upon the elect;
Perseverance of the elect to final salvation.

DOCTRINES:

Modern Doctrines

(From the "Declaratory Statement," 1903, and the "Confession of 1967")

The "Declaratory Statement" acknowledges the Westminster Confession as binding on ministers and elders of the Presbyterian Church, but it seeks a "disavowal...of certain inferences drawn from statements in the Confession of Faith," and it also seeks to make "a more explicit statement" about those "inferences." It says:

- 1. God's eternal decree of salvation or damnation is harmonious with man's access to salvation.
- 2. Damnation of the lost is based on their choices.
- 3. Dying infants are included in the "election of grace," and they are "saved by Christ through the Spirit, who works when and how he pleases."

THE BIBLE

SAYS:

- 1. The decree of God as espoused in the Westminster Confession *cannot* logically be made to harmonize with man's free choice to be saved. (Joshua 24:15; also, see material on "Election," page 38)
 - a. The word of God is *unchangeable*, which fact brands either the Confession or the "Declaratory Statement" as **error!** (Hebrews 13:8,9)
 - b. We need no "declaratory statements" to make the scriptures' meaning "explicit." (Ephesians 5:17; 3:3,4; Matthew 11:25)
- 2. This statement, while in direct contradiction to statements made in the Confession, is nevertheless a *true* statement. Those who have no love of the truth will be lost because of their own faulty choices. (2Thessalonians 2:9-14)
Note-- It is remarkable that Presbyterians (and others) believed the teaching of the Westminster Confession of Faith, as written, for more than 250 years

(1647-1903). Only when confronted with its consequences in a changing world did men decide that “disavowals of certain inferences” and “explicit” statements were necessary. It is good to give up error for truth (See 1Thessalonians 1:9,10). However, error should be admitted as such, and no attempt should be made to hide it under the guise of “explaining.”

Questions:

1. What about the “elect” individual who failed to live right before it was “explained” in the “Declaratory Statement” that he must serve Christ?
2. What about the “non-elect” person who failed to believe and obey because he waited in vain for the Spirit to “operate” on him?

OTHER DOCTRINES:

1. The Old Testament and the New Testament guide us in *all* things.

THE BIBLE SAYS:

- a. The Testaments are not the same law. (Hebrews 8:1-13; 10:9)
- b. We are guided today only by the New Testament. (Hebrews 9:17; Romans 1:16,17)

2. Salvation is by faith without obedience by man.

THE BIBLE SAYS:

- a. Salvation depends on faith and obedience. (Romans 5:1; 6:17,18)
- b. We must work the *works of God*. (John 6:29; James 2:24)

3. Baptism is administered by sprinkling or pouring.

THE BIBLE SAYS:

- a. Baptism is a *burial* in water. (Romans 6:4; Colossians 2:12)
- b. Candidates went *down into* the water and came *up out of* the water when they were baptized. (Acts 8:36,38; John 3:23)

4. Infants are “baptized” to signify membership in the church and union with Christ. Later, they “assume the obligation taken on their behalf by their parents.”

THE BIBLE SAYS:

- a. Baptism is a “washing” from sin. (Acts 22:16; 1Peter 3:21)
- b. Those in the church have been “washed.”(1Corinthians 1:2; 6:9-11)
- c. If babies are “in the church,” they were baptized to wash away their sins. If they were not born sinners, as is *now* contended, there is no

reason to baptize (“wash”) them as it was earlier when it was thought that they were spiritually tainted by “original sin.”

- d. Each individual must answer for his own responsibilities. Parents cannot “assume” responsibility on behalf of their children. (Romans 14:12; 2Corinthians 5:10)

- 5. The Lord’s Supper may be administered only by an “ordained minister” [of the Presbyterian Church].

THE BIBLE SAYS:

- a. The *manner* of partaking, not the absence of a proper administrator, prevented the Corinthians from observing the Supper acceptably. (1Corinthians 11:20 [ASV]; 11:27,28)
- b. Only Jesus is identified as the “administrator” of the Lord’s Supper. (Matthew 26:26-29; 1Corinthians 11:23-26.) There is *no record* of His transmitting that role to any other particular person(s).
- c. We are free to “eat” and “drink” upon self-examination, so long as we partake “in a worthy manner.” The presence of a “minister” does *not expedite* scriptural participation by church members. (1Corinthians 11:27-34)

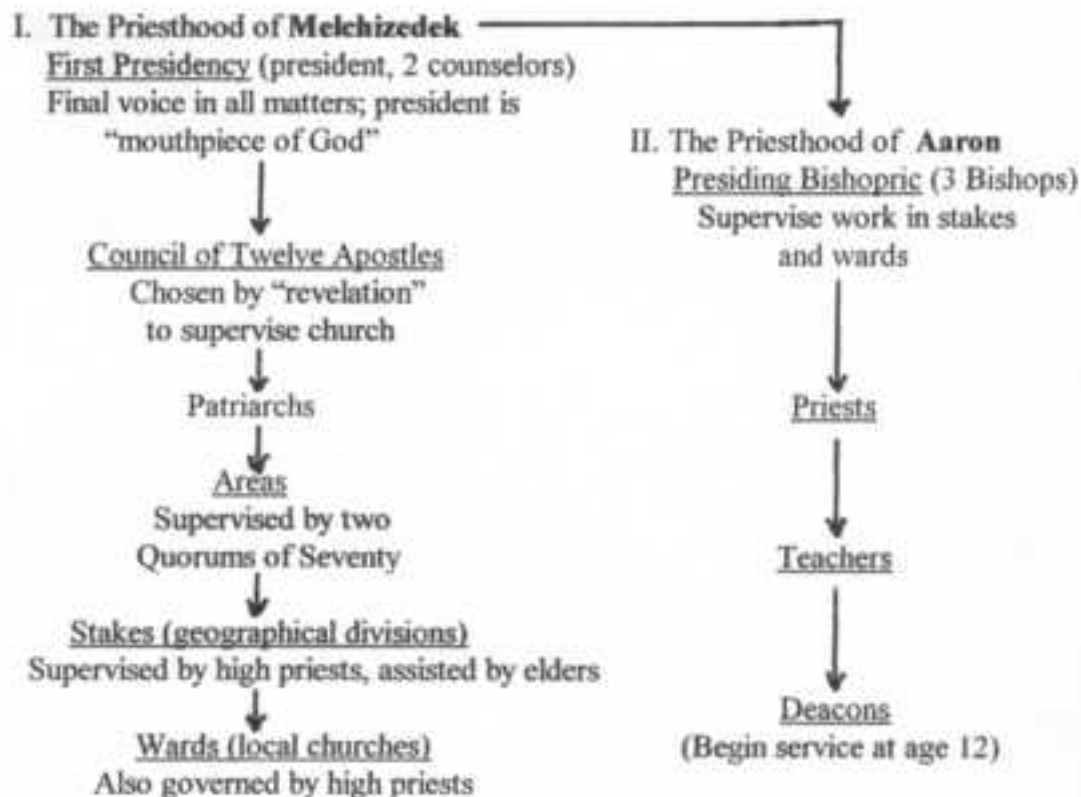
1. The work and teaching of _____ has become a major influence in the establishment and development of numerous Protestant denominations, although he did not himself start a church, and no “mainline” church wears his name.
2. Doctrines and practices of Presbyterian churches generally follow either of two basic approaches to the interpretation of Calvinistic teaching: the _____, which adheres to the _____ [creed--see page 37], and the _____, which seeks to moderate the consequences of that teaching [see page 41].
3. Give two Bible statements that prove Adam had freedom of choice when he committed man’s first sin: a. _____
b. _____
4. List the steps named by James (1:13-15) that describe the “sin-process” and that deny the idea that sin is automatically charged to people because of an inherited human nature:
a. _____ b. _____
c. _____
5. What are some Bible passages that show that God’s election is by *class*, not by *individuals*:
a. _____ b. _____
c. _____ d. _____
6. How do we know that man’s salvation is dependent on meeting gospel conditions?
a. _____ b. _____
c. _____ d. _____
7. The Bible doctrine of “atonement” teaches us that the **lost** can be _____, and the **saved** can be _____.

8. God's word will affect good hearts and bad hearts in different ways. Give examples:
- a. Good hearts: _____ b. Bad hearts: _____
9. *Ordinary* people can understand God's will by either _____ or _____ it.
10. What are the **five** foundation principles of Calvinistic doctrine that shaped early Presbyterianism, and what is the *acrostic* that helps us to remember them in their proper order?
- a. _____ b. _____ c. _____
- d. _____ e. _____ f. _____
- (acrostic)
11. The more modern "Declaratory Statement" of the Presbyterian Church contains at least three doctrines completely contrary to doctrines in the original "Confession." What are they?
- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
12. Can we be "guided in all things" today by both Old and New Testaments? Why or why not?
- _____
13. What is wrong with parents "taking on (spiritual) responsibilities" for their children that the children can "assume" later on? _____
- _____
14. Why is the practice of restricting the administration of the Lord's Supper to an "ordained minister" *too* restrictive? _____
- _____

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormon)

History: The Mormon Church is rooted in the “visions” of Joseph Smith, who claimed that God and Jesus Christ appeared to him in 1820 (at age 15) with the promise that he would receive the “true gospel” and reestablish the “true church.” He said he was led by an angel to discover metal plates, left by an “ancient prophet.” These plates were supposed to contain the true word of God as well as records of ancient inhabitants of America. Smith's translation became the Book of Mormon. Six members comprised the church at Fayette, New York, in 1830. Smith was murdered by a mob in 1844, and Brigham Young was appointed as church president. His opponents formed the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in 1847. The larger group migrated to Utah, where they built their tabernacle in Salt Lake City.

Organization:



DENOMINATIONAL DOCTRINES---

Lesson Seven ***The Mormon Church***

Creeds: The Book of Mormon; The Doctrine and Covenants; The Pearl of Great Price; various manifestoes of church presidents.

Membership: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Salt Lake City) now reports a membership of 5,113,409 in 11,315 congregations. (Data: 1999) This is an increase from 4,500,00 in 1989 and 1,106,018 in 1951. Approximately 37,000 young people serve on missions for eighteen months to two years. Only about one hundred church officials are paid for their services.

DOCTRINES: **The Articles of Faith** (According to Joseph Smith)

1. Belief in God, Jesus Christ His Son, and the Holy Ghost;
2. Punishment for our own sins, not Adam's;
3. All may be saved through Christ by obedience to the laws of the Gospel;
4. Laws and ordinances are: faith, repentance, baptism for remission of sins, laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Spirit;
5. Preachers are called by prophecy, have authorities' hands laid on them;
6. Church organization: apostles, prophets, pastors, teachers, evangelists, etc.;
7. Gift of tongues, prophecy, revelation, visions, healing, interpretation of tongues, etc.;
8. The Bible is God's word insofar as correctly translated; the Book of Mormon is also God's word;
9. Faith in past, present, and future revelations of God;
10. The gathering of Israel and the ten tribes; Zion to be built in North America; the personal reign of Christ on earth; the renewal of the earth to the glory of paradise;
11. Freedom to worship by conscience;
12. Subjection to civil authority;
13. Importance of personal morality.

A Closer Look at the Articles of Faith:

- ON GOD:**
1. God has a body of flesh like a man and is eternal in the same way men are eternal (Doctrine and Covenants, 130:20;132:22). "And man himself has existed from the premortal past..." (R.L. Evans, Council of Twelve). "Man was also in the beginning with God" (Doctrine and Covenants, 93:29).
 2. God is one God of many; each world has its own God (D & C., 132:15-17, 18-20; 121:28,32).
 3. Each man can become the god of his own world. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are now gods (D.& C., 132:37; The Pearl of Great Price, Abraham 3:22-25).
 4. Adam was the god of *our* world. Eve was *one* of his wives (Journal of Discourses, Vol.6, page 50).

5. Joseph Smith taught that God was originally a mortal man who through his own efforts advanced to Godhood. The First Presidency (highest authority in the church) has stated that “God himself is an exalted man, perfected, enthroned and supreme.”
6. From a sermon by Joseph Smith, the first “prophet” of the church: “I will prove that the world is wrong, by showing what God is...God himself was once as we are now, and is an exalted man, and sits enthroned in yonder heavens!...I am going to tell you how God came to be God...God himself, the Father of us all, dwelt on an earth, the same as Jesus Christ did...and you have got to learn how to be Gods yourselves, and to be kings and priests to God, the same as all Gods have done before you...” (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, Deseret Books, pp.345-346).
7. The Melchizedek Priesthood manual for 2002 declares that there are Gods “that exist in the eternal worlds,” that God and man are the same “species,” and that every man’s goal should be to become a “God” (Teaching of Presidents of the Church: John Taylor, pp 2-5, 82, quoted from “Salt Lake Messenger,” No. 101).

- THE BIBLE SAYS:**
1. God is a spirit; a spirit has no fleshly body. (John 4:24; Luke 24:39)
 - a. Man is *not* eternal as God is. (John 8:58)
 - b. Man was *created by God* from dust. (Genesis 1:1, 26,27; 2:7)
 2. There is only **one** God! (Isaiah 43:10,11; 44:6,8; Ephesians 4:4-6)
 3. Our goal is to be *with* God in *His place*, not to *become* Gods of other worlds. (John 14:1-3)
 - a. Paul had no wish to depart as a God to a world of his own but desired to be *with Christ*. (Philippians 1:23)
 - b. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob will “sit” together in the *same* kingdom of heaven, not in different heavens of their own. (Matthew 8:11)
 4. God is sinless and *cannot* commit sin. (Psalm 11:7; Hebrews 6:18)
 - a. Adam *was* guilty of sin in Eden. (Romans 5:14,19)
 - b. Adam had only one wife, the mother of us all. (Genesis 3:20)
 5. God is God, and has **always been** God. (See Psalm 90:1,2)
 6. “...many false prophets have gone out into the world.” (1John 4:1)
 7. See (2) and (3), above.

- ON CHRIST:**
1. Jesus was not divine as the Son of God. Brigham Young, successor to Joseph Smith and a “prophet,” taught that Jesus was Adam’s son by “natural generation” and “not begotten by the Holy Spirit” (Journal of Discourses, Vol. 6, page 50).

DENOMINATIONAL DOCTRINES---

Lesson Seven The Mormon Church

2. Jesus was a polygamist. "...if all the acts of Jesus were written, we, no doubt, would learn that these beloved women (those with whom Jesus sometimes associated--RG) were his wives" (The Seer, Vol.1, pages 158,159).

- THE BIBLE SAYS:**
1. Jesus was born of a virgin, and not by "natural generation." (Isaiah 7:14; Luke 1:34,35; Matthew 1:24,25)
 2. Worldly relationships were not a focus of Jesus. (Mark 3:32-35)
 - a. Jesus *condemned* adulterous marriages and certainly would not have been involved in one Himself. (Matthew 19:3-9)

- ON SALVATION:**
1. "Salvation" in some form will be universal. "The Latter Day Saint believes in universal 'salvation' " (R. L. Evans, prominent church official, 1955).
 2. Salvation will be in "degrees" (from least to greatest):
 - a. "**Telestial** salvation--" "Gentiles" (those who made no connection with Mormonism and rejected the gospel) will be in hell for awhile, but will, with the help of angels, receive an inferior redemption.
 - b. "**Terrestrial** salvation--" Those who received the (Mormon) "truth" only after death will be given a lesser reward than that to be enjoyed by the most faithful Mormons. These are not worthy of Godhood.
 - c. "**Celestial** salvation--" This greatest of all rewards will enable devout Mormons to dwell eternally with God and Christ with the fullest of blessings. These are worthy of Godhood (D. & C., 76:50-112).
 3. Hell is the knowledge of missing the highest possible happiness (Evans).
 4. "Salvation" is resurrection from the dead (D. & C., 88:16).

- THE BIBLE SAYS:**
1. Many will be *lost eternally*. (Matthew 7:13,14; 25:46; Mark 16:16)
 2. Salvation will be rewarded to the saved equally. (Matthew 20:1-16)
 - a. Angels are helpers of the faithful. (Hebrews 1:14) Those in hell cannot be rescued or helped by anyone. (Luke 16:19-31)
 - b. No second chance will be offered to the unsaved after death. (Hebrews 9:27; 2Corinthians 5:10)
 - c. Devout Mormons are deceived in their hope and will be *sorely disappointed* in their destiny. (2Thessalonians 2:11,12)
 3. Hell is an eternal lake of fire and brimstone. (Revelation 20:10-15; Luke 16:23,25)
 4. Some will be resurrected to *condemnation*. (John 5:28,29)

- ON OBEDIENCE:**
1. Baptism for the dead is practiced (Doctrines and Covenants, 124:33) in Mormon temples. "Thus these essential ordinances- including baptism- are 'vicariously' performed in the temples for those who have died without

adequate opportunity to receive them for themselves.” (R. L. Evans)

2. The “gift of the Holy Spirit” (a miraculous gift) follows baptism.

- THE BIBLE SAYS:**
1. Baptism is for the *living*, not the *dead*. (Acts 2:36-47, etc.)
 - a. Each person is responsible for himself; another cannot act as a proxy for him. (Luke 16:27-31; Romans 14:12; 2Corinthians 5:10)
 - b. There is no promise of a second chance after death. (Hebrews 9:27)
 2. The “gift” (singular) of the Holy Spirit was assured to *all* who were baptized. (Acts 2:38; 5:32)
 - a. Not all baptized believers had miraculous powers. (Acts 8:12, 14-17) Signs were done by the *apostles*, not the *converts*, on the Day of Pentecost. (Acts 2:43)
 - b. No indication is given that converts could perform miracles as a result of the conversion process. (Acts 8 [the eunuch]; Acts 16 [Lydia and the jailor]; Acts 18:8 [the Corinthians], etc.)
 - c. Some Christians without gifts were told to “desire” miraculous gifts. (1Corinthians 14:1)
 - d. The time for miracles would pass away when the complete revelation from heaven had been completed. (1Corinthians 13:8-10)
 - e. But-- baptism would continue until the “end of the world,” so not all those to be baptized would receive gifts. (Matthew 28:18-20)
 - f. “Gifts” (plural) would follow the apostles and others, who could use them to validate their preaching. (Mark 16:15-20; Hebrews 2:3,4)

- ON CHURCH ORGANIZATION:**
1. Church organization is the “same” as existed in the New Testament days.
 2. This organization includes:
 - a. Presidency-- 3 men, equivalent to Peter, James, and John. The “first” President is the prophet, seer, and revelator. His authority is absolute.
 - b. Apostles-- Extraordinary witnesses of the name of Christ. They have miraculous powers and rule the church when the President dies until a successor is chosen.
 - c. Patriarchs-- Of a higher rank than priests. They dispense special blessings within geographical jurisdictions.
 - d. High Priests-- May be of the order of Melchizedek or the order of Aaron.
 - e. Councils of Seventy-- They serve in imitation of the Jewish Sanhedrin.
 - f. Bishops and elders-- Bishops preside over the Aaronic priesthood. Elders are often young unmarried men.

- THE BIBLE SAYS:**
1. While the *names* of church officers today may be the same as the *names* of leaders in the New Testament church, the qualifications and functions of those filling the offices must also be the *same*. (Revelation 2:2)
 2. Each office in the Mormon Church is different from that in the Bible.
 - a. No office in the church was known as “Presidency” or “President.”
 - (1) The President is *both* a “seer” and a “prophet.” The Book of Mormon says that “a seer is greater than a prophet”(Mosiah 8:15). But-- the Bible says that a seer is a prophet. (1Samuel 9:9)
 - (2) The gifts of prophecy and revelation were removed when the complete gospel was given to the church.(1Corinthians 13:9,10; 2Peter 1:3; Jude 3)
 - (3) Jesus has *all* authority in His church. (Matthew 28:18; Ephesians 1:22,23; Colossians 1:18)
 - b. None today are qualified to be apostles.
 - (1) Qualifications are specific. (Acts 1:21,22; 1Corinthians 9:1)
 - (2) Their work cannot be replicated today. (Acts 3:6-9 [instantaneous healing]; Acts 20:9,10 [raising the dead]; Acts 8:17,18 [imparting gifts of the Spirit]. The work of the apostles was unquestionably genuine!)
 - (3) The apostles had no successors, whether it be *twelve* in the Mormon Church or *one* (the Pope) in the Catholic Church. (Revelation 2:2)
 - c. Patriarchs were part of the Old Testament practice of a family religion directed by the family’s father (patriarch). (see Job 1:5)
 - (1) The “patriarchs” [Abraham, Jacob and his sons, David] had *no connection* with the New Testament church. (Acts 2:29; 7:8,9; Hebrews 7:4)
 - (2) The concept of the geographical jurisdiction of patriarchs arose within the evolution of the Roman Catholic hierarchy (consult any church history).
 - d. The High Priesthoods of Melchizedek and Aaron were peculiar to the Old Testament: Melchizedek’s was a *unique* priesthood shared by no other human. Aaron’s was confined entirely to the practice of the Jewish religion under Moses’ law.
 - (1) The two Priesthoods were squarely contradictory to each other and *could not* coexist within the same context and at the same time. (Hebrews 7:3,11-16)
 - (2) Only Christ became a priest like Melchizedek because, like Melchizedek, He did not have the characteristics required by the Law for Aaronic priesthood. (Hebrews 7:3,6,13,14)

- (3) A priest like Melchizedek must have an *endless life*-- that priesthood cannot be affected by death (Hebrews 7:16)
- (4) The Aaronic priesthood was *imperfect* and could not offer perfection (forgiveness) to its participants. (Hebrews 7:11)
- e. Councils of Seventy and all other sub-organizations of the Mormon Church were totally unknown within the New Testament church! (2Corinthians 5:7; Romans 10:17)
- f. Bishops and elders were the same men. (Acts 20:17,28 [ASV])
 - (1) Bishops (elders) were in charge of the *entire* flock (local church) and not just men who were priests. (1Peter 5:2,3)
 - (2) Elders were *older*, not younger, men. (1Timothy 3:6)
 - (3) Elders were to be married with children. (1Timothy 3:2,4,5; Titus 1:6)

- ON AUTHORITY:**
- 1. The Bible is God's word where "translated correctly" (Articles of Faith, Number 8).
 - a. The Bible does not contain God's full revelation. "Wherefore, because that ye have a Bible ye need not suppose that it contains all my words; neither need ye suppose that I have not caused more to be written" (Book of Mormon, 2Nephi, 29:10).
 - 2. The Book of Mormon is *also* God's word (Articles of Faith, Number 8).
 - a. The three "standard works of the church" (including the Book of Mormon), are "accepted without qualification" because they were "revealed in modern times in English" (Mormon Doctrine, 1979, Bookcraft, page 764).
 - b. The Book of Mormon is advertised widely in the media as "*another* Testament of Jesus Christ."
 - c. "The Book of Mormon is part of a record, both sacred and secular, of prophets and peoples who (with supplementary groups) were among the ancestors of the American 'Indians.' It covers principally the peoples of the period from about 600 B.C. to 421 A.D. These peoples...left Jerusalem during the reign of King Zedekiah, eventually to cross the sea to the Western world...They brought with them certain records of the Old Testament...some of which were engraved on gold plates" (Richard L. Evans, Council of Twelve). From these plates Joseph Smith supposedly translated the Book of Mormon. [Mormon was a "prophet" who collected the records. His son Moroni is said to have hidden them in the earth and to have directed Joseph Smith to remove the plates from their hiding place.]
 - d. The Book of Mormon also claims to reveal the gospel "in all its

fulness and richness and power and blessing” that Jesus gave to His “other sheep” [in America] following His resurrection. These people subsequently enjoyed every doctrine, practice, and church office that characterized the New Testament church in the Bible.

THE BIBLE SAYS:

1. The Bible, “as translated” through the diligent work of hundreds of the world’s best scholars, is a reliable document by which we can learn God’s will. One man’s “translation” of mysterious “plates” can hardly challenge work that has stood the test of many centuries. (1Thessalonians 2:13)
 - a. The Bible *does* contain all of God’s revelation to man. (John 16:13; 2Peter 1:3; 2Timothy 3:16,17; Galatians 1:6-9)
2. The Book of Mormon completely fails to meet the test of inspiration:
 - a. It *was* “translated” by Smith, using two rocks [“Urim and Thummin”] and special eyeglasses while he concealed the translation process from all others. The fractional part of his “sources” that was examined by scholar(s) was discredited as being authentic. (1Thessalonians 5:21)
 - b. The Book of Mormon is not “another Testament of Jesus Christ.” If it were, it would not contradict the *original* in so many places. (1Corinthians 14:33; 4:17)
 - c. Doubtless, the book’s fanciful contents are at best the outpouring of a deluded mind or at worst the evil work of a self-appointed religious dictator and self-serving deceiver. (Jeremiah 23:28-40; 2Thessalonians 2:10-12)
 - d. Jesus gave the task of taking the gospel into “all the world” to His personally-chosen apostles and to others among the disciples. His work on earth was finished when He died. (Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8; John 19:30)

The Book of Mormon Cannot be the Word of God Because:

- (1) It claims to be a revelation received by man (421 A.D.) *after* man had received the last of the New Testament (c.100 A.D.). God’s message was fully delivered by the close of the first century “once and for all” (time). (see Jude 3)
- (2) It claims to be a *perfect* translation of God’s will; yet, there have been **thousands** of changes (many of them significant) made in the original text! (Romans 12:2; James 1:25)
- (3) It denies its own infallibility: “...if I do err...” (1Nephi 19:6); “...to the best of my knowledge...” (Jacob 7:26); “...the imperfections which are in it...” (Mormon 8:12); “...if there was no

- mistake made...” (3Nephi 8:1,2). *God’s word never errs!* (Psalm 119:172; Matthew 4:4; John 20:31; Malachi 3:6, etc.)
- (4) Its language is inferior [words convey thought!]:
“I would cite your minds *forward*...to when the Lord *gave* these commands.” “Yes, if my days could have been in *them* days...But I am *consigned* that these are my days.” [Emphasis mine--RG] Remember-- inspiration is claimed for both text and translation!
- (5) It contains serious errors in time (its completion was no later than 421 A.D.):
- aa. Uses (Holy) “Ghost,” derived from Anglo-Saxon (c. 892).
 - bb. Uses “etc,” a printing press character known after 1436.
 - cc. Draws from more than 10,000 verses of the King James Bible, which appeared in 1611.
 - dd. Deals with Catholic transubstantiation (c.1000 A.D.) and Masonry (c. 1700 A.D.).
- (6) It contradicts the Bible in many places:
- aa. Jesus was born in Jerusalem (Alma 7:10) (See Luke 2:4).
 - bb. There were “Christians” in 73 B.C. (Alma 46:15) (see Acts 11:26-- c. 40 A.D.).
 - cc. The church existed in 147 B.C. (Mosiah 18:17) (See Acts chapter 2-- c. 29 A.D.).
 - dd. There were priests under Moses’ Law outside the tribe of Levi (2Nephi 5:10; 5:26) (See Deuteronomy 21: 5).

**ON MULTIPLE
REVELATIONS:**

1. “By the standard works of the Church is meant the following four volumes of scripture: The Bible, Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, and Pearl of Great Price.” (Mormon Doctrine, page 764).
2. Other “revelations” by the First Presidents and “prophets” of the church to the present time are also accepted as inspired and authoritative.

THE BIBLE SAYS:

1. God is not a God of *confusion*, but Mormonism’s multiple “revelations” are full of contradictions with one another. (1Corinthians 14:33)
 - a. Polygamy is condemned in the Book of Mormon (Jacob 2:24) but is approved in Doctrine and Covenants (132:37-39). *Both* doctrines use David and Solomon as proof of their position!
 - b. President Woodruff (1890) discouraged polygamy in a “proclamation” (not a “revelation”) in response to intense political pressure against the practice. Polygamy remains the *official doctrine* of the Mormon Church in the eyes of “fundamental” Mormons.

DENOMINATIONAL DOCTRINES

Lesson Seven ***The Mormon Church***

ON END THINGS: 1. Christ will reign personally on the earth for 1000 years.
2. Zion will be set up in America where the Lord will dwell with His people.
3. The earth will “rest” for 1000 years in its former glory.

THE BIBLE SAYS: 1. Christ will not reign on earth at all. (Zechariah 6:13; Hebrews 8:4)
2. “Zion” refers only to: the hill on which Jerusalem was built; the temple; Jerusalem; the Jewish nation; heaven. It is not a place for saints to live on earth at the end of time [Look up references to the word in a concordance].
3. The earth and all in it will be “burned up.” (2Peter 3:10-13)

ON CIVIL DIS-OBEDIENCE: “Articles of Faith,” Number 12, states that Mormons believe in “subjection to civil authority.”

COMMENT: The early history of the Mormons belies this statement. The church and its leaders engaged in numerous confrontations and episodes of rebellion against the federal government when their ambitions for political power were challenged. The widespread practice of polygamy was “surrendered” only in the face of severe penalties by the national government. Even so, many (including numerous officials of the church) continued secretly to be polygamists.

ON MORALITY: “Articles of Faith,” Number 13, claims that Mormons are dedicated to being “honest, true, doing good to all men, being of good report,” etc.

COMMENT: The recorded history of Mormonism relates a number of alarming violations of the code of moral behavior of which the church now boasts. Mormons are known to have been guilty of the murder of numerous “enemies” of the church (E.g., The “Mountain Meadows Massacre,” in which Indians and Mormons without provocation slaughtered more than 100 persons in a wagon train). Early church leaders were charged with counterfeiting. The doctrine of “blood atonement” (shedding the blood of church enemies in retribution for wrongs committed against Mormons) was supported by Brigham Young and other prominent men in the church.

Even today, the Mormon Church engages in hypocrisy and deceit as a matter of accepted practice: (1) It conceals the more “unusual” teachings of the church from prospective converts (such as the Adam/God doctrine), and (2) it suppresses investigation into embarrassing Mormon history at every opportunity. Jesus said, on the other hand, “Ye shall know the truth, and the truth will set you free” (John 8:32).

Note-- It is strongly recommended that the student secure, if possible, copies of the Book of Mormon and Doctrines and Covenants and read for himself the citations given (RG).

- 1 . The Mormon Church is founded on the claim that _____ received certain
“golden plates” which, when translated, became the _____
2. Mormon Church activities are controlled by two “priesthoods:” (1) the _____
priesthood, and (2) the _____ priesthood. *All* church matters are controlled by
the _____, consisting of a _____ and two _____.
3. What is the present membership of the Mormon Church (Data:1999)? _____
What percent increase does this represent over the 1951 membership? _____
4. The God/man doctrine is perhaps the most unusual of all Mormon teachings. State four of
the concepts included in this doctrine:
a. _____ b. _____
c. _____ d. _____
5. Now, give the Bible *answer* to the four concepts you listed in question 4:
a. _____ b. _____
c. _____ d. _____
6. Mormonisin advocates three levels of "salvation." Name them and explain what each offers:
a.
b.
c.
7. Give two Bible reasons that prove miraculous powers are not connected to baptism:
a. _____
b. _____

8. Show that “offices” in the Mormon Church are different from those in the early church:

- a. President: _____
- b. Apostles: _____
- c. Priests: _____
- d. Elders: _____

9. Mormons are guided by three authorities (“standard works of the church”). They are:

- a. _____ b. _____ c. _____

10. Mormons also claim to follow the _____ to the extent that it is “_____.” Still another authority for Mormons are pronouncements of their _____ and _____.

11. List three “facts” in the Mormon story of how the Book of Mormon came to be:

- a. _____ b. _____
- c. _____

12. Who were: Mormon? _____ Moroni? _____

13. What are some reasons why we know that the Book of Mormon is **NOT** God’s word?

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

14. “Multiple revelations” have caused doctrinal contradictions for Mormons. Give an example:

(Polygamy) _____

The Seventh-day Adventist Church

History: The Seventh-day Adventist Church originated from the work and teaching of William Miller, who predicted the second coming of Christ to take place in 1844. When this did not happen, Miller's disciples broke into two groups- one simply postponed the predictions he had advanced and the other tried to discover the reasons for the failure they had experienced. This latter group formulated an explanation that satisfied themselves. They established a close relationship between the Law of Moses and the gospel of Christ and made keeping the Sabbath Day a vital component of each. Ellen G. Harmon (White) assumed leadership of a large segment of the sabbath-keepers and guided the movement into an aggressive effort of spreading its ideology. A conviction central to the movement was that Ellen White possessed a unique insight into the unrevealed workings of the divine realm. She was thought to be a leader worthy of following because of her special "visions" and the advantageous knowledge that she received through them. The church name was derived from the emphasis given to the teachings of sabbath-keeping ("Seventh-day") and the imminent return of Jesus Christ ("Adventist").

Organization:



Creeds: The writings of Mrs. White "...are held in highest esteem ... accepting them as inspired counsels from the Lord." These writings include Testimonies, Present Truth, The Great Controversy, and others. They are said to "explain" Bible teaching and to "convey" additional truth.

Membership: In 1999, the Seventh-day Adventist Church reported a membership of 861,860 in the United States. This number was distributed among 4,421 local churches. The church operates more than fifty publishing houses, four of them in the United States and Canada, It supports some 600 medical units, 900 colleges and secondary schools, and 4,500 elementary schools around the world.

DOCTRINES:

- ON MOSES' LAW:**
1. *Two* laws were given to the Jews: *moral* (the Ten Commandment law) and *ceremonial* (the law of sacrifices and rituals).
 2. The *moral law* is the "Law of God;" the *ceremonial law* is the "Law of Moses."
 3. Only the "ceremonial" law was removed when Jesus died; Christians are still bound by the "moral" law, including the Ten Commandments.
 4. Sabbath-keeping is an essential part of New Testament religion, being carried by God in the (moral) Ten Commandments Law to the New Covenant.
- THE BIBLE SAYS:**
1. God's instruction to the Jews in the Old Testament is called "a law" or "the law" (singular). (Exodus 24:12; Deuteronomy 33:4; Joshua 1:8, etc.)
 2. There is no difference between the "law of Moses" and the "law of God;" thus, there is no difference between a *moral* law and a *ceremonial* law. (Ezra 7:6; 2 Chronicles 31:3; 34:14; Mark 7:10; Matthew 22:35-40; Luke 2:22-24)
 3. The Ten Commandments were not included in the "new covenant" which God made with His people. (1 Kings 8:9; Hebrews 8:6-10)
 4. The Sabbath law was a part of the Ten Commandment law, but Sabbath-keeping was abolished at the death of Christ. (Exodus 20:8; Colossians 2:14, 16) Therefore, the "Ten Commandment Law" was taken away.
 - a. **All** of the Old Testament is regarded in the New Testament as "the law:"
 - (1) Genesis 3:16 (woman's submission to man) is called "the law" in 1 Corinthians 14:34.
 - (2) Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18 (loving God and neighbor) are called "the law" in Matthew 22:37-39.
 - (3) Exodus 20:17 (not coveting) is called "the law" in Romans 7:7.
 - (4) Numbers 28:9, 10 (sacrificing) is called "the law" in Matthew 12:5.
 - b. If "the law" has been taken away, then *all* of the Old Testament (both moral and ceremonial commands) has been removed from our obedience. (Romans 7:6; Galatians 3:23-25)
- ON THE SABBATH DAY:**
1. The Sabbath Day is part of God's *eternal* covenant with all men, and could not be removed as part of a *temporary* covenant given through Moses to the Jewish nation.
 2. The Sabbath was observed before the Law of Moses was given and is not among those things removed at Jesus' death.

**THE BIBLE
SAYS:**

1. The Sabbath was never “kept” before the Law was given to the Jews. (Nehemiah 9:13,14; Numbers 15:32-36)
 - a. The Law was *not* given to the Jews’ forefathers. (Deuteronomy 5:3,6,12)
 - b. It was given to the Jews as: (1) **a sign** (Exodus 31:13); (2) **a covenant** (Exodus 31:16); (3) **a memorial** (Deuteronomy 5:15). Each term demands an *exclusive* possession and a *unique* meaning for the Jewish nation.
2. The Sabbath was confined to the Jewish Age of Bible history:

<u>Patriarchal Age</u> <u>2500 Years</u>	<u>Jewish Age</u> <u>1500 Years</u>	<u>Gospel Age</u> <u>2000 Years</u>
<i>No Sabbath Commands</i>	<i>Sabbath Commands</i>	<i>No Sabbath Commands</i>
<i>No Sabbath Examples</i>	<i>Sabbath Examples</i>	<i>No Sabbath Examples</i>
<i>No Sabbath Penalties</i>	<i>Sabbath Penalties</i>	<i>No Sabbath Penalties</i>

**ON THE POPE
AND THE
SABBATH:**

1. The early church met on the Sabbath Day as men had done under the Law.
2. The Roman Catholic Pope changed the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday, establishing the “Christian Sabbath” as a popular day for worship.
3. Sunday enjoys *man’s* recognition rather than *God’s* as a day for worship.

**THE BIBLE
SAYS:**

1. The early church met for worship on the *first* day of the week (Sunday), not on the Sabbath (Saturday). (Acts 20:7; 1Corinthians 16:1,2)
2. The Sabbath was not *changed*; it was *abolished*. (Colossians 2:14,16)
 - a. There was no Pope until 606 A.D. *Emperor* (not Pope) Constantine legalized Sunday as a civil holiday in 321.
 - b. The religious observance of Sunday as the day for worship was not changed by Constantine. He only *legalized the civil observance* of the day on which Christians had been worshiping for a long while:
 - (1) A quote from Barnabas (c. 100 A.D.): “Wherefore we keep the eighth day with joyfulness, the day Jesus rose from the dead.” (Matthew 28:1ff; Mark 16:9; Luke 24:1ff; John 20:1)
 - (2) A quote from Ignatius (c. 107 A.D.): “...no longer keeping Sabbaths, but living according to the Lord’s day.”
 - (3) A quote from Justin Martyr (c. 145 A.D.): “But Sunday is the day on which we hold our common assembly.”
 - c. God approved of Paul’s participation in and instructions about the first day of the week as the day for Christians to meet for worship. (Acts 20:7; 1Corinthians 16:1,2)

DENOMINATIONAL DOCTRINES---

Lesson Eight *Seventh-day Adventists*

- ON THE SANCTUARY:** Christ entered the Sanctuary (Holy of Holies) in 1844 to begin its “cleansing.” When this is completed, the atonement will be finished. (This idea is based on an interpretation of Daniel 8:13,14.)
- THE BIBLE SAYS:**
1. Jesus entered the Sanctuary (heaven) in His ascension. (Acts 2: 32-34; Hebrews 8:1,2)
 - a. Jesus entered the Holy of Holies at His ascension. (Exodus 26:33; Hebrews 6:19,20)
 2. The “cleansing” (atonement) was completed at the ascension of Jesus into heaven with His own blood to offer for the forgiveness of man’s sins. (Hebrews 1:3; 9:12)
Note-- This doctrine of “cleansing” (an atonement in heaven rather than a return to earth) was formulated in 1844 following the bitter disappointment of the Sabbath-keepers who expected Jesus to return to earth that year. It shifted the focus of Christ’s “return” from *earth* (where it can easily be documented) to *heaven* (where it cannot be documented at all).
- ON CHRIST’S RETURN:** The return of Jesus Christ is “imminent” (“Threatening to occur immediately; impending.”... “Impending: to hang [over] threateningly.”--Webster) The *imminent* return of Christ implies that He is likely to return at *any* time.
- THE BIBLE SAYS:**
1. Christ’s return has *never* been imminent (likely to happen at any time):
 - a. Not before John’s death. (John 21:19; 1Thessalonians 4:17)
 - b. Not before the rise of a “man of sin.” (2Thessalonians 2:1-12, especially verse 8)
 - c. Not before the gospel had been preached “to the end of the earth.” (Acts 1:8)
 2. A *day* has been *set* (appointed) for Jesus’ return. (Acts 17:31)
 3. No one knows how *soon* or how *distant* that day may be. (Matthew 24:36)
- ON THE DEAD:** The dead will be in an unconscious state until the resurrection.
- THE BIBLE SAYS:**
1. Bible examples about the dead disprove the theory of unconsciousness. (Matthew 17:1-3; Luke 16:22-31)
 2. Paul denied that the dead are unconscious. (Philippians 1:23,24)
 3. The “dead” are not “dead” (unconscious) but “living” (conscious). (Matthew 22:31,32; Mark 12:26,27)
 4. The spirit of man “returns to God” at death. (Ecclesiastes 12:7; Psalm 90:10)

DENOMINATIONAL DOCTRINES---

Lesson Eight *Seventh-Day Adventists*

- ON PREMILLENIAL REIGN:**
1. Christ will reign (over His kingdom) with the faithful for 1000 years in heaven.
 2. The earth will be a “desolated, depopulated wilderness” during this time.
 3. The wicked will be raised, the righteous will return, and the “New Jerusalem” will be set up on earth.
 4. The earth will be “purified” into the eternal home of the faithful.

- THE BIBLE SAYS:**
1. The kingdom is now in existence on earth. (See Daniel 2:44; Mark 9:1; Acts 8:12; Colossians 1:13.)
 - a. Christ is now reigning over His kingdom from heaven (through His word). (See 1Corinthians 15:24,25; Zechariah 6:13; Acts 2:30,33; Hebrews 6:20.)
 2. The earth will exist no more after the Lord’s return. (See 2Peter 3:10.)
 3. All (righteous and wicked) will be raised in the *same* hour with no long period of time intervening. (John 5:28,29)
 - a. The saints will not return to earth with Christ but will, at their resurrection, ascend to *ever* be with the Lord. (1Thessalonians 4:17)
 4. “New Jerusalem” cannot be set up on earth because the earth will not exist. (2Peter 3:10)
 - a. The elements of the earth will “melt.” (2Peter 3:10,12)
 - b. Everything on earth will be “dissolved.” (2Peter 3:11)
 - (1) “Dissolved”-- “destroyed” (Henry Thayer); “demolition of the elements or heavenly bodies” (W. E. Vine).
 - c. The eternal home of the redeemed will be in heaven, not on earth. (John 14:2,3; 1Thessalonians 4:17; Matthew 5:12; 6:20; 2Corinthians 5:1)

ON THE WICKED: The wicked will not be punished, but they will be annihilated.

- THE BIBLE SAYS:**
1. The wicked are promised eternal punishment. (Matthew 25:46; Revelation 20:10; Jude 13; Mark 9:47,48)
 2. All (of the wicked) will be rewarded according to their works done in the body. (Romans 2:6; 2Corinthians 5:10; Mark 9:47,48)
 - a. Annihilation would preclude fair treatment for different levels of wickedness. (Luke 12:47,48)
 3. The rich man, a sinner, was *not* annihilated. (Luke 16:19-31)
 4. Punishment for the wicked is coextensive with the reward of the righteous. (Matthew 25:46-- the same word describes **both**)

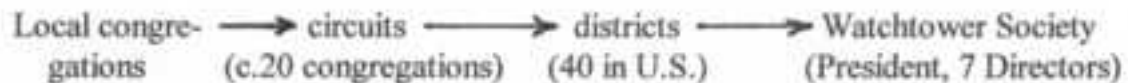
1. The Seventh-day Adventist Church originated from the teaching of _____, who predicted the second coming of Christ in _____. The movement was “rescued” by _____, who claimed to receive special _____ from God.
2. Adventists claim that God gave two laws to the Jews: a _____ law and a _____ law. The first was called “the law of _____;” the second was the “law of _____.”
3. Which of these laws is supposed to have been removed at Jesus’ death (a), and which law is said to include the “Sabbath command” and was not removed at the cross (b)?
a. _____ b. _____
4. Show from Bible passages that *all* of the Old Testament was “the law” and included both moral and ceremonial observances for the Jews. Mark each passage **M[oral]** or **C[eremonial]**.
a. _____
b. _____
c. _____
d. _____
5. The Law (including the Sabbath command) was *first* given to the Jews at Sinai. The Sabbath had peculiar significance for the Jews. It had three special meanings for them only:
a. _____ b. _____ c. _____
6. What three things would one expect to find before/after the Law, if the Sabbath had been observed at any time other than during the “Jewish Age”? Does one find them? _____
a. _____ b. _____ c. _____
7. Two Bible passages plainly show that the New Testament church met regularly on the *first day* (Sunday) and not on the *Sabbath* (Saturday). Tell what they say about *when* the church met:
a. _____
b. _____

8. The Pope *could not* have changed the Sabbath to Sunday because of chronology. Explain:
- _____
9. Name three early Christian writers who affirm that the church met on Sunday, not Saturday:
- a. _____ b. _____ c. _____
10. When Adventists were disappointed about Jesus not returning in 1844, they concocted a new doctrine that claimed He “entered the sanctuary to cleanse it” instead. How do we know that the “cleansing” (atonement) by Him did not “begin” on that date? Give two passages:
- a. _____
- b. _____
11. Explain how three passages prove that the second coming of Christ is not “imminent,” as the Adventists proclaim:
- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
12. Study the four concepts of the Adventist doctrine about the “premillennial reign” of Jesus. List these concepts and give a Bible verse that denies each point:
- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____

Jehovah's Witnesses

History: The Jehovah's Witnesses movement was organized by Charles Taze Russell, who was influenced by the Adventist movement in America. The earliest group of followers was organized in Pittsburg in 1870. Russell's books became the foundation for the system of belief of his disciples. Various names were attached to these people in their early days, such as "Russellites," "Millennial Dawn People," and "International Bible Students." The society was incorporated in New York, and its name was changed to "Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, New York, Incorporated" in 1939. "Judge" Joseph Rutherford succeeded Russell as leader of the Jehovah's Witnesses in 1916 and was the author of numerous writings which sometimes replaced or altered the publications of Charles Russell.

Organization:



Personnel: Each circuit utilizes a visiting minister, who spends one week with each group. Members are called "publishers of the Kingdom" and are assisted in their work by "pioneers." These are full-time ministers who devote 100 hours each month to their duties. Others who help in the establishment of new congregations are called "special pioneers" and "missionaries" and give 150 hours to the society.

Creeds: All the writings of Charles Russell (Millennial Dawn and Studies in the Scriptures, six volumes) and those of Judge Rutherford (The Hope of God, Deliverance, Where are the Dead? and others) are held to be "indispensable" to a clear understanding of the Scriptures. "But we see also that if anyone lays the Scripture Studies aside, even after he has read them for ten years-- if he lays them aside and ignores them and goes to the Bible alone, though he has understood the Bible for ten years, our experience shows that within two years he goes into darkness." (Charles Russell, "Watchtower," September 15, 1910)

Membership: 990,340 members distributed among 11,257 congregations (Data: 1999)

DOCTRINES:

**ON
AUTHORITY:**

1. The writings of Charles Russell, Judge Rutherford, and other leaders in the movement are superior to the Bible as the means of achieving a full understanding of God's will for men.
2. Russell claimed that no one had understood God's revelation before him. He said Jesus meant Russell when He spoke of "that faithful and wise servant whom his Lord hath set over his household to give them their food in due season." (Matthew 24:45)

**THE BIBLE
SAYS:**

1. The Bible is *complete* to save the souls of men. (2Timothy 3:16,17; 2Peter 1:3; James 1:18,25)
2. Their own false "prophecies" expose these "prophets" as frauds. (Deuteronomy 18:22)
 - a. Russell predicted the end of all world kingdoms to occur in 1914.
 - b. Rutherford said that in 1925: (1) Abraham would return to earth in human perfection; (2) Isaac and Jacob would be resurrected; (3) millions then living would not die; (4) the old and infirm would be rejuvenated and live on earth forever. NONE of these "prophecies" came to pass! (Isaiah 9:15)
 - c. Russell applied "king of the north" in Daniel [11:9-11] to England, and "king of the south" to Egypt. In their Yearbook of 1942, these same two terms became the "democracies and the Nazis."

ON JESUS:

1. Jesus was a *created* being, an *angel*. He is the "beginning of the creation (created beings) of God."
2. There is only *one* (person) God (Jehovah). He alone is divine and eternal.
3. Jesus is not equal to God as one of the Godhead (Trinity).

**THE BIBLE
SAYS:**

1. The eternal existence of Jesus is affirmed in the Bible. He was not created by the Father. (John 1:1-3; Colossians 1:16)
 - a. Jesus *claimed* eternal existence. (John 8:58; Revelation 1:8)
 - b. He was with the Father "before the world was." (John 17:5; 17:24)
 - c. He was never an angel. (Hebrews 1:4,5; Philippians 2:6)
2. The Bible identifies Jesus as *God*. (John 1:1; 17:21)
3. Jesus is *equal with* the Father as one of the Godhead. (Colossians 2:9)
 - a. He participated fully in the creation. (Genesis 1:1, 26,27; John 1:3; Colossians 1:26,27)
 - b. He existed in the *form of God* before His physical birth. (Philippians 2:6)

DENOMINATIONAL DOCTRINES---

Lesson Nine Jehovah's Witnesses

- ON DIVINITY:** Christ was only a perfect human being while on earth. He gave up His spiritual being at His incarnation.
- THE BIBLE SAYS:**
1. Jesus *was* divine while on earth. (Hebrews 10:5; John 10:30)
 2. Only “deceivers” deny that Jesus has come in(to) the flesh. (2John 7)
 3. Jesus was “Immanuel,” which is “God *with* us.” (Matthew 1:23)
 4. While on earth, Jesus accepted worship as a divine being. (Matthew 8:2)
- ON ATONEMENT:**
1. The atonement on the cross was the work of Christ as a man.
 2. All Christians are the “blood of Christ” and have a part in the atonement as they live “sacrificial” lives.
- THE BIBLE SAYS:**
1. Divinity was sacrificed for humanity on the cross. (Philippians 2:5-7)
 - a. Jesus’ blood was “precious” and not the “common” blood of humanity. (1Peter 1:18-20)
 2. The atonement is not ongoing; it *has been* received. (Romans 5:11)
 - a. His blood was offered for atonement *once, having obtained* eternal redemption for us. (Hebrews 9:12)
 - b. By *one* offering Jesus *perfected* the saved *forever*. (Hebrews 10:14)
- ON SPIRITUAL JESUS:**
1. Christ became a spirit at His resurrection; his body was not raised.
 2. Jesus is in heaven only as a spirit without the body He had on earth.
 3. Christ’s body was probably “dissolved into gases” or preserved as a corpse.
- THE BIBLE SAYS:**
1. Jesus’ body was raised from the grave. (John 2:19-22; Luke 24:39)
 2. Jesus still possesses His human qualities. (Hebrews 4:15; 1Timothy 2:5)
 3. His body was real and tangible, not “dissolved.” (John 20:27,28)
 - a. *Our* resurrection is dependent on His. (1Corinthians 15:13-17)
- ON MORTALITY OF MAN:**
1. Man is wholly mortal, not both mortal and immortal (spiritual).
 2. Man does not *have* a soul; man *is* a soul.

3. "The Bible shows that both man and beasts are souls, and that man's pre-eminence is due to the fact that he is a higher form of creature and was originally given dominion over the lower forms of animal life" (Let God Be True, 2nd edition, page 68).

**THE BIBLE
SAYS:**

1. The whole man is more than just a mortal body. (1Thessalonians 5:23)
 - a. Man can be absent from the body but present with the Lord. This demonstrates the *separate* existence of body and spirit. (2Corinthians 5:8)
2. Man not only *is a soul*, he *has a soul*. (Genesis 2:7 [KJV]; 2Corinthians 4:16; Matthew 10:28)
 - a. Death is the separation of body and spirit (soul). (James 2:26)
 - b. Rachel's soul departed from her body in death. (Genesis 35:18)
 - c. The words translated "soul" in the Old (*nephesh*) and New (*psuche*) Testaments, have several meanings each. **No** translation may be made which flatly contradicts plain Bible teaching about the nature of man:
 - (1) *Nephesh* may mean "animal life." (Genesis 1:20ff.)
 - (2) *Nephesh* may mean "heart" or "inner man." (1Samuel 30:6)
 - (3) *Psuche* may mean "physical life." (Acts 20:10)
 - (4) *Psuche* may mean "the spirit" or "inner man." (Matthew 10:28)Note-- The word "soul" in the KJV is often translated "person," "being," etc. in later versions to reflect the *whole* man-- body *and* spirit.
3. Only man was made in God's image. (Genesis 1:26,27; Genesis 1:25)
 - a. God's image is a *spiritual* image. (John 4:24; Luke 24:39)
 - b. Man's spirit (soul) is *incorruptible* like God's. (1Peter 3:4)
 - (1) No Bible reference suggests that the *animal body* (soul)-- man's or beast's-- is incorruptible. (John 11:39)

ON DEATH:

1. Death is the absence of all life.
2. The dead cease to exist altogether.

**THE BIBLE
SAYS:**

1. The *spirit* of man **lives** after the *body* is dead. (Luke 16:19-31; 1Samuel 28:7-14; James 2:26)
 - a. God is the God of the *living*, not the *dead* (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were dead but still living). (Mark 12:26,27)
2. The real, inner man continues to **exist** after the death of the body. (see Scripture references in number 1)
 - a. Jesus, according to this doctrine, would not have existed for three days. But, He went "to the Father," not into non-existence. (John 16:16)

- ON ETERNITY:**
1. Only the *righteous* will be given life (existence) in eternity.
 2. There is no place of eternal punishment; “hell” is the grave.
 3. The wicked will be *annihilated*-- become nonexistent. This is their “punishment.”

- THE BIBLE SAYS:**
1. The wicked *will* exist during eternity.
 - a. “Blackness of darkness” is *reserved* for them. (Jude 13; 2Peter 2:17)
 - b. Blasphemers are “subject” to *eternal* condemnation. (Mark 3:29)
 - c. An *eternal* judgment is planned for “the world.” (Acts 17:30,31; Hebrews 6:2; Revelation 20:12)
 - d. The unjust will appear at the judgment. (See 2Peter 2:9)
 - e. *ALL* men will receive [the consequences of] good and *bad* things done in the body. (2Corinthians 5:10,11)
 2. The wicked will be raised from the grave. (John 5:28,29)
 - a. The righteous are warned not to allow themselves to be cast into the “everlasting fire.” (Matthew 18:8,9; 25:46)
 - b. Sodom and Gomorrah are examples of the wicked’s fate. (Jude 7)
 - c. If “hell” is the grave, only the wicked should be buried. (Psalm 9:17)
 - d. Hell is the “place” into which the lost will be cast. (Mark 9:43-48)
 3. The wicked will exist in their punishment as long as the righteous will exist in their blessings. Notice these “couplets” of truth about eternity:
 - a. The **righteous** look forward to *everlasting* life. (Matthew 19:29)
The **wicked** may expect *everlasting* punishment. (Matthew 25:46)
 - b. The **righteous** have *everlasting* consolation. (2Thessalonians 2:16)
The **wicked** will have *everlasting* destruction. (2Thessalonians 1:9)
 - c. The **righteous** will reign *for ever and ever*. (Revelation 21:5)
The **wicked** will be tormented *for ever and ever*. (Revelation 20:10)
 4. “Destruction” is not [as claimed by Witnesses] “annihilation.”
 - a. God’s people were “destroyed” by ignorance. (Hosea 4:6)
 - b. Saul (Paul) tried to “destroy” the gospel. (Galatians 1:23)

- ON THE KINGDOM:**
1. The *rule* of God’s kingdom began in heaven in 1914.
 2. The kingdom [those saved initially] was selected when “Christ came to the temple” in 1918. Christ’s “presence” is invisible to men. Membership in the kingdom is limited to 144,000 saints [based on Revelation 7:4].
 3. The 144,000 is now completed. Only they will live in *heaven*. Other converts will live on *earth* throughout eternity.

DENOMINATIONAL DOCTRINES---

Lesson Nine *Jehovah's Witnesses*

THE BIBLE

SAYS:

1. Jesus began ruling through His kingdom long before 1914.
 - a. It was “at hand” during Jesus’ work on earth. (Matthew 3:2; Mark 9:1)
 - b. It was established on earth at Pentecost, A.D. 33. (Acts 1:8; 2:4,47)
 - c. People were *in* it on earth during New Testament days. (Colossians 1:13 [64 A.D.]; Revelation 1:9 [96 A.D.])
2. Christ has not “come to the temple” invisibly to live with Jehovah’s Witnesses.
 - a. Jesus is now in heaven [for]ever interceding for us in the *presence* of God. (Romans 8:34; Hebrews 7:25)
 - b. Christ’s return will be *visible* to *all*. (Acts 1:11; Revelation 1:7)
 - c. His appearance will not be concealed from any. (1Thessalonians 4:16)
 - d. Either the “144,000” is a *figurative* number, or only unmarried men will be in the *literal* number. (Revelation 14:1-4)
 - (1) Yet-- (most of) the apostles were married. (1Corinthians 9:5)
 - (a) Are the apostles included in the kingdom of “144,000”?
 - e. The kingdom includes more than 144,000 saints as Witnesses contend.
 - (1) Revelation 7:9-17 adds a “great multitude” to the “144,000.”
 - (2) People are in the kingdom after being born again. (John 3:3,5)
 - (3) Everyone “in Christ” has been born again. (2Corinthians 5:17)
 - (4) Thus, people are: [1] *baptized into* Christ, [2] become born-again Christians, and [3] enjoy participation in the kingdom. (Galatians 3:27)Note-- It is ironic that Jehovah’s Witnesses continue to baptize people, yet deny them membership in the kingdom. *Scriptural* baptism would surely add them to God’s kingdom. (Acts 2:38, 41, 47)
3. God is not a respecter of persons. (Romans 2:11; Acts 10:34,35)
 - a. All may enjoy the *same* blessings: citizenship in the kingdom and eternal life in heaven. (Revelation 22:17; Matthew 11:28)
 - b. Our hope is to be someday in *heaven*, not on *earth*. (Colossians 3:1,2)

ON CHRIST’S

RETURN:

1. A millennial reign will begin on earth at Christ’s return.
2. The lost will have 100 years to accept Jesus; those who do will receive 1,000 years’ probation .
3. Those who still reject Him will be annihilated.
4. The faithful converts will be given eternal life on this (rejuvenated) earth.

THE BIBLE

SAYS:

1. The coming of Christ is the *end* of all things. (1Corinthians 15:23,24)
 - a. There will be no millennial reign afterward. (1Thessalonians 4:16-18)
2. There will be no second chance for anyone. (2Thessalonians 2:10-12)
 - a. The state of the lost is *fixed* after death. (Luke 16:19-31; Heb. 9:27)
3. No one will be annihilated; all will be judged by God’s word. (See above)
4. This earth will be burned up--dissolved. (2Peter 3:10-12)

ON VARIOUS

DOCTRINES:

1. Salvation is by “faith only.” Baptism by immersion is practiced, but it has no connection with salvation. (See Baptist Doctrines, pages 23-25; Methodist Doctrines, page 31)
2. “Righteous princes” (Abraham, David, and others) will rule with Christ on earth following Armageddon, a battle in which Jesus will lead an army of angels against Satan. The righteous will observe but will not participate in it.
3. The Holy Spirit is not a distinct Person. There is only (person) in the Godhead. (See Matthew 28:19; 1 John 5:7, etc.)
4. Christ was not the same person before and after the resurrection. He is not now our Mediator. (See 1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 8:6; 9:15; 12:24)
5. Men die spiritually because of Adam’s sin. (See Presbyterian Doctrines, page 37)
6. The “kingdom” members (only) eat the Lord’s Supper annually.
7. Matthew 24 is fulfilled by wars and catastrophes which began in 1914.
8. The righteous should not participate actively in the civil government or in the military, nor should they salute the flag of any country.
9. Neither should the righteous give or take blood transfusions.

TACTICS OF JEHOVAH’S WITNESSES: Jehovah’s Witnesses place great emphasis on at least **four** points when trying to attract other people to their movement:

1. They stress that man **is** a soul; he does not **have** a soul. This makes man incapable of suffering eternally in hell.
2. They claim that death is destruction-- utter annihilation. This means that the wicked will not be punished in hell after death.
3. They admit that heaven is limited to 144,000 and that the number is filled. However, they portray a “cleansed and beautiful” earth to offer to converts for eternity.
4. They use their own New World Translation of the Bible to slant verses and terms toward their false doctrines.

1. The governing body of Jehovah's Witnesses is the _____ *Two*
prominent leaders of the movement were _____ and _____.
2. Give two reasons why we know that the writings of Russell and Rutherford are undependable:
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
3. Show from the Bible that Jesus was not a created angel but that He existed eternally as God:
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
4. Why are the "sacrificial lives" of the saints not a part of the "ongoing" atonement of Jesus?
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
5. What Bible evidence do we have that Jesus' body was raised from the grave?
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
6. What do the scriptures teach about man's nature as both soul (flesh) and spirit?
 - a. _____
 - b. _____

7. Jehovah's Witnesses teach that the wicked will be annihilated rather than punished in hell. Show from the Bible that this is a false doctrine:
- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
8. Contrast the "couplets of truth" to show the fates of righteous and unrighteous people:
- | <u>Righteous</u> | <u>Wicked</u> |
|------------------|---------------|
| a. _____ | a. _____ |
| b. _____ | b.. _____ |
| c. _____ | c. _____ |
9. Tell how these scriptures deny the doctrine of only 144,000 being admitted into God's kingdom:
- a. John 3:3-5: _____
- b. Romans 2:11: _____
10. Note the four concepts of the doctrine of "Christ's return." Refute each point with scripture:
- a. Millennial reign: _____
- b. Probation: _____
- c. Annihilation: _____
- d. The fate of the Earth: _____
11. Select two of the "various doctrines" of the Witnesses. Give a Bible answer to each one:
- a. _____
- b. _____

***Pentecostal Churches
Church of God, Cleveland, Tennessee
Church of the Nazarene
Assemblies of God ...and others***

History: The oldest Pentecostal group, the Church of God, Cleveland, Tennessee, (870,039 members in 6,328 churches [Data: 1999]) originated in 1886 in eastern Tennessee from efforts of R. G. Spurling. Emphasis was placed on holiness of life. Growth came under the leadership of A. J. Tomlinson and F. J. Lee as overseers. The Anderson, Indiana, church is not connected with the original group and does not claim to be “Pentecostal.” Many Pentecostal churches come from Methodist or Baptist backgrounds and trace their roots to about 1900. “Neo-Pentecostalism” currently reflects the basic mind-set that attributes tongue-speaking and similar practices to a direct operation of the Holy Spirit upon men.

The largest of the Pentecostal churches is the Assemblies of God (2,574,531 members in 12,055 churches [Data: 1999]). Denominational headquarters are in Springfield, Missouri. The union of several churches took place in 1914 in Hot Springs, Arkansas, based on the idea that spiritual gifts should be manifested in any “normal” New Testament church.

The Church of the Nazarene resulted from the merger of three different groups. The name was adopted in 1919. This church has strong Methodist ties. It is a “middle-of-the-road church, neither extremely ritualistic nor extremely informal” (Mead). It consists of 627,054 members in 5,101 local churches (Data: 1998).

Organization: There is significant variation among Pentecostal churches in organizational ideology and practice. Most congregations retain independence within a somewhat loose association with other churches. Some have district and national organizations, others do not. Some national councils or conferences set general standards to be followed in all local churches.

Creeds: Most Pentecostal and churches of God profess adherence to the Bible as their only creed. The Church of the Nazarene follows its Manual, which has been called a “re-written and modified Methodist Discipline.” (Mead)

DOCTRINES:

- ON HOLY SPIRIT BAPTISM:**
1. Church members today may expect to receive a “baptism” in/ by the Holy Spirit.
 2. Speaking in tongues is an evidence of Holy Spirit baptism.

- THE BIBLE SAYS:**
1. Holy Spirit baptism was promised to “all flesh.” (Joel 2:28)
 - a. The apostles (Jewish flesh) received it to **witness**. (Acts 1:5,8)
 - b. Cornelius (Gentile flesh) received it to **validate God’s acceptance** of the Gentiles for salvation. (Acts 10:44-48; 11:15-17)
 - c. No other instance of Holy Spirit baptism is recorded. The promises and the purposes of Holy Spirit baptism were fulfilled in the two events that *did* occur.
 - d. By A.D. 64, there was only **one** baptism known in the church. (Ephesians 4:5.) Water baptism was recognized and practiced by the church at that time. (Ephesians 5:26; 1Peter 3:20,21)
Note-- All who were “led by the Spirit” were to be *one*. (Ephesians 4:3) This unity required *one faith, one body, and one baptism*. This unity is not often seen among the various groups claiming the baptism of the Spirit.
 2. Tongues were among the “partial” gifts of the Spirit given to the church during its early history. (1Corinthians 13:1,9)
 - a. The partial gifts were to cease when the “perfect” revelation of God had been received by the church. (1Corinthians 13:8,10)
 - b. The “**perfect**” gospel *has come--gifts have ceased!* (James 1:25)
 - c. “Tongues” were different languages which could be understood by hearers trained in those languages. (Acts 2:4,6,8; 1Corinthians 14:10-14) These are not the “tongues” that are heard in Pentecostal churches today!
 - d. Rules governing tongue-speaking are not observed by those who profess to have such a gift. (1Corinthians 14:27,28)
 - e. Tongues were given as a sign to unbelievers. Today, they are mostly relied on to edify believers. (1Corinthians 14:22)

- ON SANCTIFICATION:**
1. Sanctification is a “second blessing” (following the “first blessing” of salvation).
 2. Sanctification cleanses the Christian from all sinful desires.

- THE BIBLE** 1. "Sanctification" is a "setting apart/aside."
SAYS:
- a. Jesus Christ is to be *sanctified* in our hearts. (1Peter 3:15)
 - b. The Jews were to *sanctify* the sabbath day. (Deuteronomy 5:12 [KJV])
 - c. All Christians are sanctified for God's service. (1Corinthians 1:2)
 - d. Sanctification is *simultaneous* with salvation. (2Thessalonians 2:13)
 - e. Sanctification is a continuous, lifetime process. (1Thessalonians 5:23; 2Timothy 2:21)
2. Sanctified people (all Christians are sanctified) *can* and *do* sin.
- a. Those who deny the presence of sin are self-deceived. (1John 1:8)
 - b. Numerous warnings are sounded about sin in the lives of *sanctified* people. (1Corinthians 6:9-11; 10:12,13)
 - c. Sin originates in the **desires** of a man's heart (including the *sanctified* man's heart). (James 1:13-15)
 - d. Sanctified people must continue to resist temptations to commit sinful acts. (1Thessalonians 5:19-22)

- ON**
MIRACLES:
1. Miraculous healings are possible in the church today through the agency of those who have a special gift of the Holy Spirit.
 2. The "full" gospel must provide for the exercise of all the miraculous powers that were displayed in the first century church.

- THE BIBLE** 1. Miraculous powers were used to *confirm* God's word. (Mark 16:20)
SAYS:
- a. The word has now been confirmed by miracles. (Hebrews 2:3,4)
 - b. Healings did not accomodate the sick. (1Timothy 5:23; 2Timothy 4:20)
 - c. Miraculous gifts were removed from the church when God's perfect (complete) law was given. (1Corinthians 13:10; Ephesians 4:8-13)
2. The "full" gospel was preached by Paul. (Galatians 1:8,9)
- a. But-- Paul taught that miracles would cease. (1Corinthians 13:8-10)

Note-- The Pentecostal "full gospel" misuses several Bible passages in order to support their concept of miraculous healings today. For example:

- (1) Isaiah 53:4,5-- Christ's sacrifice heals both physically and spiritually.
* The *physical* aspects of Isaiah's prophecy were fulfilled by His healings in Matthew 8:16,17. Physical and spiritual healing are not "inseparable," as Pentecostals claim. (2Corinthians 12:7)
- (2) Hebrews 13:8-- If Jesus is unchangeable, miracles are still necessary.
* Jesus' *character* remains the same, but His *law* has changed. (Hebrews 7:12) His law does not depend on miracles for its power. (2Corinthians 5:7)

DENOMINATIONAL DOCTRINES---

Lesson Ten ***Pentecostal Churches***

(3) James 5:14,15-- Prayer of faith and anointing with oil will save the sick.

* The “elders” of the church (only) are to pray for the sick, and their efforts shall succeed without any failures. These elders, no doubt, had received this spiritual gift by the hands of the apostles. (Romans 1:11; Hebrews 6:2)

(4) Mark 16:17,18-- Miraculous signs will follow believers.

* Not *all* who believed and were baptized (verse 16) possessed the signs listed. (Acts 8:14-16) The apostles’ hands imparted the gifts to some believers. (Acts 8:17-19)

**ON WASHING
OF FEET:** 1. Feet-washing is a practice that should be employed in the public worship of the church.
2. Feet-washing is often connected with the observance of the Lord’s Supper.

**THE BIBLE
SAYS:** 1. The washing of feet was practiced as a social custom in the Bible to display humility and hospitality. (Genesis 18:4; 19:2; 43:24; 1Samuel 25:41; Luke 7:44)
a. The apostles specified *all religious* practices for the church. (Matthew 16:19; 28:20; John 14:26; 16:13; Acts 20:27; 2Peter 1:3)
b. The church was not instructed about feet-washing as a religious service. (Acts 15:24)
c. Feet-washing is now classified as a social or “home” duty. (1Timothy 5:9,10)
2. The Lord’s Supper was never associated with feet-washing in New Testament examples. (Acts 20: 7-11; 1Corinthians 11:23-30)
a. Such an association is without authority. (Colossians 3:17; 2John 9)

ON MUSIC: 1. The use of mechanical instruments of music is widely practiced.
2. The use of instruments in the Old Testament is sufficient authority to use them in the New Testament church.

**THE BIBLE
SAYS:** 1. Only *singing* was practiced in the New Testament church. (Ephesians 5: 19; Colossians 3:16; 1Corinthians 14:15)
a. The *law of worship* excludes mechanical music. (John 4:24; 17:17; 2John 9)
2. We live under the terms of the New Covenant, not the Old Testament. (Colossians 2:14; Hebrews 9:15)
a. We may not change the provisions of the New Covenant. (Galatians 1:6-9)

1. The first modern Pentecostal church is the _____, headquartered in _____ Tennessee. The largest modern Pentecostal church is the _____ with a membership of _____ (Data: 1999).
2. The _____ of the _____ has close ties with the Methodist Church.
3. Why should church members today not expect a baptism in the Holy Spirit? _____
_____.
4. How may we be sure that “tongue speaking” in churches today is not authentic?
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
5. What does the Bible teach about sanctified people committing sin?
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
6. What did Paul’s “full gospel” teach about the permanency of miracles? _____
7. Explain how Pentecostal churches misuse these passages to support miracle-working:
 - a. Hebrews 13:8-- _____
 - b. Mark 16:17,18-- _____
8. In what context was feet-washing practiced in the New Testament? _____ How many New Testament examples associate feet-washing and the Lord’s Supper? _____

9. Pentecostal churches usually place great emphasis on the use of many kinds of musical instruments in their worship. Give two reasons why this is a mistake:

a. _____

b. _____

10. Is it acceptable to use instrumental music in worship because we find examples of its use in the Old Testament? Why or why not?

Islam

History: Muslims classify *all people* who are or who have been totally “submissive” to Allah [God] as *Muslims*. Thus, many patriarchs and prophets of the Bible, like Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, and *Jesus*, are considered to be Muslims. Historically, Islam originated in Arabia during the lifetime of its self-proclaimed prophet, Muhammad, 570- 632 A.D. A campaign by Muhammad to purify and reform immoral and idolatrous Arabian cities evolved into the religion of Islam [“submission”]. Growth was slow initially but became much more rapid when the sword as well as the word gave “unbelievers” a strong incentive to convert. Much of Egypt, North Africa, Palestine, Spain, and Syria were dominated by Muslims, and Istanbul (Constantinople) became the capital of Islam in 1453 A.D. Africa, Central Asia, India, and Indonesia were eventually overrun by the Muslim religion. Leadership roles for Muslims are divided between the Shi’ites, who insist that succession from Muhammad is by *divine right* (through Ali, his nephew), and the Sunnis, who are loyal to *elected* successors (through one of Muhammad’s fathers-in-law).

Organization: Muslims have no central organization, but members are associated together in their mosques throughout the world. Mosques are usually led by teachers who are called “imams.” Islam has become the national religion of several countries where civil leadership is strongly impacted by the religious leadership. The [black] Nation of Islam’s leadership began with Malcolm X and later went to a splinter-group leader, Lewis Farrakhan, in Chicago. In the United States, various societies have been established to protect and advance the interests of Muslims.

Creed: The Qur’an [Koran] is accepted by all Muslims as the full, final, and faultless authority and guidebook from Allah [God] to *all men*. It supposedly was given over a period of years to Muhammad in a series of “visions” through the angel Gabriel, beginning when the “prophet” was 40 years of age. It is claimed that the “original” will of God remains in heaven with Allah and is “expressed” in the written Qur’an. Muslims also maintain that this book was given to Muhammad by Allah to correct, complete, and restore the “true religion” that had earlier been revealed by His other prophets (Abraham, Moses, *Jesus*, and others) but now was corrupted or lost to the world. The Qur’an is divided into “surahs” (chapters), the material in which was

collected from numerous sources by Muhammad's disciples following his death. Other collected sayings of the "prophet" [called "sunnahs"] are contained in the "Hadith," respected but not considered binding on Muslims except where unanimous consent is given to their authority by religious leaders.

Membership: *Sunni Islam* is divided into four orthodox schools and includes more than 900 million followers throughout the world. An estimated 3.5 to 6 million of these are in the United States. *Shi'ism* claims about 100 million members worldwide, and an estimated 100,000 Shi'ite Muslims reside in this country. Other branches of Islam, such as *Sufism* and *The Nation of Islam* [one million (est.) in the U.S.] add to the composition of the world's second largest religion. (Data: 2001, Mead)

TERMS TO UNDERSTAND IN THE STUDY OF ISLAM:

Allah: The Muslim name for God.

Tawhid: The absolute unity of God; excludes the recognition of any other being as divine.

Islam: The name by which the Muslim religion is known. It suggests "complete submission to the will of Allah."

Muslim: A person who completely submits his will to that of Allah.

Qur'an (Koran): The sole creed of Muslims, supposedly received by Muhammad from God. The literal meaning is, "Read." Muslims believe the original will of God, the "Mother of the Book," remains in heaven and is merely *written* in the Qur'an.

Surah: A division or chapter of the Qur'an [Koran].

Hadith: Traditional events or teachings in Muhammad's life, not always considered to be divine, but which have great weight in determining the meanings and applications of the Qur'an.

Sunna: Written traditions concerning Muhammad's teachings that are held to be authoritative by Sunni Muslims.

Ijma: Consensus of Muslim scholars to standardize Muslim doctrine and practice.

Iman: Faith or belief, as opposed to practice ("deen").

- Imam:** A teacher who usually leads in the activities of the mosque.
- Sunnis:** 80%-90% of Muslims who acknowledge succession through the first three elected Caliphs who followed Muhammad.
- Shi'ites:** Muslims loyal to succession from Muhammad through his son-in-law, Ali, the fourth Caliph.
- Kafir:** An unbeliever; believers are "Mmim."
- Mecca:** The most holy city of Muslims.
- Medina:** The second most holy city for Muslims.
- Ramadan:** The ninth lunar month of the Muslim calendar when the Qur'an is supposed to have been first received by Muhammad. It is now devoted by Muslims to *daytime* fasting.
- Hajj:** Pilgrimage made by Muslims to Mecca at least once in their lifetimes.
- Salat:** The five daily prayers required of all Muslims.
- Zakat:** One-fortieth [2.5 percent] of a Muslim's income to be used to assist the poor and needy.
- Jihad:** A sacred battle using teaching and/or physical force; a "holy war."
- PBUH:** "Peace Be Upon Him." Used after the name of a prophet.
- Jinn:** Good and evil spirits created by Allah.
- Injil:** The "original" New Testament gospel, now corrupted and undependable as man's revelation.
- Caliphs:** Successors to Muhammad's leadership of Muslim people.
- Mohammedan:** A name rejected by Muslims as suggesting the *worship* of Muhammad. It is offensive to Muslims and is a term used only by "unbelievers."

THE FUNDAMENTAL ISSUE TO BE RESOLVED:

A basic difference exists between the study of Islam's errors and those of the other religions presented in this book. While all the others profess to accept Bible authority in one way or another, Islam totally rejects both Old and New Testaments, claiming they have been corrupted to the point of unreliability as God's word. Appeals to the Bible will fall on deaf ears until Muslims are willing to accept the Bible's inspiration and give a fair hearing to its message. Thus, what "THE BIBLE SAYS:" means nothing to a Muslim who believes only what is said in Islam's "holy book."

It all comes down to this *fundamental issue*: Which book reveals the inspired will of God?

BOTH BOOKS CLAIM INSPIRATION:

The Qur'an

"The revelation of This Book is from God, The Exalted in Power, Full of Wisdom. Verily it is We (God) Who have Revealed the Book to thee in Truth." (Surah 39:1,2)

"(God) Most Gracious! It is He Who has Taught the Qur'an." (Surah 55:1,2)

"Praise be to God, Who hath sent to His Servant The Book, and hath allowed Therein no crookedness." (Surah 18:1)

"This Qur'an...is a confirmation Of The Book--wherein There is no doubt-- From the Lord of the Worlds." (Surah 10:37)

The Bible

"...because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God..." (1Thessalonians 2:13)

"...knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation (origin), for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." (2Peter 1:20,21)

"God, who at various times and in different ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son." (Hebrews 1:1,2)

"...the gospel which was preached by me (Paul) is not according to man...but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ..." (Galatians 1:11,12)

BOTH CLAIMS ARE BASED ON SIMILAR EVIDENCE:**Claims for the Qu'ran's Inspiration:**

1. It has a unique literary style;
2. It was written by an unschooled author;
3. It has been preserved from its time of origin;
4. It contains prophecies later fulfilled;
5. It is scientifically accurate;
6. It possesses a perfect unity;
7. It requires a high moral standard for men;
8. It has changed many lives for the better.

Claims for the Bible's Inspiration:

- I. It has a unique literary style;
2. It was written in part by unschooled authors;
3. It is substantially preserved as written;
4. It contains prophecies later fulfilled;
5. It is scientifically accurate;
6. It possesses a perfect unity;
7. It requires a high moral standard for men;
8. It has changed many lives for the better.

Examining the Claims made for the Qu'ran's Inspiration:

1. Literary style: The Qur'an claims for itself an inimitable style of writing that manifests a divine author [Allah]. Its eloquent language, thoughts, structure, and poetic expression are claimed to prove it to be a miracle and the only miracle necessary to prove the divine origin of Islam.....
However:
 - a. Literary excellence cannot prove divine origin, or classics such as Homer's and Shakespeare's works would qualify as divine productions.
 - b. Objective Muslim scholars admit that other Arabic literary works are equally excellent in comparative characteristics.
 - c. Iranian Shi'ite scholar Ali Dashti: "... more than one hundred Quranic aberrations from the normal rules and structure of Arabic have been noted." (Quoted in Geisler, p. 193)
 - d. Abraham on-Nassam, an early Muslim scholar, admitted that neither the syntax nor the arrangement of the Qur'an displays a divine hand, and other works as good or better could be produced by "godly men" (same reference as above).
 - e. The English poet Carlyle said: "It is as toilsome as I ever undertook, a wearisome, confused jumble, crude, incondite. Nothing but a sense of duty could carry a European through the Koran."
2. The illiteracy of the writer: Muslims maintain that Muhammad could neither read nor write when given the Qur'an. That he was able to transmit perfectly so remarkable a document is "proof" that his message was of divine origin. No uninspired man could be capable of this.
 - a. There is substantial doubt about Muhammad's illiteracy. There are historical records of his using "pen and ink" for purposes of writing. His success in business suggests that he must have been able to communicate effectively, perhaps using a scribe in his writing efforts.

- b. The Qur'an calls Muhammad the "unlettered" prophet (Surah 7:157). But-- the Arabic word here for "unlettered" also can mean "heathen." It is used in that way in several other places in the Qur'an.
- 3. Preservation: Muslims maintain that the Qur'an has come from its origin down to the present time without having suffered any change in any way. It is exactly the same message as originally communicated to Muhammad, 610-632 A.D. Surely, God must be responsible for such unparalleled protection of this message.
 - a. Muslims possess no writings by Muhammad himself. His teachings were memorized and later written down by others in various places. The resultant variations in the Qur'an caused concern and prompted the third Caliph [644-656 A.D.] to appoint a "committee" to produce a revised version of the Qur'an and to destroy all the other previously used versions. This revision is the text that Muslims claim as the "unchanged" message delivered to them by their "prophet" under the direct supervision of the angel Gabriel.
 - b. A certain disciple, Masud, was authorized by Muhammad to teach the Qur'an. Yet, his version of that book is used today by Sunni Muslims and has a multiplicity of variations from the "original" version produced by Caliph Uthman [Othman, above]. These variations are often serious in nature.
 - c. The "original" Qur'an legislated stoning to death as punishment for adultery (Surah 24:2). Modern editions specify one hundred stripes instead. A significant change!
 - d. The modern Qur'an omits three verses, 21-23 ["Satanic verses"], from Surah 52. Those lines initially permitted Muslims to worship three idols, although idol worship had already been strictly prohibited. Later, Muhammad claimed to have been "deluded" by Satan in that teaching and retracted the verses. They were removed from subsequent editions.
- 4. Fulfilled prophecies: The Qur'an contains a few vague predictions about things yet to happen. Most are expressions of confidence that Islam would eventually prevail against its enemies. Muslims like to overplay these "prophecies" to support their contention that God caused their "prophet" to speak of things he could not have known by ordinary means.
 - a. The hortatory statements about victory in warfare are no more than might be expected from any leader in an effort to encourage his troops toward victory over their enemies.
 - b. In Surah 30:2-4, the resurgence of Roman military power following a battlefield defeat is predicted by Muhammad, but no "prophetic" gift would have been necessary to anticipate this turn of events. Even so, it took longer to happen than suggested in the Qur'an.
- 5. Scientific accuracy: It is proclaimed by devotees of the Qur'an that it contains no scientific errors and that this is evidence that God was in charge of its writing. Actually, the book includes some highly questionable "scientific" statements:
 - a. Surah 23:14 says that human beings are formed out of a "clot of blood." This is hardly a "revelation" that could be supported by knowledgeable scientists.

- b. Surah 18:86 tells of one traveling west “till, when he reached the setting-place of the sun, he found it setting in a muddy spring.” Scientific?
 - c. Muslim scholars continue to “find” the latest scientific discoveries and developments hidden in the Qur’an. The “findings” are not supported by unbiased scientific investigators.
6. **Unity:** Surah 4:82 declares, “Had it been from other Than God, they would Have found therein Much discrepancy.” Muslims associate the “unity” of the Qur’an with its divine origin. They point out that it: (1) had an unlearned messenger; (2) was written at different times and under various circumstances; (3) was directed to people on all levels of society. Yet, they say, “it all fits together better than a jig-saw puzzle.”
- a. The Qur’an is highly *inconsistent* because numerous of its *earlier “revelations”* were either altered or removed [“abrogated”] by *later “revelations”* of Muhammad. “Such of Our revelations as We abrogate or cause to be forgotten, We bring (in place) one better or the like thereof. Knowest thou not that Allah is Able to do all things?” (Surah 2:106)
- Some examples of this practice are:
- (1) The punishment for adultery and permission to worship idols (See 3c, above).
 - (2) There can be “no compulsions in religion” (2:256); **but**, “Fight those who believe not” (9:29) and “fight and slay the Pagans wherever ye find them.” (9:5)
 - (3) “...no change can there be in the Words of God” (10:64); **but**, “...revelations ...We abrogate or cause to be forgotten.” (2:106)
 - (4) The world was made in six days (7:54; 32:4); **but**, The world was made in eight days (41:9-12).
 - (5) Self-determination (18:29) and predestination (17:13) are **both** suggested as true doctrines.
7. **High Moral Standard:** Muslims contend that theirs is the *most moral* society possible because it is governed by the *most moral* of books and the *most moral* of lawgivers. Surah 3:110 says, “You are the best community that has been raised up of mankind. Your task is to enjoin righteousness on all and prevent them from misdeeds, and believe in Allah.” Concerning Muhammad, Muslims proclaim that he “stands in history as the best model for man in piety and perfection” (Muhammad Abdalati, Islamic scholar). The “prophet’s” high standard of morality is said to be a good reason for accepting him as God’s final and best lawgiver. However, the morality of the **man** and the morality of the **book** are inseparably related. If Muhammad’s character resulted from his perfect application of the Qur’an to his behavior [as claimed], then any defects in that character would reflect upon the “perfect morals” of the book. On the other hand, any moral weakness in Muhammad would reflect upon his qualifications as the “best” possible of all messengers for God’s law. He could not serve as the “highest moral example” of what Islam offers to all faithful believers. Consider these facts about the **man** and the **book**:

- a. Muhammad's Qur'an encourages a low standard for the marriage of men and women:
- (1) Polygamy is endorsed: "Marry women of your choice, Two, or three, or four" (Surah 4:3). The only restriction is that a man must provide for all his wives.
 - (2) Muhammad himself married as many as fifteen women in direct violation of the quota of wives allowed in his own "revelation"--- Muhammad was a lawbreaker !
 - (3) Muhammad justified his disobedience by claiming to receive a revelation from Allah allowing an exception to this wife-quota law for him alone--- Muhammad was a liar!
 - (4) Muhammad's wives often felt mistreated by him as a husband. They even went so far as to "plot against him" because of the favoritism he practiced toward them. Muhammad considered "divorcing some of them" (Muhammad Haykal, biographer)--- Muhammad was an imperfect husband!
 - (5) Muhammad claimed to receive permission by a "special revelation" to marry the divorced wife of his adopted son (Surah 33:37). The "prophet's" admiration for Zainab's *beauty* had caused the divorce. Furthermore, Muhammad claimed to be given divine sanction to use his wives sexually as pleased him regardless of their wishes and needs (Surah 33:51)--- Muhammad was a lustful man!
 - (6) The Qur'an permits men to beat their wives: "Men are in charge of women because Allah hath made the one to excel the other...As for those from whom ye fear rebellion, admonish them and banish them to beds apart, and scourge them [lightly]" (Surah 4:34).
 - (7) The Qur'an also allows men to commit fornication with women who are not their wives but who have been captured in battle (Surahs 33:50; 23:1-7).
- b. Muhammad's personal life was seriously flawed with sin:
- (1) God [in the Qur'an] repeatedly admonished him to ask forgiveness for his sins (Surahs 40:55; 47:19, etc.).
 - (2) Muhammad's biographer [Muhammad Haykal] admits to Muhammad's sin.
 - (3) The Qur'an encourages "holy war" [*jihad*] against Islam's enemies, and Muhammad often participated in such violence. The punishment for Islam's enemies was to be "execution, or crucifixion, Or the cutting off of hands And feet from opposite sides, Or exile from the land" (Surah 5:36-38).
 - (4) Muhammad sometimes encouraged and supported lying and deceit [as in the case of a certain Khalid who was tricked by a lie and killed at Muhammad's order].
 - (5) Muhammad was responsible for the slaughter of 600-900 Jews in Medina during his early efforts to gain power in that city.
 - (6) He personally ordered and directed the murder of numerous persons-- men *and* women he considered to be obstacles to his cause (The Life of Muhammad, A. Guillaume).
- c. A man such as Muhammad, known by his own history to be **a lawbreaker, an adulterer, a liar, a poor spouse, a lustful man, a self-confessed sinner, a violent and merciless warrior, a deceitful religious leader, and a murderer**, can hardly be considered as the "finest model" of man's moral potential when man is "completely submissive" to Islam!

8. Changed Lives: Islam claims to be responsible for changing many lives for the better. No doubt this is true. But-- *many* religions have lifted their followers to higher planes of moral and social living. The Qur'an contains many admirable precepts that, if followed, would result in men's betterment. These truths are not peculiar to the Qur'an! At the same time, Islam promotes many ideas that, if followed, would bring about serious deterioration rather than improvement in man's moral fiber.

Examining the Claims Made for the Bible's Inspiration:

1. Literary style: The English Bible [King James Version] has often been complimented by literary "experts" as a book given to the world in the finest vocabulary and style that the language can offer. That tribute, of course, has more to do with the literary accomplishments of the translators rather than the qualities of the original manuscripts. The power of the gospel is not in the *words* used to convey the message but in the *message itself* (1Corinthians 2:4). Christians believe that God's providence has assured us a book that can be easily understood and practiced by all people, regardless of differences in their personal circumstances.
2. Unsophisticated writers: Some of the Bible's messengers were very highly trained in the skills of writing. Others apparently had little if any such advantages. Still others were somewhere in between. It makes no difference to the Christian. No part of the Bible originated in the mind of any man, regardless of his literary abilities or lack thereof. God inspired each one to communicate His own mind to the world in a way that would be the most effective (2Peter 1:16-21). The litmus test between the penmen of the Bible and Muhammed as the messenger of the Qur'an is the difference between the two *products*-- the former is credible in every respect and the latter is not
3. Preservation: While no claim is made that we now have the original documents written by God's chosen scribes, we are confident that the versions commonly read today are essentially faithful to those documents. One interesting fact about the authenticity of our Bible is that it was **endorsed** in the Qur'an as a Book by which to measure the truthfulness of the Qur'an itself: "If thou wert in doubt As to what We have revealed Unto thee, then ask those Who have been reading The Book [the Bible] from before thee; The truth has indeed come To thee from thy Lord; So be in no wise Of those who doubt" (Surah 10:94). Those very documents upon which the integrity of the Old and New Testaments was based *then* are the *same* documents upon which their integrity is based *now*! If the Bible was uncorrupted enough for Muhammed to recommend as truthful in his time [7th century A.D.], it remains uncorrupted enough to warrant our trust today. Also, the Qur'an maintains that all messages from inspired prophets [including Jesus and Muhammad] are to be believed: "And Allah will teach him [Jesus--RG] The Book and Wisdom, The Law and the Gospel." (3:52). Jesus' word as an acknowledged prophet could not have been corrupted [by their own admission] either before or after Muhammad's time. The Christian's claim for the integrity of the Bible is substantiated by Islam's own "Holy Book."

4. Fulfilled Prophecies: While the significant “prophecies” of Muhammad can be “counted on the fingers of one hand,” fulfilled prophecy plays a major role in both Old and New Testaments. Prophecies already fulfilled are abundant in the Bible and relate to three general areas:
- (1) God’s dealings with Israel; (2) God’s dealings with nations associated with Israel; (3) plans and preparations for Christ’s coming and work. Documentation can be given for the exact and detailed fulfillment of these prophecies. Other prophecies concern end-time matters and, of course, are yet to be realized. Even casual students of the Bible should be impressed!
- a. If no other fulfilled Bible prophecies existed, those dealing with the Person and role of Jesus as the Christ would be sufficient to convince objective inquirers of the validity of a Book that contains more than 300 prophecies of this kind. The possibility that all could have been contrived to deceive us is about 1 in 84×10^{123} power [many zeros!].
- b. Prophecies and the Bible have been associated in this way:
- (a) Man cannot know the future; only God can foretell history or events;
- (b) The Bible foretold the destiny of nations and the coming of Christ;
- (c) Therefore, the Bible is the word of God, not of man. (Homer Hailey, Evidences of Christianity, p. 238, cited in Truth in Life. “Evidences for Faith,” p. 38)
5. Scientific Accuracy: The fact that a book does not contradict known scientific facts might not be especially significant. That assertion can be made for many books. Yet, when the Bible alludes to scientific phenomena yet undiscovered at the time of its writing, that is noteworthy! A few of the many prescientific matters addressed incidentally in the Bible are:
- a. The rotundity of the earth (Isaiah 40:22);
- b. The suspension of the earth in space by the force of gravity (Job 26:7);
- c. The empty space in the North (Job 26:7);
- d. The “paths” of the sea (Psalm 8:8);
- e. The vast number of stars in the heavens (Jeremiah 33:22).
6. Unity: Unity must be inherent in any book divinely inspired. The Qur’an, though “revealed” through only *one* person, still contains *many* discrepancies and contradictions. The Bible was the work of some *forty* persons but has *no* serious discrepancies or contradictions. Muhammad taught as a “prophet” for only about twenty years, but Bible prophets revealed their messages through more than 1500 years. Still, no conflicts exist among those revelations. Bible writers maintained a *perfect unity* of facts, purpose [theme], style, internal relationships, and other such things. Such unity could not be orchestrated by any non-divine mind(s).

7. High Moral Standards: The exalted moral behavior taught in the New Testament by Jesus for His disciples is evident to any student. Common human sensitivity can easily distinguish between the *rightness* of Bible morals and the *wrongness* of many doctrines of the Quran:

a. TRUTH:

The Bible: “Therefore, putting away lying, each one speak truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another.” (Ephesians 4:25)

The Qur'an: “God has already ordained For you (O men), The dissolution of your oaths (in some cases).” (Surah 66:2)

b. PEACE:

The Bible: “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.” (Matthew 5:9)

The Qur'an: “Say: ‘Fighting therein [the holy month] It is a grave [offense]; But graver it is In the sight of God To prevent access to the path of God.” (Surah 2:217)

c. VENGEANCE:

The Bible: “Beloved, do not avenge yourselves...for it is written. ‘Vengeance is Mine, says the Lord’ ...Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.” (Romans 12:19-21)

The Qur'an: “To those against whom War is made, permission is given (to fight) because they are wronged...” (Surah 22:39,40)

d. RELIGIOUS ENEMIES:

The Bible: “Preach the word!...Convince, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and teaching...when they will not endure sound doctrine...and...turn their ears away from the truth...” (2Timothy 4:2-4)

The Qur'an: “I will instill terror into the hearts of unbelievers. Smite ye above their necks and smite all their fingertips off them. This because they contend against God and his apostle.” (Surah 8:12-17)

e. SEXUAL LUST:

The Bible: “Flee fornication...he who commits fornication sins against his own body.” (1Corinthians 6:18)

The Qur'an: “We know what We have Appointed for them as to Their wives and the captives Whom their right hands Possess; in order that there be no difficulty For thee...” (Surah 33:50)

f. DIVORCE:

The Bible: “For the Lord God of Israel says that He hates divorce..” (Malachi 2:16)

The Qur’an: “...but if ye decide to take One wife in place of another, Even if ye had given the latter A whole treasure for dower, Take not the least bit of it back...” (Surah 4:20)

g. COMMON COURTESY:

The Bible: “Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some have unwittingly entertained angels.” (Hebrews 13:2)

The Qur’an: “...Enter not the Prophet’s house Until leave is given you For a meal, (and then) Not (so early as) to wait for its preparation...And when ye have taken Your meal, disperse, Without seeking familiar talk. Such (behavior) annoys the Prophet...” (Surah 33:53)

8. Changed Lives: Our own personal experience and observation testify about the power of the gospel to improve lives. “...but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe.” (1Thessalonians 2:13)

Note: Evidences for the Bible’s inspiration are far too numerous to treat adequately in this brief study. For a more thorough exposition of why we know the Bible is God’s Word, students should consult the abundant source material available on the subject.

THE FIVE BASIC PRACTICES [PILLARS] OF ISLAM:

- 1. Faith:** “There is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is His prophet.”
- 2. Prayer:** Prayer must be offered to Allah five times each day [facing Mecca].
- 3. Fasting:** Fasting is required during daylight hours throughout the month of Ramadan.
- 4. Alms:** 2.5 percent of one’s income [or worth, for special favor] devoted to charity.
- 5. Pilgrimage to Mecca:** At least once in a lifetime, unless conditions make it impossible.
- (6.)** Many scholars add *jihad* [holy war] as a fundamental commitment by Muslims.

SOME STRANGE DOCTRINES OF ISLAM THAT DIFFER FROM THE BIBLE:

Note: “What Muslims believe” is often difficult to determine because:

1. Teachings in the Qur'an are frequently vague and in ambiguous language;
2. A multiplicity of interpretations have been placed on those teachings by Muslim commentators over many years. These interpretations differ widely among themselves about what should be held as Islamic doctrine;
3. The *hadiths*, or traditions about Muhammad, range from the possible to the absurd. Many recount “miraculous” incidents that are nothing more than poor copies of some of the miracles performed by Jesus. These traditional documents are accepted by Muslims in different degrees;
4. Some “traditional” doctrines of the Qur'an are still held by “fundamental Muslims,” but changing cultures and conditions have eroded the confidence that others have in those doctrines;
5. In many passages in the Qur'an, it is hard to determine whether the language used is intended to be understood literally or figuratively;
6. Many passages are subject to *individual* interpretation and application by loyal Muslims. This results in widely differing beliefs and practices among them.

About God and

His Word

THE BIBLE
SAYS:

1. God is *one* God and singular in person. There is no “godhead” consisting of three divine persons.
 - a. There *is* a godhead [godhood] of divine persons. (Colossians 2:9; Romans 1:20; Acts 17:29 [KJV])
 - b. The “Word” was with God” in the beginning [at least 2 persons]. (John 1:1-3)
 - c. Father, Son, and Spirit [3 persons] were present at Jesus’ baptism. (Matthew 3:16,17)
 - d. Three persons-- one God-- “bear witness” of Jesus’ divinity. (1John 5:6,7)

THE BIBLE
SAYS:

2. God gave the Qur'an to the world to re-establish the pure religion of Islam after the Bible became corrupted and unreliable to guide man correctly.
 - a. The word of God cannot be corrupted. (1Peter 1:23)
 - b. The “faith” was once and for all [time] given by God. (Jude 3)
 - c. Any other gospel [“good news”] is unacceptable. (Galatians 1:6-9)
 - d. We have **all things** needed for salvation in the gospel. (2Peter 1:3)

About Jesus:

THE BIBLE
SAYS:

1. Jesus is the Jewish Messiah, but He is not God’s divine Son.
 - a. Jesus is “the Messiah” [Greek-- “Christ”]-- “anointed” to save. (John 1:41; Matthew 1:21; Luke 19:10)
 - b. Only God [divinity] can forgive sins. (Mark 2:7)

- c. Jesus alone is the only [uniquely] begotten son of God. (John 1:18; 3:16; 1John 4:9, etc.)
- d. Jesus' works demonstrated His divinity. (John 10:36-38)

2. A sexual relationship would have been necessary for Jesus to be the son of Mary and the Son of God.

THE BIBLE
SAYS:

- a. Sexual relationships are restricted to *human beings*. (Matthew 22:23-30)
- b. Jesus' conception was altogether miraculous in nature. (Luke 1:34,35)
- c. Mary was a "virgin" until *after* Jesus's birth. (Isaiah 7:14; Matt. 1:25)

3. Jesus was sent as God's prophet to the Jews only. Muhammad is God's prophet to all men.

THE BIBLE
SAYS:

- a. Jesus came to save **all** that were lost. (Luke 19:10)
- b. He had "other sheep" [than the Jews] to save from sin. (John 10:16)
- c. He dispatched his prophecy [gospel] to "all nations." (Matthew 28:18-20)
- d. His prophecy [gospel] is *not* to Jews only. (Romans 9:24; 1:16,17)

4. Jesus was not crucified [a substitute was provided] but was taken up into heaven by God.

THE BIBLE
SAYS:

- a. Redemption depends upon Jesus as a sacrifice for sin. (John 1:29,36)
- b. Prophecy pointed to the crucifixion. (Psalm 22:16-18)
- c. Jesus anticipated His crucifixion (Matthew 26:2; John 12:32,33)
- d. Crucifixion was at the center of gospel preaching. (1Corinthians 1:23; 2:2)
- e. Christ's shed blood was prerequisite to His return to heaven. (Hebrews 9:12)

5. Jesus will return to earth at the end-time to restore righteousness to the earth. He will live for forty years, die, and be buried in Mecca next to Muhammad.

THE BIBLE
SAYS:

- a. Jesus will never again set foot on earth. (1Thessalonians 4:17)
- b. His work of "restoring righteousness" has been completed. (Hebrews 9:24-28; John 19:30)

About Prophets:

1. Of some 124,000 prophets among all nations, five [or six] hold the highest rank: (1) Muhammad, the apostle of God; (2) Noah, the preacher of God; (3) Abraham, the friend of God; (4) Jesus, the word of God; (5) Moses, the speaker with God. Some Muslim scholars add (6) Adam, the chosen of God.

THE BIBLE
SAYS:

- a. Jesus was not "one of the prophets" but much more. (Matthew 16:13-17)
- b. God now speaks only through Jesus as our Prophet. (Hebrews 1:1,2)

2. God gave “progressive” revelations by all prophets, and Muhammad delivered His *final* and *complete* revelation to the world.
- THE BIBLE SAYS:**
- a. All earlier [“progressive”] revelations pointed to Jesus as the final and complete fulfillment of God’s spiritual plan. (Romans 16:22-27)
 - b. Later [“progressive”] revelation must harmonize with earlier teaching to be true (1Corinthians 14:33). Muhammad’s “progressive revelation” consisted of important changes, omissions, and contradictions with his own earlier “revelations.” (Hebrews 13:8; Malachi 3:6; 1Peter 1:23-25)
3. God gave exceptions for Muhammad to violate laws that others must obey. Muslim scholars maintain that...“The great are above the law.”
- THE BIBLE SAYS:**
- a. God is no respecter of persons. (Acts 10:34,35; Romans 2:11)
 - b. These “exceptions” are clearly self-serving “revelations” to allow Muhammad to do what was otherwise forbidden to him. (2Peter 1:20,21)
 - c. Jesus [God’s real Prophet] was dedicated to *obeying all* of God’s will. (Hebrews 10:9; Matthew 4:4; 3:15)
4. The hadiths [traditions] present Muhammad as a quasi-divine being:
 “I was prophet when Adam was still between clay and water.”
 “Had it not been for thee, I [God] had not created the world.”
 “I am Ahmad without ‘m’.” [Ahmad= Muhammad; Ahad= God]
 “If Muhammad had not been, God himself would not have existed.”
- THE BIBLE SAYS:**
- a. Muslims have become “carried away” about their “prophet’s” station. They have made him into the image of the “man of sin.” (2Thessalonians 2:3,4)

About Salvation:

1. Salvation is based on a balance between a man’s good works and bad works.
- THE BIBLE SAYS:**
- a. Salvation is *not earned* by a man’s works. (Romans 4:4,5; Ephesians 2:8,9)
 - b. “Bad works” are forgiven and will not be remembered for “balancing” in the judgment. (Hebrews 8:12)
 - c. The blood of Christ, not man’s works, will save us. (Hebrews 10:10,12,14)
2. “Supererogatory” [extra] devotions will tip the scale for marginal sinners to bring about their salvation.
- SAYS:**
- a. We are “unprofitable servants” even while obedient to God. (Luke 17:10)
 - b. Our only plea is: “God be merciful to me a sinner.” (Luke 18:13)
 - c. This doctrine is similar to the Catholic doctrine of “supererogation.” The Muslim depends on his own “extra” works; the Catholic depends on the “extra” works of others [saints and super-obedient persons].
3. Muhammad can intercede for the lost so effectively that God may change His mind and send the lost from hell to heaven.

- THE BIBLE SAYS:**
- a. Jesus is the **only** mediator between God and man. (1Timothy 2:5)
 - b. No change in a man's status is possible following his death. (Luke 16:26)

About Heaven:

- THE BIBLE SAYS:**
- 1. Heaven is a place ["Garden of Felicities"] of mostly sensual blessings, including food, drink, and beautiful women ["virgins"].
 - a. The real heaven is a place of spiritual rest and worship. (Revelation 14:13; Revelation 4:10)
 - 2. Saved people are taken to the seventh heaven to God, who sends them back to their bodies [in the grave] until judgment.
 - a. Paul spoke of the "third heaven" ["paradise"], which apparently is beyond the heaven of the birds and that of the moon and stars. (2Cor. 12:2)
 - b. Lazarus, a saved person, was in "Abraham's bosom." He was "comforted" there. Muslims say the saved suffer in the grave (See 3, below). (Luke 16:19-31)
 - 3. The grave is a "purgatory" for the souls of the saved. They suffer less in the grave than the wicked, but suffering "purges" their souls for heaven.
 - a. Judgment for any man follows his death. (Hebrews 9:27).
 - b. We will be judged by our deeds in the body, not by our suffering in the grave. (2Cor. 5:10)
 - c. Through faith, a thief was "eligible" to go directly to paradise along with Jesus, who "did no sin." (Luke 23:43; 1Peter 2:22,23)
 - d. Christ's blood, not our suffering, provides access to heaven. (1John 1:7,9)

About Miscellaneous Matters:

- 1. There will be marriage relationships in heaven [Surah 4:57]. (See Mark 12:25)
- 2. The earth will be destroyed by being "pounded to powder" [Surah 89:21]. (See 2Peter 3:10)
- 3. One of Noah's sons died in the flood because of disobedience [Surah 11:41-43]. (See Genesis 7:13; 1Peter 3:20)
- 4. Lot's wife died in a "shower of brimstone" [Surah 7:80-84]. (See Genesis 19:26)
- 5. Abraham's father banished him in anger because Abraham rejected his gods [Surah 19:46]. (See Genesis 11:31,32)

6. Potiphar did not believe his wife's story, and he told her to ask Joseph's forgiveness. Joseph requested to be put into prison to escape the attentions of lustful women. [Surah 12:28,29; Surah 12:33-35] (See Genesis 39:19,20)

Acknowledgement: Much of the information in this study of Islam is found in two excellent books: (1) Answering Islam, Norman Geisler and Abdul Saleeb, Baker Book House Company, Grand Rapids, 2002; (2) A Resource for the Study of Islam, Ney Reiber, Star Publications, Fort Worth, 1993.

SOME FACTS ABOUT THE QUR'AN:

1. The Qur'an is supposedly a collection of the revelations that God gave to the prophet Muhammad over some 23 years.
2. These "revelations" were transmitted orally by Muhammad to his disciples and were not collected and written until after Muhammad's death.
3. Different "revelations" were first written on "pieces of paper, stones, palm leaves, shoulder blades, ribs, and bits of leather."
4. Many of those who had originally memorized the "revelations" were killed in battle, and it was feared that the "revelations" might be lost to the world.
5. Zayd ibn Thabit, Muhammad's secretary, was appointed to collect and collate all existing pieces of the Qur'an.
6. Differing versions were in use until Uthman [3rd Caliph] ordered an official revised version. All other versions were ordered to be burned.
7. The Qur'an has 114 chapters, or surahs, divided into verses. Three chapters have only three verses, while the longest chapter has 286 verses.
8. Chapters are arranged neither logically nor chronologically. Instead, they appear generally according to length, from the longer to the shorter. This results in the later "revelations" being placed before earlier ones.
9. Early contacts with Christians and Jews gave Muhammad a reservoir of Biblical information that deeply impacted his religious thought. However, the sketchy and perverted impressions derived from those untaught and unprincipled persons apparently resulted in many bizarre concepts that appear throughout the Qur'an. Numerous elements of Islam obviously have distinct Biblical roots but suffer a perverted application in Muhammad's "holy book."
10. Some [many?] Muslims believe the Qur'an allows the murder of people judged to be active detractors from Islam or its "prophet." In 1989, Ayatollah Khomeini, the spiritual leader of Iran, ordered the assassination of Salman Rushtie after Rushtie wrote a book, Satanic Verses, which was condemned as slanderous toward Islam. Rushtie was forced to flee into hiding to avoid Islam's "hit men."

1. There are approximately _____ million Muslims in the world. About _____ million of these live in the United States.

2. Match these Islamic terms with their meanings:

- | | |
|---------------|-------------------------------------|
| _____ Surahs | a. A sacred battle: "holy war" |
| _____ Salat | b. A completely submissive person |
| _____ Ramadan | c. Majority party of Muslims |
| _____ Mecca | d. Traditions about Muhammad's life |
| _____ Allah | e. Name for God |
| _____ Sunnis | f. Most holy city of Islam |
| _____ Muslim | g. Chapters in the Qur'an |
| _____ Jihad | h. Ninth month of Islamic calendar |
| _____ Qur'an | i. A pilgrimage to Mecca |
| _____ Hadith | j. Islam's "holy book" |
| _____ Hajj | k. Early Muslim leaders |
| _____ Caliphs | l. Required prayers for Muslims |

3. What is the fundamental issue to be resolved when we seek religious discussion with Muslims?

4. Pick four claims made for the inspiration of both the Qur'an and the Bible:

Qur'an:

Bible:

(1) _____ (1) _____

(2) _____ (2) _____

(3) _____ (3) _____

(4) _____ (4) _____

5. Give two reasons why we can seriously doubt that Muhammad was illiterate:

(1) _____

(2) _____

6. What are two changes that have been made in the “modern” Qur’an from the “original”?

(1) _____

(2) _____

7. Give two serious scientific errors that are found in the Qur’an:

(1) _____

(2) _____

8. What are three inconsistencies that still appear *within* the Qur’an:

(1) _____

(2) _____

(3) _____

9. Give eight characteristics of Muhammad that disprove that he was the “ideal” human being:

(1) _____ (5) _____

(2) _____ (6) _____

(3) _____ (7) _____

(4) _____ (8) _____

10. It is the _____ of the Bible and not the _____ that is important.

11. How does the Qur'an support our confidence in the integrity of Bible translations?

12. What is the mathematical possibility that prophecies about Jesus were fabricated? _____

13. The Bible contains many prescientific statements. Give four facts and their scriptures:

(1) _____

(2) _____

(3) _____

(4) _____

14. Contrast three teachings on morality in the Qur'an with corresponding teachings in the Bible:

Qur'an:

Bible:

(1) _____ (1) _____

(2) _____ (2) _____

(3) _____ (3) _____

15. What are the "Five Pillars of Islam"?

(1) _____

(2) _____

(3) _____

(4) _____

(5) _____

16. Give two errors taught about Jesus in the Qur'an and a scripture proving that each is wrong:

(1) _____

(2) _____

Similarities Between Islam and Mormonism

[BASED ON THE ORIGINAL DOCTRINES]

ISLAM

MORMONISM

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. A very aggressive, evangelistic religion | 1. A very aggressive, evangelistic religion |
| 2. Claims a later prophet than Jesus | 2. Claims a later prophet than Jesus |
| 3. Claims later revelation than New Testament | 3. Claims later revelation than New Testament |
| 4. Claims to believe the Bible is word of God | 4. Claims to believe the Bible is word of God |
| 5. Claims Bible translations are corrupted | 5. Claims Bible translations are undependable |
| 6. Claims own "revelation" is perfect | 6. Claims own "revelation" is perfect |
| 7. Its "revelation" contains self-serving decrees | 7. Its "revelation" contains self-serving laws |
| 8. Polygamy is permitted up to four wives | 8. Polygamy initially permitted, still practiced |
| 9. Assassination of original prophet attempted | 9. Assassination of original prophet effected |
| 10. Prophet called to mission by angel Gabriel | 10. Prophet called to mission by angel Moroni |
| 11. Prophet told to <i>reform</i> corrupted religions | 11. Prophet told to <i>avoid</i> corrupted religions |
| 12. Large families encouraged | 12. Large families encouraged |
| 13. Early history marked by violent acts | 13. Early history marked by violent acts |
| 14. "Ignorance" of prophet proof of inspiration | 14. "Ignorance" of prophet proof of inspiration |
| 15. Serious division over prophet's successor | 15. Serious division over prophet's successor |
| 16. Extremism based on "fundamentalism" | 16. Extremism based on "fundamentalism" |
| 17. "Moderation" advocated by majority | 17. "Moderation" advocated by majority |
| 18. Pervading sexual focus | 18. Pervading sexual focus |

[This information is offered only as an interesting comparison between two "unusual" religions.]