



SIMPLE LESSON/ serves as sort of a “Reader’s Digest” Version of the Bible story!

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God could have written the Bible so that only Greek scholars or PhD theologians could have understood it. Instead it was written so that it could only be understood by seekers who have the heart of a little child.

We are going to get in a helicopter and take a 20,000 foot view of the Bible. It is so easy in Bible study to see the “trees” and miss the “forest.” This lesson is taking an aerial view and checking out the forest! Many folks have a hard time understanding because they don’t look at things in context and see how it all fits together. This “Big Picture Presentation” gives you a frame work to understand the Bible!

We will start by looking at a few basic facts about the Bible.



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The Incredible Book

66 Books: 39 OT + 27 NT

Written over **1500** years
(1450 BC – AD 100)

40 different authors

From **3** different continents, different
nations, and varying cultures

Contains **3** different languages
(Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek)

HEBREW

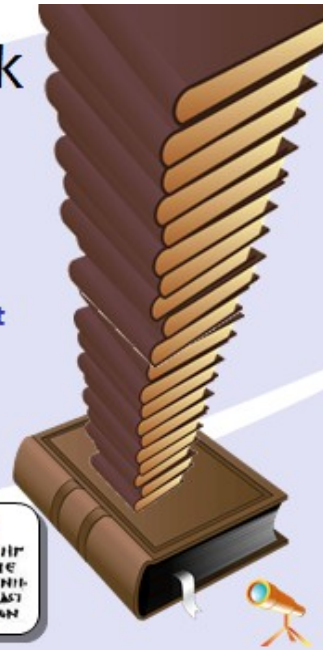
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ARAMAIC

יצוה לך לשמורך בכל
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This is the **Holy Book**, made up of 66 books total:

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How could 40 men have written this book, separated by language, culture and time, all writing on controversial subjects, and yet all speak with one *voice and perfect harmony*? Why do you think this is true of the Bible? (Wait for response)
That's right...because it is *inspired by God!*

It would be impossible without there being **one conductor**, who *orchestrated all of these events*, and moved these men to write by the **Holy Spirit** so it all fits together. Each of these 66 books are like instruments which play together in *beautiful harmony*.
The internal evidence of this book is one of the most powerful evidences that this book was written by God (II Tim 3:16-17). This *one beautiful theme throughout history is truly amazing!*

In the New Testament it is referred to as simply the “gospel.”



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An Urgent and Important Command

THE GREAT COMMISSION

"Go into all the world and
preach ***the gospel***
to all creation."

Mark 16:15



We see its importance in that the admonition to teach others the gospel are the last words Jesus spoke on Mt. Olivet before he ascended into heaven.

God wanted this message to be communicated to all mankind!

BTW.. Do you know what word gospel means?

Yes... **good news or glad tidings!**

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The Gospel – The Power of God



“I am not ashamed
of **the gospel**
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Romans 1:16



The gospel stands between man and salvation.
It is the **power of God unto salvation** – not a fuzzy feeling, but a
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THE GOSPEL – A Message of Salvation

The gospel is a **MESSAGE** that is to be
COMMUNICATED to every person - a message of
SALVATION.



It is objective **truth**. It is the truth that sets us free (Jn 8:32)!
How one responds to the gospel is a critical turning point in each
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And interestingly, it must not just **be believed, but obeyed!**
<That is what 2 Thess 1:7-9 makes clear...>

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The Gospel...Must be Obeyed

*"...when the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who **do not obey the gospel** of our Lord Jesus. These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power..."*

2 Thessalonians 1:7-9

It makes sense that those who don't *believe in God or know Him* will be rejected at Jesus' return, but this text says also those who have **NOT obeyed the gospel!**

How does one obey the facts of the gospel? How can I obey facts? Illust. I believe George Washington was the first president of the US. I believe that fact and accept it; but how can I *obey* that fact?

The Bible reveals how the facts of the gospel *can be obeyed!* We will discuss this later in the lesson.

This is Serious stuff! God will absolutely *condemn* anyone who rejects the gospel.

The gospel is critically important!

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A Serious Warning...To Christians

*"I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a **different gospel**; which is really not another; only there are some who are disturbing you and want to distort **the gospel** of Christ.*

*But even if **we or an angel** from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally **condemned!**"*

Galatians 1:6-12 (see also Acts 20:28)



Amazing these Christians began to *change* the gospel message. Tragic. This passage makes it plain, there **is only one gospel and we have to get it right.**

This one gospel is the *differentiator* of various Christian religions. It is exactly the fact that not everyone is teaching the same or the one gospel that causes so much confusion.

Do you see how important this is? Our salvation is **completely dependent upon our ability to know and respond to the one gospel.** Not even an angel from heaven is allowed to change it or try to improve upon it.

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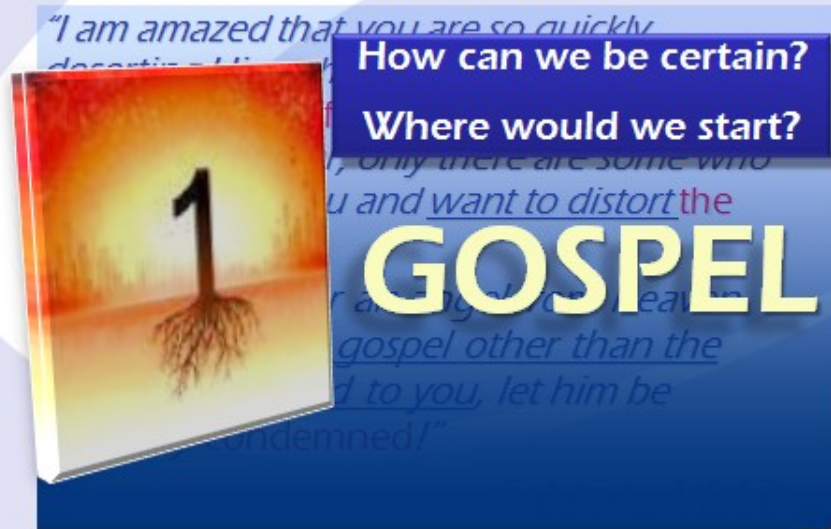


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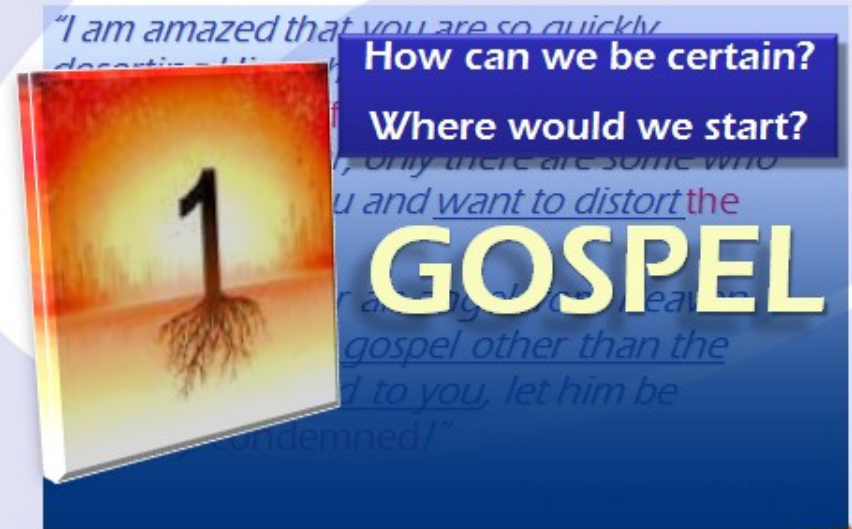
So, There is only one gospel and we have to get it right. It has grown up from the roots of the Bible and the plan of redemption was put into place as soon as man sinned. But ... how can we be sure

How can we be certain?

Where would we start?

<The NT gives us a pointer or direction of where to begin to understand the theme of the Bible>

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Galatians 3:24

Also: Rom. 15:4
For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.

1 Cor. 10:11
Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction (see also 2 Tim 3:14-15)

OLD LAW

SCHOOLMASTER
GUARDIAN
TUTOR/TEACHER

TO BRING US TO CHRIST

JUSTIFIED BY FAITH

You see, we are no longer under the Old Testament, it is still of great value. **Indeed...** *“there’s gold in them thar hills!”* (Optional phrase, use only if comfortable). bh

The OT is supposed to teach us something. Something very important. The OT was a learning/training/teaching period so that we could be “brought to Christ” so that “we may be justified by faith”.

The OT was “written for our learning”(I Cor 10:11) to reveal **foundational principles** necessary for us to understand the NT and the gospel.

<There are some fundamental things we need to look at and learn from the history of the OT that go back to the beginning of time. Before we look at those things, let’s look at God’s eternal plan and when it was first formulated in God’s mind. >

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The Eternal Plan

Ephesians 1:3-6

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as He chose us in Him

before the foundation of the world,

that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely

FREE WILL

(Read this text as the presenter and stop after you get to the point of this slide and that is the fact it was done before the foundation of the world). Then explain....

In the very beginning *before man was even created*, God (who is a Spirit) *purposed* that He would have spirit beings *made in His image* that would worship Him.

He put our spirits inside these physical containers. ***We are here for this short life to show God that we choose to serve and love Him.*** That is our purpose and that is God's purpose in creating us. Illust. **Similar to parents today.** Most often they have children so they can share their love with them, and hope they will love them in return. We don't want to *make our children* love us, we want them to ***choose to do so.***

Since God created mankind with a **free will** (the ability to *choose to* either sin or not sin), doesn't it make sense that he would *make provision* in case man chose to sin?

That is why He planned a *scheme of redemption* before man was even created! He decided in advance He would not abandon us.

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GOD IS HOLY

This is it. **God is holy**. The OT emphasizes this over and over again. Some things are clean, some things are unclean. Some things are holy, some things are not. God is Holy and clean. Man is sinful and unclean and needs cleansing!

It is interesting, that the Bible states that “*God is Love*” (*I John 4:8*) but it never says God is *Love, Love, Love*. But it does state several times both in the Old and New testament, that God is **HOLY, HOLY, HOLY!** (Isa 6:3 Rev 4:8). This is the reason why we reverence Him!

All of the interaction that we have with God is determined by this fact. Fortunately, the fact God is holy also means **God is good**.

Consider His omnipotent power. He does not use it to *abuse or manipulate*, but *uses it only for our good*. All of His power is governed by His goodness and holiness. Everything He has done as a *beneficent* Father is because He wants what is in our best interest.

<There are two important characteristics which flow from God’s Holiness>



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Ps 33:4-5

*"For the word of the LORD is upright,
And all His work is done in faithfulness.
He loves righteousness and **justice**; The
earth is full of the **lovingkindness** of the
LORD."*

JUSTICE

LOVE

**God's holiness is demonstrated in His
justice and love toward His creation.**

NIM

So we do see a **God of Justice** – He will always be faithful and do what He says He will do.

But we also see a **God that dearly loves His creation** even to the point that – as we will see – He wants to make provision to help man out of the predicaments caused by man's rebellion.

God's justice which will not allow Him to just "overlook" or "sweep man's sins" under the carpet. No, sin is serious and has to be dealt with!

<The holiness of God creates a demand and expectation on His relationship with man....>

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When man can exhibit the characteristic of holiness God has a union and relationship with man that is called *spiritual fellowship*.

We are spirit beings that inhabit earthly physical bodies. (***Not bodies with spirits so much as spirits with bodies!***) The earthly bodies are *temporary and mortal*. Our spirit bodies will soon leave these bodies and inhabit the true reality that God has prepared for eternity.

< **This relationship is only possible if man can be found in a state of holiness because this is the only realm of existence with God... but alas this is the problem of man!**>



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"Thus you are to be holy to Me, for I the LORD am holy; and I have set you apart from the peoples to be Mine." Lev. 20:26

God demands moral uprightness in His creatures because He is Holy!

So, God expects as much as possible, that *we be Holy, as He is holy!* God wants a *spiritual relationship* with us. He is a **Holy Spirit** and in order for that to occur we must have spirits that have been cleansed from sin. Once we are cleansed, we can be holy as well.

This is the idea of **SANCTIFICATION** – to make holy or set apart before God. This is usually connected with having our sins cleansed. We cannot be presentable to God if we have sin present in our lives.

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God is of such purity and sin is such a revulsion that He cannot look upon sin! (Hab 1:13).

This is the real problem of sin **It separates us from God!** (Is 59:2). There is no evil in Him whatsoever!

Illust. It is similar to the reversed polarity of magnets. When man's unholy sinful spirit tries to get in close contact with a holy and pure God there is a natural separation and push back. Holiness and impurity do not belong together!



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That's why when sin (any sin) separates us from God it is described in the most drastic terms – all sin represents **a capital crime!**
Spiritual Death – (not 5 minutes in the naughty corner, or a few minutes in purgatory). *(Optional phrase. .use only if comfortable)bh*

Did you see the classic movie “The Sixth Sense?” It came out in 2000 and starred Bruce Willis and a six year old played by Haley Osment. Haley would frequently exclaim: **“I SEE DEAD PEOPLE!”**

The truth is that we **walk among the spiritual dead every day.** Anyone who is alive but is mature enough to be accountable before God and has sinned is spiritually dead!

< **This is what Romans 6:23 tells us about the wages of sin...>**



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Romans 6:23

...for the wages of sin is death

SIN ↔ DEATH

Romans 3:23

***...for all have sinned
and fall short of the
glory of God***



Sin is the problem of each of us. All of us at one time or another has exercised our free will and chosen to sin. That causes us to be separated from God.

I like to tell people that ***“If the wages of sin is death, we better quit before pay day!”***(Optional phrase.. use only if comfortable)bh

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The **CONSEQUENCES** of Sin



"For out of the dust you were taken; for dust you are, and to the dust you shall return."

Genesis 3:19



Not only do we suffer **SPIRITUAL DEATH**, but there is **MORTAL DEATH** also. We all die physically, because of the consequences of Adam and Eve's sin..... (Gen 3:19). Our physical containers will eventually *go back to the dust...*

Think for a moment: When we have suffered the consequences of sin have we done anything that takes care of sin (removes or covers it)? No...

There is a price placed on the offense.

Illust. Just like when our legislature makes laws there is a judicial price to be paid for breaking our laws, there is price or separate penalty that must be paid in each case.

For example: a speeding ticket. If you pay the judicial price for speeding you must pay a fine.

What do you think God set as the judicial price for breaking the laws of our Creator and the God of universe?

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The **PRICE** for SIN



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The judicial price that God has set for sin is nothing short of the death of the sinner. **The death penalty! A LIFE MUST BE PAID.** This reflects the *seriousness of sin*. And it is on the head of every sinner.

God says there is only one thing that will pay for sin, and that is the fact that your **LIFE IS REQUIRED.**

BLOOD is required.

Being *good* will not take care of this problem.

If I sin, who deserves to die, or pay the penalty for my sin?

(Pause and wait for an answer) **That's right: I DO.**

<Let's summarize what we have learned so far about the two types of death that we face and the Judicial penalty for sin>

The **PRICE** for SIN



Romans 3:23

...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God



The judicial price that God has set for sin is nothing short of the death of the sinner. **The death penalty! A LIFE MUST BE PAID.** This reflects the *seriousness of sin*. And it is on the head of every sinner.

God says there is only one thing that will pay for sin, and that is the fact that your **LIFE IS REQUIRED.**

BLOOD is required.

Being *good* will not take care of this problem.

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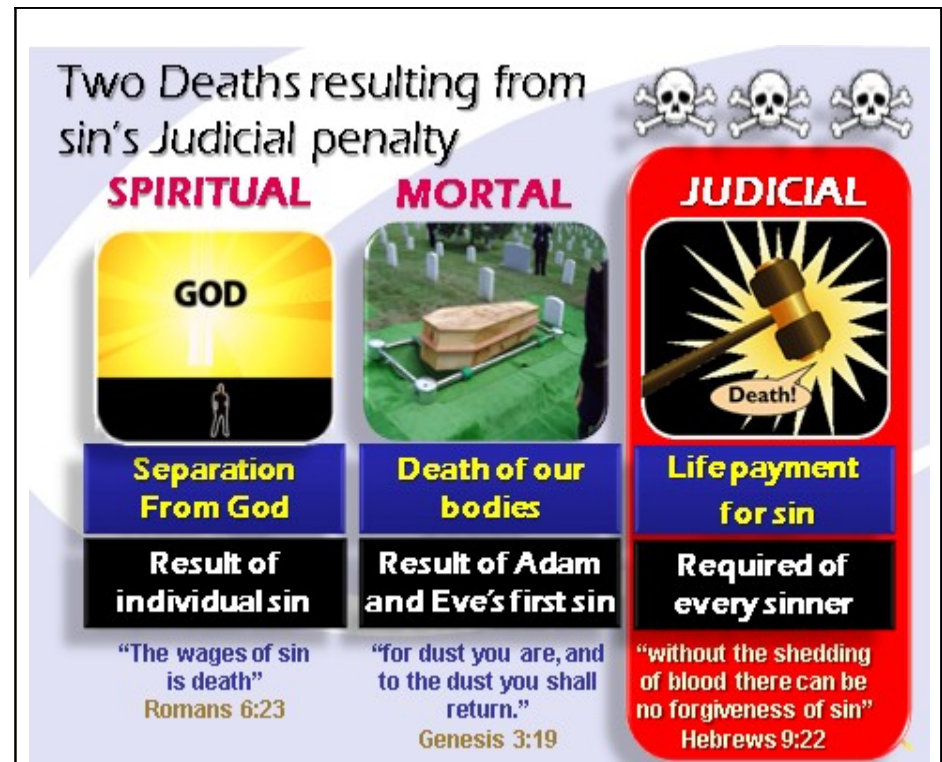
Death by definition means **SEPARATION**.

- Spiritual death is separation from God(Rm 6:23).
- Mortal death is separation from our bodies(Gen 3:19).

The reason for spiritual death is the **JUDICIAL PENALTY FOR SIN WHICH IS HANGING OVER OUR HEAD AND IS REQUIRED OF EVERY SINNER**.

Because of the seriousness of sin = the price of someone's **LIFE** must be given to have their sins remitted.

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God's **Justice** Demands Death as Payment for Sin




We find ourselves in a very desperate situation:
We have broken the laws of the God of the universe, this has separated us from a Holy God, and the price of death hangs over our head by a just God! We cannot pay the price ourselves and still live!

The principle so many overlook is that the price for sin is *personal* – no thing or no one else is responsible for the price for my sin – it is on *my* head – it is on *your* head – it is on the head of everyone who sins!

So man is in a miserable situation. He has a price on his head that he cannot pay. Is there any hope? What is the remedy?

<Yes, God reveals for us the flip side of His character and His Holiness. >

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God's Love Provides
a Way to Pay the Price

GRACE

God *gives*
what is *not* deserved
(Romans 3:23-26; 5:6-11)

LIFE!

MERCY

God *does not give*
what *is* deserved
(Romans 1:18)

DEATH!

If we only experienced the **JUSTICE** of God it would be a short story for all of us. But the other side of His holiness is His **LOVE** as demonstrated in His grace and mercy. God says, let me help you find a way to pay this price that separates us! Through **GRACE** we receive **LIFE**, which we do not deserve, and through **MERCY** we are spared **DEATH** which we deserve for breaking His laws!

People often confuse grace and mercy and use them interchangeably. **This is a mistake.** Assume for a minute that you don't realize it but you are speeding. The police catch you on their radar system red handed. You knew the law, you violated it, and you are guilty and deserve to pay the fine. However, assume you are humble and respectful, admit you messed up, and apologize. If the police officer says: *"Okay: I will let you off with a warning. Just be more careful next time."* You are the recipient of **MERCY**. You did not **get what you deserve**. But let's assume that he smiles and says: *"I really have taken a liking to you. I am in a good mood today because I just got news I have received a large unexpected inheritance. I am a wealthy man! Here is a check for \$1,000. Enjoy! I wanted to share my blessings with people today! God bless!"*

Wow! *How would you feel?* Would you want to tell others about it? Congratulations -- you were a recipient of **GRACE**. You received this gift **you did not deserve!** Do you see why God's grace is "good news?" Not only did he enable you to avoid hell (something sinners deserve) but he has prepared the way for heaven (something none of us deserve). Do you see why this is good news!

<So how did God show His mercy in the OT?>

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This is what **animal sacrifice was all about**. It was God's way to demonstrate His grace or mercy!

If you will offer up this animal, I will allow its blood to be shed *instead of yours*, and you can have its death representatively take your place.

<Man's redemption is all wrapped up in the idea of Blood Atonement which was pictured for us way back during the time of Noah and the ark. >



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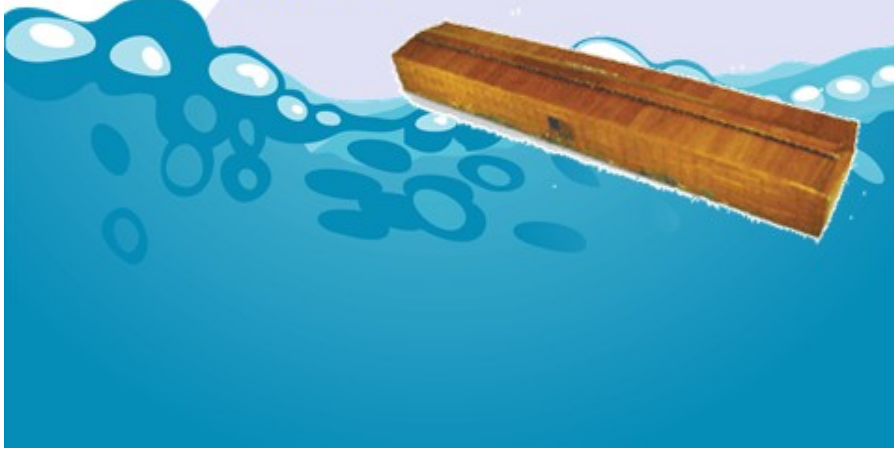
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Atonement

Kaphar: to cover, purge, make an **atonement**, make reconciliation, cover over with pitch



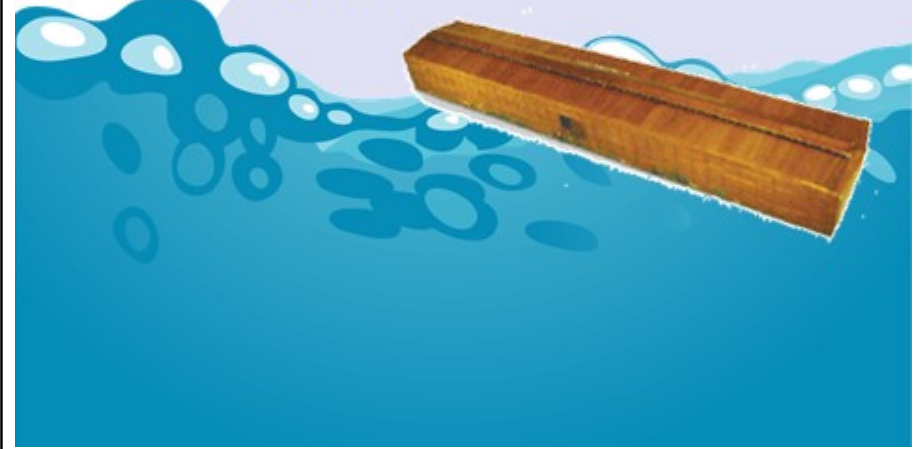
Atonement is the mechanism of *reconciliation*. The root word **Kaphar** means “to cover.” Before Noah went into the ark, he was told to “cover” the ark with pitch so that all the *imperfections* would be covered up and the ark would be water tight!

Spiritually, our **atonement** through a *blood sacrifice* allows all of our *blemishes and imperfections* to be covered over so that when we stand before God we are seen as forgiven and perfect and Holy in His sight!

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When this happened, faithful worshippers were forgiven and made **HOLY**. As a result they could now be “set apart” or **sanctified**.

In short, even though man broke God’s laws, God’s provision for atonement allows us to experience *spiritual reunion* with Him. This is called **“reconciliation.”**

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'For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood by reason of the life that makes atonement.'



(The presenter should read this slide due to it being partially being covered up by the arrows)
In Lev 17:11 this is explained more fully. (Read).
The Life of the animal is the context here, and that shed blood made for **atonement** (a covering or cleansing of sin) in the OT.

God uses blood (or life) to make atonement due to its representative nature and the seriousness of the crime

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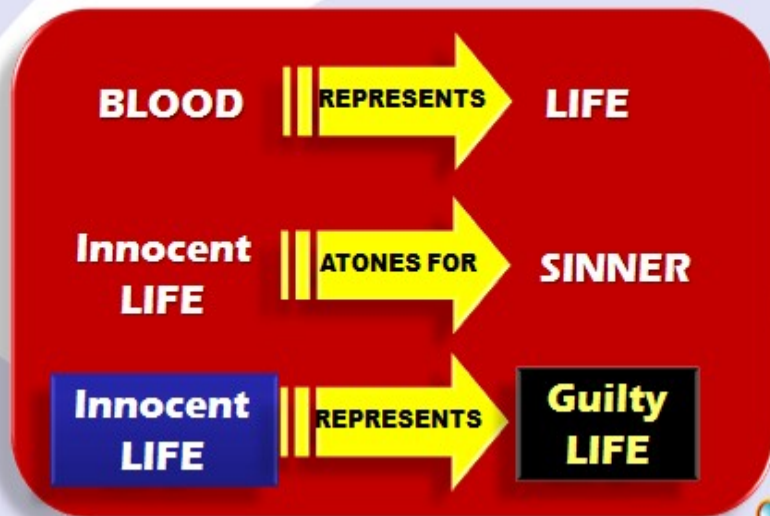


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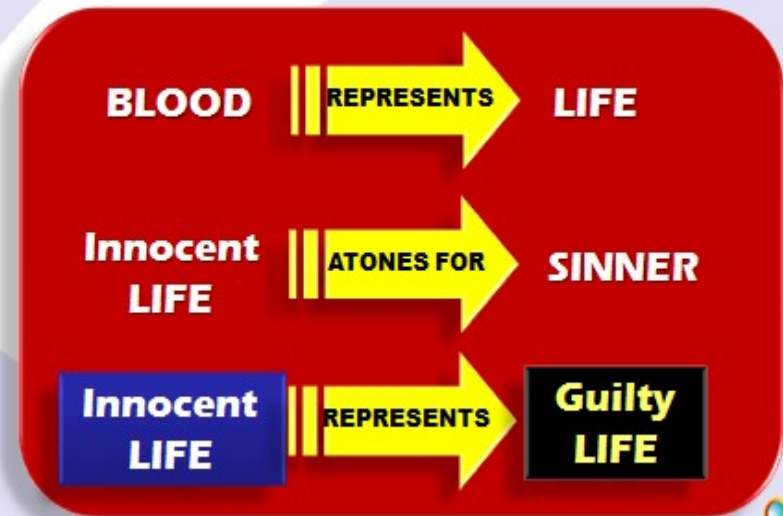


Heb 9:22 ...without the shedding of blood there can be no forgiveness

The innocent life was given in exchange for the guilty life!

< Here is a summary of the process of the animal sacrifices that lead Old Testament people into reconciliation with God!>

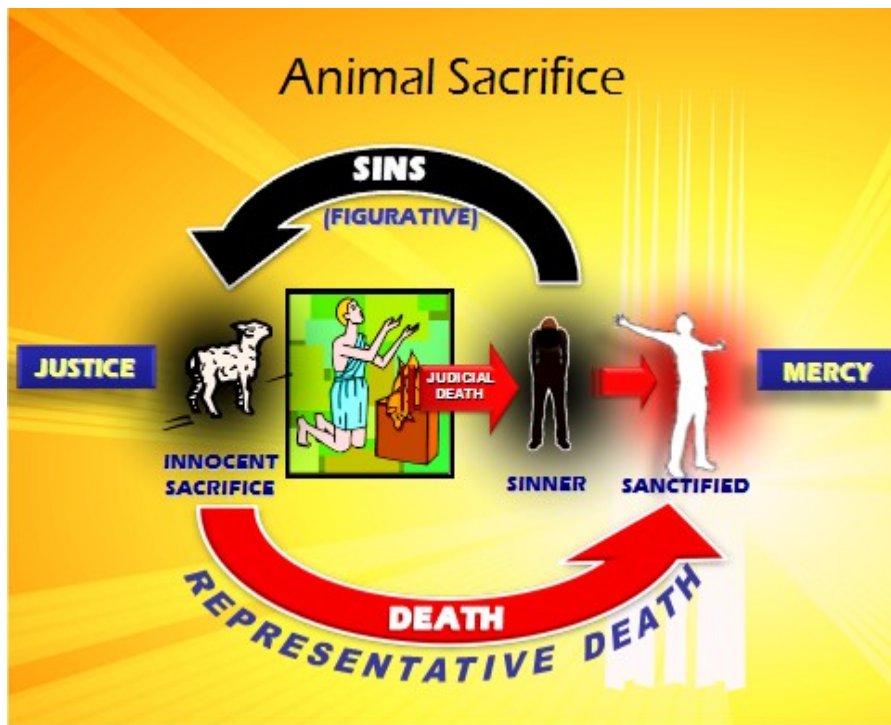
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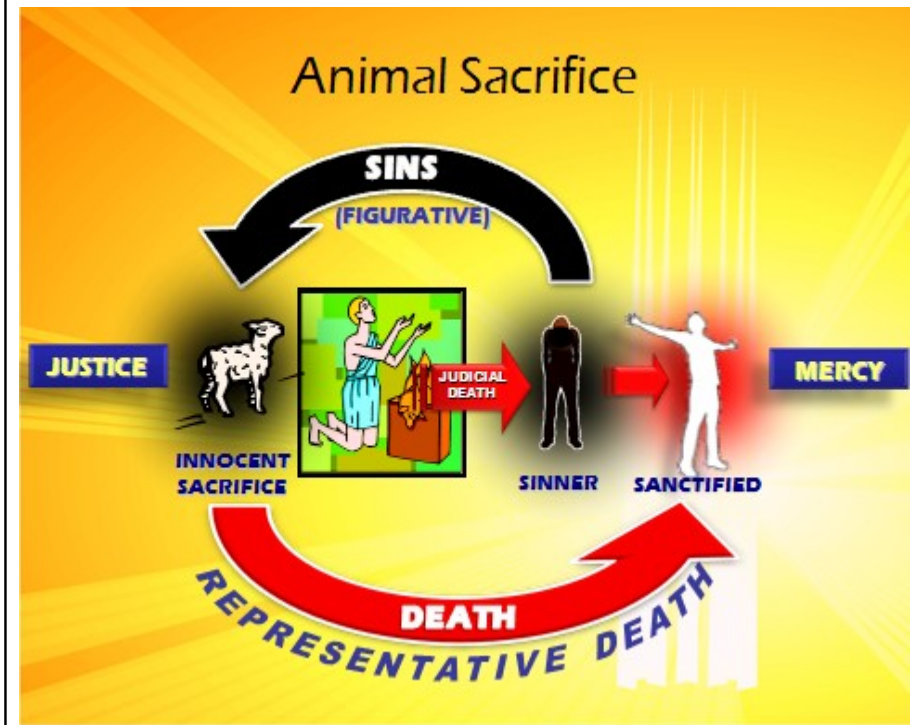
Man is spiritually dead and separated from God.

His sins are *figuratively* taken over and put on the animal (figuratively because the animal has no spirit, it cannot bear sin).

The animal is killed on the altar. As a result it is as if the sinner had died ... so there is a ***representative death***.

The sinner is now ***sanctified*** and holy having received God's mercy and allowed to keep living....

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What Made Animal Sacrifice Work?

FAITH



What made this work? The woman who believes in the doctor's orders and prescribed medicine must **take the pills to get well.**

The biblical concept of faith is seen in these animal sacrifices. Couldn't just believe in animal sacrifice. The animal obviously ***had to be killed*** (Heb 9:22). Maybe Dad didn't want to do it because it is raining and cold. **Without obedience, no mercy or benefit was received.**

Or perhaps in the next generation, son does it because dad always did it without faith or understanding what it all means. ***It would be meaningless if not done by faith from the heart!***

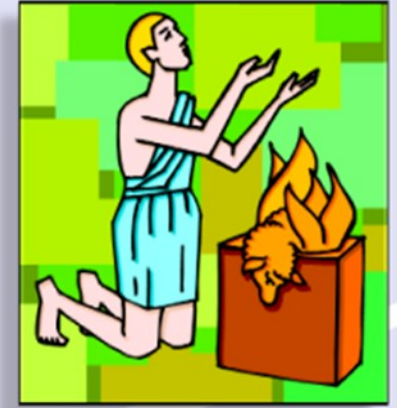
Illust. Keep in mind it is similar to receiving a "free gift." Suppose someone gives you a **birthday gift** and inside there is a check for a considerable amount of CASH. **If you had faith and believed there was money in the bank you would endorse the check and take it down to the bank to cash it.**

Just because you had to endorse the check and cash it does not mean you in any way *earned* it. It was "free money" but there were some conditions attached to your receiving benefit from the gift. **By signing the check you were just accepting the gift.** Similarly, when they offered the animal sacrifices, they did not *earn their mercy*, they were just accepting God's provision through faith.

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	Israelites	PASSED THROUGH Walls of Jericho

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Notice what they all had in common .. In this Heb 11 “Faith Hall of Fame” list.

Abel offered up a more acceptable sacrifice.

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But **without faith it is impossible** to please Him,
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Here is this famous definition of faith and we see both components of faith in this verse---- **BELIEF BASED ACTION!**

What is it, is it works alone, or belief alone? It is a combination of the two.

James 2:14 deals with this question directly by asking a rhetorical question:

“What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him?”

Saving faith must be belief-based action.

This concept is called trust or acceptance. This is only effective when it is belief-based action.

Most of our religious friends don't really believe in the doctrine of belief only... they use words like you must trust...you must accept... both which imply the person must do something more than just believe!

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THERE ARE BELIEVERS IN HELL!

Again, faith is shown *by its actions*..... Presenter read...phrases from the slide...

Vs19 says it all. The devil's themselves are all believers.....that is why they tremble! They are obviously not saved..

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Look at what we've learned from OT animal sacrifice. (Read off each point on the chart above..)

Thousands of years go by with millions of innocent animals being slain representatively. Why?

God was preparing for this moment in time.

<This is certainly one of the most climatic moments in history. John the Baptist is baptizing and looks up and sees Jesus approaching for the first time and he announces Him...How does John introduce Jesus as He begins His ministry? .>

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"Behold the **LAMB OF GOD**



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There it is. **The plan of redemption in a nutshell**

Why did he call Jesus an animal? What was he communicating to the Jewish mind by calling Jesus an animal? Particularly a *lamb*?

God's lamb. God's sacrifice!

In calling Jesus God's sacrifice....we can learn that Jesus did not die accidentally, or because things went bad and He was unable to set up the kingdom at that time. No this was all a part of **God's eternal purpose!** The very **purpose of a sacrifice is to DIE.**

Jesus lived a sinless life. If he had committed even one sin he could not have died for our sins, because He would have had to die for His own sins!

This is why the NT emphasis on His *sinlessness* is so important! Jesus is the perfect spirit being that unlike bulls and goats could be a fitting substitute or sacrifice that could save man from sin!

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Christ's Blood in Prophecy

- 5 He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed.
- 6 All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all To fall on Him.
- 8 He was cut off out of the land of the living For the transgression of my people, to whom the stroke was due
- 10 But the LORD was pleased To crush Him, putting Him to grief; the Righteous One, My Servant, will justify the many, As He will bear their iniquities.



Who is this obviously about?

JESUS!

This is an incredibly accurate betrayal of what Jesus went through on the cross ... Notice...

Vs 8 ***"to whom the stroke was due."*** To whom was it due? Us, we are the ones that sinned not Jesus!

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Do you know when this was written?

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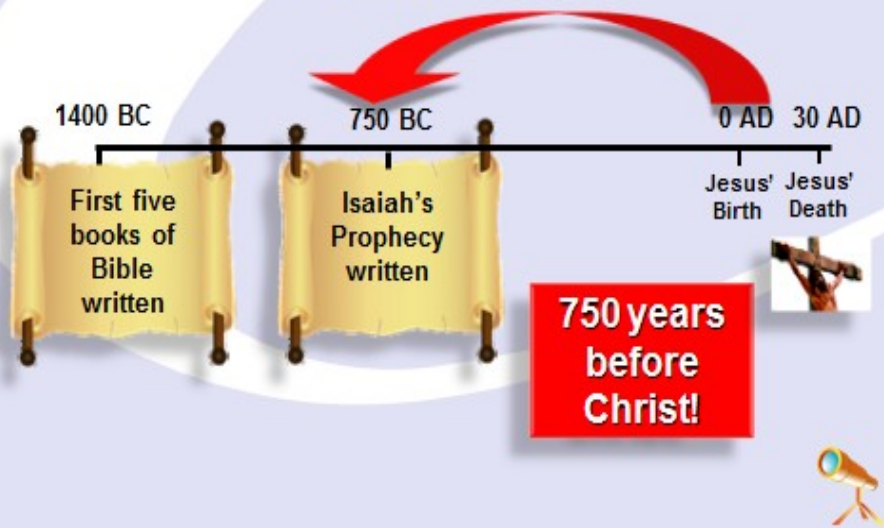
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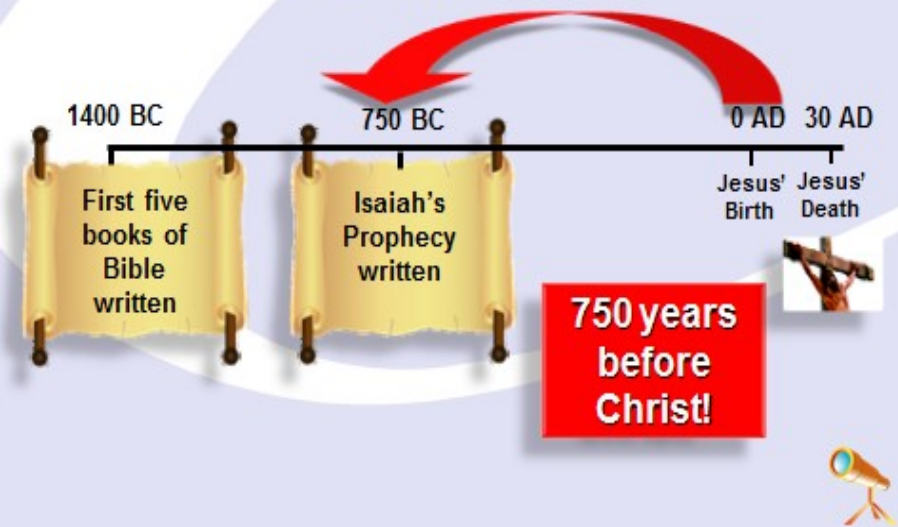
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The Lamb of God - Ransomed



Mt. 20:28

*the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a **ransom** for many*

Mt. 26:28

*for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many **for forgiveness of sins.***

1 John 3:5

*But you know that he appeared so that he might take away our sins. And in him is **no sin***

These passages describe the fact that he came as a **ransom for many**. Illust. The idea is that we have been carried off into the captivity of sin by Satan and had no way to get back to God out of the bonds of the strongman.... *Until Jesus came and paid the price for our release!*

<Let's look at the idea that Christ actually came to fulfill the Old Testament!)>

The Lamb of God - Ransomed



Mt. 20:28

*the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a **ransom** for many*

Mt. 26:28

*for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many **for forgiveness of sins.***

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Christ's Sacrifice – OT Fulfillment



Matthew 5:17

"Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill."

Heb 9:22 ...without the shedding of blood there is no remission.



Christ's sacrifice – brought *redemption*... and the price was not silver and gold but the precious blood of Jesus.

In coming, Christ came **not to abolish the law but to fulfill it!** In fact it was the laws very purpose to bring us to Christ (Gal 3:24). Christ was the ultimate *culmination and fulfillment of all the OT sacrificial system*.

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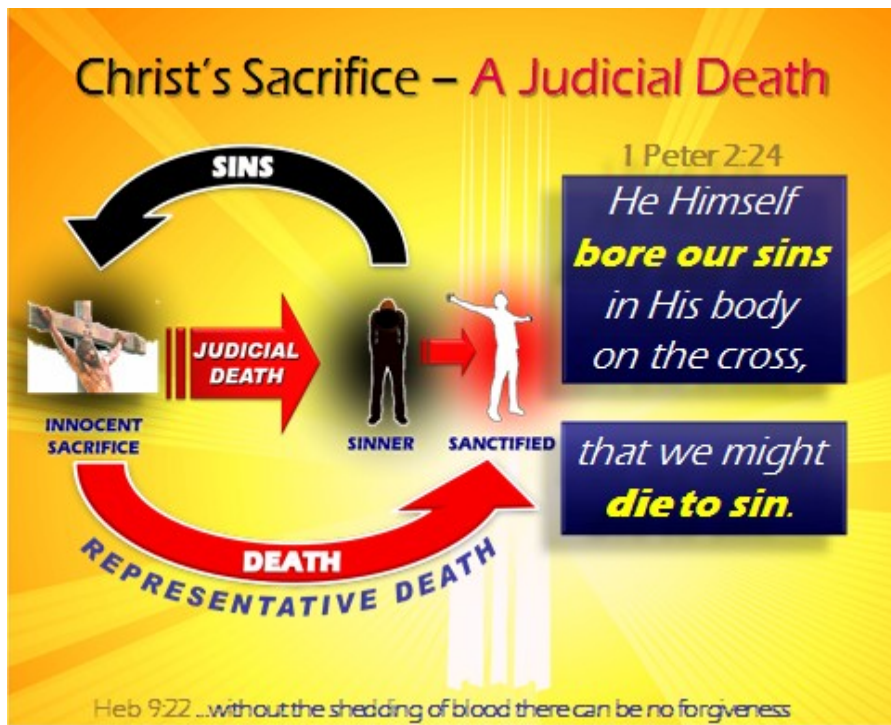
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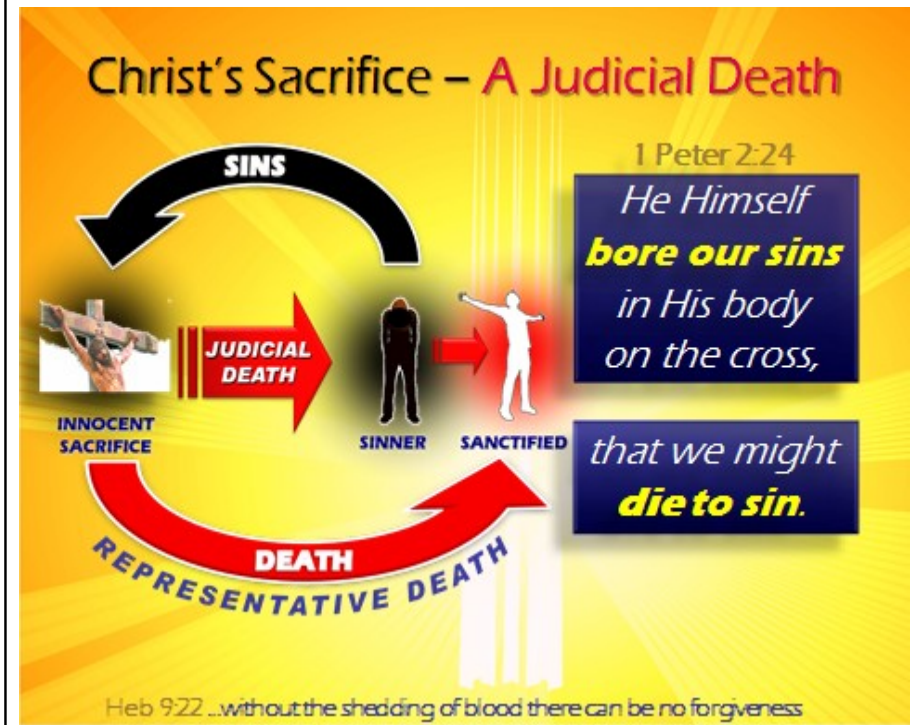


We see Christ on the cross *bore our sins* that we might *die to sin*. Christ collectively took all the sins of mankind on the cross, paid the judicial price on our heads for us, so that we could be sanctified.

Illust. **Imagine all the sins from Adam to the cross, and from the cross to the end of time, and all of those sins were borne by Jesus in His body on the cross in one huge nauseous mass.**

Amazing! It was during this time from 12 Noon – 3:00 P.M. that the world was plunged into darkness. *Jesus went through this time of darkness so that ultimately He could become the light of the world!*

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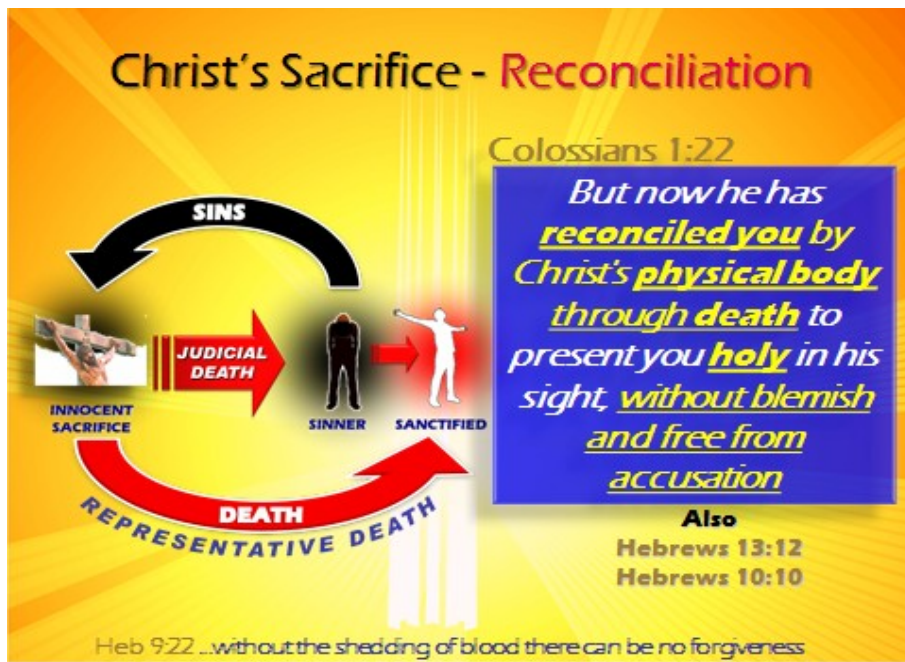
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 As stated earlier, the **first death** is when our spirits *separate from our bodies*. It will be overcome when *all that in the graves will come forth and hear His voice* (Jn 5:28)!
 The real mission of Jesus is not just to save us from physical death, but *spiritual death*. He wanted us not to have to be separated from God eternally! That is the most serious penalty for sin that Christ paid for us on Calvary. He experienced the **second death on the cross** when He bore our sins and literally *became sin for us* (2 Cor 5:21). Sin always brings about **separation from God** (Isa 59:1-2) which is why Jesus cried out in Matt 27:46 "*My God, My God, why hath thou forsaken me?*" Jesus was quoting Ps 22:1. He knew this dreaded moment was coming. "*The soul that sinneth, it shall die*" (Ezekiel 18:20).

Jesus did not sin *personally*, but he chose to suffer the *penalty of sin* for us as the lamb of God so we would not be hurt by the second death! He suffered the ultimate --spiritual death-- for us so we would not have too! This is the *real message* of Christ's sacrifice that is often overlooked!



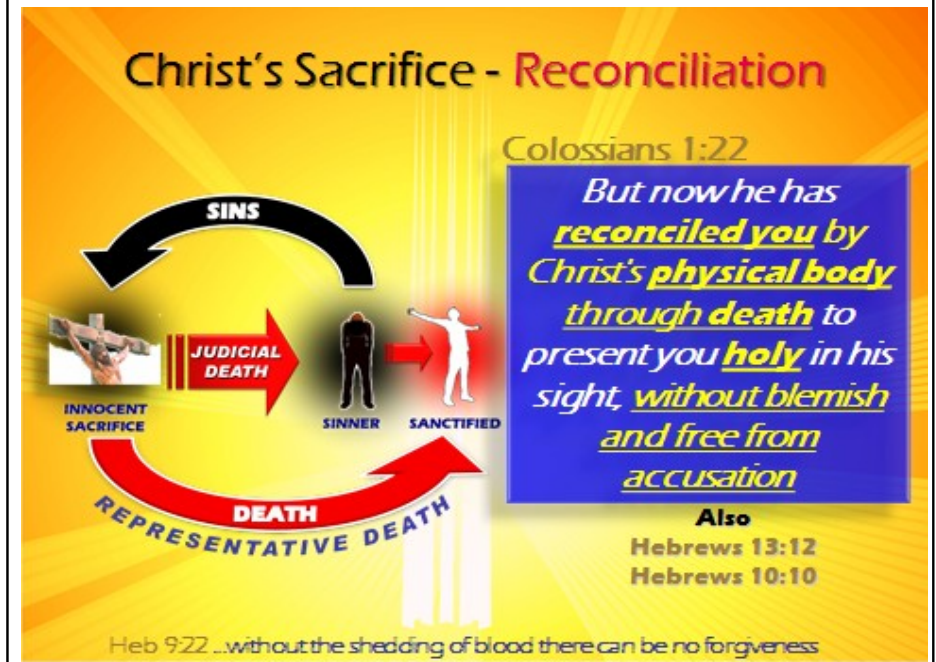
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Propitiation – By Faith

Romans 3:23-25



for all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God set forth to be a propitiation, through faith, in his blood...

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Christ wanted His resurrection to send this strong proof of His deity and His power.

His follower's thought it was all over, but when Sunday came and they saw the risen Lord...it changed these men who had formally been cowards! All the apostles except John died martyred courageous deaths. No one would die for something they knew was a lie? No one. Especially not these men!

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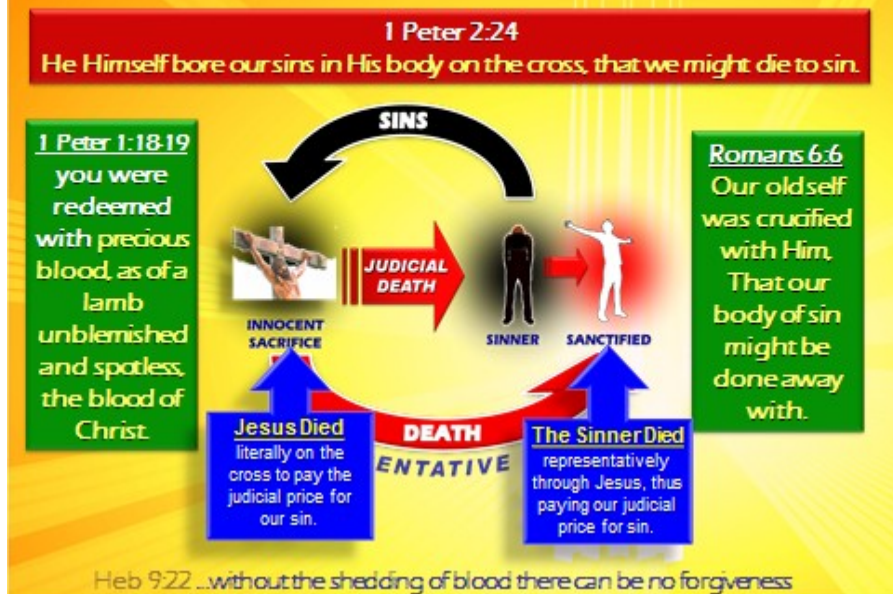
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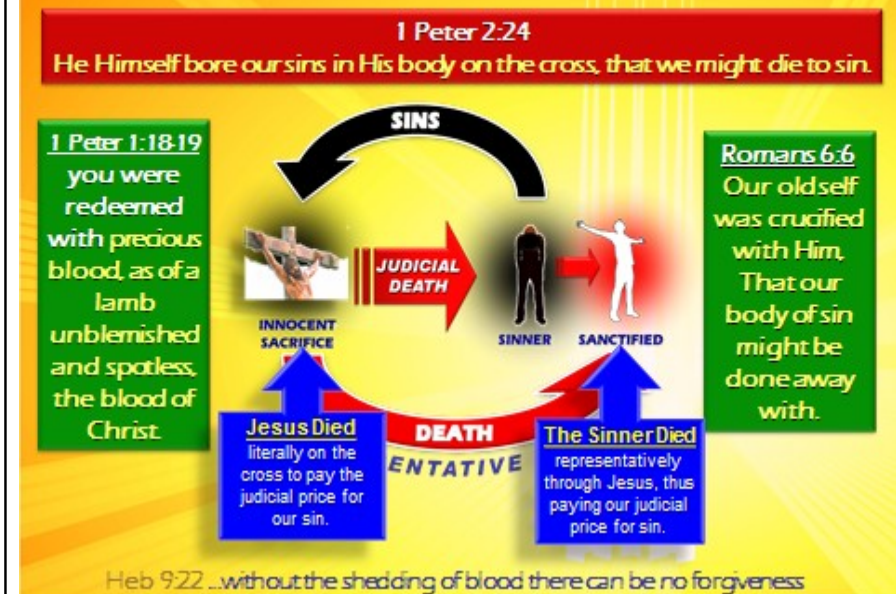
Representatively – the sinner died with Him, through faith paying our judicial price for sin as well.

Therefore, we should not be surprised to see this type of language found throughout the NT.

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Now, if this is the gospel message *that Christ died in my place when he died for me*. These four points become important requirements connected with the death of Christ.

What would be the question if you heard this gospel message and believed it?

You heard this message, that by dying with Him by faith and accepting God's grace, that you could have your sins forgiven....
what would be the first question you would ask?

Don't think of the answer, what is the question?

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The fundamental question of the gospel is:

When?

Or
How?

At what point in my faith . . .

do I die to sin?

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When does God view me as . . .

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Now if you ask this to people today you get a lot of different answers.
Why? **Different gospels.**

Do you suppose that God would put in place the scheme of redemption and have millions of animals killed over thousands of years just to prepare the way for His son (the Lamb of God) and then have Christ go through the anguish, suffering, and cruel death on the cross – to die in my place – and then leave us in confusion as to when Christ's death became mine!

Can you believe it? That God would make this some fuzzy mystery? The confusion doesn't come from God. It comes from man. We need a Bible answer, not an answer based on human reasoning, tradition, or human emotion. **We want God to answer the question and we want to accept His answer.**

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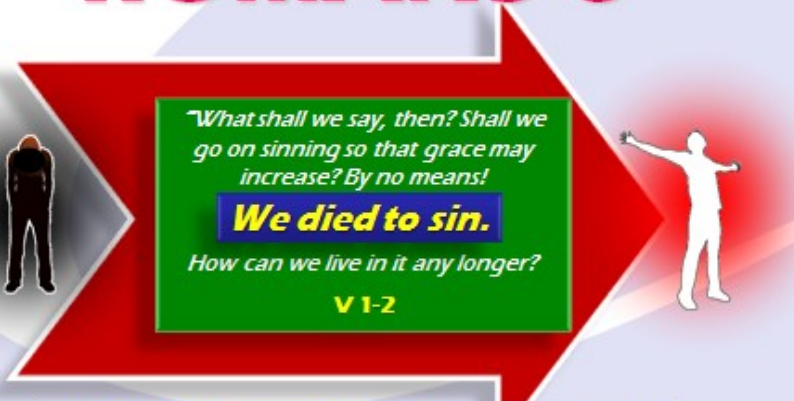
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ROMANS 6



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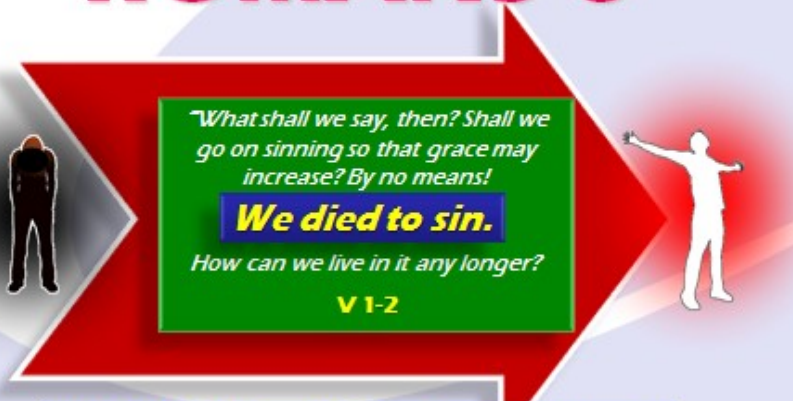
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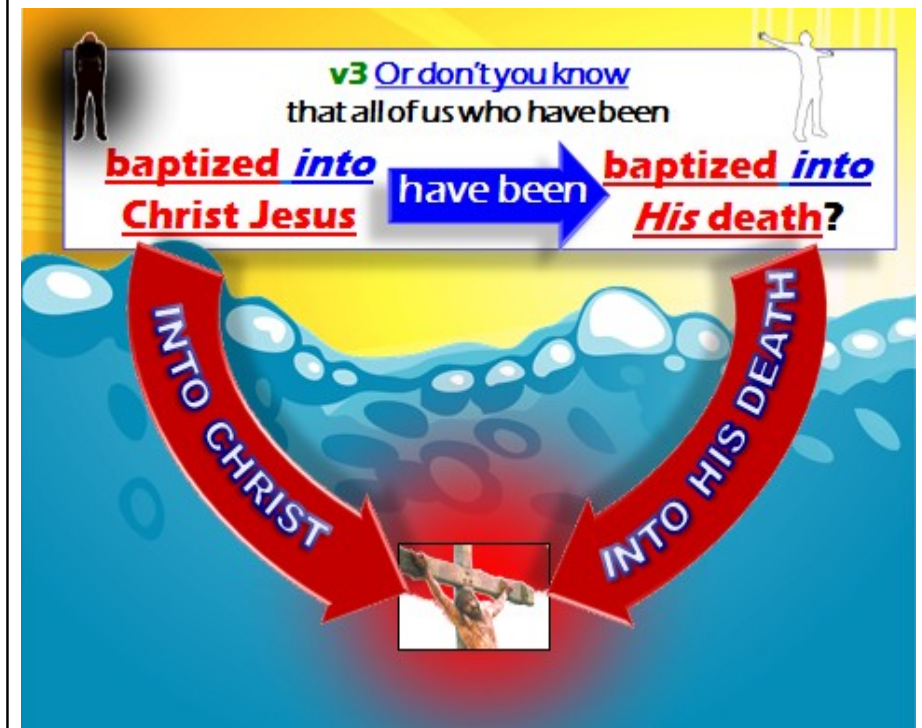
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It makes sense doesn't it? Christ shed His blood in His death, and the power is in the blood. **One contacts the blood of Christ when one is baptized into His death where His blood was shed!**

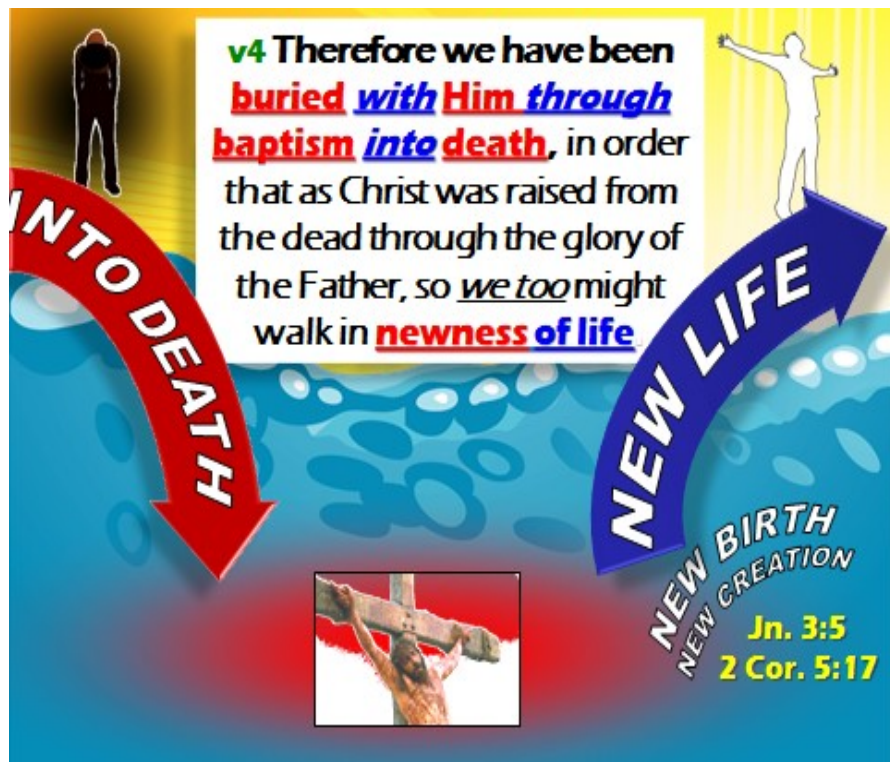
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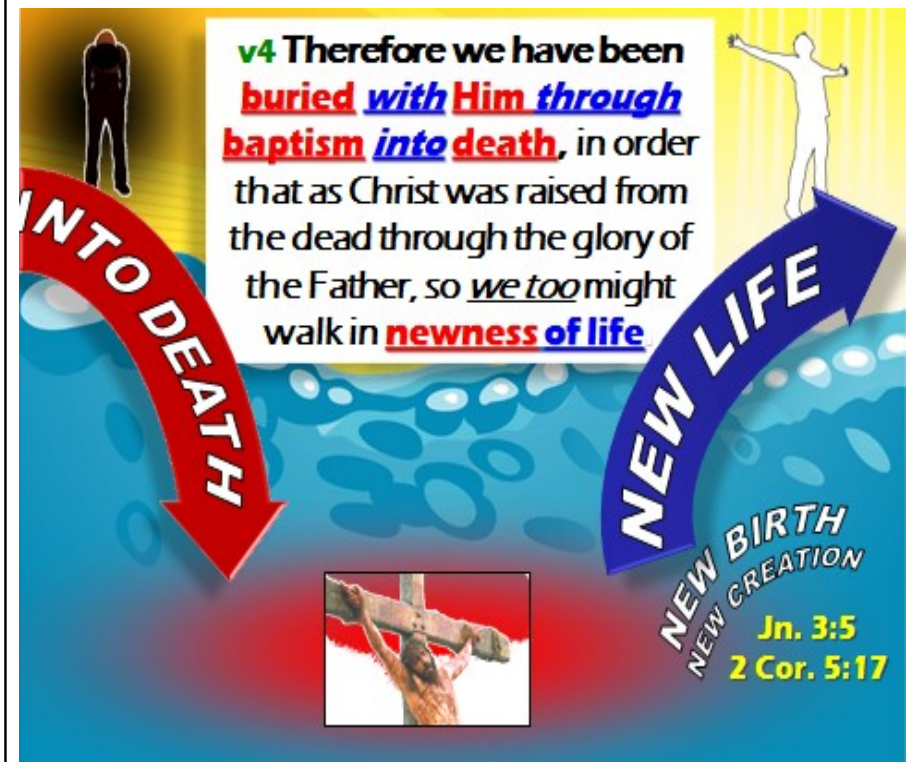
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Other places this is referred to as a **new birth** (Jn 3:5)! “*Except one be born again of the water and the spirit you cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven.*”

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Here is the answer to question 3?

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What is the result? Read verse 6.

“Our body of sin is done away that we should no longer be slaves to sin!! “



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The whole purpose of Christ coming to this earth and being the lamb of God is so those who come to Him could **die with Him** and have our sins removed.

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Notice what the Bible says about the blood of Christ:

It Cleanses us from all unrighteousness (I John 1:7)

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Identical or similar things are said about Baptism: Cleanses/washes away sins (Acts 22:16) Obtains forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38) Served as a good conscience/doth now save us (I Peter 3:21)

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In other words, you've just been cleaned up. **Don't go out and get dirty again!**

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Vs 17 tells us how this works.... It is not some superstitious act where we could just grab people and put them under the water and they would be saved after we said the “magic words” over them ... No.... of course not!

A PERSON must become *obedient from the heart*--- baptism was an **act of faith!** In essence I have received the “free gift” – (eg. Similar to the check I have been given, I believe in it, I now by faith am willing to endorse the check and take it to the bank!

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Optional material if you think would be helpful:

IMPORTANT ANALOGY: Think of baptism as the “Believer’s Wedding Ceremony.” The important thing is that you have love and faith in the person who you want to marry. But you are not married and do not become one with that person, until you exchange your vows and go through the married ceremony. Similarly, we must love Christ, and be touched by the gospel, and decide to become one with Christ. All of this comes to fruition when by faith go through the ceremony by which we become one with Christ! Once you become one with Him in the watery grave of baptism, you now live with Him and for Him and take on His name!



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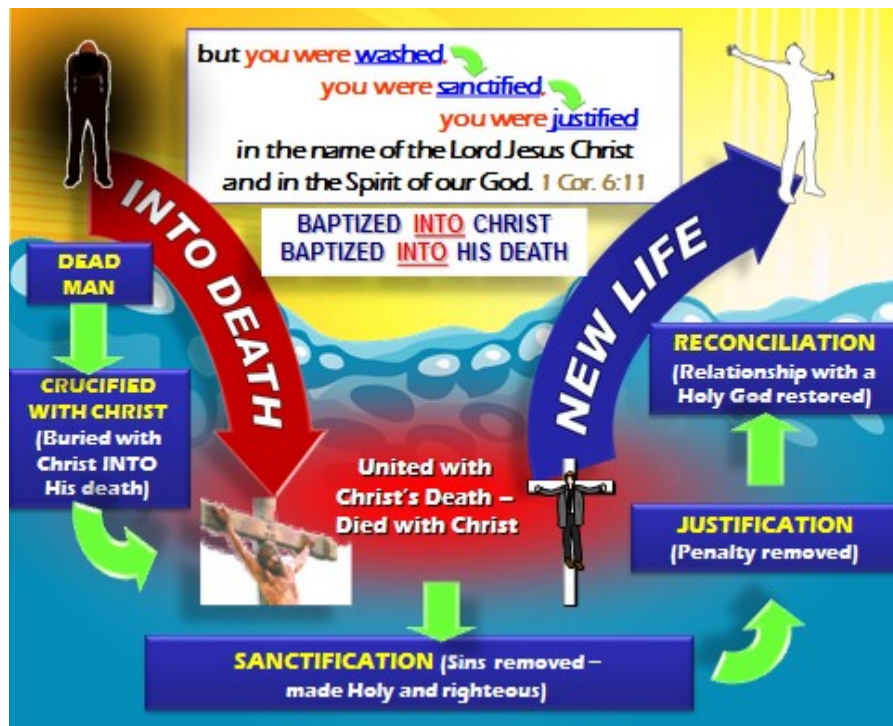
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We did not do anything to *earn this*....
 It is a free gift that we accept by faith.
 Romans 6 answers these four questions and how baptism fits into God's plan.



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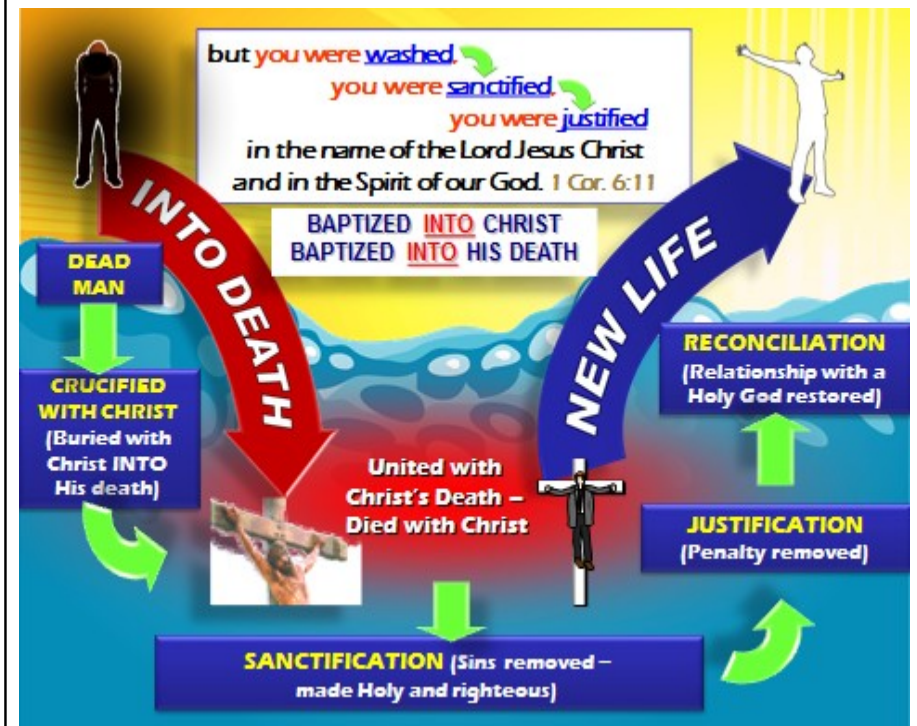
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Finally, the key objective is achieved.

RECONCILIATION occurs with a Holy God. A new life and spiritual fellowship is regained!

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Eph 4:3-6

Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit
through the bond of peace.

There is **one body** and
one Spirit -just as you were called to
one hope when you were called
one Lord,
one faith,

one baptism,

one God and Father of all

who is over all and through all and in all.

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Here we have a very important list. **Seven things upon which Christians must be unified**

Why is baptism on this list?

If this were just optional, not very important, just something you do as a sort of fuzzy symbol reenacting the DBR of Jesus, why is it on this list? It is up there with *one lord, one faith, one spirit, one father... amazing.....* Why is this given such a place of importance?

If we understand from Rom 6 that baptism is the place where one is **united with Christ, contact His blood, and become one with him in the believer's wedding ceremony...it becomes clear!** Baptism is where we are put into Christ, and have our sins forgiven...so this is of monumental importance!!

Notice there is only **ONE baptism**, just like there is only one gospel. It is not the gospel, but it is the *response to the gospel* where each individual taps into its power by faith.

<**How could we find out what the one baptism is? The book of Acts shows us historically what is being referenced here and why it is so important.**>

Eph 4:3-6

Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit
through the bond of peace.

There is **one body** and
one Spirit -just as you were called to
one hope when you were called
one Lord,
one faith,

one baptism,

one God and Father of all

who is over all and through all and in all.

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What Shall We Do?

"Now when they heard this,

they were pierced to the heart,

and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles,

"Brethren, what shall we do?"

First gospel
sermon
Pentecost

They
believed the
gospel

How can we
be saved?

DIFFERENT GOSPELS

Do? There is
nothing you can
do! Christ did it all!

Accept Jesus
into your
heart.

Just believe.

Pray through.

Call out Jesus'
name.

Pray the
sinners prayer.

Acts 2 records Peter is preaching the gospel for the first time...
The people have heard it and believed it.... They ask: ***What must we do? (Acts 2:37).***

Peter could have answered their question in all sorts of ways....
(See above)

Why so many possible answers today? Because over the centuries
so many **DIFFERENT** gospels have emerged. **This is so sad,**
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RESPONSE**

This is the clear simple response...
Repent...stop sinning!!!! And then become one with Christ by
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An Urgent and Important Command

The great commission –

*"Go into all the world and
preach the gospel to all creation.
He who **believes and is baptized**
shall be saved;
but he who has not believed
shall be condemned.*
Mark 16:15-16



Let's go back to Jesus' final commands that he gave to His followers before he ascended up into heaven....

We started off by saying that Jesus commanded that **the gospel be preached**, but if you complete the command you see he also said *"He who believes and is baptized shall be saved."*

Christ knew how important this was... it was not just by virtue of keeping this command, per se, but by virtue of *accepting the gift of salvation by grace and being united with Him.*

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Do you want to die with Christ?



REMEMBER: Every person has in their life, a cross and a throne.

The call of the gospel is for those who have been their own tin God, sitting upon their own throne and turning up their nose at Jesus on the cross, to humbly get off the throne of their lives and enthrone Jesus there instead, so they can then take up His cross and follow Him!

Won't you accept the promise and gift of God's son today? And be baptized for the remission of your sins by faith in the blood of Christ?

If you believe in Christ and have faith in His blood, and are willing to repent of your sins and confess His name... then you are ready to die with Him and have your sins removed, and enter His kingdom and live a life of faithful loving obedience to Christ as king and have every confidence that you will spend eternity in heaven.

But if you reject this gift there will be no hope for you... there is no other basis on which God will forgive sin...nothing but the blood of Jesus.

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This chart summarizes very well the “Big Picture” of the Bible and how it is all about Christ’s blood and how it flows backwards and forwards! (Review chart). In the OT period through faith in God and animal sacrifices looking forward to the coming of Christ, sins were forgiven sort of “on credit” awaiting the coming of the Messiah. In the NT, faith in Christ as the perfect sacrifice and the lamb of God is accredited to your account in heaven when you respond to the gospel by participating in the death/burial/and resurrection which is how you “obey the gospel.”

Now, turn and read Eph 1:3. It says **“All spiritual blessings in the heavenly places are found in Christ Jesus.”** What are some of those blessings? Discuss which ones mean the most to them.... **Salvation, Fellowship, Hope of Heaven, Purpose in Life, Freedom from sin**, etc. Then ask again.. Would you like to have those blessings? *Where are they found?* **They are found in Christ!** (See Eph 1:3, Gal 3:27).

Would you allow me to baptize you into Christ now so that you might die with Him and arise to walk in a new life having Christ’s blood applied to your account in heaven?

How quickly did they respond to the gospel message in Acts 16: 33 they responded ***“in the same hour of the night and immediately he was baptized.”*** ***Would you die with Christ now?***



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Great Commission

Matthew 28:19-20

*"Therefore go
and make
disciples of all
the nations"*

HOW?

*baptizing them in the
name of the Father
and the Son and the
Holy Spirit,*

*teaching them to
observe all that I
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The basis for
following Apostolic
authority for all
work and worship in
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If the answer is yes, I am ready.... **count the cost...(Lk 14:25-32)**. Remind them that baptism is not the end it is just the beginning. Jesus in the Great Commission made it clear that there is to ***be teaching after baptism in order for one to understand the work and worship in the Kingdom.***

In short, one can't have Christ and reject his body, which is the church family (Col 1:18)! They need to continue to die with Christ and that means die to sin and live for Him. Otherwise, this new relationship is meaningless.

Remember: Baptism is the point where one comes to be "wed" to Christ and wear His name. It is the day you make your commitment to him to serve Him and "be faithful until death" (Rev 2:10). The church family is here to help you. That is God's plan and we must make a commitment to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Peter 3:18).

Keep in mind that once you "obey the gospel" you are added to the *church universal*. A separate decision needs to be made concerning where you choose to worship and the local church you choose to place your membership.

Would you like to become a part of the congregation here and worship with us as well as a part of your commitment?

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Final thoughts for the presenter of the Big Picture:

The last one third of the **Big Picture** contains excellent material which further validates and provides Biblical evidence which complements what has been shared in this condensed “flip chart version.”

If the person needs additional information to be convinced of these truths, set up another time to go over the material entitled: **The Four Testimonies**. It deals with the following:

- What *Jesus taught*
- What the *apostles taught*(the testimony of the epistles)
- What the *apostles practiced* (the power of actual historical example),
- What the *early church taught and practiced*.

I recommend you have extra copies of the Big Picture book handy so that you can present one to the person after you have shared the presentation. I suggest you write something in the front and date it as a personal memento of the “Big Picture” presentation.

Also, remember to refer back to the “salvation experience” or “spiritual journey” that the person shared with you at the beginning of the presentation. This will help to determine what the person’s past actions have been in connection with the gospel and whether or not there is a need for someone to properly obey the gospel now.

For further help and guidance in sharing the Big Picture, please see the handout I have put together with suggestions on how to be most effective in your presentation. **Sharing Ken Craig’s The Big Picture of the Bible** can be downloaded off of the Johnson Avenue church of Christ web site at: www.jacofc.org.

May God bless you in your efforts in sowing the seed and sharing the gospel. It is a wonderful privilege and one of life’s greatest joys to have a part in saving a soul. Remember: **“The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and he that wins souls is wise”** (Prov. 11:19).

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