

Becoming A Roma Disciple of Jesus

By Bob Hitching

Part One

The Authority of Jesus in Heaven and Earth

1 Jesus is Lord in Heaven and in Earth

The most important lesson we can learn in becoming a disciple of Jesus Christ is concerning the power and authority that God has in heaven and earth. There is so much superstition in our Roma communities and as a result we get some very strange teaching about good and evil. As always we need to test all the ideas and teachings we hear by carefully reading what the Bible says. It is important to look at the Bible and see what God has said concerning these things. Together we will look at some important things the Bible says about Jesus being the Lord. As we begin our study together we will look at six points which will be an introduction to our whole study time. By the time you finish this study you will be able to understand clearly how powerful God is and how He is involved in your life. Let us look at these slowly and think about them as we read.

1. Jesus had authority in His teaching.

Matthew 7:29 *for Jesus was teaching them as one who had authority, and not as their teachers.*

We hear so many different opinions from so many different people about what is the truth. There is one source of truth and that is the Lord Jesus. What He says is the truth. When Jesus has spoken in his Word the Bible we can trust it, believe it and obey it.

John 14:6 *Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.*

2. Jesus has all authority in heaven and earth.

Matthew 28:18 *And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. "*

There is no power greater on earth nor in heaven than the Lord Jesus Christ. There is no person greater than Jesus. There is no Angel or Demon greater than Jesus. This means when we believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and trust Him with our lives; we are safe.

Romans 8:38-39 For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

3. God's power is so great it can not be understood.

Psalms 147:5 *Great is our Lord, and abundant in power; his understanding is beyond measure.*

One of the great lessons that we learn in life as we follow the Lord Jesus Christ as His disciples is that no matter how great and powerful we think He is, He is actually more powerful.

Sometimes when we worship it is very exciting and noisy but there are times when we have to be quiet and respectful when we think about God because He is so great. We must never play games with God.

Isaiah 6:5 And I said: (When I saw the Lord in all His power) "Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!"

4. His power is so great there is nothing He does not know or can not do.

Psalms 147:4 *He determines the number of the stars; he gives to all of them their names.*

God knows everything. He knows everything that is in our hearts and in our minds. He knows everything about everyone in the world all at the same time. We can not hide anything from God.

Isaiah 40:26 *Lift up your eyes on high and see: who created these? He who brings out their host by number, calling them all by name, by the greatness of his might, and because he is strong in power not one is missing.*

5. God's Knowledge is wonderful.

Isaiah 28:29 *This also comes from the LORD of hosts; he is wonderful in counsel and excellent in wisdom.*

God's power is so great that it would be very frightening if He were not so good and kind. He is absolutely powerful and He is absolutely good. This is wonderful news.

Psalm 62:11-12*Power belongs to God, and that to you, O Lord, belongs steadfast love. For you will render to a man according to his work.*

6. God does not need anyone to give Him advice.

Isaiah 40:13-14 *Who has measured the Spirit of the LORD, or what man shows him his counsel? Whom did he consult, and who made him understand? Who taught him the path of justice, and taught him knowledge, and showed him the way of understanding?*

God does not need anything. He does not need help to do His will nor can His plans be defeated. He actually does not need us for anything but He loves us and He chooses us to be His friends, His children and His servants.

Isaiah 40:28 *Have you not known? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable.*

Now that we have read this introduction let us go through these teachings at a deeper level. Before we do we need to look at a special principle. When we read the Bible there are times when some of the truths we read are quite hard to accept at first or even understand and so we have to have a very important principle in our study. He is an illustration to help us.



Illustration

If it is too heavy do not try to carry it alone

*Think of a little girl who is riding her bike and she sees a great piece of scrap iron laying in the street. She tries to pick the scrap metal up because she knows her father will be pleased because he will be able to sell it as scrap metal. She manages to get it on her bike but the weight of the scrap iron is so heavy her bike keeps falling over. Then, thankfully her father sees her and comes running to her side. He reaches down and seems to lift the iron without effort, put it on the bike and wheel it away. The little girl seems sad and so her father, if he is a good man, asks her what is wrong. She says that she wanted to carry the iron home so that he would be proud of her. **The father smiles and then explains to her that there are some things that are too heavy for her to carry so he must carry them for her.***

It is the same principle in our lives when we think of some of these hard subjects are difficult to understand. If it is too heavy for us, in other words it is too hard for us to understand then let our heavenly Father carry it for us. When we read something in the Bible that is hard to carry then do not fear but trust that our Heavenly Father is able to carry it for us until we are able to understand more fully.

So with this in mind let us look at this a little bit more about Jesus being the Lord of heaven and earth.



Special Thought

“ If we can grasp these truths then our lives will be more peaceful and we will know more about resting in our hearts. It will also help us to see that we are not to be afraid of Satan but to see Jesus as the one who is the King of all things”

Let us think of heaven and earth in four ways:

A. Earth, Water and Fire

Job 12:15 If he withholds the waters, they dry up; if he sends them out, they overwhelm the land.

Everything that happens in the world such as the rain, the wind, fire, the seas, everything belongs to God and is under His authority.

- (I) God gives us the sun and rain and the soil to produce food for our lives.
- (II) He gives us the materials to make houses, materials to make clothes.
- (III) He has given us fire for heat and water for drinking.

This is very comforting because it means that the earth and everything in it is under the authority of the Lord Jesus. Nothing happens that causes him to be surprised.



Let us look at some verses in the Bible to help us

Genesis 1 29 – 30

And God said, "Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food." And it was so.

Psalm 111:5 He provides food for those who fear him; he remembers his covenant forever.

Genesis 8:22 While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease."

James 1:17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.

Psalm 135:6- 7 Whatever the LORD pleases, he does, in heaven and on earth, in the seas and all deeps. He it is who makes the clouds rise at the end of the earth, who makes lightnings for the rain and brings forth the wind from his storehouses.

These things make us realise that God has good things on the earth for us as His people. This is very good news. There is also the other side of this story. God also allows bad things to happen in the earth. When Adam sinned God allowed as part of the judgment for sin to be felt in the earth and so now we have floods and earthquakes and other natural disasters. God's original plan was for the earth to be full of blessing but because of sin He has allowed bad things to happen on the earth. He is the Lord over all the elements on the earth.



Let us look at some verses in the Bible to help us

Genesis 3:17-18 And to Adam he said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, 'You shall not eat of it,' cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field.

B. Governments and Authorities

- (I) All the governments of the world are allowed by God. The good ones and the bad ones.
- (II) He does not desire bad governments but He allows them to exist to bring people closer to Himself, especially when they have sinned or sometimes He allows bad governments to test His people to see how faithful they will be.
- (III) He can remove governments and He can put governments in place whenever he desires.



Let us look at some verses in the Bible to help us

Daniel 2:21-22 He changes times and seasons; he removes kings and sets up kings; he gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding; he reveals deep and hidden things; he knows what is in the darkness, and the light dwells with him.

Psalms 22:28 For kingship belongs to the LORD, and he rules over the nations.

Jeremiah 18:6 "O house of Israel, can I not do with you as this potter has done? declares the LORD. Behold, like the clay in the potter's hand, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel.

Daniel 4:17 The sentence is by the decree of the watchers, the decision by the word of the holy ones, to the end that the living may know that the Most High rules the kingdom of men and gives it to whom he will and sets over it the lowliest of men.'

God allows the governments of the world to exist for a purpose. Sometimes, many times, we do not know what that purpose is but God does. He has a plan for the world and governments fit into this plan.

C. Angels and Demons

This supernatural or spiritual world that we can not see is real and is all around us. It is a place where evil spirits operate and where Angels work to comfort, protect and encourage Christians. Let us talk a bit about Angels. I have never personally seen an Angel but there have been many times when I think Angels were there to protect me.



Illustration

Angels are here to help us

One day I was driving my car on an icy road in the middle of winter. The road was busy and there were cars all around me. Suddenly, I lost control of the car on the ice. I tried to get the car back under control but could not. Finally, I knew I was going to crash. I actually let go of the steering wheel and I called out to God. Interestingly, I actually felt peaceful. Then it was as if some one took over control of the car and brought it back under control. I can not be certain but I think it was an Angel.

A friend of mine was walking along a railway track out in Asia. He was praying and thinking and not concentrating. He did not realize that just around the corner behind him was coming an express train. Then he said it was as if someone just gently moved him off the railway track and the express train wizzed by him. It was possibly an Angel that did this. For Christians we need to understand that God is Lord in the heavens and He has His Angels constantly working for our good.

There are of course evil spirits who live in this unseen world. They are there to destroy and to encourage people to do evil. Every time a little boy or girl is sexually abused in one of our villages there are evil spirits rejoicing and encouraging people to do evil. Every time a woman goes to bed afraid of her husband hitting her then the evil spirits are there rejoicing. There is a very close relationship between evil in peoples lives and evil spirits. The reason that people sometimes become possessed by evil spirits is that they have sinned in such a way that they have given their lives over to evil.

Let me explain. Everyone loves sin before they are a Christian. Most people are not aware that they love sin because sin has always been with them. When we come to Christ one of the first evidences in our lives is that we either hate sin or we struggle with sin. Usually before we are a Christian we do not struggle with sin because we do not even know what sin is. One of the most wonderful aspects of being a Christian is that we change so deeply because we end up hating what we used to love.

Sometimes some people not only love sin they allow themselves to become completely controlled by sin that comes directly from evil spirits. People who are involved with witchcraft, fortune telling, certain sexual sins, extreme alcoholism and sins where they are out of control of themselves, can at times become so taken over by evil spirits that they are totally controlled by them. That is why at times we have to pray for God to set people free from evil spirits.

Let us think about this. Evil spirits no matter how powerful they are, are also under the authority of Jesus. The Bible is filled with stories of how Jesus released people from the power of evil spirits. Evil spirits always have to run away when the authority of Jesus is near and their power is always broken when the name of Jesus is declared against them. God allows evil spirits to exist because even they are somehow a part of His plan. He wants His children to learn to live under the authority of Jesus so that evil spirits lose their power in the places where Christians live and work. Again this is not easy to grasp but it is important.



Let us look at some verses in the Bible to help us

Exodus 23:20 "Behold, I send an Angel before you to guard you on the way and to bring you to the place that I have prepared.

Matthew 8:16 That evening they brought to him many who were oppressed by demons, and he cast out the spirits with a word and healed all who were sick.

Mark 1:23 And immediately there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit. And he cried out, "What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are--the Holy One of God." But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent, and come out of him!"

D. Good and Evil in Peoples Lives

Proverbs 15:3 *The eyes of the LORD are in every place, keeping watch on the evil and the good.*



Illustration

God sees everything

One day I walked into a village where I knew every family well. One of my friends had just been released from prison and the whole village was having a celebration. The problem was there was no joy. Everyone was drunk and falling on the ground. Children were getting hurt because there was no one to look after them. One little boy unattended had fallen onto the wood stove and had burnt his face. One drunk woman came into the street and started screaming at me and put a curse on my wife and I. As I looked around I could sense demons everywhere. I could sense their laughter as I had tried on so many occasions to share the Gospel with the people and now they were given over to sin and Satan. As I drove away I was very sad in my heart because I knew that Judgment was going to come to that village.

When we look around and see so much evil it is easy to ask the question why does God allow it? If Jesus was really Lord of the earth then why does He not stop these kinds of things taking place? We may even think thoughts like If I were God I would not allow terrible things to happen. God allows people to sin. He does not make them sin. He does not desire them to sin but He chooses to allow them to sin. God has absolute power in the world and yet He still allows us to sin even though He hates our sin. This is very important to understand that God allows even sin to exist in the world. When we think about these hard subjects we need to remember the little girl with the iron on her bike. We can not understand everything and so there are times when we must stand back and allow the Bible to speak and as children humbly accept what is spoken.



Let us look at some verses in the Bible to help us

2 Chronicles 12:14 And he did evil, for he did not set his heart to seek the LORD.

Jeremiah 17:9 The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?

John 8:34 Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is a

slave to sin.

Revelation 1:5 and from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood

Psalm 99:8 O LORD our God, you answered them; you were a forgiving God to them, but an avenger of their wrongdoings.

Collosians 2:13 And you, who were dead in your sins.....God made alive together with him (Jesus) , having forgiven us all our sins,



Special Thought

“Bad things exist but God chooses to allow even bad things to exist so that He can turn them into good”

2 The Authority of Jesus Over our Lives

Our lives are lived here on earth and yet they are effected by the spiritual world every day. As we have said in the last chapter there are Angels who help us and there are evil spirits who seek to oppose everything that God does.

We need to look at how we fit in to this great plan of God. Let us look at this in the following four ways:

- A. The Angels and the demons are being taught the authority of Jesus through our lives
- B. Everything that happens to our lives happens for a purpose that is always good
- C. In God's sight everyone of us has great value

D. Our lives now on earth will effect eternity

A. The Angels and the demons are being taught the authority of Jesus through our lives

The Bible teaches us that Angels and Demons are watching our lives and that God is using our lives to teach them truth about Himself. Let me give you an example. A man has come to Christ recently. He is struggling with all kinds of sins and temptations. He has been married for some time and before he was a Christian. When his wife made him angry he beat her. Now as a Christian he realizes that only cowards beat their wives and that it is a sin to do so. Then one day she makes him angry and he is tempted to hit her.

- He knows it is wrong because he has been taught from God's Word that it is sin.
- He is still tempted to hit her.
- The Angels and Demons are watching to see if he will hit her or not. If he hits her the demons will laugh at God.
- He makes the right decision and he does not hit her.

The end result is this:

- God is glorified because he chose to do right.
- The demons are angry because he did the will of God.
- The Angels rejoiced because he chose the right way.....

But most importantly the Angels and Demons have learned something and that is that God's power and wisdom is great. Your choosing to make the right decision and obey God rather than your feelings will always have an impact on the unseen world.



Let us look at some verses in the Bible to help us

Ephesians 3 v 10 through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places.

Job 1:8 And the LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, who fears God and turns away from evil?"

Luke 15:10 Just so, I tell you, there is joy before the Angels of God over one sinner who

repents."

1Corinthians 4:9 For I think that God has exhibited us apostles as last of all, like men sentenced to death, because we have become a spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men.

Luke 12:8 "And I tell you, everyone who acknowledges me before men, the Son of Man also will acknowledge before the angels of God,

B. Everything that happens to our lives happens for a purpose that is always good



Illustration

God's will is hard to understand

Many years ago I had a little daughter that died. That night as her body was taken away I sat on my own broken, confused and angry that such a tragic thing had happened. The telephone rang and it was my very close friend who was calling me from another country as he had just heard the sad news. He said some thing that changed my life. He said this, " You have to accept this, God has chosen for her to die, you do not know the reason but God is in control of even this".

The Bible says in Romans 8 v 28 that all things work together to good for those who love God and have become Christians. It does not mean that everything that happens is good but it means that everything that happens will work together for good because God is in control. I do not know why God chose to take my baby away. **I do know this that I would rather trust the Bible than my own feelings and I would rather trust the Bible than what others may have to say.** The truth is, as a person I am now more gentle and compassionate because I have suffered some sad things. Suffering as hard as it is can be used of God to make us more like Jesus.



Let us look at some verses in the Bible to help us

Isaiah 64:8 But now, O LORD, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand.

Genesis 28:15 Behold, I (The Lord) am with you and will keep you wherever you go.....
For I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you."

Deuteronomy 4:31 For the LORD your God is a merciful God. He will not leave you or destroy you.

Judges 2:1 'I will never break my promises

Psalm 18:30 This God--his way is perfect; the word of the LORD proves true; he is a shield for all those who take refuge in him.

C. In God's sight everyone of us has great value

It is very easy to think that we are not very important and do not have much value. To think that we are not valuable is a lie from Satan. The truth is that every Christian has so much value to God. Let us look at this a little more:

- We are so valuable that Jesus died on the Cross so that we could be set free from our sins.
- We are so valuable to God that He has chosen us to be the way that He teaches Angels and Demons about His will.
- We are so valuable to God that He has given Angels to be responsible just for us.
- We are so valuable to God that He refuses to allow anything (even bad things) to happen to us that He does not turn around for our own good.



Special Thought

Everyone who is a Christian, no matter how weak, is like a precious diamond to God. That means you. You have value.



Let us look at some verses in the Bible to help us

Psalm 68:5 Father of the fatherless and protector of widows is God in his holy habitation.

2Corinthians 6:18 and I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to me, says the Lord Almighty."

Galatians 4:7 So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.

Psalm 36:7 How precious is your steadfast love, O God! The children of mankind take refuge in the shadow of your wings.

Isaiah 43:4 Because you are precious in my eyes, and honored, and I love you,

1Peter 2:4 As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious,

D. Our lives now on earth will effect eternity

The Bible teaches us that one day Christians will go to be with God in heaven forever. Heaven will be a place of joy and peace. The Bible also tells us we will have a reward in heaven according to how we have lived on earth. What this means is that everything in our lives now has an impact on heaven.

Let us look at how this effects us:

- It means everything we do has a purpose
- It means that we are very important to God's plan for heaven and earth
- It means we will be rewarded according to how faithful we are in being obedient to God's Word.



Let us look at some verses in the Bible to help us

Isaiah 3:10 Tell the righteous that it shall be well with them, for they shall eat the fruit of their deeds.

Matthew 10:32 So everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven,

Mark 10:21 And Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, "You lack one thing: go, sell all that you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me."

Romans 2:10 but glory and honor and peace for everyone who does good

Hebrews 10:36 For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God you may receive what is promised.

1Corinthians 2:9 But, as it is written, "What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him"--



Special Thought

“ We are not people without value. Everyone of us is precious to God and He has a plan for each of our lives”

3 God's plan can never be defeated

God has a plan for the world. This means He has a plan for our countries, our cities, our villages, our families and our own lives. The Bible speaks so much about God having plans and that His plans will be ultimately worked out. Lets us look then at

how this works out in:

- A. The Nation
- B. The City
- C. The Village
- D. The Family
- E. Our own lives

A. The Nation

All through the Bible God talks about nations. We think of nations as being the country we live in. There is nothing wrong with this but when the Bible teaches about nations it is usually talking about people who speak the same language and have the same customs. Nations are very important to God and He has said that His greatest plan is for all the nations of the earth to worship him.

Firstly, the plan of God is that there would be people from our nations who will worship God. In fact, the Bible teaches that Jesus will not come again to the world until there are people from every nation who worship him.

We do not want to be too complicated here but let me say this. The Roma peoples are one nation but in some ways they are several nations. **The will of God is that Kalderash, Gurbet, Erli, Arli, Lovari, Bayash and all the languages of the Roma be used to worship Him. This is God's plan.**

Secondly, God's plan for the nation is that our nation would have what the Bible calls a "Voice of Righteousness". This is a people who will stand up and tell the other people in our nation what God says is right and wrong. In the next booklet in this series we will look at the subject of what our message is to the nations. It is Good News that we are to share but also news of what makes God angry when he sees our nation in sin.



Let us look at some verses in the Bible to help us

Acts 10:35 but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him.

1Peter 2:9 But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

Revelation 5:9 And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation.

B. The City

Most of us either live in a city or a village that is close to a city. God has a plan for cities.

(i) Safety and security

(ii) Justice

(iii) Goodness

We could put other things on the list but these are the main three ideas of God's plan for the city.

(i) Safety and Security

There is too much violence and fear in the cities of the world. It is not the will of God and God has chosen the Christians to be the ones to help bring safety and security to the city. In many cities in the world Christians help old people not to be afraid. Christians are told to protect widows, children who do not have fathers and orphans. God's plan for the Cities is that they would be places where Christians bring safety and security.

(ii) Justice

A woman can not get medical care for her daughter, the doctor wants a bribe. This is injustice.

A Roma man finishes school and is a hard worker. He can not get a job because he is Roma.

This is injustice. A young woman gets a job in a shop but the people say they do not want a Roma girl serving them. She goes home crying. This is injustice.

God hates injustice. His plan is that Christians would fight against injustice and make our cities places where there is no injustice. All around the world Christians are fighting for justice and as they do, they fulfill the plan of God for the city.

(iii) Goodness

Cities are very often selfish places. That selfishness comes out in crime, rudeness and many other ways. The plan of God is that Christians would show goodness in the city. Being kind, speaking nicely and being unselfish is God's desire. When goodness starts to grow it takes over whole communities. It is God's will that we love our cities and show a good example in our cities.



Let us look at some verses in the Bible to help us

Isaiah 1:16-17 Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean; remove the evil of your deeds from before my eyes; cease to do evil, learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression; bring justice to the fatherless, plead the widow's cause.

Matthew 5:13 "You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet.

John 13:12 – 14 When he had washed their feet and put on his outer garments and resumed his place, he said to them, "Do you understand what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet.

C. The Village

The village is the place where we see life very close up. The nation is big. The City is also big but the village is a place where everyone knows what is going on. God has a plan for our villages and His plan is for Christians is that they would be lights in the midst of darkness. God's plan for the village is:

- A place where there is no adultery
- A place where there is no beating of wives and children
- A place where everyones property is respected
- A place where there is no alcoholism
- A place where children can go to bed unafraid
- A place where God's name and God's day are honoured

Christians are to be the example in our villages and show the light of God in the way we live.



Let us look at some verses in the Bible to help us

Jeremiah 22:3 Thus says the LORD: Do justice and righteousness, and deliver from the hand of the oppressor him who has been robbed. And do no wrong or violence to the resident alien, the fatherless, and the widow, nor shed innocent blood in this place.

John 13:35 By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

1John 4:20 - 21 If anyone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. And this commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother.

1Peter 2:17 Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the emperor.

D. The Family

God has a plan for your family. His plan for your family is that the father and husband would be respected, honoured and obeyed. Where the mother is honoured, cherished, cared for, protected and loved by her husband. Where children grow up safe and secure showing respect and love and honour to their parents. This is the plan of God for the family and Christians all over the world are learning to live according to God's plan.



Let us look at some verses in the Bible to help us

Ephesians 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her,

Ephesians 5:22 Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord.

Ephesians 6:1 Children obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.

Collosians 3:21 Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged.

E. Our Own Lives

God has a plan for our lives. Each one of us has great value to God because He made us and

loves us. He loves us so much that He has chosen us to be the ones to fulfill His plan on the earth. God's desire for each of us is that we would be involved in fulfilling His plan for the nation, the city, the village, our family and in our lives. Nothing is going to stop God's plan for the world. He is fulfilling that plan in two ways:

- Now through the Christians
- Later when He returns

God is going to make a new heaven and a new earth where only security, Justice and goodness can exist. He is preparing the way for this by teaching His people, the Christians how to live in that new earth. That is why we follow His plan for the Nation, the City, the Village and the Family so that we can learn how to live in the new earth that one day will come when Jesus comes again to destroy all that is evil.



Special Thought

“ Jesus is Lord of Everything”

4 Giving Ourselves to God

Some people who are reading this booklet and doing this study have been Christians for a long time. Others are new Christians. A lesson we start to learn when first become a Christian and that continues all through our lives is the lesson of giving every part of our lives to God. We see this in Three ways:

- A. We give our past
- B. We give our present
- C. We give our future

A. Our Past

Most of us have things in our lives that we have done that we are ashamed of. All of us have things in our past that we would not want others to know about. One of the hardest things in life is actually giving our past to God and let Him take authority over our past lives.

- Our past is forgiven
- Our past is forgotten
- Our past has no power over our lives now.

One of the wonderful aspects of being a Christian is being forgiven. God never excuses us of our sins. He never lets sin goes unpunished. He does though forgive sins. We will talk more about this in the next study, “What is the Gospel”.

God does not only forgive our past He also forgets the past. A better way of saying is it he erases it away. Imagine you have a DVD of all your sins over your lives. God takes that DVD and erases it so that there is no record of them. When God forgives our past He never brings the past up again. Because God forgives and forgets, our past has no power over us. What is important though is that we have to give our past to God. We have to receive and accept His forgiveness and then we need to forget our past as well. There is no value in keep bringing up our past sins. Let us be people who give our past to God.



Let us look at some verses in the Bible to help us

2Chronicles 7:14 if my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.

Jeremiah 31:34 declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."

Jeremiah 33:8 I will cleanse them from all the guilt of their sin against me, and I will forgive all the guilt of their sin and rebellion against me.

Matthew 9:6 But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"

1John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

B. Our Present

God's desire for us is that we would leave the past behind and learn to give our present lives to him. What this means is that God desires to give us new gifts and new abilities that have little or nothing to do with our past lives. The Bible says when we become a Christian our old life is done away with and we are given a new life.



Illustration

Everything made new

I have spent many years traveling world preaching and teaching in different Churches and schools and colleges. I have written several books and have been involved in making films and many other creative things. The truth is though that I did not finish school. I was thrown out of school when I was 15 years old. I remember my teacher telling me I would never be successful at anything. He was correct humanly. Yet when God changed my life He took all the old life away and gave me a completely new life with all kinds of gifts. God desires to take people the world throws away and use them to do His will on earth.



Let us look at some verses in the Bible to help us

2Corinthians 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

Psalms 40:3 He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God. Many will see and fear, and put their trust in the LORD.

Isaiah 43:19 Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.

Isaiah 48:6 "You have heard; now see all this; and will you not declare it? From this time forth I announce to you new things, hidden things that you have not known.

Lamentations 3:22 The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; his mercies never come to an end;

Lamentations 3:23 they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.

Ezekiel 36:26 And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.

God desires to give you all kinds of new gifts in your life if you would say to Him that your life is no longer your own but His. Here is a list of the new things that God has given to us when we give ourselves to Him.

- Music
- Poetry
- Drawing and Painting
- Writing
- Wood working
- Metalwork
- Needlework embroidery
- Making Clothes
- Cooking

These are just a few of the gifts that God has for you. The desire of God is that our present lives

would belong to Him and that He would be free to develop within us all kinds of gifts that we can then share in our villages. Imagine in our villages if Christians had all these gifts and then used them to teach others. I think heaven is going to be something like this. People learning and expressing endless creativity.



Special Thought

Why don't you stop right now and ask God to give you a gift so that you can use it in a way that He would be pleased with.

C. The Future

The most important aspect of the future relates to fear and anxiety. These are some of the things we fear:

- Where will food, clothing and fuel come from
- Someone I love may die
- Something bad will happen to someone in my family or to me

We have to go back to the early things we looked at. Everything that happens to us happens for our good. It is not that everything that happens is good but everything works together for good. The will of God is that we allow our future to be something we trust Him for and that includes our family, our needs and our health.



Let us look at some verses in the Bible to help us

Mathew 6:25 "Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?"

Mathew 6:31 Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'

Phillipians 4:6 do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.



Special Thought

“ The Bible says that Jesus has promised to be with us at all times. He has all authority in heaven and on earth. This means we can be at peace and rest in Him”